

Traditional Language and the Women in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*

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The expression ἡ' οἴη, which introduces the stories of several heroines in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, must have played a significant role in the poem. In its plural form it serves as an alternative title, and early commentators used it to describe individual segments of the whole.¹ The phrase, moreover, is peculiar to this Hesiodic work and is not found in the *Theogony*, the *Works and Days*, nor any of the Homeric poems.² Quotations cited by ancient sources have suggested to some scholars that the phrase was a signpost, meant to signal a story about the love between a mortal woman and a god.³ Those who believed that the *Catalogue* was created by the mutual attraction of poems with similar themes understood the words to be a tool for its expansion, by affirming the essential unity of the subjects of all poems

1 For example, the scholia on Pindar's *Pyth.* 9.6 (2.221.12 Drachmann) refer to the ἡ' οἴη of Kyrene (*fr.* 215). The poem is called Ἡοῖαι by Hesychius (η 650), Eunapius (*vit. soph.* 6.6–10), Pausanias (10.31.3, see *app. crit. ad fr.* 25.12), Athenaeus (10.32 p. 428c, see *fr.* 239), the scholia on Soph. *Tr.* 1167 (p. 344 Papageorgios, see *fr.* 240), and Philodemus (see *fr.* 346 and for the correct reading A. Henrichs, *GRBS* 13 [1972] 67 n. 2).

References to the fragments and *testimonia* are from R. Merkelbach and M. L. West, *Fragmenta Hesiodica* (Oxford 1967). New fragments derived from more recent papyrus discoveries can be found in an appendix to the second edition of the Hesiodic poems in the Oxford Classical Texts series (Oxford 1983).

2 Cf. M. L. West, *The Hesiodic Catalogue of Women* (Oxford 1985) 167: "The ἡ' οἴη device probably came from a post Hesiodic or para-Hesiodic tradition."

3 E.g. Koronis and Apollo (*fr.* 59), Antiope and Zeus (*fr.* 181), Kyrene and Apollo (*fr.* 215), Mekionike and Poseidon (*fr.* 253).

beginning with ἡ' οἴη and incorporating each into the unity of the *Catalogue*.⁴

The subsequent publication of new fragments from papyri, however, has shown that the work was conceived according to a coherent plan, following certain principles of composition, to which this phrase belongs.⁵ M. L. West suggests that after the invocation the first of the women, possibly Pyrrha, was introduced by the phrase “such as” while the others were subsequently added with the corresponding expression “or such as.”⁶ Furthermore, fragments which show the formula at a transition point in the narrative indicate that, more than a mere listing device, it functions within the genealogical structure of the poem to introduce collateral branches of family trees and to allow for slight discontinuities of exposition.⁷

4 These functions of ἡ' οἴη are summarized by B. A. van Groningen, *Verhandelingen der Koninklijke Nederlandse Akademie van Wetenschappen, afd. Letterkund, Nieuwe Reeks*, Deel 65, no. 2 (1958) 85, 120. W. Marckscheffel (*De Catalogo et Eois Carminibus Hesiodiis* [1838] 24) had concluded that the formula always referred to a woman who had relations with a god. He was not aware of how the poet had handled the stories of Asterodeia (*fr.* 58), Stratonike, Eurythemiste (*fr.* 26), Hypermestra (*fr.* 23a), and Leda (in the context of *fr.* 23a), all of whom are introduced by the expression, but not in the context of an affair with a god. It was Wilamowitz (*Hermes* 40 [1905] 123 = *Kl. Schr.* 4 [1962] 176) who suggested that the formula was a tool for incorporating various myths of origin so that the poem expanded in “snowball” fashion.

5 In their edition of the fragments Merkelbach and West made certain assumptions about the poet's principles of composition, the most important being that the *Catalogue* was laid out according to the same general plan as Apollodorus' *Bibliothēke*, with a systematic exposition of the great genealogies of Greek myth: Deukalionidai, Inachidai, Pelasgidai, Atlantidai, Asopidai, and Pelopidai. The reasons for this assumption, not explicitly stated at the time (although *cf.* M. L. West, *Gnomon* 35 [1963] 758f. and R. Merkelbach, *Chronique d'Egypte* 43 [1968] 133–155), have been given comprehensive treatment in Professor West's commentary on the *Catalogue* (n. 2 above) 31–124.

6 West (n. 2 above) 56.

7 West (n. 2 above) 48, 35. The phrase's function within the genealogical framework of the poem is particularly evident in *fr.* 23a, 25, 26, which provide the clearest example of a transition from one branch of a family tree to another; in this instance the family tree is that of Agenor. At *fr.* 23a. 3 the expression introduces the stories of Leda, Althaia, and Hypermestra, the three daughters of Thestios, son of Agenor's daughter Demodike. At *fr.* 26. 5 the words ἡ' οἴαι begin a new section dealing with Eurythemiste, Stratonike, and Sterope, the three daughters of Agenor's son Porthaon.

This having been said, we might still ask what exactly is its meaning within the context of the poem? A phrase that is usually translated “or such as” appears to be descriptive of women who share certain qualities and characteristics which distinguish them from other women, either within the epic tradition or contemporary with the poet and his audience. In the proem the poet announces that the poem will be about special women who had sexual relations with gods at that time “when men and gods mingled at common feasts and assemblies” (*fr.* 1.7); and at *fr.* 26.5–6 he provides a clue to the sort of woman with whom he is dealing when he introduces the three daughters of Porthaon by ἠ’οῖαι and says that they are οἴαι τε θεαί, περικαλλέα [ἔργ’ εἰδυῖα].⁸ A more extensive catalogue of the epithets and phrases by which the poem’s heroines are described will help to define more precisely the type of woman that was attractive to gods and men. Yet such a list will also serve to remind us that, in respect of its contents,⁹ the epic form in which it is cast,¹⁰ and its diction, the Hesiodic *Catalogue* shares with the more well-known works of Hesiod and Homer many of the characteristics of traditional poetry.

- 8 Merkelbach and West supplement the text at *fr.* 23a.4 with this description in reference to the daughters of Thestios.
- 9 The poem contains and serves to organize an enormous volume of heroic saga. Not only does it present the great genealogies of Greek myth, but it also appears to move through time from Deucalion to the Trojan War. When it is viewed in conjunction with the *Theogony*, the effect is a history of the Greek world from the very beginnings of time, when earth, gods and men first evolved, through to the beginning of the modern, less than golden, age.
- 10 The catalogue form is a familiar element of traditional epic poetry. There are several such series of parallel passages, which list or describe people, actions, or objects that have something in common. Homer’s “Catalogue of Ships” stretches to some 300 lines in Book 2 of the *Iliad*, and the catalogue of women seen by Odysseus in the underworld (*Odyssey* 11.225–332) is over one hundred lines in length. Hesiod catalogues Zeus’ love affairs in the *Theogony* and goes on to sing about the goddesses who had relations with mortal men (886ff.). At *Iliad.* 14. 315 Zeus himself catalogues his love affairs in a relatively brief passage of 13 lines.

Successive entries in these catalogues usually begin with a similar word or phrase and often contain the same kind of information. In theory a catalogue might be extended indefinitely, since any number of entries could be tacked on by means of this connecting formula.

The expression ἠ’ οἴη is not the only such formula found in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*. K. Heilinger (*MH* 40 [1983] 19–34) points out the function of the formula ἠ’ τέκεν, which often marks the conclusion of a woman’s personal story and leads into a

The relationship of the language of the Hesiodic poem to that of other early epic poetry was established by Werner Meier in his 1976 dissertation on the epic formula in the *Catalogue*.¹¹ His survey of the epithets applied to gods, heroes, heroines, nations, and places shows a great number of parallels with Homer, including a multitude of expressions found adopted without change, some only slightly changed through transposition, shift of verse position or simple expansion, all variations which can be found in Homer's work as well.¹² The examination of a series of adjectives and descriptive expressions in an attempt to discover the meaning of ἦ' οἴη may shed more light on the broader question of whether the poet has adapted or manipulated the formular diction of epic in order to reinforce the image that he wishes to present. Thus, of particular interest will be instances where the Hesiodic poet appears to use unique or innovative phrases.¹³ A further comparison, where possible, of the treatment given to the same women by both the *Catalogue*-poet and Homer may also provide some insight into the former's special use of traditional language.

broader discussion of her genealogy through her descendants. He also notes the significance at the beginning of episodes of phrases such as ποιήσατ' ἄκοιτιν, γάμε, θαλερὸν λέχος εισαναβῆσα.

- 11 *Die epische Formel im pseudohesiodischen Frauenkatalog: Eine Untersuchung zum nachhomerischen Formelgebrauch*. Diss. Zurich 1976. On the poem's epic diction see also W. E. McLeod, *Phoenix* 31 (1977) 363 and R. Janko, *Homer, Hesiod and the Hymns* (Cambridge 1982).
- 12 Cf. J. B. Hainsworth, *The Flexibility of the Homeric Formula* (Oxford 1968) 35–45.
- 13 This study owes much to the work done on the epic formula by M. Parry, collected in *The Making of Homeric Verse* (Oxford 1971); A. B. Lord, *HSCP* 72 (1967) 1–46 and *The Singer of Tales* (New York 1978); A. Hoekstra, *Homeric Modifications of Formulaic Prototypes* (Amsterdam 1964); and J. B. Hainsworth (n. 12 above). I have been guided by the definition offered by W. B. Ingalls, *TAPhA* 109 (1979) 89: "... a formula is defined as a 'recurrent group of words.' This will include any combination of two or more words, regardless of length, provided that it is repeated at least once either verbatim or with minor modifications such as are involved in conjugation or declension, or with the substitution of particles, enclitics, personal pronouns or the like. Sometimes such minor modifications alter the metrical shape of the combination ... again, occasionally, the same word group may be used in a different part of the verse with a consequent change in metrical shape." The collection of Homeric and Hesiodic parallels was aided by reference to G. L. Prendergast, *A complete Concordance to the Iliad of Homer* (Darmstadt 1962), H. Dunbar, *A Complete Concordance to the Odyssey of Homer* (Hildesheim 1962), and W. W. Minton, *Concordance to the Hesiodic Corpus* (Leiden 1976). Meier's work (n. 11 above) proved valuable for purposes of comparison.

[1] *Epithets*

The *Catalogue*-poet describes a vast array of legendary women in terms of their beauty or similarity to the gods. Many of the epithets applied to them are identical to and used in the same way as those used by Homer, Hesiod and the authors of the Homeric *Hymns*. Several of these are listed below.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| 1. /δ[ῖα δ']Υπερμήστρη | 25.34
<i>Od.</i> 3.266 (Klytaimestra) |
| δῖα Φιλωνίς/ | 64.14
<i>Il.</i> 5.70 (Theano); <i>Od.</i> 5.263, 321 (Kalyphso); 12.133 (Neaira), 12.235 (Charubdis); <i>H. Merc.</i> 99; <i>H.</i> 32.8, 17 (Selene); <i>H.</i> 16.2 (Koronis) |
| δῖα γυναικῶν/ | 190.3 (Hippodameia)
<i>Il.</i> 2.714 (Alkestis); 3.171, 228, 423 (Helen); <i>Od.</i> 1.332; 16.414; 18.302; 20.60; 21.42; 23.302 (Penelope); 20.147 (Eurykleia); 4.305; 15.106; (Helen) |
| 2. Ὑπερηΐς ἀ[μύ]μων/ ¹⁴ | 26.7 (Laothoe)
<i>Il.</i> 14.414 (Nηΐς); 2.876, 14.426 (Glaukos); 8.273, 292 (Teukros); 13.641 (Menelaos); <i>Od.</i> 8.123 (Klytoneos); <i>Theog.</i> 654 (Kottos); <i>Sc.</i> 65 (Kyknos) |
| 3. ξανθὴν Ἰόλειαν/ ¹⁵ | 26.31
<i>Il.</i> 11.740 (Agamede); 5.500 (Demeter); <i>H. Cer.</i> 302 (Demeter); <i>Theog.</i> 947 (Ariadne) |
| 4. ἐ]υστέφανος Πολυμήλη/ | 43a.1
<i>Il.</i> 21.511 (κελαδεινή); <i>Od.</i> 2.120 (Mylene); 8.288; 18.193 (Kythereia); 8.267 (Aphrodite); <i>H. Ven.</i> 6, 175, 287 (Kythereia); <i>H. Cer.</i> 224, 236, 307, 384, 470 (Demeter); <i>Theog.</i> 255 (Halimede); 1008 (Kythereia) |

14 The epithet is common in this line-position. It is used several times with proper nouns, but only once in reference to a woman (Naiad).

15 This epithet occurs six times in the *Odyssey* with Menelaos.

5. Κλυταιμήστρην τε βοῶπι[ιν]/
Σθεν[έ]βοια βοῶπις/¹⁶ 23a.9
129.20
Il. 3.144 (Klymene); 7.10 (Philome-
dousa); 18.40 (Halia); *H.* 31.2 (Eury-
phaessa); *Theog.* 355 (Plouto)
6. κυανῶπις/¹⁷ 169.1 (Elektra); 23a.14, 27 (Klytaimes-
tra); 25.14 (Althaia)
7. /Χλωριν ἐ]ύζωνον 33a.7
ἐζώνοιο γυναικός/
195sc.31
ἐζωνος Πολυκάστη/
Il. 1.429 (Chryseis)
221.1
Il. 9.590 (παράκοιτις); *H. Cer.* 255, 212,
234, 243 (Metaneira)
8. καλ[λι]πλόκαμον 129.18
Σ[θ]ενέβοι[αν]/¹⁸ *Il.* 18.592 (Ariadne, dative)
9. ἐυπλ]όκαμον Δ[ιομ]ήδη[ην]/ 171.5
H. 31.6 (Selene); *Il.* 11.623; 14.6 (Heka-
mede); 18.48 (Amatheia); *Od.* 5.125
(Demeter)¹⁹
/Τυρώ ἐυπ]λόκαμος 30.25
/Λήδη ἐ]υπλόκαμος 23a.8
Il. 6.380 (= 385) (Τρωαί); *Od.* 10.136
(= 11.8, 12.150) (Kirke); *Od.* 12.132
(Nymphs)
10. /Τηγυέτη τ' ἐρόεσσα²⁰ 169.1*
Theog. 251 (Hippochoe); 357 (Petraia)

16 This adjective is often used in the Homeric poems in the expression βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη; it usually occurs in the nominative case.

17 The only other occurrence of this epithet is at *Od.* 12.60 in the form κυανῶπιδος (Ἄμφιτρίτης/).

18 The epithet occurs in the same position, preceded by the name, at *Il.* 20.207 and *H. Apoll.* 101.

19 Parallels from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are all in the nominative case.

20 The adjective occurs at the same line-position in *H. Merc.* 31, but is not used with a proper noun.

11. καλλίσφυρ[ο]ν
 ἐν μεγάροισιν/²¹ 204.94 (Hermione). Perhaps also
 23a.15 (Iphimede); 129.14 (Danae)
Theog. 384 (Nike)
 καλ[λίσφυ]ρον Ἡερόπ[ειαν]/ 195.3
Theog. 507 (Okeanine)
 καλλισ[φύρου] Ἀργειώ[νη]ς/ 23a.20 and 136.10 (Helen)
Il. 9.557 (Euenine); 14.319 (Akrisione)
 καλλ[ί]σφυρον Ἥβην/ 25.28
Od. 11.603 and *H.* 15.8 (Hebe); *Od.*
 5.333 (Ino, nominative)
12. τ[αν]ίσφυρ[ο]ς -̄ -̄ / 75.6 (Atalante)
 τανισφύρου -̄ -̄ / 43a.37; 73.6; 198.4
 τανισφύρου Ἥλεκτρύωνης/ 195sc.35 (Alkmene)
 τανισφύρω Εὐρωπέῃ/ 141.8
Theog. 364 (nom. pl.); *H. Cer.* 2 (accu-
 sative); 7 (dative)
13. εὐσφύρου Ἥλεκτρύωνης/ 195sc.16 (Alkmene)
Sc. 86 (dative); *Theog.* 254 (Amphitrite,
 dative)
14. Γόργην τ' ἠύκομον 25.17
 /Πηρώ δ' ἠύκομος 37.8
H. Cer. 1, (= *H.* 13.1), 315 (Demeter);
H. Cer. 442, 60, 75 (Rheia)
 ἠύκομόν τε Μ[έδουσαν] 37.21
Theog. 267 (Harpies, acc. pl.)
 Ἀστρηΐδος ἠυκόμοιο/ 185.8
 καὶ νη[ΐδος] ἠυκόμοιο/ 195.2
Il. 2.689 (Βρισηΐδος); *Theog.* 241 (Δωρί-
 δος)
 Ἐλένης ἕνεκ' ἠυκόμοιο/ 200.11
Op. 165

Compare Ἐλένης πόσις ἔμμεναι ἠυκόμοιο/ (199.2; 200.2; 204.43, 55) with Ἐλένης πόσις ἠυκόμοιο/ at *Il.* 3.329 (= 7.355, 8.82); 11.369, 505; 13.766.

21 The epithet occurs at the same line position in the genitive case at *Il.* 9.556, *H. Cer.* 493, and *H.* 33.2; in the accusative case at *H.* 27.19.

15. ἐλικώπιδα κ[αλλ]ιπάρηον/²² 43a.19 (Mestra)
Theog. 298 (νύμφην)

Four expressions are of particular interest because they do not have verbatim parallels in the Homeric and other Hesiodic poems.

16. /- ~ - κούρης ἐυ[ώ]λ[ένο]υ 204.81 (Helen)

There are no parallels for this epithet, although we do find the expression /- ~ - ἄμφ' Ἐλένη λευκωλένω at *Od.* 22.227; and the adjective λευκώλενος is found several times referring to Nausicaa and Arete in the *Odyssey* at the same line-position after a vowel. The formula λευκώλενος Ἥρη/ is a common line-end in the *Iliad*.

17. ἐπί[φ]ρονα Δηϊάνειραν/²³ 25.17
 18. /- ~ [Λ]αιο[θή]η κρείουσ' 26.7

We note with interest that this epithet does not occur elsewhere in this form or line-position, (cf. fr. 26.31a — Ἄντιόχη κρείουσα), but it is used with the same name at *Iliad* 22.48 (τούς μοι Λαιοθήη τέκετο, κρείουσα γυναικῶν/).

19. ποδώκης δι' Ἀταλάντη/ 73.2; 76.5, 20

The adjective ποδώκης is commonly used of Achilles in the *Iliad*, but is not used of women or goddesses. Atalante herself is not named in the Homeric poems.

Thus an image begins to emerge of the sort of woman who is the subject of the *Catalogue*. By means of language that is applied within the epic tradition to mortals and immortals alike the heroines are generally described in terms of the physical beauty of their ankles, hair and general appearance, their prowess, or their intelligence. In only four instances does the poet appear to have created new descriptions by analogy with well-known formulas (e.g. ἐυώλενος) or to have placed traditional words into different settings (e.g. ποδώκης, ἐπίφρονα). Although he may have used certain adjectives because they are drawn to a particular name

- 22 The second element of this description is a common line-end in the *Iliad*, often with a proper noun. Two examples are of interest for their similarity in sound to the expression in the *Catalogue*: Χρυσηῖδα καλλιπάρηον (*Il.* 1.143, 310, 369) and Βρισηῖδα καλλιπάρηον (*Il.* 1. 184, 323, 346; 19.246).
- 23 This adjective is frequently used in the *Odyssey* and the *Theogony* with the noun βουλῆν, but is not found with a proper noun.

(e.g. ἠυκόμοιο with Helen, κρείουσ' with Laothoe), he does not seem to create contrasts or parallels by exploiting the audience's knowledge of the epithet's usage elsewhere in early epic.

[2] *Longer Descriptions*

The poet does not, however, limit his descriptions to individual epithets. The longer phrases that are employed to describe the women of the *Catalogue* may be grouped into four categories.

[2.1] *Phrases with verbatim Homeric and Hesiodic parallels*

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|--|---|
| 1. φίλη μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι./ ²⁴ | 30.24 (Tyro)
<i>Od.</i> 1.82 |
| 2. ἦ εἶ]δος ἔχε χρυσῆς
Ἐφ[ροδί]της/ ²⁵ | 196.5 (Helen)
<i>Od.</i> 4.14 (Hermione) |
| 3. Χαρίτων ἄπο κάλλος ἔχουσα/ | 215.1 (Kyrene)
<i>Od.</i> 6.18 (Nausicaa's handmaids) |
| 4. ἀμόμονα ἔργ' εἰδυίας/ | 197.1 (γυναῖκας)
<i>Il.</i> 9.128, 270; 19.245; 23.263; <i>Od.</i>
24.278 |
| 5. πυκι]νά [φ]ρεσὶ
μήδε' ἰδ]υι- | 43a.9 (Mestra)
<i>Il.</i> 24.282 (= 674), the line ends with
ἔχοντες; <i>Od.</i> 19.353, the line ends with
ἔχουσα |

[2.2] *Unique Combinations of Traditional Phrases*

The phrases in this section serve to draw attention to the individuals' qualities by placing special stress on their appearance.

- 24 The passage in the *Odyssey* is the only other place that this combination of φίλ- and μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι occurs and it refers to Odysseus' "return", a rather different context than that of the *Catalogue*.
- 25 Χρυσῆς Ἐφροδίτης is found at *Il.* 3.64. See also *Il.* 22.470 (nom.); 19.282; 24.699 (dat.); 5.427 (acc.).

6. ἐυπλόκαμος ικέλη χ[ρ]υσῆ
Ἄφρο[δ]ίτη/ 30.25 (Tyro)

The same comparison with Aphrodite is used by Homer for Briseis (*Il.* 19.282), Cassandra (*Il.* 24.699), and Penelope (*Od.* 17.37, where the phrase is expanded to include Artemis); the adjective ἐυπλόκαμος appears at this position twice in the *Iliad* to describe Trojan women in general, three times in the *Odyssey* for Kirke, and once for nymphs (see above, section 1.9).

7. καλλιπάρηον ἐὺ πραπί[δεσσ']
ἀρα[ρυῖα]ν/ 129.13 (Eurydike)

The adjective always appears at the end of the line in its other occurrences (see above, section 1.15). Forms of ἀραρυῖαν commonly come at this line-position, but three instances are of interest because of their similarity of sound: πρυλέεσσ' ἀραρυῖαν/ (*Il.* 5.744), κανόνεσσ' ἀραρυῖαν/ (*Il.* 13.407), and διηνεκέεσσ' ἀραρυῖαι/ (*Il.* 12.134).

8. κούρην ἐλικώπιδα
κ[αλλ]ιπάρηον 43a.19 (Mestra)

See above, section 1.15, for καλλιπάρηον. The two words which precede it are found together at the end of the verse in the combination ἐλικώπιδα κούρην at *Il.* 1.98, *Theog.* 998, and *fr.* 75.15 (*cf.* *H.* 33.1: κούρους ἐλικώπιδες - - -/).

9. περικ]αλλέα ἔργ' εἰδιύιας/
129.23 (Proitides); 26.6 (daughters of Porthaon)

Although the adjective is found elsewhere in this verse-position (*e.g.* *Il.* 3.262; 17.436; 6.321; *Od.* 2.117; 24.165; *Theog.* 10), the noun in this phrase is usually modified by the epithet ἀμόμονα (see above, section 2.1.4).

[2.3] Phrases apparently created by analogy

The phenomenon of the analogical formula was noted briefly above (1.16; and compare 1.13 with 1.11 and 12). M. Parry proposed that phrases such as these were enough like others in thought and words to leave no doubt that the poet who used them knew them not only as single formulas, but also as

formulas of a certain type.²⁶ He argued that the creation of new formular expressions on the model of particular words and the sound-patterns of old formular expressions (*i.e.*, by analogy) was the creative force in the formation of the epic style.²⁷ Among the following examples are two very striking and innovative images (numbers 11 and 12) whose very uniqueness suggests that the poet of the *Catalogue* has made his own contribution to the traditional diction of epic in his attempt to stress the special characteristics of his heroines.

- | | |
|---|--|
| 10. ἐπήρατον εἶδος ἔχουσα[ν] ²⁸ | 25.39 (Iphianeira) |
| 11. Χαρίτων ἄμαρ[ύγμ]ατ'
ἔχουσαν/ ²⁹ | 196.6 (Helen); 73.3 (Atalante); 43a.4 (Mestra) |
| 12. ἐ[υπλόκαμος ἰκέλη φαέεσσ]ι
σελήνης ³⁰ | 23a.8 (Leda) |

[2.4] *Unique phrases*

- | | |
|---|--|
| 13. ἡ εἶδος Ὀλυμπιάδεσσιν
ἔριζεν/ ³¹ | 129.5 (Aglaia); 252.2 (Leipephile) |
| 14. ἡ εἶδος ἐρήριστ'
ἀ[θανά]τησιν./ ³¹ | 23a.16 (Electra); 35.12; 36.3 (Peisidike); 23a.10 (Phylonoe) |
| 15. Νυμφάων καλλιπ[λο]κάμ[ω]ν
συγοπηδοῖ/ ³¹ | 26.10 (daughters of Porthaon) |

26 M. Parry (n. 13 above) 275 and 301.

27 M. Parry (n. 13 above) 301. See also A. B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales*, 33–37. The concept is further developed by J. A. Notopoulos (*AJPh* 83 [1962] 356 n. 59), J. A. Russo (*TAPhA* 94 [1963] 237), and with more caution by J. B. Hainsworth (*CQ* n.s.14 [1964] 161ff.) and A. Hoekstra [n. 13 above] 15. Cf. W. W. Minton, *TAPhA* 96 (1965) 245.

28 Cf. πολυήρατον εἶδος ἔχουσαν/ at *H. Cer.* 315 and ὑπέιροχον εἶδος ἔχουσαν/ at *H.* 12.2. For ἐπήρατον in this position see *Il.* 18.512 (= 22.121); *Od.* 13.103 (= 347); 4.606; *H. Apoll.* 286, 521, 529; *Theog.* 67; *Op.* 63.

29 Cf. above, section 2.1.3: Χαρίτων ἄπο κάλλος ἔχουσα/.

30 Cf. above, section 2.2.6: ἐυπλόκαμος ἰκέλη χ[ρ]υσοῦ Ἄφρο[δ]ίτη/.

31 Although numbers 13 and 14 are not paralleled in the Homeric and other Hesiodic poems, the notion of competing with the gods in respect of beauty is expressed, for example, at *Od.* 5.213 (θνητὰς ἀθανάτησι δέμας καὶ εἶδος ἐρίζειν/).

The evidence of the epithets and phrases listed above indicates that the poet may, in some cases, have carefully chosen his words and consciously manipulated the epic tradition to produce a particular effect. A somewhat different approach to the question may provide further signs that he is doing this. It has already been noted that at least two epithets seem to be attracted to the environment of particular names, though their deployment in the verse has been modified (see above, section 1.14 and 18). Examination of the poet's treatment of women who are dealt with elsewhere in early epic should reveal the extent to which descriptions of specific individuals have been dictated by the formulaic language of the tradition.

[3] *Women dealt with by both Homer and the Catalogue-poet*

The subjects for comparison are limited in number and appear, for the most part, in the catalogue of women seen by Odysseus in the underworld (*Od.* 11.225–332). The hero meets the shades of his mother and thirteen other women from various parts of the Greek world. Four of these (Tyro, Alkmene, Leda, and Chloris) also appear in the extant fragments of the Hesiodic work with some sort of description intact or reasonably reconstructed. In addition, Chloris' daughter Pero is named in both poems, as is Agamemnon's wife Klytaimestra.

[3.1] *Chloris*

Od. 11. 281–2 Καὶ Χλωῶριν εἶδον περικαλλέα, τὴν ποτε Νηλεὺς
γῆμεν ἐὸν διὰ κάλλος, ...

Cat. 33a. 7 Χλωῶριν ἐ]ύζωνον θαλερὴν ποιήσατ' ἄκ[οιτιν.

[3.2] *Pero*

Od. 11. 287–8 τοῖσι δ' ἐπ' ἰφθίμην Πηρῶ τέκε, θαῦμα βροτοῖσι,
τὴν πάντες μνώοντο περικτίται ...

Cat. 37. 8 Πηρῶ δ' [ἠ]ύκομος ...

The fragments of the *Catalogue* do not preserve extensive descriptions of Chloris and Pero. The beauty which Homer attributes to them is expressed

differently by the Hesiodic poet, though still by means of traditional epithets (see above, section 1.7 and 14).

[3.3] *Leda*

Od. 11. 298 τὴν Τυνδαρέου παράκοιτιν,
Cat. 23a. 8 Λήδη ἐ[υπλόκαμος ἰκέλη φαέεσσι] σελήνης/

Leda is described by Odysseus merely as the wife of Tyndareus. Elsewhere her name is accompanied by the traditional epithets πότνια and καλλίσφυρος (*Hymns* 17.3 and 33.2).

The Hesiodic poet, comparing Leda to the shining rays of the moon, appears to have employed a particularly striking image, which is found only here and at *fr.* 252.4, in the so-called *Megalai Ehoiai*.

[3.4] *Tyro*

Od. 11. 235 εὐπατέρειαν/
 236 Σαλμωνῆος ἀμύμονος ἔκγονος--/
 258 βασίλεια γυναικῶν/
Cat. 30. 24 φίλη μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι/
 25 Τυρῶ ἐυπλόκαμος ἰκέλη χρ[υ]σῆ Ἄφροδῖτη/ἰτ[η]/
 31 ἥβης πολυηράτου ἐς τέλος ἦλθεν/
 33-34 οὐνεκ' ἄρ' εἶδος
 πασῶν προὔχεσκε γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων.

Homer describes Tyro in terms of her noble birth and as a queen among women. Again, however, the *Catalogue*-poet uses additional, though nonetheless Homeric, epithets to emphasize her beauty. Moreover, it has been noted above that the use of the epithet ἐυπλόκαμος together with the phrase ἰκέλη χρυσῆ Ἄφροδίτη is not found elsewhere; the expression φίλη μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι, which is found only here in the feminine, usually appears in somewhat different contexts; and although the verse-end γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων is common, its use in a comparison with other women is not (*cf.*, for example, *Od.* 11.386). Thus, the Hesiodic poet has not been constrained to use a particular description of Tyro, but he has used traditional diction to put his own emphasis on her attributes.

[3.5] *Alkmene*

<i>Od.</i> 11. 266	Ἄμφιτρώνος ἄκοιτιν/
<i>Cat.</i> 193. 19	χάρμα γο[νεῦσι/
195sc.4–10	ἦ ῥα γυναικῶν φύλον ἐκαίνυτο θηλυτεράων εἶδει τε μεγέθει τε, νόον γε μὲν οὐ τις ἔριζε τάων ἄς θνηταὶ θνητοῖς τέκον εὐνηθεῖσαι. τῆς καὶ ἀπὸ κρήθεν <u>βλεφάρων τ' ἄπο κυανεάων</u> τοῖον ἄηθ' οἷόν τε <u>πολυχρύσου Ἄφροδίτης</u> . ἦ δὲ καὶ ὥς <u>κατὰ θυμὸν</u> ἔδον τίεσκεν ἄκοιτην, ὥς οὐ πῶ τις ἔτισε <u>γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων</u> .
195sc. 14,46	αἰδοίη παρακοίτι/
31	ἐυζώνιοι γυναικός/
16	ἐυσφύρου Ἥλεκτρύωνης/
35	τανισφύρου Ἥλεκτρύωνης/

Homer employs a common verse-end formula to describe Alkmene as the wife of Amphitryon. She is also named without an epithet or description at *Il.* 14.323, 19.9 and 19.119; and at *Od.* 2.119–20, together with Tyro and Mykene, she is described as one of the *εὐπλοκαμίδες* (fair-haired Achaeans).

The Hesiodic lines in the *ehoia* of Alcmene are indeed constructed of traditional phrases, but the large number of them, together with the unique combinations, produces an impressive description of a woman whose qualities of beauty, intelligence, and virtue surpasses everyone else's.³²

32 In the excerpt from fragment 195 (lines 4–10) the underlined expressions are those for which verbatim parallels may be found in the Homeric poems:

εἶδει τε μεγέθει τε:	<i>Od.</i> 6.152; <i>H. Ven.</i> 85 (<i>accusative</i>)
πολυχρύσου Ἄφροδίτης:	<i>H. Ven.</i> 1, 9
κατὰ θυμὸν:	<i>e.g. Od.</i> 1.29; 4.187
γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων:	<i>Od.</i> 11.386; 23.166; <i>H. Cer.</i> 119, 167, 222

We note with interest that οὐ τις ἔριζε is not used by Homer in the context of comparing feminine attributes (*cf. Od.* 8.371: no one can challenge the dancing skills of the two Phaeacians Halios and Laodamas); and *βλεφάρων τ' ἄπο* is twice used for *tears* in the *Odyssey* (14.129 and 23.33).

The words in line 4 are found in Homer but with significant variation, *e.g.* *φύλα γυναικῶν* is found at the end of *Il.* 9.130 and *γυναικῶν θηλυτεράων* is common as a line-end (see above).

For the other epithets see above, sections 1.7, 1.13, 1.12.

[3.6] *Klytaimestra*

In the *Odyssey*, Klytaimestra is described by the epithet δολόμητις at the end of the verse (*Od.* 11.422); δῖα at the beginning (*Od.* 3.266). Although the *Catalogue*-poet relates that Orestes killed his mother (μητέρα ὑπερήνορα) because she murdered his father, Klytaimestra's name is accompanied only by adjectives that pertain to her appearance: κυανῶπις (*fr.* 23a.14, 27), which is not found in Homer in this form; and βοῶπις (*fr.* 23a.9), which is an Homeric epithet (see above, sections 1.5 and 1.6). Both of these occur at a line-position that would easily accommodate the epithet δολόμητις. Finally we are also told that Agamemnon married her because of her beauty (ἔδν διὰ κάλλος, an epic formula, see *Od.* 11.282).

In all of the above cases the *Catalogue* shows a marked emphasis on the god-like beauty, skill, and intelligence of the heroine in question. At least two other women, who do not appear in the Homeric poems, are described in *fr.* 43a with the same emphases that are applied to Tyro, Alkmene, and Klytaimestra.

Mestra, daughter of Erysichthon, is not only known for her intelligence (line 9 — πικρινὰ [φ]ρεσὶ μήδε' ἰδ[υ]-), but she is also Χαρίτων ἀμαρύγματ' ἔχουσα (line 4) and κούρην ἐλικώπιδα κ[αλλ]ιπάρηον (line 19). The significance of these phrases has already been discussed above (2.3.11 and 2.2.8)

Eurynome is very distinguished:

Cat. 43a.70–74 Ἰο θυγάτηρ Πανδιονίδαο
 ἦ]ν ἔργα διδάξατο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη
]εουσα, νόεσκε γὰρ ἴσα θεῆισι
 τῆς καὶ ἀπὸ χροῖτῆς ἠδ' εἴματος ἀργυφέοιο
]θεοῦ χαρίεν τ' ἀπὸ εἶδος ἤτο·

In lines that are reminiscent of, but not identical to those that refer to Alkmene, we are told that she rivals the gods in her wisdom and has a divine glow emanating from every aspect of her person.

Within the context of epic poetry and the notion of an heroic age it is not surprising that the women in the *Catalogue* are described as they are. The epic genre provided the Hesiodic poet with a great store of formulas to describe the exceptional men and women of that special era. Nevertheless, there is evidence that some of these have been adapted and manipulated in order to emphasize the extraordinary attributes of this poem's heroines. Furthermore, the poet's treatment of those individuals who occur elsewhere in early epic appears to be more specific and rather more expansive; and the

example of Mestra and Eurynome suggests that this sort of handling is the norm. Such utilization of the traditional language must reflect the poet's desire to create a particular effect. He has clearly underlined that it was women *such* as these who attracted the amorous attention of the gods. These are the sort of women who lived at the time when mortals interacted freely with immortals and the great heroes of Greek myth were born.

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