The Activity of the Unrecognizable in Book XIII of Homer's *Odyssey*

by

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Abstract

In Book Thirteen of Homer's *Odyssey*, the adjective ἄγνωστον is at line 188 rendered by most translators as "unrecognizable." I argue that Odysseus' failure -- as a consequence of the intervention of the goddess Athena -- to recognize Ithaca requires that this adjective ἄγνωστον be understood in both an active sense and in a passive sense, as meaning at once both "unrecognizing" and "unrecognizable."

Oh beautiful people I love. I wish there were a page for each one of you, because without you there would be no pages at all. My husband, Patrick, to know how you believe in me makes me realize why you were at the beginning of all this. My family: my parents, all my brothers: Stephen, you're like a lighthouse big brother, Ben, forgiver of faults, Jesse, great runner of races, Tim, Mike, Nate, Davey, Joseph; my sister, Anna. Liz, your patience and friendship have taught me so much more than Greek. Jim Pritchard, if there is poetry in here, it is for you, as are the clearest sentences. Angus, you believed in the beauty of which I could barely speak. Gary McGonagill, if it wasn't for what you said about the *Aeneid* and all the other ancient mysteries, I would never have loved them. Peter O'Brien, I wish all teachers possessed your kindness. Eli Diamond, I do hope to read Homer and Aristotle simultaneously one day. Father Gary Thorne, begetter of visions, I believe in you. My dearest friends: Emma, Kadie, Kate, and Sue. Where would I be without the ones who love me? Lost like Odysseus without his native land in sight. But here I am at home.

Chapter One: Introduction

At the beginning of the *Metaphysics*, Aristotle writes: "all men by nature desire to know."[1] It belongs to the nature of the individual to desire, to literally reach toward,[2] knowing. Aristotle finds this desire demonstrated in the delight we take in the senses, particularly sight, because it is seeing that makes us know "and brings to light many differences between things."[3]

In Homer's *Odyssey*, after twenty years of wandering Odysseus arrives on Ithaca asleep, and when he wakes up he does not recognize it. Athena has poured a mist around him and all things appear strange to him:

> . . . ὁ δ' ἔγρετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
> εὖδων ἐν γαίῃ πατρωΐῃ, οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω,
> ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών: περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε
> Παλλὰς Ἀθηναίη, κούρη Διός, ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν
> ἄγνωστον τεύξειεν ἕκαστά τε μυθήσαιτο,
> μή μιν πρὶν ἄλοχος γνοίη ἀστοί τε φίλοι τε,
> πρὶν πᾶσαν μνηστῆρας ὑπερβασίην ἀποτῖσαι.
> τοὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα ἄνακτι,
> ἀτραπιτοί τε διηνεκέες λιμένες τε πάνορμοι
> πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι καὶ δένδρεα τηλεθόωντα.
> στῆ δ' ἄρ' ἀναΐξας καί ῥ' εἴσιδε πατρίδα γαῖαν:
> ὤμωξέν τ' ἄρ ἔπειτα καὶ ὠ πεπλήγετο μηρὼ
> χερσὶ καταπρηνέσς', ὀλοφυρόμενος δ' ἔπος ηὔδα:

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[1] πάντες ἄνθρωποι τοῦ εἰδέναι ὀρέγονται φύσει. σημεῖον δ' ἡ τῶν αἰσθήσεων ἀγάπησις: καὶ γὰρ χωρὶς τῆς χρείας ἀγαπῶνται δι' αὐτάς, καὶ μάλιστα τῶν ἄλλων ἡ διὰ τῶν ὀμμάτων. οὐ γὰρ μόνον ἵνα πράττωμεν ἀλλὰ καὶ μηθὲν [25] μέλλοντες πράττειν τὸ ὁρᾶν αἱρούμεθα ἀντὶ πάντων ὡς εἰπεῖν τῶν ἄλλων. αἴτιον δ' ὅτι μάλιστα ποιεῖ γνωρίζειν ἡμᾶς αὕτη τῶν αἰσθήσεων καὶ πολλὰς δηλοῖ διαφοράς. φύσει μὲν οὖν αἴσθησιν ἔχοντα γίγνεται τὰ ζῷα, ἐκ δὲ ταύτης τοῖς μὲν αὐτῶν οὐκ ἐγγίγνεται μνήμη, τοῖς δ' ἐγγίγνεται.
Aristotle. *Aristotle's Metaphysics.* Trans W.D. Ross. (New York: Random House, 1941). 980a1.

[2] Cf. the Liddell and Scott entry for ὀρέγω: reach, stretch, stretch out; to reach after, grasp at, yearn for.

[3] Aristotle, Ibid.

"ὤ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὖτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἱκάνω; (13.187-200)[4]

Unable to see his native shores as he knows them, Odysseus is made actively ἄγνωστον, unrecognizing. This cognitive compromise leads him to bewail his loss, curse the Phaeacians, and groan for home as he has so many times before.

It is not until Athena disperses the mist that Odysseus recognizes Ithaca. As the goddess speaks, the light of the sun returns and Odysseus sees again the land he knows. It is in this seeing again that we may discern the activity of distinguishing that Aristotle says is particular to sight. When Athena scatters the mist, Odysseus is no longer unrecognizing; he sees the landscape and discerns within himself the likeness between his knowing of Ithaca and the land around him; the many things that appeared strange to him are the very cliffs, trees, and mountain of his homeland. This recognition of Ithaca is not, however, simply a return to the same. When Athena reveals Ithaca, Odysseus knows it as distinct from Ithaca's appearance through the mist. In this way, the shared likeness between Odysseus and Ithaca is re-established by a relationship to difference. In the absence of mist Odysseus sees his homeland and knows the strange appearances to be both the same as and different from Ithaca. It is this knowing of likeness and difference, this holding together of same and other, that Athena gives Odysseus when she hides Ithaca from him. She gives him the cognitive activity that sight initiates and, as Aristotle says, gives delight: "Glad then was the much-enduring, noble Odysseus, rejoicing in his own land . . ."[5]

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[4] Homer, *Odyssey*. Ed. with Introduction and Commentary by W.B Stanford. (London: Bristol Classical Press, 1996). All subsequent references to the original text of the *Odyssey* are to the W.B Stanford edition.

[5] Homer, *Odyssey*. Trans. A.T Murray, Ed. Jeffery Henderson, Revised by George E. Dimock (Cambridge MA/London: Harvard University Press, 1995). 13.353-54.

Odysseus regains himself and his native land through the mediation of Athena. Thus when the mist is scattered more than the land of Ithaca is revealed. For Athena to reveal Ithaca is to reveal herself: when Odysseus sees that he has been standing all along on Ithaca's shores, he knows Athena has been present too. The one who has scattered the mist is the one who poured it. That is to say, Odysseus beholds the woman skilled in glorious handiwork and knows her to be the mist that made him ἄγνωστον. He now understands his moment of confusion to be necessary for the revelation of the goddess. It is Athena who made him unrecognizing and it is she who now makes him recognizing. Seeing Athena, Odysseus makes many distinctions: the goddess is at once the same as and different from the mist that surrounded him; she is the young shepherd boy, she is the light in the hall, and the dreadful aegis bearer. Thus, when she invites him to come close to her, "But come I will make you unknown to all mortals,"[6] Odysseus draws near to the goddess and his desire to know reaches out to the unrecognizable.

[6] ἀλλ' ἄγε ς' ἄγνωστον τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι. Murray, 13.397.

Chapter Two

ὁ δ' ἔγρετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
εὗδων ἐν γαίῃ πατρωΐῃ, οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω,
ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών (13.187-89)

After twenty years of wandering, Odysseus is asleep when he arrives on Ithaca and when he awakens he does not recognize it: "But god-like Odysseus awoke out of his sleep in his native land, and did not recognize it . . ."[7] In a moment of unanticipated disorientation, Odysseus wakes up and does not recognize Ithaca "having been away so long." Although the duration of twenty years is long, and the safe harbor where the Phaeacians have left him may look different than it once did, nonetheless it is difficult to accept that Odysseus' failure to recognize his homeland is on account of his being away so long. Perhaps the poet, too, felt the insufficiency of such an explanation and thus described the context into which Odysseus awakens:

περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε
Παλλὰς Ἀθηναίη, κούρη Διός, ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν
ἄγνωστον τεύξειεν ἕκαστά τε μυθήσαιτο,
μή μιν πρὶν ἅλοχος γνοίη ἀστοί τε φίλοι τε,
πρὶν πᾶσαν μνηστῆρας ὑπερβασίην ἀποτῖσαι. (13.189-93)

Most translators produce a translation similar to the following:

> For about him the goddess had poured a mist, Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, so that she might make him unrecognizable, and tell him all things, so that his wife might not recognize him, nor his townsfolk, nor his friends, until the suitors had paid the full price for all their transgressions.[8]

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[7] Murray, 13.187-89.
[8] Ibid. 189-93.

While such a translation is by no means crude or invalid, I would suggest that it effects a rather abrupt textual disconnect for the reader of the *Odyssey* in English; there is a degree of skepticism that Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca is a consequence of "having been away so long" and we expect the lines introduced by "for" will provide a more valid justification. However, what we learn is quite the opposite of what we expect. The cause of Odysseus' not recognizing Ithaca is not the mist Athena has poured around him; the purpose of the mist is reserved to make Odysseus unrecognizable – and this is a subject not breached until much later.[9] It appears, therefore, that for the sake of conveying Athena's eventual purpose (to make Odysseus unrecognizable until the suitors are defeated), the translator must overlook the immediate effect of Athena's mist pouring (that Odysseus does not recognize Ithaca). This kind of interpretation subsequently compels the reader to conclude that the divine agency of the goddess is not responsible for the action of the previous sentence, "but he did not recognize," because, according to such a translation, at the moment of Odysseus' awakening Athena has not yet appeared to him, told him her plan, and transformed his appearance.

A legitimate concern thus arises: if the purpose of the mist is not achieved when Odysseus opens his eyes and does not recognize his native land, why, then, does he not recognize his native land? How is the daughter of Zeus manifest at the moment of Odysseus awakening? That is, the modification of Odysseus by the adjective "unrecognizable" (ἄγνωστον) snatches from the reader the inclination to attribute Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca to the mist Athena has shed around him. It is as though the reader must surrender the understanding that Odysseus has been already

[9] It is not until line 392 that Athena introduces her plan to make Odysseus unrecognizable.

affected by the goddess and accept that after twenty years the "god-like" ruler of Ithaca has returned to his native land at the will of Athena only to be the victim of his own participial modification (ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών). For the modern English reader, therefore, torn on the one hand by the authority of the translator, and on the other by a desire to justify "but he did not recognize it" with more than a long absence from home, the cause of Odysseus' failure to know his homeland remains in question.

There is a general consensus among commentators that ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών is not the direct cause of Odysseus' failure to recognize his native land: "since it is not apparent why his long absence should have prevented Odysseus from recognizing his own land."[10] Stanford chooses to take the phrase "as an addition for the sake of *Pathos* with εὖδων, etc.[11] but I agree with Hoekstra; to do so would reduce οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω, "the most important element of the sentence." to a "casual, parenthetical remark."[12] The position of neither commentator on the expression ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών is, however, argued successfully: οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω cannot stand alone, nor can it be taken in conjunction with ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών and "one may wonder why the phrase is there at all."[13] The burden of explaining Odysseus' action in line 189 thus falls to Athena whose action is introduced by γάρ in line 188. Now, one would assume that the poet intended such a responsibility for the goddess; however, as we

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[10] Alfred Heubeck and Arie Hoekstra, *A Commentary on Homer's Odysseus* Vol. II, Books IX-XVI. Book XIII. Hoekstra. (Oxford: Claredon Press, 1989) *ad loc.*

[11] W.B Stanford, *ad loc.*

[12] Contrary to Stanford's claim, Hoekstra does not take *ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών* as the cause of Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca: " . . . since it is not apparent why his long absence should have prevented Odysseus from recognizing his own land, its meaning cannot be causal. But one may wonder why the phrase is there at all (for the sake of pathos? thus Stanford: but it will not do to take the expression as an addition to *εὖδων*, since this would reduce *οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω*, the most important element of the sentence, to a casual, parenthetical remark)." Hoeskstra, *ad loc.*

[13] Ibid.

demonstrated in the English translation, it is here that commentators arrive at the problem. According to the passive significance of ἄγνωστος, "περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε . . ." does not explicate why Odysseus does not recognize his native land because it refers to Athena's unrecognizable transformation of him at line 397. To any attentive reader, the postponed purpose of Athena's mist-pouring also lacks the logic we are looking for: if the goddess needs the mist to aid in her transformation of Odysseus' appearance in lines 398, why is the mist dispelled at line 352? Benjamin Haller observes the same conflict: "If the mist is already gone when Athena disguises Odysseus, how can concealing this transformation be its purpose?"[14]

In an attempt to resolve the tension between Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca and Athena's intended modification of his appearance, many scholars, including Irene de Jong, turn to Stanford's rather forceful extraction of Athena's "actorial motivation" from her "embedded focalization" in 190-93.[15] Identifying the significance of the conjunction ὄφρα in relation to the action of Athena in χεῦε, Stanford observes that, in Homer, ὄφρα fluctuates between temporal and final uses and he determines that, in this context, the conjunction functions as an intermediate between the two: i.e. for about him the goddess had shed a mist until/so that she might make him unrecognizable.[16] According to Stanford, Athena has poured the mist "in order to give herself time to make him unrecognizable and

[14] Benjamin Haller, "Landscape Description in Homer's Odyssey." 2007. pp. 224-25.
[15] "Athena's embedded focalization (shifter: ὄφρα+optative) informs narratees about what is to come: 190-1 announce her counseling Odysseus (from 372 onward), and making him 'unrecognizable' (in 396-403). 192-3 announce the second half of the poem Odysseus' incognito revenge on the Suitors." Irene J.F. de Jong, *A Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) *ad loc.*
[16] W.B Stanford, *ad loc.*

tell him the circumstances."[17] In other words, the mist is a kind of temporary prerequisite for the final purpose of goddess' plan. Odysseus must not recognize Ithaca so that Athena may make him unrecognizable so that he can defeat the suitors. Athena pours the mist because it prevents Odysseus from otherwise returning immediately to the palace and revealing himself; it gives her the time she needs to appear to Odysseus, make him unrecognizable, and set her plan into action. ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών is not, therefore, the cause of Odysseus' failure to know his homeland; rather the cause is Athena herself who, by surrounding him in mist, makes time for her intervention.

For the student of ancient Greek reading the *Odyssey* and the commentaries that supplement it, this insight is only of limited helpfulness. While it makes sense that Athena prevents Odysseus from recognizing Ithaca so that she can appear to him and tell him her plan before he returns home "with small chance of survival,"[18]does it make sense that Odysseus does not recognize his native land because Athena needs time to make him unrecognizable? Poseidon has had his turn, Odysseus' successful return home is Athena's desire, and it has been ordained by the nod of Zeus.[19] Why then would the purpose of the goddess not be manifest at the very moment the hero awakens in Ithaca? If Athena's wish

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid, ln. 189.

[19] Cf. lns.1.44-101 and also Poseidon's response to Zeus after the Phaeacians set Odysseus safely on the shores of Ithaca: "Father Zeus, no longer shall I, even I, be held in honor among the immortal gods, seeing that mortals honor me not in the least – the Phaeacians, who, as you well know, are of my own lineage. For I just now declared that Odysseus should suffer many woes before he reached his home, though I did not wholly rob him of his return when once you had promised and confirmed it with your nod (καὶ γὰρ νῦν 'Οδυσῆ' ἐφάμην κακὰ πολλὰ παθόντα/οἶκαδ' ἐλεύσεσθαι; νόστον δέ οἱ οὔ ποτ' ἀπηύρων/πάγχυ, ἐπεὶ σὺ πρῶτον ὑπέσχεο καὶ κατένευσας) (13.125-34). Murray.

to make Odysseus unrecognizable is not carried out for another 206 lines, what is she doing in the meantime? In what way is Odysseus immediately defined by her, that is, how is his first experience of Ithaca characterized by divine agency without delay?

I am interested in examining the nature of the time in which Odysseus wakes up surrounded by mist and does not recognize Ithaca. From Stanford's perspective, Athena's mist-pouring seems to amount to little more than the goddess giving herself a kind of time out, an intermission during which she has enough time to prepare herself, as if she must change costume before her next appearance. Rendered as "so that she might make him unrecognizable," ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον explicates the outcome Athena will eventually achieve, but it overlooks the effect she immediately achieves with her mist pouring: god-like Odysseus does not recognize his native land. Such a translation of περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε, etc., confines Athena to making Odysseus unrecognizable and thus abstracts her from the action of Odysseus in οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω. Without the divine intervention of the goddess, Odysseus' failure to know Ithaca is in fact incredible – as if for the hero to wake up and not recognize his native land were somehow normal.

Upon hearing the same passage, it is doubtful the Ancient Greek audience would have experienced the same conflict that frustrates modern readers, whether reading the text in English or the ancient Greek. Homer's primary audience would be alive to all senses of the words heard, and would let as many senses have play as seemed appropriate in any given context. According to *LSJ* sv, ἄγνωστος is not restricted to a purely passive significance, *not to be known*, but carries an active meaning: *unknowing*.[20] I am not the first to

[20] LSJ cites Pindar O. 6.113 for the active sense of ἄγνωστος but it is easy to imagine this sense was available early than Pindar. Cf. Pierre Chantraine's entry for γιγνώσκω: "L'adjectif verbal ancien est, commue on l'attend, γνωτός (Hom., S) plus souvent écrit avec

propose a reading of this active sense of the adjective in line 191. Edward Loewe's commentary from 1828 cites Anne Dacier's well-regarded French translation and commentary of the *Odyssey* from 1716:

> Minerve n' enveloppe point Ulysse d' un nuage, pour le rendre inconnu, mais pour lui rendre sa terre méconnoissable, pour l' empêcher lui de la reconnôitre. – Ἄγνωστος – ne signifie pas seulement, *qui n'est point connu*, mais aussi, *qui ne connoit point.*[21]

While I do not align myself exclusively with Dacier, upon consideration of lines 187-93, I suggest the context of the passage clearly signifies an ambiguity between the passive and active sense of the adjective. While, on the one hand, Odysseus' transformation at lines 429- 38[22] requires ἄγνωστον as unrecognizable be assumed, on the other, Odysseus' failure to know his native land presupposes a deprivation in his knowing; that is, a state of unrecognizing. If we follow Dacier's reading, the active significance of ἄγνωστος supplies Odysseus with the negative faculty that causes this failure. "So that she might make him unknowing, confirms the intrinsic correlation between Odysseus' not-knowing of Ithaca and the effective will of the goddess" expressed in περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε. Thus, to admit the active meaning of the adjective is to grant Athena the active modification of Odysseus;

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un sigma non étymologique γνωτός . . . de même en composition ἄγνωστος <<inconnu>> (S. et Ar.) mais aussi ἄγνωστος, atteste dès l'Odyssée; de agnostos sont tires ἀγνοέω <<ignorance>> . . . . Un vocalisme bref apparaît dans le verbe compose privatif agnoew <<ne pas reconnaître>> . . . " Pierre, Chantraine, *Dictionnaire Etymologique de la Langue Grecque: Histoire des Mots.* (Paris: Editions Klinckseick) 1968, p. 224-25.

[21] Based on Clark's opinion that ἄγνωστον, rendered as "ignorant," cannot be reconciled with line 192, μή μιν πρὶν ἄλοχος γνοίη ἀστοί τε φίλοι τε, and that line 194, τοὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα ἄνακτι, must not be taken as an explication of lines 190-91, ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον, Loewe ultimately finds Dacier's interpretation to be mistaken: "*Quam interpretationem minime convenire cum* v.192., *recte monuit jam Clarkius ad h.1. Adde quod illa Dacieriae opinio inde solum nata est, quod ἄγνωστος, si per ignotus explicetur, repugnare male crederet praecedentibus.* – v. 194." Edwardus Loewe, *Homeri Odyssea Graece* (Lipsiae: Apud C.G Kayser, 1828). Liber XIII. v.186-196.

[22] ἀλλ' ἄγε ς' ἄγνωστον τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι, etc.

to hear ἄγνωστον as unrecognizing is to see Odysseus' not-recognition of Ithaca as the enactment of Athena's will. For the Homeric audience, the privative act of knowing which occurs in οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω and ἄ-γνωστον is not merely a fortuitous coincidence of lexical semantics, but the deliberate effect of the mist shed by the goddess. For an audience uninhibited by a word's single definition, but captured by its resonating significance, the ancient listener would have understood both senses at once.

It is my intention neither to dispute the "unrecognizable" meaning of ἄγνωστον, nor to replace it with an active significance. Instead I want to propose a reading of the text that allows both meanings to be at once signified. To be clear, I do not think one meaning of the adjective may be understood to the exclusion of the other. As we have shown, it is a consequence of isolating the adjective to one meaning that has compromised our understanding of Athena's reason for pouring the mist. While there have been many attempts to convey in translation the two-sided effects of the mist, there is a further ambiguity we have not yet raised: is the mist poured around Odysseus or around Ithaca? On the one hand, it initially seems to be around Ithaca, because Odysseus does not recognize it; on the other hand, if we read περὶ γὰρ θεὸς, etc, as "to make the man himself unrecognizable," the mist surrounds Odysseus.[23] And, as we have discussed, for Odysseus himself to be made unrecognizable is an idea "which suffers from an internal lack of logic."[24] I think our frustration with the passage is that we want to see the mist as making something unrecognizable; clearly Athena does make something unrecognizable, but we simply cannot assert that the passive significance of ἄγνωστον belongs to Odysseus at the

[23] R.D. Dawe, *The Odyssey, Translation and Analysis* (Sussex: The Book Guild Ltd, 1993) ln. 190.
[24] Dawe articulates this lack of logic as follows: ". . . so that she could tell him everything in case his wife . . . recognised him before he could punish the suitors': a rushed anticipation of the transformation into a beggar, a theme not broached until 397." Ibid.

moment of his awakening. In an attempt to resolve this discrepancy, Aristophanes of Byzantium, who clearly felt a need for Athena's deed to be the immediate cause of Odysseus' not recognizing his home, made perhaps the most drastic alteration by changing the accusative αὐτὸν to the dative αὐτῳ. [25] This substitution makes Ithaca the referent of μιν, i.e: περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε . . . ὄφρα μιν αὐτῳ ἄγνωστον τεύξειεν, thus positing that it is the island that is surrounded in mist: "For about him the goddess had poured a mist so that she might make *it* unrecognizable to him."[26] Therefore, while Aristophanes solves the problem of Odysseus' not recognizing his native land, he leaves us with another: we must still account for Odysseus' unrecognizable transformation at lines 429-38. Yet if we return to the question of over what the mist is poured, we can hear the double significance resonating - without thinking ahead to Athena's disguising of the man. When Athena pours the mist in order to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον, she engages both the passive and active implications of the adjective: she simultaneously makes Ithaca unrecognizable and Odysseus unrecognizing. It makes no difference, therefore, around what the mist is poured - Odysseus or Ithaca, and in fact, the text does not indicate one or the other as an object of περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε. Odysseus does not recognize his native land because Ithaca has been made unrecognizable; and if Athena wills the ἄγνωστον modification of Odysseus, she must reciprocally will the ἄγνωστον modification of Ithaca.

By pouring a mist, Athena effectively makes Ithaca unrecognizable and Odysseus unrecognizing, thus preventing him from going home and revealing himself to his wife, his townsfolk, and his friends. It is this state of unrecognizing that then allows Athena to come to Odysseus and make him unrecognizable "so that his wife might not know him, nor

[25] Ibid.
[26] Emphasis mine.

his townsfolk, nor his friends, until the suitors had paid the full price for all their transgressions."[27] We may now reconsider Stanford's suggestion that Athena pours the mist to give herself time to appear to Odysseus and make him unrecognizable. To the Homeric audience hearing the two-fold meaning of the adjective, that Odysseus is not immediately made unrecognizable when he awakens on Ithaca is not indicative of the goddess' unaccomplished plan, because Athena is already active in the unrecognizing of Odysseus. In other words, if the goddess has caused Odysseus not to recognize Ithaca, she will make others not to recognize Odysseus. οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω is not, therefore, merely a consequence of the duration of Odysseus' wanderings, nor is it simply the precursor to Athena's eventual transformation of him; it instead confirms that Athena has caused Odysseus to fulfill her necessary time requirements - so to speak - and that she will make him unrecognizable. Thus, when Odysseus opens his eyes and fails to know his native land, he achieves a divinely authorized activity: he enacts Athena's purpose to make him ἄγνωστον in the full sense of the word.

The assertion of Athena's will is manifest not only around Odysseus in the form of a misty haze (περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε) but in the modification of Odysseus himself (αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον). It is Athena who stands before and on the other side of Odysseus' recognition of Ithaca (οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω) because it is she who has taken the shape of the privative alpha that deprives him of his knowing and made him *not* to recognize. By pouring a mist around him, the goddess does not delay her appearance but initiates it by inserting herself into Odysseus' ability to recognize. It is in this way that the agency of Athena is revealed to the reader when Odysseus awakens in his native land and he does not recognize it. However,

[27] 13.192-93, Murray.

this revelation is not recognizable to Odysseus in the same way. Surrounded in mist, the goddess is present to Odysseus only in a negative form; to him she reveals herself only in the negative act of his knowing. She makes Odysseus ἄγνωστον because she occupies the space where the mist is. In the disabling of his knowing, Athena confirms her presence to the effect that the hero believes he is not home, but still wandering, ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών.

Chapter Three

As readers, the frustration we experience in our attempt to reconcile Odysseus' return to Ithaca with his failure to recognize it is a consequence of learning the effect of Athena's mist-pouring before we know about the mist itself.[28] It is not until we discover περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε that we grasp the chronological inevitability of οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω, instinctively presupposing that the mist has caused Odysseus not to recognize his native land by affecting how the island appears to him. There is a natural inclination to assume the effects of Athena's mist-pouring are not isolated to Odysseus: if Odysseus does not recognize Ithaca, Ithaca must in some way be unrecognizable to him. Implicit in the very logic of our thinking is, therefore, the confirmation that the significance of ἄγνωστον necessarily requires the modification of two sides: so that the goddess might make Odysseus ἄγνωστον Ithaca must also be made ἄγνωστον. However, in this double ἄγνωστον-making a change not characteristic of either Odysseus or Ithaca has occurred. It does not belong to the nature of Odysseus to be unrecognizing of his native land (despite his long absence) and it does not belong to the nature of Ithaca to be unrecognizable to Odysseus. Ithaca is not unknown to its ruler; it is his fatherland. Odysseus has been longing for home for two decades: "... such desire is in him/ merely to see the hearthsmoke leaping upward/from his own island, that he longs to die."[29] Straining from Calypso's island "to catch sight of the very smoke uprising/ from his own country"[30]

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[28] οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω is prior to περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε

[29] Homer, *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1998) 1.78-80.

[30] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Trans. Richmond Lattimore, (New York: Harper Perennial, 1999) 1.57-59. In order to show the difficulty of determining the effects of Athena's mist

Odysseus drenches his clothes in tears, longing only for the sweetness of Ithaca.[31] But in addition to his unrelenting desire to see his homeland, the Phaeacians have left Odysseus in a place he knows well, the harbor of Phorcys that is near to the sacred cave where he made many perfect hecatombs for the nymphs who weave their sea-purple webs.[32] From this safe harbor is a view of Neritos, that "leaf-trembling" mountain Odysseus described when he revealed his identity to Alcinoos.[33] This is a place from which Odysseus has come and gone. And, as the poet will tell us, it is a place he will know again. It is on account of these undeniably familiar surroundings that we must see the divine influence at work in Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca. However, if we are to discover how Athena awakens within Odysseus the negative that rejects his native land as recognizable to him, we must situate ourselves beside Odysseus in the mist. We must hear οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω as the counter

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and also the range of interpretations generated by Odysseus' response to his homecoming, I will provide at various points different translations for the same lines of Greek text.

[31] Cf. Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Trans. S.H. Butcher and A. Lang, (London and New York: MacMillan and Co., 1887) p. 135 and Lattimore, 9.28-36.

[32] "There is a harbor of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorkys,/in the countryside of Ithaca. There two precipitous/ promontories opposed jut out, to close in the harbor/and shelter it from the big waves made by the winds blowing/so hard on the outside; inside, the well-benched vessels/can lie without being tied up, once they have found their anchorage./At the head of the harbor, there is an olive tree with spreading/leaves, and nearby is a cave that is shaded, and pleasant,/and sacred to the nymphs who are called the Nymphs of the Wellsprings,/Naiads. There are mixing bowls and handled jars inside it,/all of stone, and there the bees deposit their honey./And therein also are looms that a made of stone, very long, where/the nymphs weave their sea-purple webs, a wonder to look;/and there is water forever flowing." Lattimore, 13.96-111. See also Lattimore's translation of lines 345-351: "This is the harbor of the Old Man of the Sea, Phorkys,/and here at the head of the harbor is the olive tree with spreading/leaves, and nearby is the cave that is shaded and pleasant,/and sacred to the nymphs who are called the Nymphs of the/Wellsprings,/ Naiads. That is the wide over-arching cave, where often/you used to accomplish for the nymphs their perfect hecatombs;/and there is the mountain Neritos, all covered with forest."

[33] Odysseus to Alcinoos: "There is a mountain that stands tall, leaf-trembling Neritos" Lattimore 4.21-22. Cf. George Herbert Palmer, *The Odyssey of Homer* (Cambridge MA: The Riverside Press, 1894) p. 137: "I live in Ithaca, a land far seen; for on it is the lofty height of Neriton, covered with waving woods."

response invoked by that which is unrecognizable (Ithaca). The poet reveals how Athena effects this twofold transformation of Odysseus and Ithaca by introducing us to the atmosphere into which Odysseus awakens on Ithaca's shores:

> τοὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα ἄνακτι,
> ἀτραπιτοί τε διηνεκέες λιμένες τε πάνορμοι
> πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι καὶ δένδρεα τηλεθόωντα. (13.194-96)

Whether one limits ἄγνωστον to the passive significance or not, line 194 provides the necessary excuse for why Odysseus does not recognize Ithaca and how Athena has given herself time to come and meet him: Odysseus does not run immediately home and reveal himself because he does not recognize he is home; the mist makes all things appear strange to him. We might proceed with the conclusion of de Jong after her analysis of the same passage: "[Odysseus'] failure is due to his long absence (189), but above all to Athena pouring a mist around the countryside which makes it hazy."[34] Dawe suggests, much like de Jong, that the poet is augmenting the first cause of Odysseus' unrecognizing with a divine latter cause: "The text gives two alternative reasons for Odysseus's failure to recognise his own country. 1) The length of time he has been away. 2) Intervention by Athene. The first is natural, the second contrived . . ."[35] While on the surface this suggestion seems to offer a practical solution to our dilemma, considering that both de Jong and Dawe translate ἄγνωστον as unrecognizable, I find it hard to discern how they can understand appearance of Ithaca to be Athena's way of supplementing Odysseus' failure to recognize. Unless, of course, we follow Stanford's conclusion that ὄφρα functions as an indecisive intermediate, vacillating in its support for Odysseus' non-recognition of Ithaca and the subject of Athena's eventual unrecognizable transformation of him 206 lines

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[34] De Jong, lns. 187-358.
[35] Dawe, ln. 190.

later. Such logic, however, is necessary only if lines 190-91 are perceived as the poet's initial neglect to authorize Athena as the cause determining both Odysseus' not-knowing of Ithaca and his later unrecognizable transformation. I would suggest that insofar as this sort of interpretation in effect imposes an unnecessary justification of textual corruption, it attributes a kind of carelessness, or an indifference, not only to the poet, in this the culmination of the wanderings, but also to Odysseus, the one for whom this quintessential homecoming is sought. And we must ask ourselves: would the poet or the hero defend the unrecognized return as a natural response to a long absence from home or as a subsidiary by-product of divine activity? Hoekstra, perhaps wondering the same, acknowledges that in this passage Homer "does not employ the mist in the normal epic way . . . [gods] do not act in such a roundabout way in order to advise and change their protégés."[36] Why then should we not see the relationship between Athena and her mist and Odysseus and Ithaca as anything but unambiguously interrelated?

I do not think that dissatisfaction with the text at this the moment in the epic requires an excuse be negotiated for either Homer or Odysseus. If we keep before us the twofold significance of ἄγνωστον (unrecognizing/unrecognizable), our desire to justify Odysseus' response to his return home - on both a grammatical and semantic level - is intentionally satisfied by the poet. Homer establishes a direct correlation between the appearance of Ithaca and Odysseus' failure to recognize it (although waking up in it) by linking the explanatory τοὔνεκα to ὄφρα of line 190: ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον . . . τοὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα ἄνακτι. By supplying the active meaning to ἄγνωστον,

[36] Hoekstra, lns. 190-91. Cf. Dawe's note on this discrepancy: "Nor does a mist need to be shed around Odysseus here on the sea shore; Athena held her mist-shedding proclivities in check until a more suitable moment when she arranged for her protégé to enter the Phaiacian town." *ad loc.*

line 194 naturally reveals how Athena fulfills her purpose to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον: so that she might make him unrecognizing, *therefore* all things were seeming strange to their ruler." There is, therefore, a logical and chronological relation between Ithaca's appearance through the mist and Odysseus' failure to recognize it. If Athena makes Odysseus' native land appear strangely, Odysseus must be affected by this change. By accepting that Odysseus is made actively ἄγνωστον by the mist, we are not distraught when we are told of Ithaca's strange appearance; Ithaca is Odysseus' unrecognizable counterpart. Re: οὐδέ *μιν* ἔγνω.) By connecting Athena's purpose (to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον) with how the mist makes Ithaca appear, Homer leads us directly to an understanding of the failure of its ruler to recognize his homecoming. It is in this way that Edward Lowe is correct when he says the poet jumps from one explanation of the matter to another.[37] However, when the logic is intrinsic to the words themselves, our route is not a circuitous one: by discerning the relationship between unrecognizable and unrecognizing we are led toward and understanding of what it means for the goddess Athena to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον.

The poet tells us that it is on account of the Athena's mist-pouring that Odysseus wakes up and "all things were appearing ἀλλοειδέα to their ruler, the long paths, the bays offering safe anchorage, the sheer cliffs, and the luxuriant trees."[38] I find most translations of these lines are generally quite creative and instructive in their expression of how the mist makes Ithaca appear to differently to Odysseus. I think, however, it is helpful to the significance of the sentence and the context of Odysseus' first experience of Ithaca to offer

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[37] Loewe, note to Liber XIII. v.186-196: "*Magis etiam inde apparet, transilire h.1 poetam ab alia rei causa ad aliam.*"
[38] Murray, 13.194-96.

the literal meaning of the adjective: other-shaped. ἄλλος = "another, or different, or some other;" εἶδος = "appearance, shape, form." [39] Accordingly, surrounded in mist, Odysseus' surroundings seem, literally, like other-shapes, not in the sense that the paths, bays, cliffs and trees do not look like paths, bays, cliffs and trees, but in the sense that they do not look like the paths, bays, cliffs and trees of Ithaca: "Therefore it was that the place had an unfamiliar appearance:/Everything seemed changed . . ."[40] The significance of ἀλλοειδέα is, therefore, determined in opposition to what is not other, that is, what is the same. In other words, the extent to which all things were appearing other-shaped to Odysseus is relative to the degree to which these things were seeming not-like the shapes of Ithaca: "So to its King Ithaca showed an unaccustomed face."[41]

It is important to put forth the literal significance of ἀλλοειδέα because it clarifies how Odysseus' disoriented experience of his native land occurs. The quality of how Ithaca was appearing to Odysseus is not indicative of an actual geographical transformation of the island, but a disguising of its true appearance. As Lattimore says, Athena "made everything look otherwise than it was."[42] By pouring a mist around, Athena manipulates Ithaca's likeness to itself into difference and transforms that which is known to Odysseus into a place that seems unknown to him: "Wherefore each thing showed strange to the lord of the land . . ."[43] Therefore, although Ithaca surrounds Odysseus with all its "long paths . . . sheltering havens . . . steep rocks and the trees in their bloom," because these things do not

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[39] Cf. LSJ entry for ἀλλο-ειδής: of a different form, looking differently and in *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect*: of another, i.e. of strange appearance.
[40] Homer, *The Odyssey*. Trans. Francis Caufeild (London: G. Bell and Sons, Ltd, 1921) p. 211.
[41] Homer, *The Odyssey*. Trans. T.E Shaw (New York: Oxford University Press, 1932) 187.
[42] Lattimore, 13.194-5.
[43] Butcher and Lang, p. 213.

seem like Ithaca, Ithaca cannot be recognized.[44] It is thus in the concealment of likeness that a strange and different appearance takes the shape of the unrecognizable. The ἀλλοειδέα quality of Ithaca's appearance is that which makes Ithaca ἄγνωστον; it is cause of Ithaca's unrecognizable modification. Thus, after twenty years of absence, Ithaca receives its ruler again, and, displaced by an appearance unlike itself, is lost to Odysseus in mist:

> Now all the land another prospect bore,
> Another port appear'd, another shore.
> And long-continued ways, and winding floods,
> And unknown mountains, crown'd with unknown woods.[45]

It is into a divinely imposed obscurity that Odysseus awakens and is motivated to experience all things as ἀλλοειδέα. Homer establishes a correlation between how Ithaca appears to Odysseus and how he sees it by specifying the king of Ithaca as the one to whom the cliffs and hills were appearing strangely: ἄνακτι. By affecting how Ithaca appears to its ruler, Athena simultaneously affects the way in which Ithaca's ruler sees his own land: "All objects, therefore, in the Hero's eyes/Seem'd alien . . ."[46] Surrounded in mist, the same quality that conceals Ithaca's likeness to itself must also deprive Odysseus of the evidence that would otherwise prompt his recognition of it. Compelled to confirm the appearance what he sees, Odysseus is transformed from the outside in:

> Therefore all things about him the King as strange did see,
> The uncrooked ways far-reaching, the all-safe haven there,
> The steep high rocks and the trees, well growing, leafy fair.[47]

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[44] Ibid.
[45] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Trans. Alexander Pope (London: George Bell and Sons, 1876) 13.231-4.
[46] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Trans. William Cowper (London: J.M. and Sons Ltd; New York: E.P. Dutton and Co., 1922) 13.232-3.
[47] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*, Vol.II. Trans. William Morris (London: Reeves and Turner, 1887) 13.194-6.

For the Homeric audience, the relationship between the mist Athena pours and Odysseus' failure to recognize his native land would not have to be pieced together by a projection of textual interpretation. According to the unequivocal relationship between seeing and knowing, Odysseus' failure to know Ithaca could not be distinct from how he sees it. In Greek culture the faculty of sight was inseparable from the activity of knowing. It is for this reason that Aristotle privileged sight above all the senses – it was seeing that lead to the cognitive pleasure of knowing. The degree to which seeing is pregnant with the potency of knowing is reflected in the fact that when one "has seen" one is said to know.[48] As Jean-Pierre Vernant writes, for the Greeks, the fundamental union between seeing and knowing was implicit in the language itself:

> Foremost, to see and to know were as one; if *idein*, "to see," and *eidenai*, "to know," are verbal forms of the same term, if *eidos*, "appearance, visible aspect," also means "the specific character, the intelligible form," this is because knowledge was interpreted and expressed through one's way of seeing. Knowing was a form of vision.[49]

On the basis this manifest correlation between physical sight and cognitive sight, we must distinguish Odysseus to be the active agent in both his seeing and his knowing. That is to say, we must interpret Odysseus' immediately affected seeing of Ithaca to be an expression of his immediately affected knowing of Ithaca. From here it is easy to determine that if Odysseus does not recognize his native land it is on account of Athena altering the subject and object of sight such that the two are no longer like themselves. By concealing Ithaca's likeness to itself, Athena also conceals this same likeness in Odysseus, thus depriving him

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[48] Cf. LSJ entry for εἴδω: I see; pf. οἶδα (I have seen) always used as present; I know.
[49] Vernant, Jean-Pierre, *The Greeks*. Trans. Charles Lambert and Teresa Lavender Fagan. Ed. Jean-Pierre Vernant. Introduction. (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1995). p. 12.

of the resemblance between what he sees and what he knows. That is to say, because the landscape is appearing differently to him, Odysseus is seeing Ithaca differently and cannot retrieve the knowing he possesses. To this extent, the mist is not simply a visual barrier through which Odysseus cannot rightly see; it is a cognitive barrier through which he cannot rightly know. The lovely English prose of Butcher and Lang conveys the activity of Odysseus' not-recognizing well: "Even then the goodly Odysseus awoke where he slept on his native land; nor knew he the same again."[50] By imposing a visual obstacle between Odysseus and Ithaca Athena denies Odysseus, king of Ithaca, the immediate repossession of his native land. Thus, despite no longer being separated from Ithaca by any physical distance, the cognitive distance between Lord and land invokes the same twenty years long sense of alienation.

I am not treading on untried territory in my struggles with line 194. However, the concern that preoccupies most commentators is how to manipulate ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο into the nicest metrical fit. Readings of the line are divided into two groups: those who, like Stanford, follow Munro in adopting Payne Knight's ἀλλοειδέ' ἐφαίνετο and those who favor ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο, including Murray and Hoekstra.[51] Stanford admits Murray's suggestion that the oftener Odysseus looked the stranger the land appeared, "is not impossible," but he ultimately rejects the "harsh double *Synizesis*" of ἀλλοειδέα.[52] Merry tends towards the "dubious" ἀλλοϊδέα, while Dawe finds the "simple 'appeared' to have "a

[50] Butcher and Lang, p. 213.
[51] Hoekstra reads ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο, but also concedes ἀλλοειδέ' ἐφαίνετο "is the least unsatisfactory of the MS-tradition." *ad loc.*
[52] Stanford, *ad loc.*

less authentic look to it" and prefers to convey the iterative significance: "That is why everything kept appearing to look different."[53]

According to the MS-tradition, there are good arguments for both the aorist and the iterative imperfect; however, what I find troubling is that while commentators generally agree that Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca is related to how it appears to him, few take into account the possibility that the particular activity of Ithaca's appearing may be essential to Odysseus' failure to recognize it. What is primary to our argument is that the effects of the mist (namely οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω) are directly related to Athena; it is the goddess who has poured a mist and set a change in motion. Our challenge, therefore, is to examine the mist-defined relationship between Ithaca and Odysseus and to see it as a means by which the poet expresses the divine influence of Athena upon Odysseus.

In our analysis of the relationship between Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca and the way in which the land appears to him, we must note the distinction the poet makes between Ithaca as the singular object of Odysseus' unrecognizing (οὐδέ *μιν* ἔγνω) and the cliffs and hills and trees as the manifold objects appearing to Odysseus (*ἀλλοειδέα* φαινέσκετο *πάντα* ἄνακτι). Appearing through the medium of the mist, Odysseus' native land is divided into multiple and discrete appearances. There is a multiplicity that seems strange; but it is Ithaca he does not recognize. We, the reader, move backwards in the logic of Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca, encountering the strange plurality of Ithaca's appearing after it has resurfaced reconfigured as the object of Odysseus' unrecognizing (μιν). We learn first that Odysseus awakens in his native land and does not recognize it, and second that because he is surrounded in mist all things are appearing strangely to him.

[53] Dawe, *ad loc.*

If we place ourselves beside Odysseus, however, it is not the entire island of Ithaca that appears differently, but cliffs, paths, hills, and trees. From here we can discern that the poet is articulating the transition these objects undergo from the nominative plural to the accusative singular (ἀλλοειδέα πάντα becomes μιν). This grammatical change suggests that Odysseus is actively engaged in a cognitive process: he reduces the many things that seem unfamiliar to him to a singular land he does not recognize.

I myself am inclined to side with Murray partly because of the continual, repeated activity that is suggested by the iterative imperfect and also because of Winfried Elliger's suggestion that the generalizing plurals reflect Odysseus' inability to recognize Ithaca.[54] While Stanford finds nothing to justify the frequentative sense of the iterative and prefers the metrical fit of the aorist, I argue in favor of the iterative on the basis that the plurals justify it. In my view, the iterative is an important indication of the motion, the activity, occurring between the elements of Ithaca and its ruler who is looking upon them. It shows time passing, and thus demonstrates the will of Athena taking effect. The more Odysseus sees, the more Ithaca retreats from sight; the more his knowing of clear-seen Ithaca is hidden from him, and the more his ability to recognize deteriorates. It is this motion, this activity between Ithaca's strange appearing and Odysseus' strange seeing that fuels his anxiety. Over and over again there a disjunction between the hills and trees and cliffs he sees and those in his memory of his native land:

> Another look, - the footways stretching far,
> The bights where ships were moored the towering
> rocks,

[54] De Jong, lns. 195-96 with reference to Winfried Elliger, *Die Darstellung der Landschaft in der griechischen Dichtung*, 1975 (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter) pp. 125-27.

And spreading trees.[55]

Grasping at the appearance of paths, harbors, cliffs, and trees for a resemblance to Ithaca, Odysseus' capacity to recognize falters and is overtaken by the negative that will deny its positive activity. Odysseus is unrecognizing. He is made ἄγνωστον. He does not recognize his native land, οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω:

He rose and stood upright,
And gazed upon his native coast and wept.[56]

The repetitive activity of the land's appearing has fulfilled Athena's purpose. Sometime, somewhere in all the strange seeming of things Ithaca is lost from Odysseus. To dismiss how the poet characterizes the appearance of Ithaca with the iterative φαινέσκετο would be, therefore, vastly to underestimate and how Odysseus is affected by the mist Athena pours around him.

With the contrast between οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω and ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα, Homer juxtaposes the instability between multiplicity and unity. The lack of any correspondence between his native land and the strange cliffs, trees, and harbors, indicates that Odysseus cannot retrieve the knowing under which the appearance of his surroundings are unified. The lofty mountain with its waving trees, long pathways and steep cliffs cannot be recognized as one (μιν), as under the name of Ithaca if they are divided from their true nature. By contriving an absence of likeness Athena makes the king of Ithaca experience the anxiety of being lost while standing on his native shores. Surrounded in mist, what seems strange to Odysseus' seeing becomes the object of his unrecognizing, μιν. And this is

[55] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*, Vol. II. Trans. William Cullen Bryant (Boston: James R. Osgood and Company, 1873) 13.241-244.
[56] Ibid.

no object at all. Odysseus looks upon his native land and does not see Ithaca. He looks upon Ithaca and does not know he is home:

> Pensive and slow, with sudden grief oppress'd,
> The king arose, and beat his careful breast,
> Cast a long look o'er all the coast and main,
> And sought, around, his native land in vain:
> Then with erected eyes stood fix'd in woe,
> And, as he spoke, the tears began to flow:
> 'Ye Gods', (he cried) 'upon what barren coast,
> 'In what new region, is Ulysses toss'd?[57]

[57] Pope, 13.231-42.

Chapter Four

There is an absence that accompanies the ἀλλοειδέα appearance of Ithaca. Surrounded in mist, the relationship between Ithaca's king and Ithaca is not realized. The strange shape of things creates a dissonance between Odysseus and his native land; it gives birth to a groaning as the two sides of ἄγνωστος collide and confirm their opposition. When at last face to face with his own land Odysseus looks upon it and despairs that he is once again lost:

> στῆ δ' ἄρ' ἀναΐξας καί ῥ' εἴσιδε πατρίδα γαῖαν:
> ὤμωξέν τ' ἄρ ἔπειτα καὶ ὠ πεπλήγετο μηρὼ
> χερσὶ καταπρηνέσς', ὀλοφυρόμενος δ' ἔπος ηὔδα:
> "ὤ μοι ἐγώ, τέων αὖτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἱκάνω;" (13.197-200)

We are surprised by Odysseus' response to his homecoming, but as we have shown, this response is the appropriate reaction to the modification accomplished by Athena's mist. By surrounding Odysseus in mist Athena has conjured up the privative alpha. With the appearance of an ἀλλοειδέα Ithacan landscape, she has hidden Ithaca behind another appearance and made its ruler un-recognizing, actively ἄ-γνωστον. The privative alpha asserts a lack or want or absence and Odysseus' groaning is an expression of this deprivation; it is the revelation of his recognition of this deprivation.[58] Already we have been told by the poet of Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca when he wakes up and he does not recognize it, and we know the reason for this failure; now we hear it confirmed by Odysseus. Leaping up, he surveys the land around him and then cries out: "Oh, woe is me, unto what mortal's land am I now come?"[59] This is god-like Odysseus waking up and not

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[58] "καὶ ὠ πεπλήγετο μηρὼ: denotes a gesture of sorrow, despair, or anger, cf *Il.* xii 162, xv 113, 397." Hoekstra, ln. 198.
[59] Butcher and Lang, p. 213.

recognizing; this is Odysseus looking upon the land that appears strangely to him and seeing that he does not know where he is. Homer reveals the negative relation between Odysseus and Ithaca when he describes Odysseus looking upon his native land and the sense of despair that results from this seeing. Odysseus looks upon his native land, Ithaca is the direct object of his seeing (εἴσιδε πατρίδα γαῖαν) and yet, it is the activity of seeing his native land that causes Odysseus to cry out that he is lost:

> So he rose and stood on his feet, and looked on his father-land,
> And groaned therewith, and smiting his thigh with the flat of his hand . . . [60]

Homer marks the etiological sequence of Odysseus not-recognizing Ithaca with the adverb ἔπειτα when he says: Odysseus looked upon his native land, and *then* he groaned and struck both of his thighs with the flat of his hands, and mournfully spoke and said: "ὤ μοι. . .". ἔπειτα thus marks a transition from Odysseus beholding his land to his physical and verbal expression of despondency when he does not recognize it. Odysseus' lament is provoked by what he sees, or rather, by what he does not see. He asks where he is because he sees that he does not know; he sees and *then* he knows that he does not know:

> Hastily rising he stood and gazing around on his homeland
> Uttered a pitiful groan and on both of his thighs in despondence
> Smote with a downward stroke on the hands and made lamentation:
> Ah me, what is the folk whose county I now am arrived at?[61]

It is important to discern in Odysseus' question τέων αὖτε βροτῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἱκάνω; a two-fold lack of knowing: Odysseus is unknowing of both the land he has arrived upon, and the people who inhabit it. And for good reason, the knowing of one would determine the knowing of the other. That is to say, if Odysseus knew what people inhabited the land, he would know where he was, and, reciprocally, if he knew what land he was on, he would

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[60] William Morris, 13.197-99.
[61] H.B. Cotterill, *Homer's Odyssey* (London: George G. Harrap and Company, 1911) 13.197-200.

know what kind of people inhabited it. Thus, when he asks, "To the land of what mortals have I now come again?" Odysseus expresses the innate relation between a land and the people who inhabit it, which is the very relation that exists between himself and Ithaca. The irony of Odysseus' question is, of course, that he does not recognize who he himself is standing on his own native shores: Ithaca is his own land; he should occupy the position of the "mortals" he wonders about. And this too we must see as part of Athena's plan: unable to recognize where he is, Odysseus is unable to recognize himself and is momentarily denied the possession of what is rightfully his - the power to assert himself as the ruler of Ithaca. With her cloud of mist Athena has hidden this knowing from him. She has afflicted Odysseus' knowing with a debilitating lapse in sight that makes the things most known to him seem like objects of unknowing. Thus, confronted with the unrecognizable appearance of his surroundings, it is at the will of the goddess that Odysseus undergoes the cognitive equivalent to the privative alpha. He wakes up on his native land and is made ἄγνωστον.

When the alpha imposes itself ahead of the signified definition it robs the subject of the content it rightfully owns. Implicit in Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca is the failure to recognize himself; if he does not know the identity of Ithaca he cannot identify himself as its ruler. Homer signifies the presence of an absence in Odysseus' knowing with the negative, *oude*, in line 189; he establishes the cause of this failure to recognize by articulating Athena's wish to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον in line 191, and he expresses this privation through the voice of Odysseus asking where he is at 200. The interrogative, τέων, which modifies βροτῶν, exposes the indeterminate effects of Odysseus' ἄγνωστον modification. Into the space vacated by Odysseus' capacity to recognize an unknowing

makes itself manifest. In the process of seeing all things as ἀλλοειδέα, Odysseus has been detached from what he knows and absorbed the amorphous authority of the interrogative. To an unrecognizing Odysseus, the possession of the land he stands upon belongs to a people he cannot define. Odysseus, who should occupy the position of the "mortals" in the genitive, replaces his singular ownership with a plural unknown. In this substitution we see the degree to which the instability of the manifold and discrete appearances of the landscape has a cognitive effect on Odysseus' relation to his circumstance. Odysseus' particular seeing of things has determined his particular cognizing of things. In the same way all things were seeming not like Ithaca to him but disorienting strange shapes, without the unifying power of a known ruler, the men of this land seem to be divided into a indefinite plurality:[62] "Ah me, what are the men who inhabit this land I have come to?"[63] Yet, significantly, it is the presence of Odysseus himself who mediates between the interrogative and the noun. The adverb, αὖτε, which modifies Odysseus' coming (ἱκάνω), recalls Odysseus' perpetual arrivals at lands other than Ithaca, which have in turn reinforced the indefinite identity of the people who now inhabit Odysseus' kingdom. He who rightfully rules Ithaca is at the center of Ithaca's identity; therefore, if Odysseus is not there, the land is undefined, indefinite. For twenty years it has been the land of others, and even though Odysseus has arrived on Ithaca, he still has not returned.

The degree of despair and alienation Odysseus suffers in his own land is clearly steeped in dramatic irony and is somewhat humorous, yet it is hard to hold Odysseus accountable for not recognizing his homeland. After ten years of wandering, strange

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[62] The irony is of course that in the absence of a knowing ruler, that is Odysseus, the people are divided by the unlawful rule of the suitors.
[63] Caulfeild, p. 211.

places and people would be strangely familiar to him. "Oh not again! among/ what mortals can I be now?"[64] The way in which Odysseus sees the world around him is inseparable from how he sees and knows himself - and he sees that in a strange land he is a stranger. It is this conclusion that becomes the point of reference for Odysseus' perspective on his circumstance and the point of departure from what he knows. Equipped with only what he sees – that he is in an unknown place and unknown himself – there is nothing Odysseus can affirm. The answers that should be most obvious to him become empty and oblique interrogatives: πῇ δὴ χρήματα πολλὰ φέρω τάδε; πῇ τε καὶ αὐτὸς πλάζομαι; (13.203)[65] Not recognizing his homeland, Odysseus does not recognize his homecoming. The sacred caves of nymphs is not recognizable to him so he does not know where to carry his treasure, he cannot recognize the safe harbor of Phorkys or the forests of Neritos and he does not know where he will be carried himself.

Unable to locate himself in his native land, Odysseus situates himself within the indefinite quality of his perpetual wanderings: Where shall I go roaming from here? Dawe says the question is contrary to what we would expect to hear. He suggests we anticipate "Where am I wandering?" or "Where have I wandered to?"[66] I disagree with this conjecture. Odysseus has already asked where he is at line 200. Moreover, not only is his new question a response to his inability to answer the first ("To the land of what mortals

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[64] Homer, *The Odyssey of Homer*. Trans. Ennis Rees (New York: Random House, 1960) p. 217.
[65] "Where shall I carry all this wealth, or where shall I myself go wandering on?" Murray, 13.204-5. φέρω and πλάζομαι are both presents, but the only question is, are they indicatives, as they appear, or subjunctives in deliberative questions. I think the latter. The present indicative and subjunctive of φέρω in 1st person singular are formally identical. πλάζομαι would normally have a long ω in the subjunctive, but Homer routinely uses short-vowel subjunctives on aorist stems, and I do not see why he should not do so on a present stem.
[66] Dawe, *ad loc.*

have I come now?") it is also fitting for one with a twenty years long history of wandering. "Where do I myself go roaming?" reiterates the absolute weariness first signified by the αὖτε with which Odysseus qualified his immediate response to his native land, and, in this way, the question expresses Odysseus' anticipation of continued wandering. But, as if realizing that further wandering does not situate him in the present or the future, Odysseus looks back. Unable to remain or move forward, Odysseus remembers the Phaeacians and wishes he had never left:

> αἴθ' ὄφελον μεῖναι παρὰ Φαιήκεσσιν
> αὐτοῦ: ἐγὼ δέ κεν ἄλλον ὑπερμενέων βασιλήων
> ἐξικόμην, ὅς κέν μ' ἐφίλει καὶ ἔπεμπε νέεσθαι (13.204-206).

Many readings prefer to take χρήματα as the subject of ὄφελον, following the interpretation that Odysseus feels "handicapped by his treasures."[67] I, however, agree with Dawe and Murray; Odysseus is not referring to his treasures, but to himself: "Would that *I* had remained . . ."[68] Dawe finds the argument for χρήματα to lack a logical relation to Odysseus' arrival to Ithaca and I would add to this that what is primary to Odysseus is his preoccupation with being lost again.[69] It is Odysseus' anxiety of not knowing where he is that dominates his view. He does not know where to put his treasure because he does not know where to go: πῇ τε καὶ αὐτὸς πλάζομαι; The same Odysseus who could not wait for the sun to set, so eager was he to begin the journey home,[70] now wishes he had not yet left

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[67] Hoekstra, *ad loc.*
[68] Murray, 13.204. Emphasis mine.
[69] "But if the treasure had stayed in Scherie, where would Odysseus be? If in Scherie himself, how would he have known he should be approaching one of the other princes . . . If not in Scherie, how would be ever get back there to retrieve them?" Dawe, *ad loc.*
[70] "[B]ut Odysseus/Ever and ever was turning his eyes to the sun in its splendour,/Longing to hasten its setting, so eager he felt for departure./Even as yearns for his supper a man when his wine-red oxen/All day long have tugged at a jointed plough in a fallow,/E'en as he joys when he seeth the sun's light sink to the setting/So he can get to his food – and his

the Phaeacians, or at least delayed his departure and gone instead to other kings - they would have sent him home:

> I wish I had stayed among the Phaiakians, just where I was, and I would have visited some other powerful king, who then would have been my friend and sent me on my journey."[71]

There is a kind of tragic desperation articulated in this wish, in the "if only" Odysseus longs for. Homer arouses in us pity for Odysseus as he offers to himself the bittersweet satisfaction of the unattainable prospect of a different choice:[72] if only I stayed there, I would be home now, if only the past were not contrary to the fact of the present. We, as readers, know Odysseus has only to recognize the land around him to relieve his anguish; if only he were to see himself from the outside, standing on his native shores wishing he had been sent elsewhere, he would know the redundancy of his longing. But Odysseus does not see the mist as we do, and what would have been seems clearer to him than what he knows at this moment. On this unknown land, Odysseus knows the indefinite "other" kings would have fulfilled his desire to come home. But there must have been many times Odysseus said, αἴθε: if only the bag of winds had not been opened, if only the cattle had not been eaten, if only he had not been sleeping.

As if reminded of his present circumstance by what is nearest to him, Odysseus once more laments not knowing where to put his treasures. "But now I do not know where to bestow this wealth; yet here I cannot leave it, for fear it become the spoil to others at my cost." It is here we see the immediate effects of the ἀλλοειδέα appearance of Ithaca begin

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knee-joints ache as he walketh - /Thus did Odysseus rejoice when the sunlight sank to the setting." Cotterill, p. 173.

[71] Lattimore, 13.204-206.

[72] "There is both *Irony* and *Pathos* in his grieving for Ithaca when he already stands on its very shores." Stanford, lns. 219-221.

to sink in as suddenly "all things," past, present, and future, are absorbed into the distorting kaleidoscope lens of Odysseus' other-shaped vision. Thinking of his treasure and where to put it, Odysseus remembers he is on a strange land. And wait: remembering he is on a strange land reminds him that he is not on Ithaca, and if he is not on Ithaca then the Phaeacians did not bring him home, and if they did not bring him home, they did not keep their promise. The other-shaped seeming of Ithaca's landscape transforms itself into a quickly evolving other-shaped landscape for Odysseus' knowing. If this land is other-shaped then the Phaeacians words were also other-shaped; they were not as wise or just as they seemed.[73] No longer wishing he had stayed among them, Odysseus rebukes the Phaeacians for the disparity in their words and behavior:

> Out upon them; not wholly wise, it seems, nor just were the leaders and counselors of the Phaeacians who have brought me to an other land. They said indeed they would bring me to *clear-seen Ithaca*, but they have not made good their word. [74]

Odysseus' accusation of the Phaeacians is harsh, but Athena has justified it. If the Phaeacians said they would bring him to "clear-seen Ithaca," Odysseus cannot recognize the fulfillment of their promise until he clearly sees Ithaca. Although the epithet Ἰθάκην εὐδείελον may be distinguished as ornamental,[75] I would suggest the use of the epithet in this particular context ascribes to Ithaca a particular significance. [76] For example, when

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[73] "ἄρα with the imperfect denotes discovery of a pre-existing fact – 'so all along they were . . ." Stanford. *ad loc.*

[74] Murray, 13.209-12.

[75] " . . . ornamental epithets frequently have reference to the most marked natural characteristics of an object rather than to a particular occasion." Thomas D. Seymour *Homeric Language and Verse* (Boston: Ginn and Company, 1895) pp. 11-12.

[76] Following Milman Parry's argument of particularized epithets, I suggest that Ἰθάκην εὐδείελον is not a fixed epithet used only for its metrical value, but rather pertains "directly to the action of the moment" and, therefore, "the poet had special reasons for

Odysseus voices his charge against the Phaeacians: "they have brought me to another land . . . they said they would bring me to *clear-seen* Ithaca, but they have not accomplished this," he exposes the degree to which the "marked natural characteristics" that generally belong to the nature of Ithaca are, at this moment, not apparent.[77] The misty appearance of the land around Odysseus has caused him to see his native land qualitatively differently, which, for Odysseus is not to see Ithaca. It is, therefore, when Odysseus names his country by its ornamental meaning, that the poet achieves the force of the particularized meaning, which "would have drawn the attention of the audience and awakened in the mind a particular image."[78] By awakening in our minds the vision of clear-seen Ithaca, the juxtaposing ἀλλοειδέα appearance of Ithaca is also awakened, and we are once again reminded of the goddess' purpose for pouring the mist: ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον. When Athena makes all things appear ἀλλοειδέα, she effectively changes the quality by which Ithaca is recognized. Although the mist only changes Ithaca's appearance, this difference is enough to persuade Odysseus to ascribe to his native land the indefinite modification: ἄλλην γαῖαν. This is a land other than Ithaca because it is not clear-seen like Ithaca. It follows, therefore, that Odysseus, believing Ithaca to be another land, assumes the Phaeacians have not kept their word; they too are other than they seemed:

> ὦ πόποι, οὐκ ἄρα πάντα νοήμονες οὐδὲ δίκαιοι
> ἦσαν Φαιήκων ἡγήτορες ἠδὲ μέδοντες,
> οἵ μ' εἰς ἄλλην γαῖαν ἀπήγαγον, ἦ τέ μ' ἔφαντο
> ἄξειν εἰς *Ἰθάκην εὐδείελον*, οὐδ' ἐτέλεσσαν. (13.209-12)

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putting it into his song." Milman Parry, *The Making of Homeric Verse*. Ed. Adam Parry. The Traditional Epithet In Homer. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971) pp. 153-56.

[77] Seymour, Ibid.

[78] Parry, p. 160.

In Ithaca's epithet we are encouraged to see Odysseus and Ithaca as fundamentally dependent upon each other. That is to say, both the nature of Ithaca and the nature of Odysseus must be confirmed by Odysseus seeing clearly and knowing who and where he is. More specifically, the true nature of Ithaca is contingent upon Odysseus recognizing himself as the returned ruler of his native land. Implicit in Athena's desire to make Odysseus ἄγνωστον is, therefore, the desire to alter his relation to his homeland. She does not allow Odysseus to wake up, recognize Ithaca, and know his wandering is finished, which is no doubt the liberty Odysseus anticipates the Phaeacians will give him. Rather, Athena keeps this from him. She withholds the reunion between fatherland and son. Surrounded in mist, Ithaca and Odysseus are separated from each other by only a breach in cognition, and the goddess herself occupies this gulf.

Believing he has been deceived by the Phaeacians' promise to bring him to Ithaca, Odysseus decides they have also robbed him of their gifts and thus sets about counting the treasures they have given to him:[79] "But come, I will count my goods, and go over them, for fear these men have carried off some with them in their hollow ship."[80] For a third time Odysseus mentions his treasure; previously burdened by it, he now realizes the practical advantage it provides. By counting his gifts and knowing the number of them, he can prove the false intentions of the Phaeacians. Although of all the beautiful treasure "he

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[79] "There is a well-attested *v.l.* οἴχωνται which would imply that he thought they had done it. Monroe, *H.G.* 358 *d*, 'While the clause, as in expression of the speaker's mind about an event – his fear or his purpose – should have a Subjunctive or Optative, the sense that the happening of the event is a matter of past *fact* causes the Indicative to be preferred'." Stanford, lns. 215-16.

[80] ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ τὰ χρήματ' ἀριθμήσω καὶ ἴδωμαι,
μή τί μοι οἴχωνται κοίλης ἐπὶ νηὸς ἄγοντες. (13.215-16). Murray.

missed nothing,"[81] Odysseus is neither consoled nor is he compelled to reconsider the words of Alcinoos.[82] His grief over the loss of Ithaca outweighs the value of all his treasure.[83] The number of gifts does not reveal to him his native land but instead provokes him to more despair: "he mourned for his native land, creeping along the shore of the loud-sounding sea, uttering many a moan."[84] Surrounded by the land he knows but cannot recognize, Odysseus experiences only a great absence and a painful distance; he is as far from home as he has even been: "To the land of what mortals have I come this time?"[85]

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[81] ὡς εἰπὼν τρίποδας περικαλλέας ἠδὲ λέβητας
ἠρίθμει καὶ χρυσὸν ὑφαντά τε εἵματα καλά.
τῶν μὲν ἄρ' οὔ τι πόθει (13.216-18).

[82] "As for conveyance, so that you may be sure, I appoint it/for tomorrow, until which time giving way to slumber/you may rest, and they will sail in the calm, to bring you/back to your country and house and whatever else is dear to you,/even if this may be much further away than Euboia,/which those of our people who have seen it say is the farthest/away of all, at that time they carried fair-haired Rhadamanthys/on his way to visit Tityos the son of Gaia./ They went here, and without any strain they accomplished/the journey, and on the same day they were back home with us./You yourself will see and know in your mind how my ships/are best, and my young men for tossing up sea with the oarblade." Lattimore, 7.317-28.

[83] Stanford, *ad loc.* "O. is not comforted by the fact that his possessions are intact."

[84] Murray, 13.219-221.

[85] ὁ δ' ὀδύρετο πατρίδα γαῖαν
ἑρπύζων παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,
πόλλ' ὀλοφυρόμενος. (13.219-20). Murray.

It is into this state of despair that Athena abruptly appears:

> When lo! The guarding goddess of the wise,
> Celestial Pallas stood before his eyes . . .[86]

But Odysseus does not know it is she; the goddess draws near to him, "having likened her form to a young man, a herdsman of sheep, one most gentle, as are the sons of princes."[87] Seeing the young shepherd, Odysseus rejoices and, with relief, unknowingly greets the goddess, saying:

> Friend, since you are the first to whom I have come in this land, hail to you, and may you meet me with no evil intent, but rather save this treasure, and save me; for to you do I pray, as to a god, and come suppliant to your knees in friendship.[88]

There is irony in this address but it is not an unusual greeting. According to the convention of popular belief, because strangers had no local law to protect them, they were protected under the jurisdiction of Zeus. It is to this custom that Odysseus appeals.[89] In the same way he implored the fair-flowing river that brought him safely to Phaeacian

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[86] Pope, p. 215.

[87] . . .σχεδόθεν δέ οἱ ἦλθεν Ἀθήνη,
ἀνδρὶ δέμας εἰκυῖα νέῳ, ἐπιβώτορι μήλων,
παναπάλῳ, οἷοί τε ἀνάκτων παῖδες ἔασι,
δίπτυχον ἀμφ' ὤμοισιν ἔχους' εὐεργέα λώπην:
ποσσὶ δ' ὑπὸ λιπαροῖσι πέδιλ' ἔχε, χερσὶ δ' ἄκοντα. (13.221-25).

[88] ὦ φίλ', ἐπεί σε πρῶτα κιχάνω τῷδ' ἐνὶ χώρῳ,
χαῖρέ τε καὶ μή μοί τι κακῷ νόῳ ἀντιβολήσαις,
ἀλλὰ σάω μὲν ταῦτα, σάω δ' ἐμέ: σοὶ γὰρ ἐγώ γε
εὔχομαι ὥς τε θεῷ καί σευ φίλα γούναθ' ἱκάνω. (13.228-31) Murray.

[89] For example, see Odysseus' petition to Polyphemus: " . . . but we on our part, thus visiting you, have come as suppliants to your knees (ἡμεῖς δ' αὖτε κιχανόμενοι τὰ σὰ γοῦνα, ἱκόμεθ'), in the hope that you will give us entertainment, or in some other manner be generous to us, as is the due of strangers (ἥ τε ξείνων θέμις ἐστίν). Do not deny us, good sir, but reverence the gods (ἀλλ' αἰδεῖο, φέριστε, θεούς); we are your suppliants; and Zeus is the avenger of suppliants and strangers (Ζεὺς δ' ἐπιτιμήτωρ ἱκετάων τε ξείνων τε) – Zeus, the stranger's god (ξείνιος) – who walks in the footsteps of reverend strangers" (9.266-71).

shores and addressed Nausicaa and Arete, Odysseus appeals to the shepherd "ὥς τε θεῷ."[90] By praying to Athena "as to a god," he requests that she recognize the authority of Zeus and offer him the protection of local law. In a lovely display of dramatic irony, Odysseus asks Athena to recognize her father's position and tell him where he is:

> And tell me this also truly, so that I may be sure of it. What land, what people? What men dwell here? Is it some clear-seen island, or a shore of the deep-soiled mainland that lies sloping down to the sea?[91]

Athena indulges Odysseus' ignorance, calling him "stranger" and ridiculing his questions:

> You are an ignorant person, stranger, or else have come from afar, if truly you ask about this land. It is not at all so nameless as you imply. Many know it, both all those who dwell toward the dawn and the sun, and all those that are behind toward the murky darkness.[92]

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[90] Compare Odysseus' appeal to the shepherd, Athena, with the following:
His address to the river on the shores of Phaeacia: "Hear, me king (κλῦθι, ἄναξ), whoever you are. As to one greatly longed-for do I come to you seeking escape out of the sea from the threats of Poseidon. Reverend even in the eyes of the immortal gods is that man who come as a wanderer, as I have come to your stream as to you knees, after many toils (ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ νῦν/ σόν τε ῥόον σά τε γούναθ' ἱκάνω πολλὰ μογήσας). Pity me, king; I declare myself your suppliant (ἀλλ' ἐλέαιρε, ἄναξ: ἱκέτης δέ τοι εὔχομαι εἶναι)." (5.445-50)
To Nausicaa: " . . . it seemed better to him to stand apart and beseech her with winning words, fearing that the maiden's heart might take offense if he should lay hold of her knees; so at once he made a speech both winning and crafty:
"I clasp your knees, my queen (γουνοῦμαί σε, ἄνασσα) – are you a goddess, or are you a mortal? . . . Instead, my queen, have pity (ἀλλά, ἄνασς', ἐλέαιρε); for it is to you first that I have come after many grievous toils (σὲ γὰρ κακὰ πολλὰ μογήσας/ἐς πρώτην ἱκόμην), and of the others who possess this city and land I know not one (6.145-49, 175-77).
To Arete: "Arete, daughter of godlike Rhexenor, to your husband and to your knees have I come suppliant after many toils (σόν τε πόσιν σά τε γούναθ' ἱκάνω πολλὰ μογήσας) . . . But grant me speedy conveyance, that I may come to my native land, and quickly; for it is a long time that I have been suffering woes far from my people" (7.146-47, 151-52).

[91] καί μοι τοῦτ' ἀγόρευσον ἐτήτυμον, ὄφρ' ἐῢ εἰδῶ:
τίς γῆ, τίς δῆμος, τίνες ἀνέρες ἐγγεγάασιν;
ἦ πού τις νήσων εὐδείελος, ἦέ τις ἀκτὴ
κεῖθ' ἁλὶ κεκλιμένη ἐριβώλακος ἠπείροιο; (13.232-35). Murray.

[92] νήπιός εἰς, ὦ ξεῖν', ἢ τηλόθεν εἰλήλουθας,
εἰ δὴ τήνδε τε γαῖαν ἀνείρεαι. οὐδέ τι λίην
οὕτω νώνυμός ἐστιν: ἴσασι δέ μιν μάλα πολλοί,
ἠμὲν ὅσοι ναίουσι πρὸς ἠῶ τ' ἠέλιόν τε,
ἠδ' ὅσσοι μετόπισθε ποτὶ ζόφον ἠερόεντα. (13.237-41).

The goddess then proceeds to give Odysseus the answer he has been looking for, and slowly the ruler of Ithaca hears the name of a place, which if now is unrecognizable to his sight, is recognizable to his ears:

> It is a rugged island, not fit for driving horses, yet it is not utterly poor, narrow though it is. It grows grain beyond measure, and the wine grape as well, and the rain never fails it, nor the rich dew. It is a good land for pasturing goats and cattle; there are trees of every sort, and in it are watering places that never fail.[93]

Athena withholds the name of Ithaca until the very end, knowing Odysseus would hear the name of Ithaca with the familiarity that he would hear his own name: "Therefore, stranger, the name of Ithaca has reached even to the land of Troy, which they say is far from this land of Achaea."[94] The goddess must take pleasure in teasing: Odysseus himself is that stranger who has carried the name of Ithaca from Achaea to Troy. The far-traveling hero of Ithaca has established the island's far-reaching fame. Thus, hearing the name of Ithaca spoken by the words of his patron goddess, Odysseus rejoices in his homecoming: "he was glad, and rejoiced in his land, the land of his fathers, as he heard the word of Pallas Athene, daughter of Zeus, who bears the aegis."[95]

Odysseus may hear the words of Athena but he does not know it is she; it is a young princely shepherd he sees standing before him. Nor does he see Ithaca; the mist is not

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[93] ἦ τοι μὲν τρηχεῖα καὶ οὐχ ἱππήλατός ἐστιν,
οὐδὲ λίην λυπρή, ἀτὰρ οὐδ' εὐρεῖα τέτυκται.
ἐν μὲν γάρ οἱ σῖτος ἀθέσφατος, ἐν δέ τε οἶνος
γίγνεται: αἰεὶ δ' ὄμβρος ἔχει τεθαλυῖά τ' ἐέρση:
αἰγίβοτος δ' ἀγαθὴ καὶ βούβοτος: ἔστι μὲν ὕλη
παντοίη, ἐν δ' ἀρδμοὶ ἐπητανοὶ παρέασι. (13.242-47.)

[94] τῷ τοι, ξεῖν', Ἰθάκης γε καὶ ἐς Τροίην ὄνομ' ἵκει,
τήν περ τηλοῦ φασὶν Ἀχαιΐδος ἔμμεναι αἴης. (13.248-49.) Murray.

[95] ὣς φάτο, γήθησεν δὲ πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
χαίρων ᾗ γαίῃ πατρωΐῃ, ὥς οἱ ἔειπε
Παλλὰς Ἀθηναίη, κούρη Διὸς, αἰγιόχοιο (13.251-52). Ibid.

dispersed. It is at the moment of Athena's revelation of Ithaca that Odysseus is compelled to disguise his real identity: "yet he did not speak the truth, but checked the word before it was uttered, always revolving in his breast thoughts of great cunning."[96] No longer a stranger in a strange land, Odysseus holds back the truth, he gives himself a different identity and pretends to be a strange to Ithaca. He is from broad Crete, and, yes, he has heard of Ithaca far over the open sea, but was brought here unintentionally by the Phoenicians who left him grieving and troubled with all of this treasure.[97]

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[96]καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα:
οὐδ' ὅ γ' ἀληθέα εἶπε, πάλιν δ' ὅ γε λάζετο μῦθον,
αἰεὶ ἐνὶ στήθεσσι νόον πολυκερδέα νωμῶν (13.254-53). Murray.

[97]Odysseus' clever tale of deceit:
πυνθανόμην Ἰθάκης γε καὶ ἐν Κρήτῃ εὐρείῃ,
τηλοῦ ὑπὲρ πόντου: νῦν δ' εἰλήλουθα καὶ αὐτὸς
χρήμασι σὺν τοίσδεσσι: λιπὼν δ' ἔτι παισὶ τοσαῦτα
φεύγω, ἐπεὶ φίλον υἱα κατέκτανον Ἰδομενῆος,
Ὀρσίλοχον πόδας ὠκύν, ὃς ἐν Κρήτῃ εὐρείῃ
ἀνέρας ἀλφηστὰς νίκα ταχέεσσι πόδεσσιν,
οὕνεκά με στερέσαι τῆς λῃΐδος ἤθελε πάσης
Τρωϊάδος, τῆς εἵνεκ' ἐγὼ πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῷ,
ἀνδρῶν τε πτολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων,
οὕνεκ' ἄρ' οὐχ ᾧ πατρὶ χαριζόμενος θεράπευον
δήμῳ ἔνι Τρώων, ἀλλ' ἄλλων ἦρχον ἑταίρων.
τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ κατιόντα βάλον χαλκήρεϊ δουρὶ
ἀγρόθεν, ἐγγὺς ὁδοῖο λοχησάμενος σὺν ἑταίρῳ:
νὺξ δὲ μάλα δνοφερὴ κάτεχ' οὐρανόν, οὐδέ τις ἡμέας
ἀνθρώπων ἐνόησε, λάθον δέ ἑ θυμὸν ἀπούρας.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ τόν γε κατέκτανον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
αὐτίκ' ἐγὼν ἐπὶ νῆα κιὼν Φοίνικας ἀγαυοὺς
ἐλλισάμην, καί σφιν μενοεικέα λῃΐδα δῶκα:
τούς μ' ἐκέλευσα Πύλονδε καταστῆσαι καὶ ἐφέσσαι
ἢ εἰς Ἤλιδα δῖαν, ὅθι κρατέουσιν Ἐπειοί.
ἀλλ' ἦ τοι σφέας κεῖθεν ἀπώσατο ἲς ἀνέμοιο
πόλλ' ἀεκαζομένους, οὐδ' ἤθελον ἐξαπατῆσαι.
κεῖθεν δὲ πλαγχθέντες ἱκάνομεν ἐνθάδε νυκτός.
σπουδῇ δ' ἐς λιμένα προερέσσαμεν, οὐδέ τις ἡμῖν
δόρπου μνῆστις ἦεν, μάλα περ χατέουσιν ἐλέσθαι,
ἀλλ' αὕτως ἀποβάντες ἐκείμεθα νηὸς ἄπαντες.
ἔνθ' ἐμὲ μὲν γλυκὺς ὕπνος ἐπήλυθε κεκμηῶτα,

If Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca provoked Athena's scorn, his lie about his identity invokes her pleasure. Smiling, the flashing-eyed goddess reaches out and "stroked him with her hand . . ."[98] With this reaching out and caressing of the man who attempts to lie to her, Athena demonstrates her affection for Odysseus. What is the reason for this? Why the gestures of familiarity? Athena does not pay such attention to just any man; yet she recognizes Odysseus οὐδ' ὅ γ' ἀληθέα εἶπε[99] and she delights in the lie she hears. Odysseus' cleverness is clearly far inferior to Athena's; he has not miraculously changed his shape; he has lied about his real name by giving himself another. Yet, Athena delights in this disguise and in a "unique" expression of intimacy, names Odysseus by his epithet, ποικιλομῆτα.[100] Odysseus cannot hide the truth from Athena; his skill for deceit is how she knows him: "Stubborn man, insatiate in deceit, not even in your own land, it seems were you to cease from guile and deceitful tales, which you love from the bottom of your heart."[101] It is, therefore, in the very changing of his identity that Odysseus definitively shows his true nature to the goddess. He does not make himself seem like a different man from the land of Crete; he immediately reveals the very πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς whom Athena knows and loves. Athena sees Odysseus' strange story to be an expression of who he is; he

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οἱ δὲ χρήματ' ἐμὰ γλαφυρῆς ἐκ νηὸς ἑλόντες
κάτθεσαν, ἔνθα περ αὐτὸς ἐπὶ ψαμάθοισιν ἐκείμην.
οἱ δ' ἐς Σιδονίην εὖ ναιομένην ἀναβάντες
ᾤχοντ': αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ λιπόμην ἀκαχήμενος ἦτορ. (13.256-86)

[98] ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,
χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε: (13.287-88) Murray.

[99] 13.254.

[100] "Athena – uniquely – uses Odysseus' epithet ποικιλομῆτα, 'of many various wiles,' as a vocative, thus conveying a tone of intimacy." Dawe. ln. 293.

[101] κερδαλέος κ' εἴη καὶ ἐπίκλοπος ὅς σε παρέλθοι
ἐν πάντεσσι δόλοισι, καὶ εἰ θεὸς ἀντιάσειε.
σχέτλιε, ποικιλομῆτα, δόλων ἆτ', οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμελλες,
οὐδ' ἐν σῇ περ ἐὼν γαίῃ, λήξειν ἀπατάων
μύθων τε κλοπίων, οἵ τοι πεδόθεν φίλοι εἰσίν. (13.291-95).

cannot resist from cunning and untrue tales because they belong to his very nature. Caught in the act of fabricating a falsehood, Odysseus performs an act of self-expression:

> Ah, thou audacious inventor of falsehood, insatiate trickster . . .
> Weaving thy fables, wherein from the ground of thy heart thou delightest."[102]

The goddess of μῆτις and wiles, in divine Olympos Athena is "divine intelligence incarnate."[103] It is, therefore, with unobstructed clarity that the goddess hears Odysseus' cunning tale and knows she is confronted with a mind that is like her own. The Odysseus who lies to her is not only πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς but also δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς. Athena's physical gesture of stroking Odysseus with her hand thus signifies an intimacy between the divine mind of Athena and the godlike mind of Odysseus. It is with his cleverness that Odysseus comes close to the goddess and it is to this that she reciprocally extends herself. In Odysseus' tale, Athena recognizes a capacity for cunning that is like her own: both she and the man before her are "well versed in craft."[104] It is, therefore, by lying to Athena that Odysseus reveals his likeness to her through an imitation of her skill; he flatters the goddess with a demonstration of his godlikeness. It is this likeness that Athena articulates when she says:

> We are both of us practiced
> Weavers of wiles – for of all mankind thou art easily foremost
> Both in thy counsels and speech, and amid the immortals I win me
> Fame for my wit and my wiles.[105]

To hear Odysseus give a performance of his *kleos* is for Athena to hear her own *kleos* resonate. The man who is "by far the best among men in counsel and in speech" is like no

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[102] Cotterill, p. 180.
[103] Jean-Pierre Vernant, *Mortals and Immortals.* Ed. Froma I. Zeitlin. (Princeton: Princeton University Press) 1991, p. 46.
[104] εἰδότες ἄμφω κέρδε' (13.296-97).
[105] Cotterill, p. 180.

other god but Athena who is "famed among all the gods for wisdom and craft."[106] Aroused by the manifestation of her own likeness, it is with a smile and the touch of her hand that the goddess spontaneously makes herself recognizable to her favorite:

> So he spoke, and the goddess, flashing-eyed Athena smiled and stroked him with her hand, and changed herself to the form of a woman, beautiful, tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork.[107]

The skill that distinguishes Odysseus as the best among men summons its divine match. Odysseus cannot hide from the one who knows the wiliness of tricks first hand; it is Athena who is κερδαλέος and ἐπίκλοπος when meeting him, it is she who goes beyond him in all forms of cunning.[108]

There is much controversy over this particular metamorphosis of the goddess. Many scholars interpret Athena's manifestation as "a woman, beautiful and tall, and skilled in glorious handiwork" to be the goddess' revelation of her "real shape." De Jong finds the verb "ἤϊκτο," "she resembled" to suggest that Athena's form is still a disguise, but goes on to say that "as Athena is the patroness of female handiwork . . . this one comes close to her real identity and is therefore conducive to her self-revelation."[109] Dawe agrees that if Athena wished to convince Odysseus of her true identity, the revelation of her true shape would be "a sensible thing to do;" however, "the actual words chosen favor the idea of a second disguise." Moreover, according to Dawe, for Homer to give his Olympian goddess

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[106] ἐπεὶ σὺ μέν ἐσσι βροτῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος ἁπάντων
βουλῇ καὶ μύθοισιν, ἐγὼ δ' ἐν πᾶσι θεοῖσι
μήτι τε κλέομαι καὶ κέρδεσιν: (13.297-99)
[107] ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,
χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε: δέμας δ' ἤϊκτο γυναικὶ
καλῇ τε μεγάλῃ τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίῃ: (13.287-89) Murray.
[108] κερδαλέος κ' εἴη καὶ ἐπίκλοπος ὅς σε παρέλθοι
ἐν πάντεσσι δόλοισι (13.291-92).
[109] De Jong, n. 13.221-440.

the testimonial, "with splendid accomplishments' would be patronizing.[110] Jean-Pierre Vernant seems to share Dawe's sentiment, but articulates it in other words:

> As a boy or a woman, Athena's visible body fails equally to express what the goddess authentically is. It fails to designate the invisible body made of undying energy, power, and vitality, and, in the case of Athena, a sovereign mastery of the art of cunning intelligence, ingenious stratagems, skillful know-how, shrewd lies.[111]

If we align ourselves with Vernant's position, whether or not Athena assumes her "real" or "true" shape will not distract us; by transforming herself before Odysseus, Athena reveals herself to him. Let us look again at the line: ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ θεὰ γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη, /χειρί τέ μιν κατέρεξε. "Thus had he spoken when, smiling, the grey-eyed goddess Athene/Touched him with a gentle caress . . ."[112] Odysseus' words clearly inspire within the goddess the desire for contact, the desire to reveal her proximity to him. But as we noted above, the proximity of which Athena speaks is not a physical likeness but an intellectual likeness. The intimacy with which she recognizes him cannot, therefore, be fully realized by reaching out with her hand and touching him; however this physical gesture gives way to a divine epiphany: δέμας δ' ἤϊκτο γυναικὶ /καλῇ τε μεγάλῃ τε καὶ ἀγλαὰ ἔργα ἰδυίῃ. That is to say, the tale Odysseus cunningly tells is a kind of divine revelation. The particular form Athena assumes is secondary to the fact that the reaching out of her hand denotes a cognitive reaching out to a reflection of her own divine image. It is upon contact with this likeness that the goddess reveals herself.

Athena is pleased by Odysseus' deceptive story but she does not allow him too much satisfaction. After admiring his unrelenting love of cunning tricks and tales, she says:

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[110] Dawe, ln. 288.
[111] Vernant, Jean-Pierre. Ibid. p. 45.
[112] Cotterill, p. 180.

"Come, let us speak no longer thereof!"[113] Declaring herself the winner, Athena asserts the superiority of her divine μῆτις and the proof of her victory:

οὐδὲ σύ γ' ἔγνως Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην, κούρην Διός[114]

Once again we hear the sound of Odysseus' failure to recognize. The same activity of not-recognizing that occurred when Odysseus awoke in his native land takes place in his encounter with Athena. The goddess appears to him, she comes near him, and he does not recognize her. Why does Odysseus not recognize the shepherd as his patron goddess? As she claims, she guards him in all things; it is she who made him beloved by the Phaeacians.[115] We were troubled by Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca, but are we alarmed at his failure to recognize Athena? If both Ithaca and Athena appear to Odysseus but are unrecognized by him, why does Athena's claim οὐδὲ σύ γ' ἔγνως Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην, κούρην Διός seem like a self-evident assertion of superiority and οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω an unexpected blunder in our hero? To address this discrepancy, let us examine how Odysseus responds to Athena' revelation.

Odysseus is surprisingly unaffected by the self-identification of the goddess. He is not amazed by Athena's metamorphosis; he is not pleased by her praise or offended by her criticism. De Jong says "our hero is clearly annoyed"[116] and Dawe finds the lack of response disconcerting: "Lastly we notice that the sudden change from boy to woman elicits no

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[113] ἀλλ' ἄγε, μηκέτι ταῦτα λεγώμεθα (13.296). Cotterill, p. 180.
[114] 13.299-300.
[115] . . .ἥ τέ τοι αἰεὶ
ἐν πάντεσσι πόνοισι παρίσταμαι ἠδὲ φυλάσσω,
καὶ δέ σε Φαιήκεσσι φίλον πάντεσσιν ἔθηκα,
νῦν αὖ δεῦρ' ἰκόμην, ἵνα τοι σὺν μῆτιν ὑφήνω
χρήματά τε κρύψω, ὅσα τοι Φαίηκες ἀγαυοὶ
ὤπασαν οἴκαδ' ἰόντι ἐμῇ βουλῇ τε νόῳ τε, (13.302-5).
[116] Jong, lns. 312-13.

response whatever from Odysseus. Most of us would find it disconcerting."[117] We will see, however, that Odysseus does defend himself against Athena and he does so by situating her victory within the context of their respective natures:

> "ἀργαλέον σε, θεά, γνῶναι βροτῷ ἀντιάσαντι,
> καὶ μάλ' ἐπισταμένῳ: σὲ γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ ἐΐσκεις. (13.212-13)

Odysseus distinguishes himself from Athena's power to disguise with one word: ἀργαλέον: It is hard. We are by now familiar with the difficulty Odysseus experiences when he is met with an appearance that seems unfamiliar to him. We have examined the factors that affect a strangeness or difference in his seeing and give way to his frustration and despair. Odysseus himself now articulates the logic of his failure to recognize. In the same way the poet introduced the reason for Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca with the conjunction, γάρ (for about him the goddess had shed a mist) Odysseus introduces the reason it is hard for him to recognize Athena: it is hard, goddess . . . σὲ γὰρ αὐτὴν παντὶ ἐΐσκεις: for you liken yourself to all things. If we trace the logic of Odysseus' failure to recognize Athena, we will see that it follows the logic of his not-recognizing Ithaca. Let us look closely at the Greek: γὰρ, because/for the reason that (conjunction), σὲ, you, (singular accusative pronoun) ἐΐσκεις, liken (present indicative active verb) αὐτὴν, yourself (singular accusative feminine adjective) παντὶ, to everything (singular dative neuter adjective). That is to say, Odysseus sees Athena to make her singular nature into a plurality of things. It is hard for him to discern the goddess as the object he sees because she slips from one into many; Athena can make herself like all things: "for thou takes upon thee every shape."[118] How she appears in her various likenesses thus seems to Odysseus like Ithaca through the

[117] Dawe, ln. 288.
[118] Butcher and Lang, p. 217.

mist. And in the same way Odysseus failed to recognize Ithaca because he could not see that the many appearances of the landscape around him were unified under his knowing of Ithaca, he cannot recognize Athena because, although she stands near him, her differing appearances escape the unity his thought desires. Thus when he says, "ἀργαλέον . . ." we hear again Odysseus' groaning for Ithaca as he stands upon its misty shores.

Like his failure to recognize Ithaca, Odysseus' failure to recognize Athena is a consequence of a disjunction between what is seen and what is known. However, unlike his relationship to clear-seen Ithaca, Odysseus' recognition of Athena cannot be facilitated by a common relation to sight. The reciprocal relation of likeness that exists between the seeing subject and seen object does not characterize the relationship between man and goddess:

> Oh goddess! thou art able to elude,
> Wherever met, the keenest eye of man
> For thou all shapes assum'st . . .[119]

Odysseus' knowing cannot grasp the goddess as its object because her divine nature transcends the anthropomorphic manifestations she assumes. It belongs to the nature of Athena's divine mind to be cloaked in multiplicity. Athena may make herself like the form of a bird, a young girl, a shepherd and Mentor,[120] but, as Vernant contends, each of these manifestations fails to fully express the pure cunning and intelligence of the daughter of Zeus.[121] Accordingly, if Athena's appearances do not fully designate who she is, how Odysseus sees her will not fully correspond to his knowing of her. Constrained by the necessity of likeness for recognition, how Odysseus sees the goddess subverts the means by

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[119] Cowper, p. 199.
[120] At 7.18 Athena appears as a young girl, at 22.240 she is a swallow, and she is Mentor at 24.502, 548.
[121] Vernant, Ibid. p. 45.

which he recognizes: Athena is at once different from and like all her appearances. Unlike his knowing of clear-seen Ithaca, however, knowing that Athena takes all shapes upon her does not make him recognize her, it makes him know that she is hard to recognize. Thus, despite being extremely wise (μάλ' ἐπισταμένῳ) and meeting the goddess face to face, what confronts Odysseus is his difficulty recognizing the divine presence. Proximity does not overcome the distance between them because Athena's appearances are not conclusive in their revelation. Odysseus' seeing of the goddess, therefore, does not necessarily result in the recognition of her anymore than his seeing of all things through the mist made him recognize his native land.

Odysseus exposes the way in which Athena's divine nature resists the relationship between seeing and knowing when he confronts her claim to be continually present. He tells the goddess he knows one thing for certain: Not since the war ten years ago has he seen her or perceived her with his mind - not in any capacity that would ward off sorrow from him at least. If Athena stands beside him in all things and was present during those ten years, why did he not see her or mark her coming on board his ship? Why was he wandering, bearing within his breast a stricken heart?[122] In Athena's appearance Odysseus sees all the other lands to which her father's brother Poseidon has driven him. In her unfailing confidence he sees his continual fear of a denied homecoming. Odysseus situates Athena in his terms for recognition and does not see her; he looks upon his patron goddess

[122] τοῦτο δ' ἐγὼν εὖ οἶδ', ὅτι μοι πάρος ἠπίη ἦσθα,
ἧος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ πολεμίζομεν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.
αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ Πριάμοιο πόλιν διεπέρσαμεν αἰπήν,
βῆμεν δ' ἐν νήεσσι, θεὸς δ' ἐκέδασσεν Ἀχαιούς,
οὔ σέ γ' ἔπειτα ἴδον, κούρη Διός, οὐδ' ἐνόησα
νηὸς ἐμῆς ἐπιβᾶσαν, ὅπως τί μοι ἄλγος ἀλάλκοις.
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ φρεσὶν ἦσιν ἔχων δεδαϊγμένον ἦτορ
ἠλώμην . . . (13.314-21). Murray.

and cannot see his homecoming fulfilled. Unable to discern a correlation between his absence from Ithaca and this goddess who "was not ever disbelieving"[123] he would return home, Odysseus finds a resemblance between her words and the character of the Phaeacians – she has not been entirely wise or just. Even as she tells him of his likeness to her, Odysseus believes his treasures have been stolen; Athena is other than she seems; she is surely lying to him about his native land. Having said it before to the cliffs and hills and trees and bays, Odysseus accuses Athena of the Phaeacians' broken promise: "I do not believe I have come to clear-seen Ithaca."[124] In the face of the goddess' appearance, Odysseus' knowing is concealed and his capacity to recognize deserts him. He cannot see Ithaca through the lens of Athena's interminable metamorphoses. Deprived of the correlating activity of the same, Odysseus denies Athena's words as true and fills the negative space with an indefinite modification: "no it is *some other* land over which I roam, and you, I think, speak thus in mockery to beguile my mind."[125] Odysseus, who moments before rejoiced in the words of the shepherd, is cast into doubt and thrown back into oblivion and wandering. The revelation of Athena's presence does not restore to him his native land but cheats him with another land. Unable to see clearly what is closest to him, Odysseus demands of the goddess what he cannot ask the Phaeacians in their ship-shaped stone:[126] "tell me whether in very truth I have come to my own native land."[127]

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[123] αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτ' ἀπίστεον (13.339-40). Murray.
[124] . . . οὐ γὰρ ὀΐω
ἥκειν εἰς Ἰθάκην εὐδείελον, ἀλλά τιν' ἄλλην
γαῖαν ἀναστρέφομαι: σὲ δὲ κερτομέουσαν ὀΐω
ταῦτ' ἀγορευέμεναι, ἵν' ἐμὰς φρένας ἠπεροπεύσῃς—
(13.324-25). Ibid.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Poseidon has fulfilled the prophecy of Alcinoos' father and turned the ship that carried Odysseus to safety to stone: "And she drew close to shore, the seafaring ship, speeding

When Odysseus lied to Athena she caressed him with her hand and articulated the likeness between then. Now when he rebukes her, she reaches out again, saying:

> Ever is the thought in your breast, and therefore it is that I cannot leave you in your sorrow, for you are soft of speech, keen of wit, and prudent.[128]

The sorrow Odysseus says continually ravaged his heart Athena sees is present in him now: "αἰεί," always, she says, you are unwilling to believe. Unable to leave him in doubt, she extends herself towards his misery and announces its completion: "Therefore it is that I cannot leave you . . ." Athena admits Odysseus' wandering; she was not willing to fight against Poseidon.[129] But the anger of her father's brother did not negate her confidence in his return home; Odysseus' wandering was to Athena a matter of course: "But as for me, I never doubted this, but in my heart knew it well, that you would come home after losing all your comrades."[130] It is by establishing her negative relation to disbelief (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτ' ἀπίστεον) that Athena articulates her positive relation to Odysseus homecoming: ἀλλ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ ἥδε'. In her heart she was not ever disbelieving he would return home. Like Thetis in the *Iliad*, rising from the sea in her misty form to comfort her son Achilles, the disparity between Odysseus' human nature and Athena's

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swiftly on her way. Then near her came the Earth-shaker and turned her to stone, and rooted her fast beneath by a blow of the flat of his hand, and then he was gone." (13.160-64, 170-78) Murray.

[127] εἰπέ μοι εἰ ἐτεόν γε φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἱκάνω." (13.328) Murray.

[128] αἰεί τοι τοιοῦτον ἐνὶ στήθεσσι νόημα:
τῷ σε καὶ οὐ δύναμαι προλιπεῖν δύστηνον ἐόντα,
οὔνεκ' ἐπητής ἐσσι καὶ ἀγχίνοος καὶ ἐχέφρων.

[129] ἀλλά τοι οὐκ ἐθέλησα Ποσειδάωνι μάχεσθαι
πατροκασιγνήτῳ, ὅς τοι κότον ἔνθετο θυμῷ,
χωόμενος ὅτι οἱ υἱὸν φίλον ἐξαλάωσας. (13.341-43).

[130] αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτ' ἀπίστεον, ἀλλ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ
ἥδε', ὃ νοστήσεις ὀλέσας ἅπο πάντας ἑταίρους. (13.339-40) Ibid.

divine nature is made manifest by more than a different relation to appearance.[131] The difference between goddess and man is a cognitive difference that is as immeasurable as time itself. One by one Odysseus lost all his friends and wished that he too had died at sea. Athena "ne'er was ignorant, but well foreknew" that not until after the loss his friends would Odysseus return.[132]

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[131] "Achilles, from his friends withdrawing, sat
Beside the hoary ocean-marge, and gazed
On the black deep beyond, and stretch his hands,
And prayed to his dear mother, earnestly: -
"Mother! Since thou didst bring me forth to dwell
Brief space on earth, Olympian Jupiter,
Who thunder in the highest, should have filled
That space with honors, but he grants them not.
Wide-ruling Agamemnon takes and holds
The prize I won, and thus dishonors me."
Thus, shedding tears, he spake. His mother heard,
Sitting within the ocean deeps, beside
Her aged father. Swiftly from the waves
Of the gray deep emerging like a cloud,
She sat before him as he wept, and smoothed
His brow with her soft hand, and kindly said: -
"My child, why weepest thou? What grief is this?
Speak, and hide nothing, so that both may know."
Achilles, swift of foot, sighed heavily,
And said: "Thou know'st already. Why relate
These things to thee, who art apprised of all?
William Cullen Bryant, *The Iliad of Homer, Vol. II.* (Boston: Fields, Osgood, & Co, 1870) 1.437-57.
It is not possible within the scope of this paper to fully discuss this, perhaps one of the most tender of interactions between a divine being and a mortal, in Homer. However, what is primary and significant to our argument is Achilles' response to Thetis' desire to console him. Achilles articulates the difference between his understanding and his mother's. Achilles knows his mother's superior nature and to a certain degree is frustrated by her condescension. He is right; he does not need to tell Thetis the story of Agamemnon stealing Briseis; she knows it already. Nevertheless, the cognitive inequality between the two does not separate them entirely. Thetis in her misty shape strokes her son with her hand and he tells her why he despairs.

[132] Cowper, p. 199.

Just as Athena recognized a resemblance between Odysseus and herself, she also recognizes the difference between their two natures. Odysseus' relation to knowing is not like that of a god; it matters not that Calypso has not seen Hermes,[133] just as Thetis does not need to hear Achilles' tale to know why he despairs. Conversely, Odysseus' knowing must be facilitated, mediated, by an object. It is thus that Athena invites Odysseus to view his native land. If Odysseus is to recognize she speaks the truth, she must show him Ithaca:

> But come, I will show you the land of Ithaca, so that you may be sure. This is the harbor of Phorcys, the old man of the sea, and here at the head of the harbor is the long-leafed olive tree, and near it is the pleasant, shadowy cave, sacred to the nymphs that are called Naiads. This, you my be sure, is the vaulted cave in which you used to offer to the Nymphs perfect hecatombs; and yonder is Mount Neriton, clothed with its forests.[134]

ὅδε, ἥδε, τοῦτο. Surrounded in mist ἀλλοειδέα φαινέσκετο πάντα ἄνακτι. The long paths, lovely trees, steep cliffs and safe bays seemed unlike Ithaca and made Odysseus unable to recognize. It is this indistinct plurality of shapes that Athena now counters with her words: ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ σκέδας' ἠέρα, εἵσατο δὲ χθών. "So spoke the goddess, and scattered the mist, and the land appeared."[135] By naming the harbor, the tree and the mountain, Athena transforms the many strange appearances that kept Odysseus from recognizing Ithaca, into singular objects of signification:

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[133] After admiring the garden of Calypso, Hermes "went straight into the wide cave; nor did Calypso, the beautiful goddess, fail to know him, when she saw him face to face; for not unknown are the immortal gods to one another, even though one dwells in a home far away." (5.77-80) Murray.

[134] ἀλλ' ἄγε τοι δείξω Ἰθάκης ἕδος, ὄφρα πεποίθῃς.
Φόρκυνος μὲν ὅδ' ἐστὶ λιμήν, ἁλίοιο γέροντος,
ἥδε δ' ἐπὶ κρατὸς λιμένος τανύφυλλος ἐλαίη:
ἀγχόθι δ' αὐτῆς ἄντρον ἐπήρατον ἠεροειδές,
ἱρὸν νυμφάων, αἳ νηϊάδες καλέονται:
τοῦτο δέ τοι σπέος ἐστὶ κατηρεφές, ἔνθα σὺ πολλὰς
ἔρδεσκες νύμφῃσι τελήεσσας ἑκατόμβας:
τοῦτο δὲ Νήριτόν ἐστιν ὄρος καταειμένον ὕλῃ (13.344-51). Ibid.

[135] Murray, 13.352.

> *This* is the harbor of Phorcys . . . *here* at the head of the harbor is the long-leafed olive tree . . . *this*, you may be sure, is the vaulted cave in which you used to offer . . . and *there* is Mount Neriton . . .[136]

While it is common for ὡς to occur as a parenthetical remark with verbs of speaking, it can also have a concurrent sense: thus, as. Taken in conjunction with the deictic pronouns, our argument for the contemporaneous sense of ὡς is strengthened. While the goddess speaks, she signals the particularity of Odysseus' surroundings and literally demonstrates what is near in place, time and thought. Perhaps Athena gestures with her hand, perhaps she simply speaks, but by distinguishing each thing as it is, a kind of reconciliation takes place: Athena unifies the land with her words. The generalizing plurals are restored to their particularity and in this restoration the land of Ithaca emerges. By revealing the true nature of the parts of Ithaca, she at once restores the relationship of these parts to the whole. The hills and trees now signify their relation to the one land: they are Ithaca. The μιν that was unrecognizable is made recognizable as Athena herself shows Odysseus the χθών that surrounds him.

The verb σκεδάννυμι helpfully illustrates the revelatory power of Athena's words. If Athena's speech disperses the mist, by implication, these same words shed light around Odysseus. Often used to describe the rays of the sun, σκεδάννυμι means to scatter and disperse.[137] It is, therefore, by scattering the mist that Athena literally sheds light on Ithaca's natural landscape and reveals the characteristic quality by which the island is known.[138] Whether Ithaca's fixed epithet means sunny or clear-seen, in the presence of light Odysseus sees Ithaca in the way it is characteristically known. With her words Athena

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[136] Murray, 13.345-51.
[137] Cf. LSJ entry for σκεδάννυμι: to scatter, disperse.
[138] Lattimore, in fact, translates the epithet, Ἰθάκην εὐδείελον as "sunny Ithaka."

restores the order of Ithaca's landscape, and she does so in the sight of its ruler. The strange and different appearances are banished as a likeness to the same is restored. Just as Athena divided Ithaca from its true nature by pouring the mist, she reassembles Ithaca into Odysseus' clear-seen native land by the pouring of light. It is with this activity that she takes Odysseus from his sorrow; by dispersing the mist she removes the distance between lord and land and reveals the clear-seen nature of each:

> So saying, the Goddess scatter'd from before
> His eyes all darkness, and he knew the land.
> Then felt Ulysses, Hero toil-injured,
> Transport unutterable, seeing plain,
> Once more his native isle. [139]

Just as the unclear sight of Ithaca provoked a negative physical reaction in Odysseus, the plain sight of the land results in an equally but opposite response. The same surroundings that made him slap his thighs in despair are now the object of relief and joy; Odysseus rejoices in his native land, he kisses the shores of the loud-sounding sea. It is the earth that feeds him:

> Glad then was the much-enduring, noble Odysseus, rejoicing in his own land,
> and he kissed the grain-giving earth, the giver of grain.[140]

This is the response we expect when Odysseus arrives on Ithaca: an immediate expression of recognition, a positive engagement with things that are known to him. However, as our first three chapters have shown, what we receive is despair, curses and a disconcerting failure to see what is most present to him. Waking up on Ithaca, Odysseus is made unrecognizing and is deprived of the very light by which he sees and knows the

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[139] ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ σκέδας' ἠέρα, εἵσατο δὲ χθών:
γήθησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα πολύτλας δῖος 'Οδυσσεύς,
χαίρων ᾗ γαίῃ, κύσε δὲ ζείδωρον ἄρουραν. (13.352-54) Cowper, p. 200.
[140] γήθησέν τ' ἄρ' ἔπειτα πολύτλας δῖος 'Οδυσσεύς,
χαίρων ᾗ γαίῃ, κύσε δὲ ζείδωρον ἄρουραν (13.352-53) Murray.

world around him. Cowper's translation is right, therefore, to convey that when Athena speaks and reveals Ithaca, she scatters from his eyes all darkness. When she removes the visual barrier that kept Odysseus from seeing Ithaca she restores light, not just to Odysseus' physical sight, but also to his cognitive sight. By dispersing the mist she makes him actively recognizing; as light comes to his seeing, it comes to his knowing. The scattering of all darkness is, therefore, an assembling of light both natural and intellective; and, in the same way all things were changed by the pouring of mist, in the shedding of light all things are transformed. Odysseus' despair in the land he gazed upon is turned to joy; the treasures that encumbered him are his gifts of thanksgiving, and the goddess who mocked him is the daughter of Zeus whose blessing he requires:

> At once he prayed to the nymphs with outstretched hands: You Naiad nymphs, daughters of Zeus, never did I think to behold you again, but now I hail you with loving prayers. And gifts will I give, as before if the daughter of Zeus, she that drives the spoil, will graciously grant me to live, and will bring to manhood my dear son.[141]

In this expression of contingency (αἴ κεν ἐᾷ πρόφρων με Διὸς θυγάτηρ ἀγελείη/αὐτόν τε ζώειν καί μοι φίλον υἱὸν ἀέξῃ) we see the activity of Odysseus' recognizing beginning to embrace more than that of his not-recognizing. When Odysseus awoke on his native land he knew neither that he was on Ithaca nor that he was surrounded in mist. But now as the mist dissipates and Odysseus sees the hill and tree and harbor, he also sees the cause that restores them to their proper nature – and he sees that he too stands in the light of the goddess who restores his sight and sustains it. It is Athena who preserves Telemachus' life

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[141] νύμφαι νηϊάδες, κοῦραι Διός, οὔ ποτ' ἐγώ γε
ὄψεσθ' ὔμμ' ἐφάμην: νῦν δ' εὐχωλῆς ἀγανῇσι
χαίρετ': ἀτὰρ καὶ δῶρα διδώσομεν, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ,
αἴ κεν ἐᾷ πρόφρων με Διὸς θυγάτηρ ἀγελείη
αὐτόν τε ζώειν καί μοι φίλον υἱὸν ἀέξῃ. (13.353-58). Murray.

and his own. Athena responds to Odysseus' request by directing his attention to the treasure given to him by Phaeacians:

> Be of good cheer, and let not these things distress your heart. But let us now at once set your goods in the innermost recess of the sacred cave . . . and let us ourselves take thought how all may turn out excellently.[142]

Odysseus eagerly accepts Athena's command and together the two hide the treasure:

> Thus when the goddess had spoken she plunged into the shadowy cavern
> Eagerly searching for places of hiding; and quickly Odysseus
> bringing the whole of his treasure – the gold and the bronze adamantine
> Finely wrought garments as well, that the Phaeacians had given
> - Stowed them away; and a boulder was set in the door by the goddess
> Pallas Athena, the daughter of Zeus who beareth the aegis.
> Then did the twain at the base of the sacred olive recline them,
> There to consul, devising the doom of the insolent suitors.[143]

It is hard to overestimate the significance of this shared activity between the goddess and the man. Athena seeks out the dark and secret places and Odysseus carries the gifts inside. These are the gifts Odysseus received by Athena's will. They are more in number than all the booty he received at Troy and he carries all of them into the cave (αὐτὰρ 'Οδυσσεὺς/ ἆσσον πάντ' ἐφόρει . . .). There is no item he leaves behind or takes with him. Nor is there any evidence that he goes back to retrieve anything. Athena places a stone at the door and we may assume that it is she who must remove it.

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[142] θάρσει, μή τοι ταῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶ σῇσι μελόντων.
ἀλλὰ χρήματα μὲν μυχῷ ἄντρου θεσπεσίοιο
θείμεν αὐτίκα νῦν, ἵνα περ τάδε τοι σόα μίμνῃ:
αὐτοὶ δὲ φραζώμεθ' ὅπως ὄχ' ἄριστα γένηται. (13.362-65) Murray.

[143] ὣς εἰποῦσα θεὰ δῦνε σπέος ἠεροειδές,
μαιομένη κευθμῶνας ἀνὰ σπέος: αὐτὰρ 'Οδυσσεὺς
ἆσσον πάντ' ἐφόρει, χρυσὸν καὶ ἀτειρέα χαλκὸν
εἵματά τ' εὐποίητα, τά οἱ Φαίηκες ἔδωκαν.
καὶ τὰ μὲν εὖ κατέθηκε, λίθον δ' ἐπέθηκε θύρῃσι
Παλλὰς Ἀθηναίη, κούρη Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο.
τὼ δὲ καθεζομένω ἱερῆς παρὰ πυθμέν' ἐλαίης
φραζέσθην μνηστῆρσιν ὑπερφιάλοισιν ὄλεθρον. (13.366-73) Cotterill, p. 182.

The treasure Athena requests Odysseus hide with her is also that which, we may remember, so preoccupied him in his despair. To Odysseus, the gifts confirmed his wandering. He had nowhere to hide them and nowhere to take them. The treasures were also the evidence that he believed would prove the Phaeacians' true nature. Surely, he thought, they took some of it with them in their ship. Yet, when Odysseus counted it all, he missed nothing, and still wept for Ithaca and for himself, lost in a strange land he did not know.

There is transition that takes place in the relationship between Odysseus and Athena in the hiding of the gifts and the poet signifies this transition when he describes the subsequent action of the two. After the treasures are stored safely away, goddess and man sit (καθεζομένω) by the sacred olive tree and plan (φραζέσθην) the death of the suitors.[144] The duals represent not only the physical proximity between Athena and Odysseus, but more significantly, suggest the beginning of a new cognitive intimacy between them.[145] By removing the gifts from sight, Athena redirects Odysseus' desire to recognize towards a knowing that cannot be grasped by counting and numbers. She turns

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[144] τὼ δὲ καθεζομένω ἱερῆς παρὰ πυθμέν' ἐλαίης
φραζέσθην μνηστῆρσιν ὑπερφιάλοισιν ὄλεθρον. 13.371-73.

[145] Significantly, in the recognition scene between Odysseus and Penelope, Homer employs the dual. I think it is fair to suggest that because the duals occur only after recognition has occurred (after Penelope has challenged Odysseus with the trick of their marriage bed and after Odysseus has told her of his voyage yet to come), Homer marks a new cognitive intimacy between his characters by describing them as a pair: τὼ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν φιλότητος *ἐταρπήτην* ἐρατεινῆς,/*τερπέσθην* μύθοισι, πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐνέποντε, (23.300-01). The act of re-cognition is more than the acknowledgment of familiar physical traits, it occurs when the likeness between two minds is established, or, as is the case of Penelope and Odysseus, it is re-established; Penelope is the one with whom Odysseus shares a "like mind." It is this common mind and heart, Odysseus tells Nausicaa, that is better than all else: "For nothing is greater or better than this, than when a man and a woman keep house together sharing one heart and mind (ὁμοφρονέοντε νοήμασιν), a great grief to their foes and a joy to their friends; while their own fame is unsurpassed." (6.182-85) Murray.

his gaze away from material objects and prepares him for her revelation. The best trickster among men and the most cunning of gods are now a pair; they sit together and contrive a plan. Side by side the mind of the goddess and the mind of Ithaca's ruler devise the fate of the suitors. Having revealed Ithaca's landscape to Odysseus' outer sight, Athena reveals the nature of his kingdom to his inner sight. She tells him that in his absence an authority other than his own has come into power. The Ithaca to which he returns will not appear like itself:

> Son of Laertes, sprung from Zeus, Odysseus of many devices, take thought how you may lay your hands on the shameless suitors, who now for three years have been lording it in your halls, wooing your godlike wife, and offering suitors' gifts. And she, as she continually mourns in her heart for your return, offers hopes to all, and has promises for each man, sending them messages, but her mind is set on other things.[146]

It is upon this revelation that Odysseus' mind awakens. "Ah me! In all truth I was about to have perished in my halls by the evil fate of Agamemnon, son of Atreus, had you not, goddess, duly told me all."[147] Odysseus now sees clearly beyond his immediate surroundings: Ithaca as he knows it is unrecognizable, it has been separated from its true nature by the unnatural rule of many men. Unable to recognize Athena in the guise of the shepherd, now sitting beside her at the trunk of the olive and listening to her speak, Odysseus recognizes the mind of the daughter of Zeus. Conceived out of his *noos*, Athena is

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[146]διογενὲς Λαερτιάδη, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,
φράζευ ὅπως μνηστῆρσιν ἀναιδέσι χεῖρας ἐφήσεις,
οἳ δή τοι τρίετες μέγαρον κάτα κοιρανέουσι,
μνώμενοι ἀντιθέην ἄλοχον καὶ ἕδνα διδόντες:
ἡ δὲ σὸν αἰεὶ νόστον ὀδυρομένη κατὰ θυμὸν
πάντας μέν ῥ' ἔλπει καὶ ὑπίσχεται ἀνδρὶ ἑκάστῳ,
ἀγγελίας προϊεῖσα, νόος δέ οἱ ἄλλα μενοινᾷ." (13.375-81) Murray.

[147] ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο
φθίσεσθαι κακὸν οἶτον ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἔμελλον,
εἰ μή μοι σὺ ἕκαστα, θεά, κατὰ μοῖραν ἔειπες. (13.383-86). Ibid.

like the mind of her father: changeful, variable, difficult to discern.[148] The same nature that Odysseus protested was too hard for him to recognize he now seeks to align himself with. Recognizing Athena as his defender, Odysseus recognizes his divine privilege; he is the rightful ruler of Ithaca. He remembers the victory at Troy and calls upon Athena to imbue him with her power so that again he may enact her will, so that he may fulfill her purpose:

> But come, weave some plan by which I may requite them; and stand by my side yourself, and endue me with dauntless courage, as when we loosed the bright diadem of Troy. Would you but stand by my side, you of the flashing eyes, as eager as you were then, I would fight even against three hundred men, with you mighty goddess, if with a ready heart you would give me aid.[149]

Implicit in Odysseus' desire to defeat the suitors is more than a desire to be the vehicle of Athena's μῆτις. As king of Ithaca, Odysseus is nourished by Zeus: wherever order is preserved, wherever the law is imposed, Zeus is present.[150] For Odysseus to be restored as king is, therefore, for the authority of Zeus to be restored, it is to reveal Odysseus' kingship as the absolute sovereignty of the ultimate king. By uniting her divine mind with Odysseus' intellect, by weaving her mind together with his, Athena pours the divine light of Zeus into the cognitive sight of Odysseus. It is in Zeus' all-seeing and all-knowing of his universal kingdom that Odysseus may see clearly the many strange appearances, the suitors usurping his power, and unify these things under his knowing of his kingdom. The

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[148] ἄλλοτε δ' ἀλλοῖος Ζηνὸς νόος αἰγιόχοιο,
ἀργαλέος δ' ἄνδρεσσι καταθνητοῖσι νοῆσαι.
Hesiod. *Works and Days.* (483-84).

[149] ἀλλ' ἄγε μῆτιν ὕφηνον, ὅπως ἀποτίσομαι αὐτούς:
πὰρ δέ μοι αὐτὴ στῆθι, μένος πολυθαρσὲς ἐνεῖσα,
οἷον ὅτε Τροίης λύομεν λιπαρὰ κρήδεμνα.
αἴ κέ μοι ὣς μεμαυῖα παρασταίης, γλαυκῶπι,
καί κε τριηκοσίοισιν ἐγὼν ἄνδρεσσι μαχοίμην
σὺν σοί, πότνα θεά, ὅτε μοι πρόφρασς' ἐπαρήγοις. (13.386-91). Murray.

[150] Walter Burkert, *Greek Religion* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985) p. 130.

desire for Athena's blessing has thus evolved into more than a wish for her to grant life to himself and Telemachus, Odysseus has been brought into accord with Athena's vision of his homecoming. In the same way Athena restored the clear-seen nature of Ithaca by the scattering the mist and ordering all things back to their rightful significance, Odysseus' must reestablish order in his kingdom by defeating the cruel and unjust suitors and restoring himself as god-fearing king. With his kingship he will make Ithaca into a likeness of the kingdom of Zeus, just as with his cunning he made himself into Athena's mortal likeness.

Chapter Six: Conclusion

In Chapter Two we examined Stanford's observation that, in Homer, the conjunction ὄφρα fluctuates between temporal and final uses and, according to this double implication, Athena's mist-pouring functions as a temporary prerequisite for making Odysseus unrecognizable: i.e. for about him the goddess had poured a mist until/so that she might make him unrecognizable. We determined that while this logic is helpful to a degree, insofar as Stanford restricts ἄγνωστον to a purely passive significance, Athena's will is not realized in Odysseus' failure to recognize Ithaca and the goddess is ultimately denied the immediate fulfillment of her desire (ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον). In Odysseus' exclamation, "Ah, me had you not goddess told me all . . ." the oversight of Stanford's view is confirmed. When Athena shows Ithaca to Odysseus and when she tells him the state of his kingdom, she makes him recognize the things which he previously could not. And as we have shown in our preceding chapters, the scale of Odysseus' unrecognizing extended beyond Ithaca and its trees and hills. Odysseus could not recognize the wise and just nature of the Phaeacians, he could not recognize himself as the returned ruler of his native land, and he could not recognize Athena. It follows, therefore, that for Athena to reveal her purpose for Odysseus' homecoming is for her to disperse the other-shapedness from Odysseus' knowing and make him re-cognize the true form of the ἀλλοειδέα appearing things. In light of the goddess' words, all things that appeared strangely to Odysseus are known as the same and are recognized: the Phaeacians are not other than they seemed, Odysseus is not lost on an other land, the shepherd boy is no other than Athena, and the mist that surrounded him is the goddess who prepares him for his homecoming. Knowing Athena's purpose, Odysseus is made to recognize of the temporal significance of this purpose. The

time of his unrecognizing was part of her whole plan. In the mind of the goddess, the temporal and purpose significance are not two separate moments; they are the same moment. In unison she issues them out of her desire: ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν ἄγνωστον. Therefore, as Athena is active now in Odysseus recognizing, she was active then, in the time of his unrecognizing.

Odysseus' response to Athena's confirms the fullness of her revelation. Odysseus looks back and he sees that Athena is the unrecognizable counterpart to all his unrecognizing. He recognizes her as the unrecognizable presence that facilitated his failure to recognize Ithaca and as that which will mediate his successful homecoming: "you yourself stand beside me . . . would you but stand by my side, you of the flashing eyes." The significance of the ὄφρα has shifted from a temporal to a purpose usage, that is, having made Odysseus unrecognizing Athena will now make him unrecognizable. This shift, however, does not imply a sudden active participation of the goddess; Athena has not delayed her presence, she has been with Odysseus all along. Odysseus' longing for Athena's presence is his groaning for Ithaca transformed. Athena's cognitive power now is now the means by which Odysseus recognizes. It is the goddess herself who offers proof of his homecoming. No longer unrecognizing, Odysseus desires that which is hard to recognize. He now wishes to be surrounded by the presence that made him not to recognize his native land. It will be with the help of this same power that he will make Ithaca recognizable again.

Athena answers Odysseus' request with a promise: "Most certainly I shall be with you, and will not forget you, when we are busied with this work . . ."[151] She then fulfills this

[151] καὶ λίην τοι ἐγώ γε παρέσσομαι, οὐδέ με λήσεις,

promise by inviting him to satisfy her desire: "Come I will make you unknown to all mortals."[152] The best of all mortals for cunning and tricks will now resemble the divine in mind and body. Reaching out, Athena touches Odysseus with her wand and just as when she poured the mist around him her will is effective immediately:

> The skin shrunk up, and wither'd at her hand;
> A swift old age o'er all his members spread;
> A sudden frost was sprinkled on his head;
> Nor longer in the heavy eye-ball shined
> The glance divine, forth-beaming from the mind,
> His robe, which spots indelible besmear,
> In rags dishonest flutters with the air:
> A stag's torn hide is lapp'd around his reins;
> A rugged staff his trembling hand sustains;
> And at his side a wretched scrip was hung,
> Wide-patch'd, and knotted to a twisted thong.
> So look'd the chief, so mov'd; to mortal eyes
> Object uncouth! A man of miseries![153]

Odysseus is once more made ἄγνωστον. And again the adjective divides itself in two. By making Odysseus unrecognizable, Athena affects the whole of his kingdom: the ruler of Ithaca will appear strangely in the sight of all who know him: "For this, my hand shall wither every grace . . . Estrange thee from thy own; thy son, thy wife/From the loathed object every sight shall turn,/And the blind suitors their destruction scorn."[154]

ὁππότε κεν δὴ ταῦτα πενώμεθα . . . (13.393-94). Murray.
[152]ἀλλ' ἄγε ς' ἄγνωστον τεύξω πάντεσσι βροτοῖσι. (13.397) Ibid.
[153] ὣς ἄρα μιν φαμένη ῥάβδῳ ἐπεμάσσατ' Ἀθήνη.
κάρψεν μὲν χρόα καλὸν ἐνὶ γναμπτοῖσι μέλεσσι,
ξανθὰς δ' ἐκ κεφαλῆς ὄλεσε τρίχας, ἀμφὶ δὲ δέρμα
πάντεσσιν μελέεσσι παλαιοῦ θῆκε γέροντος,
κνύζωσεν δέ οἱ ὄσσε πάρος περικαλλέ' ἐόντε:
ἀμφὶ δέ μιν ῥάκος ἄλλο κακὸν βάλεν ἠδὲ χιτῶνα,
ῥωγαλέα ῥυπόωντα, κακῷ μεμορυγμένα καπνῷ:
ἀμφὶ δέ μιν μέγα δέρμα ταχείης ἔσς' ἐλάφοιο,
ψιλόν: δῶκε δέ οἱ σκῆπτρον καὶ ἀεικέα πήρην,
πυκνὰ ῥωγαλέην: ἐν δὲ στρόφος ἦεν ἀορτήρ (13.429-38) Pope, p. 221.
[154] Pope, p. 220.

This time Odysseus occupies the other side of an ἄγνωστον modification, no longer unrecognizing, he is unrecognizable. Like a god, he will "In secret walk unknown to mortal eyes."[155] Odysseus will be the cognitive equivalent to the alpha that denies Telemachus, Penelope, his friends, his father, and the suitors their capacity to know him again; he will make them unrecognizing. But to those in whose eyes he appears alien, the time will come when he is known to be the same. Odysseus' true nature will be recognized like the revelation a god. The flashing-eyed goddess will bear the aegis, Zeus will thunder and the true nature of Ithaca will be made recognizable in the light of its true ruler.[156]

In response to Aristophanes' alteration to line 190: "Pallas Athene . . . poured mist around, to make *it* unrecognizable to *him*," Dawe wrote that we must ask, "why Athene should wait to make the island unrecognizable, a peculiarly cruel thing for his patron goddess to do."[157] As we have shown, there is no waiting Athena endures before effecting her will; there is no time prerequisite she must satisfy before initiating her presence into Odysseus' arrival on Ithaca. Nor should Athena' actions be classified as cruel or unjust; Odysseus himself overflows with thanksgiving for the goddess' work, both for what she has done and for what she will do. This is the problem with the commentaries we have examined: to overlook the active significance of ἄγνωστος is to fail to see the way in which the goddess manifests herself at every point in Odysseus' homecoming; it is to deny the degree to which Athena's will is present both when Odysseus is unrecognizing and when he is unrecognizable. It is not to recognize the same to be present in the other, and see the

[155] Ibid.
[156] Cf. 24.516-48.
[157] Dawe ln. 190.

strange shapes unified in the divine light of Athena's knowing. Odysseus has come farther than this.

> So when the two had thus taken counsel together, they parted; and thereupon the goddess went to splendid Lacedaemon to fetch the son of Odysseus.[158]

In accordance with Athena's command, Odysseus in the guise of a beggar sets off to find the swineherd, Eumaeus.

[158] τώ γ' ὡς βουλεύσαντε διέτμαγεν. ἡ μὲν ἔπειτα
ἐς Λακεδαίμονα δῖαν ἔβη μετὰ παῖδ' Ὀδυσῆος. (13.439-40). Murray.

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