Brothers in Arms: 'Fictive Kinship' among the *Iliad*'s Greeks and Trojans

Questions of how the *Iliad* represents the differences between the Greeks and the Trojans go back to the scholia (e.g. Σ *Il.* 17.220-32 bT: 'let us compare the barbarian *êthos* with the Greek'), and recent work has drawn out how the epic consistently presents distinctions between the two groups on a variety of levels (Hall 1989: 21-32; Mackie 1996 on speech; Elmer 2013 on politics). Despite much excellent work on Homeric kinship (Donlan 2007 for an overview), little has been done to distinguish the family structures of the Greeks and Trojans, other than noting Priam's exceptional polygyny. In this paper, I demonstrate one such difference: namely, a) how 'fictive kinship' ties – that is, relationships similar to blood ties (Pitt-Rivers 1977) – are only found among the Greeks, while b) Trojans are more likely to have similar close relationships with more distant relatives.

First, I analyze the explicit cases where a non-blood relative is welcomed into the household and given the status similar to that of a blood relative; it turns out that the "suppliant exile" motif (Schlunk 1976) is confined to the Greeks. The case of Lycophron (15.430-441) is typical. The narrator explains how he "lived with [Ajax]" (παρ' αὐτῷ / ναῖ'), and Ajax himself says that he resided "in our household" (ἐν μεγάροισι). Furthermore, speaking to his half-brother Teucer, Ajax compares his relationship with Lycophron to that with a parent: "one we honored as we honored our beloved parents" (ἶσα φίλοισι τοκεῦσιν ἐτίομεν). These dual criteria – residence within the household and the comparison to a family relationship – are found as well in the cases of Phoenix (9.479-84), Patroclus (23.85-90; cf. 16.7-10, 23.222-3), and to a lesser extent Epeigeus (16.571-4), all received by Peleus.

Second, I show how similar kinds of relationships among the Trojans are not given the same fictive kinship status; rather Trojans organize their extended relationships on other lines,

particularly marriage ties and distant blood relationships. Priam hosts Imbrios, a son-in-law of an illegitimate daughter (13.176), and his nephew Melanippus (15.551) at his house much like Greek fictive ties. A crucial example is Othryoneus (13.363-382). When he comes to Troy he is treated as a prospective son-in-law to Priam, yet until the marriage is conducted he is not offered honorary kin status: he is offered the hand of Cassandra, but (apparently) is not welcomed into the household nor given kin status.

Third, I show how in contrast to fictive kinship between entirely unrelated persons, Trojans are more likely to use these kinship terms to 'upgrade' more distant relationships to more significant kin. While both Greeks and Trojans occasionally honor illegitimate sons or grandsons with comparisons to legitimate sons (Trojans: 5.71, 11.223; Greeks: 8.283-4, 16.192; cf. also 9.142-3), Trojans use kinship language more widely: Hector calls cousins κασίγνητοι (15.545), and Priam honors Imbrios and Melanippus "like children." In this sense, Andromache's famous comparison of Hector to her father, mother, and brother (6.429-30) is characteristically Trojan, and more surprisingly Helen's comparison of Priam as "like a father" (24.770) likewise is.

I close by briefly considering the consequences of the paper for our reading of the famous simile of Priam as he approaches Achilles in his tent (24.480-2). Edwards wrote of the 'shock effect' in the role reversal between Achilles and Priam (Edwards 1987: 107): Achilles is the murderer, not Priam. But the reversal goes further: in comparing the Trojan Priam to a man seeking a new home with the 'man of substance' – a fundamentally un-Trojan thing to do – the narrator further underscores how exceptional Priam's visit to Achilles is.

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