THE *HODOS* IN *ODYSSEY* 12

4.1 *Odyssey* 12: Rhetorical Schema of the *hodos*

4.1.1 Rhetorical Schema of the hodos

What does the analysis set out in the previous chapter mean for Circe's second *hodos*, the one she details in *Odyssey* 12? The overarching task of this chapter will be to analyse *Od*. 12.39–141 using the tools introduced and the framework developed in the Chapter 3.

The dramatic scenario in which Circe spells out this *hodos* is well-known. Odysseus has returned from the Underworld to attend to the bones of the hapless Elpenor. But he is also, from a narrative perspective, still empty-handed; Tiresias has not in fact provided the directions home that Odysseus needs, and it therefore falls to Circe to designate the actual itinerary of his journey home.[1] She greets the returning voyagers with characteristic hospitality, and then, dispatching the ship's crew, pledges to Odysseus: 'I shall indicate the *hodos* and sign out each [of the road-marks]' (αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ δείξω ὁδὸν ἠδὲ ἕκαστα σημανέω, *Od*. 12.25–26).[2] With a minimum of preliminaries, she then launches into the business of doing just this.

In fact, in the catalogic discourse that follows (*Od*. 12.27–141), we find precisely what our study of the *hodos* enumerated by Athena to Telemachus in *Odyssey* 1 would lead us to

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[1] As discussed by e.g. Nagler (1980), Peradotto (1990), and de Jong (2001). For the implications of this point in respect to the best way to analyse the structure of the *Apologoi*, see Ch. 6 below.

[2] See Ch. 6 below for the link between its usage here and the use of the word *sēma* by Parmenides' goddess in Fr. 8.

expect. There, we saw that: (a) the temporal adverbs and particle combinations πρῶτα μὲν ... κεῖθεν δὲ ... δὴ ἔπειτα enumerated entries in the catalogue of the *hodos*-itinerary; (b) the sequence of this discursive enumeration tracked the underlying movement in the story-world from destination to destination to be undertaken in the future by Telemachus; (c) the destinations themselves were marked by the lexical items -δε and εἰς; and (d) the events that made up the core of the narrative were expressed in verbs in the aorist, often in the imperative mood (and in the second person). What we find in *Odyssey* 12 is fundamentally the same constellation of features, though with a few small modifications; for example, the second person imperatives have been replaced by second person futures. Circe begins (*Od.* 12.39):

> Σειρῆνας μὲν <u>πρῶτον</u> <u>ἀφίξεαι</u>.
>
> First you will come to the Sirens.

And introduces the Cattle of the Sun (*Od.* 12.127):

> Θρινακίην δ᾽ ἐς νῆσον <u>ἀφίξεαι</u>.
>
> But then you will come to the island of Thrinacia.

Between these moments, a section introduced by the following lines intervenes immediately after the Sirens episode ends (*Od.* 12.55–58):

> <u>αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ</u> τάς γε παρὲξ ἐλάσωσιν ἑταῖροι,
> <u>ἔνθα</u> τοι οὐκέτ᾽ <u>ἔπειτα</u> <u>διηνεκέως</u> ἀγορεύσω,
> ὁπποτέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς
> θυμῷ βουλεύειν· <u>ἐρέω</u> δέ τοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν.
>
> But then indeed after your companions have passed by the Sirens,
> What follows there I shall no longer narrate piece by piece
> Which of two possibilities will in fact be your *hodos*, but
> Consider this carefully yourself: I shall tell you both from this point.

Here, too, the textual progression along temporal lines is marked through the cluster αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δή. The sequence of the textual progression and the sequence of places to be visited in the voyage

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are correlated with the story-world that Circe narrates to Odysseus: the 'what place comes next on the *hodos*' (ἔνθα) is coordinated with the 'what comes next in the narration' (ἔπειτα διηνεκέως ἀγορεύσω).

This is as we would expect from the rhetorical schema governed by the figure of the *hodos*. We will in due course be able to examine the portion where Circe presents the choice. First, however, and by way of clarifying the patterns that define the other two discursive units (which will then give us a framework for examining the portion where the choice can be found), we will move to the level of types of dependence to examine how the discursive units marked out by this constellation of adverb and particle clusters, tense-aspect-mood-person configurations, and the relationship between narrated movement through space and discursive patterning are organized internally: that is, at the level of dependence.

4.1.2 Levels of Dependence

4.1.2.1 The Sirens and Thrinacia

As expected, a brief narrative link (*Od.* 12.39a, 12.127a) connecting catalogue entries creates a frame from which

Table 4.1 *Preliminary division of* Od. *12.39–141 by discourse-units*[3]

	Sirens	Choice: Two Roads (and Two Rocks)	Cattle of the Sun
Lines	39–54	55–126	127–41

[3] See Section 4.2.1 below, where this term will be discussed further. As a preliminary point, it will be seen that my analysis diverges from de Jong (2001) 297–98. I am interested *inter alia* in the relationship between discursive units, narrative units, and story units, a relationship that de Jong's discussion precludes by taking the 'episode' (never defined) as the unquestioned base unit of analysis.

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first description (*Od.* 12.39b–46, 127b–36), then further nar-
ration (in the form of instruction – *Od.* 12.47–54, 137–41)
depend (see Table 4.1). It is these relations we will now
examine at further length.

The first and last of these discourse-units are as follows (*Od.*
12.39–54, 127–41):

Σειρῆνας μὲν πρῶτον ἀφίξεαι,

                     αἵ ῥά τε πάντας
ἀνθρώπους θέλγουσιν, ὅτις σφεας
     εἰσαφίκηται.
ὅς τις ἀιδρείῃ πελάσῃ καὶ φθόγγον
     ἀκούσῃ
Σειρήνων, τῷ δ᾽ οὔ τι γυνὴ καὶ νήπια
     τέκνα
οἴκαδε νοστήσαντι παρίσταται οὐδὲ
     γάνυνται,
ἀλλά τε Σειρῆνες λιγυρῇ θέλγουσιν
     ἀοιδῇ
ἥμεναι ἐν λειμῶνι, πολὺς δ᾽ ἀμφ᾽
     ὀστεόφιν θὶς
ἀνδρῶν πυθομένων, περὶ δὲ ῥινοὶ
     μινύθουσι.

ἀλλὰ παρεξελάαν, ἐπὶ δ᾽ οὔατ᾽
     ἀλεῖψαι ἑταίρων
κηρὸν δεψήσας μελιηδέα, μή τις ἀκούσῃ
τῶν ἄλλων· ἀτὰρ αὐτὸς ἀκουέμεν αἴ κ᾽
     ἐθέλῃσθα,
δησάντων σ᾽ ἐν νηὶ θοῇ χεῖράς τε
     πόδας τε
ὀρθὸν ἐν ἱστοπέδῃ, ἐκ δ᾽ αὐτοῦ
     πείρατ᾽ ἀνήφθω,
ὄφρα κε τερπόμενος ὄπ᾽ ἀκούσῃς
     Σειρήνοιιν.
εἰ δέ κε λίσσηαι ἑτάρους λῦσαί τε
     κελεύῃς,
οἱ δέ σ᾽ ἔτι πλεόνεσσι τότ᾽ ἐν δεσμοῖσι
     διδέντων.

Θρινακίην δ᾽ ἐς νῆσον ἀφίξεαι·

                 ἔνθα δὲ πολλαὶ
βόσκοντ᾽ Ἠελίοιο βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
ἑπτὰ βοῶν ἀγέλαι, τόσα δ᾽ οἰῶν πώεα
     καλά,
πεντήκοντα δ᾽ ἕκαστα. γόνος δ᾽ οὐ
     γίγνεται αὐτῶν,
οὐδέ ποτε φθινύθουσι. θεαὶ δ᾽ ἐπιποιμένες
     εἰσίν,
νύμφαι ἐυπλόκαμοι, Φαέθουσά τε
     Λαμπετίη τε,
ἃς τέκεν Ἠελίῳ Ὑπερίονι δῖα Νέαιρα.
τὰς μὲν ἄρα θρέψασα τεκοῦσά τε πότνια
     μήτηρ
Θρινακίην ἐς νῆσον ἀπῴκισε τηλόθι
     ναίειν,
μῆλα φυλασσέμεναι πατρώια καὶ ἕλικας
     βοῦς.
τὰς εἰ μέν κ᾽ ἀσινέας ἐάᾳς νόστου τε
     μέδηαι,
ἦ τ᾽ ἂν ἔτ᾽ εἰς Ἰθάκην κακά περ πάσχοντες
     ἵκοισθε·
εἰ δέ κε σίνηαι, τότε τοι τεκμαίρομ᾽
     ὄλεθρον,
νηί τε καὶ ἑτάροις· αὐτὸς δ᾽ εἴ πέρ κεν
     ἀλύξῃς,
ὀψὲ κακῶς νεῖαι, ὀλέσας ἄπο πάντας
     ἑταίρους.

First you will reach the Sirens,

         who charm all
Men, whoever happens to approach
    them.
And whosoever draws near to
    them in ignorance and hears the
    voice
Of the Sirens, neither this man's wife
    nor his little children
Will be at hand, delighted, as he
    returns home;
But the Sirens, enchanting him with
    their clear song,
Wait in their meadow, and there is
    a great heap of men
Rotting on their bones[4] as the skin
    withers around them.

But give a wide berth as you sail past,
    and anoint the ears of your
    crewmates
With beeswax kneaded soft, in order
    that none
Of them hear the singing. But should
you yourself wish to hear it,
Let them bind you hand and foot
    upright on the mast
Of the swift ship, the ropes made fast
    to the beam,
So that you may delight in hearing the
    voice of the Sirens.
And if you plead with your men,
    command them to untie you,
Let them bind you yet tighter still.

Then you will reach the island Thrinacia:

         and there the many
Cattle and sleek sheep of Helios pasture.
Seven herds of oxen, and as many fine
    flocks of sheep,
With fifty creatures in each herd. There is
    no begetting among them,
Nor do they ever perish. Their shepherds
    are goddesses,
Nymphs with beautiful braids, Phaëthousa
    and Lampetie,
Whom heavenly Neaera bore to Helios
    Hyperion.
Having given birth to them and raised
    them, their lordly mother
Sent them to the island Thrinacia to
    dwell far away
And guard their father's sheep and cattle
    with curved horns.

If you leave the cattle unharmed and
    keep your *nostos* in mind,
You may all yet make it to Ithaca, despite
    suffering ills.
But if you harm them, in that case
    I foresee destruction
For ship and crew; and even if you
    yourself survive,
You will return late and in bad condition,
    having destroyed all your
    companions.

    As expected, textual features characteristic of description are on abundant display in *Od*. 12.39b–46 and 127b–36: verbs are in the timeless/omnitemporal present indicative and in the third person

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[4] See again Stanford (1959) ad loc.

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(θέλγουσιν at 40 and 44, μινύθουσι at 46, βόσκοντο at 128, γίγνεται at 130, φθινύθουσι and εἰσίν at 131) or (stative) perfect (ἥμεναι at 45); the spatial adverb ἔνθα opens the descriptive portion at *Od.* 12.127; motion through the story-world (i.e. the future motion through it that Circe foretells) 'stops'; the 'statics of the world' – states of affairs and enduring properties – are presented, and qualities and properties attributed to objects and places.

Similarly, in lines 12.47–54 and 12.137–41, we find again what we would expect to find at this level of dependence; just as in *Odyssey* 10, Circe follows descriptions of the places that form the *hodos* with instructions about what to do there. Accordingly, we find several verbs in the imperative or (especially where conditional clauses are concerned) in the subjunctive or optative; similarly, these instruction sections feature verbs in the second person, rather than the third person of description sections.

In order to analyse these sections better, it will be useful to proceed by way of a very brief detour through scholarship concerning Homeric deliberation. In a major study of this and related topics, Christopher Gill highlights three features that are characteristic of Homeric deliberation.[5] First, Homeric deliberation often involves 'working out the implications of different courses of action'.[6] Second, this working out of implications involves a process by which an actor 'first entertains and then rejects a certain course of action; and the rejection is a crucial preliminary to the reaching of a conclusion'.[7] Third, these courses of action are often 'evaluate[d] . . . in light of explicit or implied goals' or in relation to a general rule;[8] so the thought pattern often adheres to the following form: 'if I do *x*, then *y* will happen, and this involves *z*, which is bad or good.'[9] Rachel Knudsen has identified two further features of Homeric deliberation: first, the conclusion of a chain of inferences often takes the form of an imperative or some other kind of instruction (something concerning actions, that is, rather than states of affairs); and, second, these

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[5] Gill (1998) esp. 41–60, Knudsen (2014); see also Section 3.1.2 and, also in Ch. 3, nn. 33–35.

[6] Gill (1998) 49–50; see Gill (1998) 49–54 for the entire discussion.

[7] Gill (1998) 50.

[8] Gill (1998) 54, and Gill (1998) 50–55 more generally.

[9] Gill (1998) 54.

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conclusions often come first and are linked to the supporting premises, which come after, by *gar* or *epei*.[10]

Returning to the Sirens, two points may be established. First, that Circe does not merely provide a set of detailed instructions for Odysseus (in the form of the imperatives); instead, she persistently justifies them by embedding them in a purposive or explanatory framework. The means by which she does so are grammatical: the purpose clause and the conditional construction.[11] Thus Circe's imperative: οὔατ᾽ ἀλεῖψαι ἑταίρων (*Od.* 12.47) is not expressed as some kind of divine injunction imposed from above; rather, she supplies a rationale in the form of the negative purpose clause: μή τις ἀκούσῃ | τῶν ἄλλων (*Od.* 12.48–49). As Knudsen suggests, it is the conclusion, expressed in the form of an imperative to an action, which comes first; as Gill leads us to expect, it is by virtue of thinking through (a) the implications of a course of action (b) in reference to a particular goal or end that each imperative is justified. So, too, her final instructions for Odysseus' encounter with the Sirens – οἱ δέ σ᾽ ἔτι πλεόνεσσι τότ᾽ ἐν δεσμοῖσι διδέντων (*Od.* 12.54) – forms the apodosis of a conditional clause: *if* you plead with your companions to release you, *then* let them bind you tighter still. In the first instance, Circe establishes the explanatory relationship between her instructions and the rationale behind them in the form of a purpose clause: her instructions (anointing the ears of Odysseus' crew) represent a good way to achieve a particular outcome (preventing them from hearing the Sirens' song and, ultimately, being seduced by it). In the second, she uses a conditional clause to articulate something akin to a causal relationship: an effect to be triggered in the event that a given condition is met. We even see a chain of explanatory argument evolve in

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[10] Knudsen (2014) 41–76, esp. e.g. 48–49, 42–43 for the respective points. For the role played by *epei*, see Ch. 3, n. 37 above. The position of the 'conclusion' first, and its justification or support second has been much noted; see Ch. 3, nn. 37 and 38 above for bibliography.

[11] For a contemporary analysis of the place of the purpose clause in action theory, see e.g. Thompson (2008) 85–88, esp. 87–88. Particularly interesting is the importance of the question 'Why?' (see Ch. 3, n. 34 above) in tracing out the rationale behind the performance of (or, in Circe's case, imperative to) certain actions. This 'Why?' question is what we find in *Odyssey* 12's third level of 'types of dependence' (but not its sister passage in the *hodos* of *Odyssey* 10) and what we will find in Parmenides' fragments 2 and 8 (though not, so far as we can discern, in the Milesian cosmologists – see discussion in Section 6.1, '*Sēma* I' below).

the linkage between the two (12.49–52): Circe locates her instruction in the apodosis of a conditional clause, and this apodosis triggers its own purpose clause – *if* what you want is to hear the Sirens, have your men bind you to the mast *in order to* hear the song of the Sirens and take delight in it (without being fatally waylaid by their seductive song).

The second point is that if it seems natural, even obvious, that Circe should account for her instructions to Odysseus, the first *hodos* she details (in *Odyssey* 10) suggests otherwise. There she outlines a series of places Odysseus will need to pass through *en route* to Hades, giving a detailed series of instructions about what to do when he has arrived at the rock where Acheron receives its tributaries. Those instructions, however, are simply instructions (*Od.* 10.516–25):

ἔνθα δ' ἔπειθ', ἥρως, χριμφθεὶς πέλας, ὥς σε <u>κελεύω</u>,
βόθρον <u>ὀρύξαι</u>, ὅσσον τε πυγούσιον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα,
ἀμφ' αὐτῷ δὲ χοὴν <u>χεῖσθαι</u> πᾶσιν νεκύεσσιν,
πρῶτα μελικρήτῳ, μετέπειτα δὲ ἡδέι οἴνῳ,
τὸ τρίτον αὖθ' ὕδατι· ἐπὶ δ' ἄλφιτα λευκὰ <u>παλύνειν</u>.
πολλὰ δὲ <u>γουνοῦσθαι</u> νεκύων ἀμενηνὰ κάρηνα,
ἐλθὼν εἰς Ἰθάκην στεῖραν βοῦν, ἥ τις ἀρίστη,
ῥέξειν ἐν μεγάροισι πυρήν τ' ἐμπλησέμεν ἐσθλῶν,
Τειρεσίῃ δ' ἀπάνευθεν ὄιν ἱερευσέμεν οἴῳ
παμμέλαν', ὃς μήλοισι μεταπρέπει ὑμετέροισιν.

But there, hero, go close in and do as I tell you:
Dig a pit, about a cubit in each direction,
And pour around it drink offerings for the dead:
First, honey mixed with milk, and then sweet wine,
And in the third place, water, and over this sprinkle white barley.
And promise many times to the strengthless heads of the dead
That when you return to Ithaca, a barren cow, whichever is your best,
You will slaughter in your palace, and pile the pyre with fine gifts,
And sacrifice just for Tiresias an all-black
Ram, the one conspicuous in your flocks.

Indicators, syntactical or semantic, articulating explanatory, purposive, or intentional relationships justifying these instructions are completely absent: Odysseus is simply supposed to *do* the things she tells him to do. The contrast between these two 'instruction' segments depending from the 'description' sections

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(the first bare instructions, the second embedded within a framework of inferential justification) suggests we might do well to call this section not only 'instruction' (as does de Jong), but even 'justified instruction' – or even, according to the terminology set out in Section 3.1.2, 'argument'.

The Thrinacia episode develops this penchant for examination and explanation. Recall Gill's observation that in Homeric deliberation, the deliberating character often 'entertains and then rejects a certain course of action; and the rejection is a crucial preliminary to the reaching of a conclusion'.[12] Common to *Od.* 12.47–54 and 12.137–41 is the use of conditional clauses, though the differences between them in the Sirens episode and those related to Thrinacia are striking. In the first case, the conditional sentences are geared towards attaining a certain set of outcomes – to hear the Sirens and not be destroyed by doing so. By contrast, the three conditional clauses in the Thrinacia episode examine the terms and consequences of a single choice. Two mutually exclusive possibilities are presented: *either* Odysseus and his men can leave the cattle unharmed, *or* they can harm the cattle – plainly they cannot *both harm and not harm* the same cattle (the point is driven home by the binary pair ἀσινέας/σίνηαι, 12.137, 139).[13] What is more, these choices are presented as exhaustive: these two options are plainly the only two conceivable options. In the first case the outcome is clear: *nostos* for all. Not so the second case; again deploying the framework of the conditional clause, Circe examines two possible consequences resulting from the second course of action. That Odysseus' men will perish and his ship will be destroyed is expressed unequivocally (τεκμαίρομαι),[14] but 'even if' (εἰ . . . κεν . . .) Odysseus happens to survive, he will be much delayed and will return in grievous circumstances (139–41). And although Circe does not explicitly reject one of the two courses of action, the way in which she establishes the implications of each strongly suggests the undesirability of one – 'a crucial preliminary to the reaching of a conclusion'.[15]

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[12] Gill (1998) 50.
[13] Discussed by Benardete (1997). See e.g. Wakker (1994) 120–25, 400–12 for much more general comments on the disjunctive nature of the Greek conditional clause.
[14] See here Peradotto (1990) 67 n. 6.
[15] Gill (1998) 50.

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4.1.2.2 *Levels of Dependence in* Odyssey *12: The Relationship between 'Description' and 'Instruction'/'Argument'*

We see, then, that the two 'description' passages fulfil two of the basic roles the study of narrative has typically assigned to description: to introduce the places, objects, characters, and so forth that are to feature in a given narrative segment,[16] and to make this world and its components vivid.[17] This pair of functions is particularly vital at this stage in the narrative, located as we are in the fantasy world of the *Apologoi*. Since Pylos and Sparta, Nestor and Menelaus need rather a different introduction from, say, the Sirens, the scenario is quite different from what we saw in *Odyssey* 1;[18] in the fantasy world of the *Apologoi*,[19] a world must be formed anew each time the next island-episode appears on the horizon, its story-universe invented and peopled with characters, filled with objects. The two 'instruction' or 'argument' subsets of the Siren and Thrinacia episodes, meanwhile, reveal a persistent tendency on the part of the goddess to justify or provide explanations for the instructions she offers, and an interest in examining the relationship between action and outcome, decision and consequence.

With this in mind, we may propose the following relationship between *Od.* 12.39b–46 and 12.47–54, and 12.127b–36 and 12.137–41, respectively. The descriptive passages each (a) introduce the setting and *dramatis personae*, then (b) hone in

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[16] See Bal (2009) 31–47, esp. 36; also Hamon and Baudoin (1981), de Jong (2011b), and Koopman (2018) 32–38. Nor are these modern considerations out of place in the world of Homeric poetics. As Scodel (2002) 91–92 puts it, descriptions of the sort in question here 'do not provide information irrelevant now but useful later, as modern exposition does, nor do they compensate for possible ignorance in the audience. Instead they create the so-called *reality effect*, locating the action precisely in a landscape'. See also Minchin (2001) 101.

[17] Especially if we wish to tap into the specifically Greek conception of *enargeia*, for which see e.g. Bakker (1997) and Bakker (1993a).

[18] Though see e.g. Foley (1999) and Foley (2010) for the general question concerning the degree to which episodes in the *Apologoi* represent traditional material, well-known to the audience, that is merely reworked in the poem we have; likewise Reinhardt (1996), Kirk (1962), Hopman (2012), Burgess (2012); for a comprehensive bibliography of this question from the perspective of Analytic/Unitarian polemics, see Heubeck (1989) 4–7; for bibliography and excellent analysis regarding the Sirens specifically, see Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) *ad* 39–54. See also Scodel (2002) 120.

[19] Which is 'an archipelago: built of a string of island episodes, each with its own closed internal topography, and cut off from communication with its neighbors by a sundering sea … a place without human landmarks', as Lowe (2000) 135 aptly puts it.

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immediately on the most pertinent details, which (c) are examined through a kind of embedded narrative that directly or indirectly sets up the 'instruction/argument' passages that follow.[20] Particularly deft in this last respect is the failed *nostos* Circe presents in miniature in the Sirens episode. She does this through the syntactical resource of the indefinite general relative clause (*hos tis*, *Od.* 12.41–43), which allows her to set out one of the two key considerations to be negotiated in the following 'instruction': that the Sirens' song is so seductive that it prevents passing sailors from fulfilling their *nostoi* and rejoining their wives and children. In the Thrinacia episode, this means introducing the cattle, adumbrating their number,[21] their extraordinary qualities (*Od.* 12.130–32), and the degree to which the Sun god cares about them (*Od.* 12.132–36).

This judicious dispensation of details laying the groundwork for narration to come might simply be thought a mark of good storytelling. Richardson writes: 'Homer is not interested so much in the object of the description as he is in its effect on the particular scene, and he therefore feels no need to describe the setting for its own sake but only on those occasions when it matters.'[22] But this narrative strategy should not be taken for granted. As we saw in the case of Circe's first *hodos*, instructions issued by the goddess, however vital, need not necessarily be preceded by much in the way of preparatory description; just because a place or object 'matters', that is, does not guarantee that it will be presented to the audience prior to 'mattering'. In the episodes that bookend Circe's second *hodos*, however, her instructions and the justification she provides for them are scrupulously anticipated by details introduced in the preceding descriptive sections.

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[20] It may also lay the groundwork for elements of Odysseus' actual encounters with the creatures and places described; see Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) *ad* 39–54, *ad* 47; the introduction of Lampetia provides a narrative 'seed' – after the cattle are consumed, it is she who conveys this news to her father (*Od.* 12.374–75). See also Benardete (1997) 101.

[21] In which critics since at least Aristotle have seen an important symbolic charge; see e.g. Bakker (2013) 101–08; Garcia (2013) 240–42; Buchan (2004) 155–61.

[22] S. Richardson (1990) 50; see 50–69 for 'setting description'. This now seems to represent the scholarly consensus. In addition to n. 16 above, see e.g. de Jong (2011a) 21; de Jong (2011a) 33; Minchin (2001) 101, 119; Minchin (1999). For the *Iliad*, see also Clay (2011a) 101 n. 17.

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If details that matter need not necessarily be introduced but are in *Od.* 12.39–46 and 12.127–36, Richardson's general formulation does only partial justice to the sophisticated use to which the details that 'matter' are put in the instruction/argument sections of *Od.* 12.47–54 and 12.137–41. Details are not introduced in the first sections merely to make a brief cameo in the second before Circe moves on; rather, they are carefully placed in an intentional and purposive framework, or examined in terms of their modality and the matrix of possible consequences that can issue from them. Circe does not simply say 'put wax in your men's ears and have them tie you to the mast' as she does 'dig a pit of so many cubits, perform this ritual in this sequence, make such and such a vow' (*Od.* 10.516–25). Instead, in her instructions to act a certain way, Circe explicitly addresses the question, 'Why?', and her discourse, teeming with purpose and conditional clauses, bears the mark of this rationalization.[23]

We may summarize the type of dependence between the description and instruction/argument sections in the following way. In the episode of the Sirens and of Thrinacia, Circe's descriptive sections serve both to create a world within which the narrative actions are located and to anchor this world in a sense of reality; they also hone in on specific elements of this world that are often of direct significance for the instructions that follow on from them; and, finally, these details serve as the evidence that provides a basis for the instructions issued, and upon which they are justified (or create a consequential framework surrounding the different stances Odysseus and his men might take in relation to them). These observations will also provide a useful starting point for an examination of the intervening passages, in which the Planctae, Scylla, and Charybdis feature.

4.2 *Krisis*

4.2.1 *Rhetorical Schemata*

If analysing *Od.* 12.39–54 and 12.127–41 can be done rather neatly, how best to analyse the different units that make up *Od.*

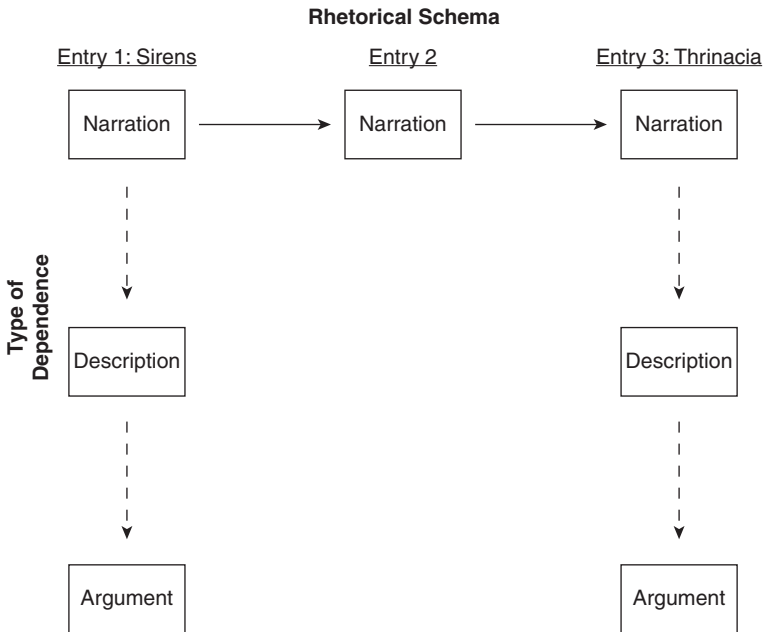
[23] See Ch. 3, n. 34 above.

Rhetorical Schema

Figure 4.1 Preliminary analysis: Discursive organization governed by the figure
of the *hodos* in *Odyssey* 12

12.55–126 is more challenging. De Jong's commentary, generally
a reliable starting point, is misleading or inaccurate in a number of
ways when it comes to this passage. For example, lines 12.108–10
and 124–26 are inexplicably assigned to Charybdis, not Scylla; the
first half of line 12.73 addresses not only Scylla, but both Scylla
and Charybdis; lines 12.81b–82 are plainly not descriptive.[24] One
suspects that these uncharacteristic inaccuracies stem from de
Jong's decision to use the individual characters or places – viz.
the Sirens, the Planctae, Scylla, Charybdis, Thrinacia – as the base
units ('episodes') of her analysis. While this is appropriate for the
Sirens (12.39–54) and Thrinacia (12.127–41), where the segmen-
tation of the text (that is, of the narrative or plot) corresponds to the
discrete places where Odysseus will arrive, in lines 12.55–126
something else is going on.

[24] De Jong (2001) 297–98.

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As noted, *Od.* 12.55–58 fits the model of 'prior narration', the top unit in the levels of dependence:

αὐτὰρ ἐπὴν δὴ τάς γε παρὲξ ἐλάσωσιν ἑταῖροι,
ἔνθα τοι οὐκέτ' ἔπειτα διηνεκέως ἀγορεύσω,
ὁπποτέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς
θυμῷ βουλεύειν· ἐρέω δέ τοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν.

But then indeed after your companions have passed by the Sirens,
What follows there I shall no longer narrate piece by piece
Which of two possibilities will in fact be your *hodos*, but
Consider this carefully yourself: I shall tell you both from this point.

Two recent studies on *autar* and *autar* + *epei*/*epeita*/*epēn* have made clear how these clusters of what are traditionally classed as particles and conjunctions are better understood as discourse markers that help speakers organize their discourse by parcelling it into distinct units.[25] Applying their findings to this portion of the *Odyssey*, we may say that αὐτὰρ ἐπήν would here mark the beginning of a new narration section. Similarly, we find typical markers of narrative activity, including three verbs in the future indicative ἀγορεύσω, ἐρέω, and ἔσσεται.[26] The cluster ἔπειτα διηνεκέως also marks the progression of the text along temporal lines. All the features of narration discussed above are in play here.

By contrast, very few of these narrative elements are found in 12.59–126. Instead, we find extensive stretches of description (to be examined shortly) introduced by the portentous phrase (*Od.* 12.57–58):

ὁπποτέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς
θυμῷ βουλεύειν· ἐρέω δέ τοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν.

These two *hodoi*, both of which she promises to enumerate, in fact introduce what amounts to 47.5 lines (12.59–106a) of description; verbs in this portion of the text overwhelmingly take the omni-temporal present, and nearly all the adverbs used are spatial (e.g.

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[25] Bonifazi (2008) 48; see ibid., pp. 48–51 for *autar* (*epei*/*epeita*/*epēn*). See also Bonifazi (2012) 234 for *autar*'s role 'marking . . . transitions to entirely new threads of discourse or to new narrative sections'.

[26] The first two verbs function at the pragmatic level of the plot and discourse organization, rather than the story narrated (the 'presentational' level in Bonifazi's typology; see also Ch. 3, n. 37 above).

enthen at 12.59; *entha* at 12.85; *tēi* ['past there'] at 12.62, 12.66; *tōi* ['in that place'] at 12.103, 12.104). The text proceeds along largely spatial lines, with little movement in 'story' time (barring one important exception, which we shall note shortly).[27] The function of these portions is clearly to introduce elements of the story-world and attribute qualities and attributes to them.

One major exception is a curiously ambiguous line and a half of plainly narrative language occurring at 12.81b–82, just after the first of the 'two rocks' (viz. Scylla's rock) is introduced (*Od.* 12.80–82):

> μέσσῳ δ᾽ ἐν σκοπέλῳ ἔστι σπέος ἠεροειδές,
> πρὸς ζόφον εἰς Ἔρεβος τετραμμένον, ᾗ περ ἂν ὑμεῖς
> νῆα παρὰ γλαφυρὴν ἰθύνετε, φαίδιμ᾽ Ὀδυσσεῦ.

> About halfway up [the first rock] there is a misty cave,
> Turned towards the dark, towards Erebus, past which you
> Shall steer your hollow ship, shining Odysseus.[28]

As the commentators note, ἰθύνετε is an aorist subjunctive; when combined with the ἂν in the environment of a prophecy, this has the force of something approaching a command.[29]

What are we to make of this? Lines 81b–82 (ᾗ ... Ὀδυσσεῦ) plainly cannot be designated as descriptive (as de Jong would have it): the textual features are not those of description, neither establishing features of the narrative world nor attributing qualities to the characters that populate it. Depending on how one interprets the force of the subjunctive + *an* construction in the context of a prophecy, this could either be a prior narration section, which would introduce a new unit, or an instruction section, which would close off an old unit, according to the analysis we have been undertaking so far (see Figure 4.2 below). Perhaps in this setting, however, the ambiguity is useful. We might do well to see the clause that spans the two lines as doing double duty: as instruction, it closes off the section that, as

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[27] It is worth clarifying that 'story time' as I use it here refers to the future moment of Odysseus' journey through the story space described, not the progress of time during the conversation between Circe and Odysseus on Aeaea – nor the progress of time in the Phaeacian court as Odysseus narrates.

[28] Translation after Stanford, who addresses the difficulties in line 81: Stanford (1959) *ad* 12.80–82.

[29] As Stanford *ad* 12.80–82 makes clear; see also 'Circe is indirectly advising Odysseus to choose this second route' (Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) *ad* 12.81–82), and Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) *ad* 12.108, Chantraine (1963) 210–11.
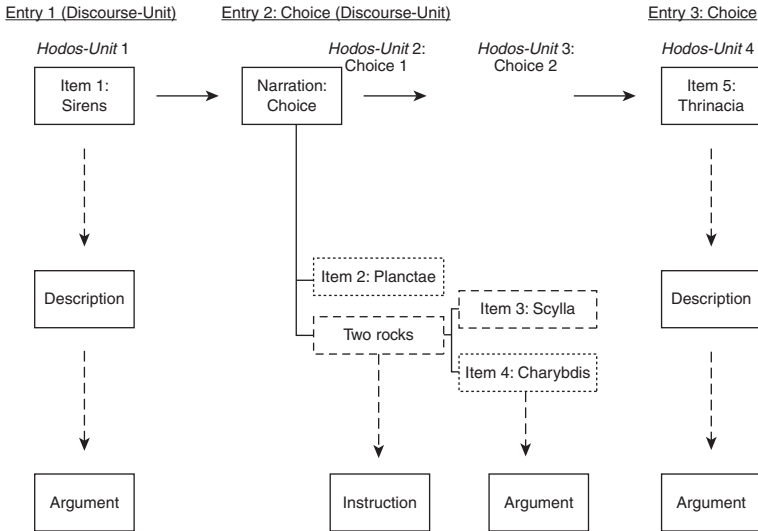
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Figure 4.2 Analysis of *Od*. 12.39–141 by discourse-unit, *hodos*-unit, and episode

we shall see, details a choice between the two 'routes', while as prior narration it opens a new kind of textual or discursive unit in which the two creatures, Scylla and Charybdis, are presented in high-descriptivity passages followed by instruction/argument (12.106b–10) concerning how best to address them.

A version of de Jong's schema modified to take these points into account might look like Table 4.2. On this reading, we can identify three possible units of analysis. The first would be *discursive units*, units of discourse parcelled out or marked off as discrete items by discourse markers on the surface of the text (clusters of adverbs and particles, here in combination with prior narration introducing the new unit and following a section of instruction closing the old units); these would be distinctions made at the level of discourse[30] and would here be coextensive with entries in the catalogue of Circe's *hodos*-itinerary (capitalized in Table 4.2). These units we may contrast with what we may still, following convention, call *episodes*, which would correspond to all the locations Circe mentions, regardless of whether

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[30] Specifically, the 'presentational level' (see Ch. 3, n. 37 above).

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she actually instructs Odysseus to visit them;[31] these episodes may revolve around particular characters (e.g. the Sirens) but they are ultimately tied to specific places (which number five, underlined in Table 4.2, and would include the Planctae and Charybdis (rejected by Circe)). Finally, we can identify a third category between these two, what we might call a '*hodos*-unit', which marks out a distinct node in the itinerary (based on the analysis of the level of dependence undertaken so far) that makes up the *hodos* enumerated in the catalogic discourse of Circe's prophecy. This level may be seen to bridge the underlying story-world and the level of discourse by capturing the way elements in the story-world are organized by discourse (these number four, in boldface in Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 *Preliminary analysis of* Od. *12.39–141*

Unit	Discourse mode	Lines
<u>SIRENS</u>	Prior Narration (PN)	39a ('you will first come to')
	Description	39b–46 (epic *te* in 39 and 44)
	Argument	47–54 (imperatival infinitives in 47, *bis*)
CHOICE	PN	55–57a ('I cannot tell you what your way will be')
Choice 1	Instruction	57b–58 (imperatival infinitive in 58)
Planctae	Description	59–72 (epic *te* in 62, 64)
Two Rocks	Description	73a
<u>Scylla</u>	Description	73b–81a
Choice 2/Scylla	Instruction(/PN)	81b–82
Scylla	Description	83–100
<u>Charybdis</u>	PN	101 ('you will see')
	Description	101–06a
Two Rocks	Argument	106b–110
(Scylla 2)	Description	118–20 (epic *te* in 90, 93, 99)
	Argument/PN	121–26
<u>THRINACIA</u>	PN	127a ('you will come to')
	Description	127b–136
	Argument + PN	137–41 ('if you do A, then you might/will . . .')

All caps = discourse-unit; bold = *hodos*-unit; underlined = episode.

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[31] Or, following the schema in Ch. 3, n. 37 above, the 'representational level'.

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Table 4.3 *Terms of analysis:* Od. *12.55–126*

	Defined by:	Nature:
Discourse-unit	Discourse marker	Textual unit
Hodos-unit	Status as node in itinerary	Textual unit tied to place/ character in story-world
Episode	Correspondence with geographical location	Tied to place/character in story-world

It is this level of analysis, the *hodos*-unit (see Table 4.3), that will provide the basis for the following discussion; breaking things down in this fashion allows us to glean a better insight into the two passages where choices are presented (12.57–82; 81–110, 115–26) and, by helping us better discern the shape of Circe's *hodos*, help us better analyse the discursive dynamics through which it is expressed. How, then, does this work in practice?

As we have seen, Circe disclaims the ability to instruct Odysseus, telling him she will present two options between which he must choose (12.57–58):

> ὁπποτέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται, ἀλλὰ καὶ αὐτὸς
> θυμῷ βουλεύειν· ἐρέω δέ τοι ἀμφοτέρωθεν.

The first of these two (and both ὁπποτέρη and ἀμφοτέρωθεν underscore the duality of the choice) is presented by lines beginning ἔνθεν μὲν γὰρ[32] πέτραι ἐπηρεφέες ('There on the one hand [are] steep rocks', 12.59). Notable is the spatial preposition *enthen* and the particle *men*, which open the door to an extended description of these steep rocks (12.59–72). The *men* is matched by the corresponding οἱ δὲ δύω σκόπελοι ('And on the other [are] the two rocks', 12.73), which in turn heads another portion of description (12.73–81a) where the first of these rocks is presented.

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[32] See analysis of *gar* in Slings (1997) under the heading 'PUSH' and Bakker (1997) 112–15 in terms of a 'syntax of movement' where an item in the path is singled out for a 'close-up' (89). Although Slings addresses later texts, the notion of a 'PUSH' expresses perfectly the shift from one level of dependence to another below it: in this case, from narration to description.

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Scrupulous symmetries characterize the two items presented in the harmonized balance of the *men . . . de . . .* clauses, as Hopman puts it:

> Circe's prophecy clearly constructs the Planctae and the straits of Scylla and Charybdis as parallel dangers. Both involve a narrow path located between cliffs made of smooth stone (*petrai*, 12.59, *lis petrē*, 12.64 [Planctae]; *petrē . . . lis*, 12.79 [Scylla]). Amphitrite, who otherwise appears only twice in the *Odyssey* (3.91 and 5.422), is mentioned in relation to both the Planctae and Scylla (12.60 and 97). Finally . . . a similar 'description by negation technique' is used to describe both hazards. Just as no dove would be able to go through the Planctae, not even a great archer could reach Scylla's cave with his arrows (12.62–4 and 12.83–84) . . . in Circe's speech, therefore, the Planctae are structurally and thematically comparable to the Straits of Scylla and Charybdis.[33]

In Bakker's view, as a general matter in Homer, the use of *men* ensures that the option introduced by the *de* clause is 'framed' in relation to the option in the *men* clause.[34] This 'framing' need not set up an antithetical relationship: '[a] speaker using *men*, looking forward to an upcoming statement with *de*, does not so much *presuppose* a common basis for conducting discourse as *establish* one'.[35]

Whereas units of discourse are mapped onto places one-to-one in the Sirens and Thrinacia episodes, in the course of the *hodos*-unit formed by the narration-description-instruction section spanning lines 12.57–82 we find *two* different geographic units, the Planctae and the Two Rocks. They are *not* introduced at the level of the narrative frame (the top level of dependence), but rather form two different entries placed in parallel at the second level of dependence, that of description.

Precisely the same dynamics are to be found in the course of lines *Od.* 12.73–106a, which relate Scylla and Charybdis to each other and describe them. The two are presented through a *men . . . de . . .* framing device (for Scylla's rock: ὁ μὲν οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἱκάνει | ὀξείῃ κορυφῇ at 12.73–74; for Charybdis: τὸν δ᾽ ἕτερον σκόπελον

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[33] Hopman (2012) 26–27. See also Danek (2002) 23.

[34] Bakker (1997) 79–85, 100–08. See Bakker (1997) 103–04 for the *men . . . de . . .* clauses at *Od.* 12.73–75, 101–02. For the more general point, see also Bakker (1993a) 12–15; Bakker (1993b) esp. 298–302.

[35] Bakker (1997) 81, emphasis original.

χθαμαλώτερον at 12.101)[36] at the level of description rather than narration.[37] What follows (*Od.* 12.73b–81a, 12.83–106a) is an extended description addressing the first option and then the second, the details of which are closely coordinated.[38] There is also one final point: an advantage of this line of analysis is that the *hodos*-units do not map one-to-one onto 'episodes'; as the confusion surrounding lines 73–81a make clear, it is entirely possible for one discrete place or character – Scylla and her rock, in this case – to be split across two different *hodos*-units in a way that analysing by episode does not allow for.

By way of linking the foregoing discussion to existing scholarship on ancient Greek thought, and also to pinpointing what makes this portion of the *Odyssey* distinctive, it is helpful to discuss these points in light of the Homeric phenomenon that Geoffrey Lloyd termed 'polar expressions', with which the relationship between the Planctae and the Two Rocks, and between Scylla and Charybdis, may seem to have much in common.[39] As Lloyd emphasizes, however, the unit that forms one half of a 'polar expression' can also often be paired with other units to form a 'polar expression' along a different axis; so, for example, 'openly' can be contrasted with either 'secretly' (ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ἦε κρυφηδόν, *Od.* 14.330) *or* 'by trickery' (ἠὲ δόλῳ ἢ ἀμφαδόν, *Od.* 1.296).[40] Furthermore, these polar opposites often admit of a third, intermediate option (or even a gradation of intermediate options): so soldiers need not be only either brave or cowardly, but can also be somewhere in between (μεσήεις, *Il.* 12.269).[41] By contrast, however, and very importantly, neither *hodos* of the two paired

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[36] See Bakker (1997) 103–04 for direct discussion of this *men . . . de . . .* pairing; see the works cited in n. 34 above for further discussion.

[37] Regarding Charybdis, strictly speaking she is introduced in line 12.101: τὸν δ' ἕτερον σκόπελον χθαμαλώτερον ὄψει, Ὀδυσσεῦ. This has a narrative element (ὄψει) which can be seen as parallel with the narrative element at lines 12.81–82. On the either/or relationship between Scylla and Charybdis, see esp. Reinhardt (1996) 99–104, also Saïd (2011) 170–71.

[38] Aspects of the language and 'zooming-in' technique of Scylla's presentation (12.73–100) have been seen to resemble the description of Tartarus in Hesiod's *Theogony* 720–819, a *locus classicus* for the spatially organized sequencing of descriptive passages arrayed in sequence; see e.g. Hopman (2012) 16–18.

[39] See Lloyd (1966) 90–94 for such expressions in Homer.

[40] Lloyd (1966) 92–93, 93 n. 1.

[41] Lloyd (1966) 93; he also cites *Od.* 15.70ff.

by Circe admit of another contrary to be substituted, as with 'openly/hidden' and 'openly/secretly'. No 'third *hodos*' is presented – nor does the possibility seem conceivable, unless one can rewrite the geography of the story-world. It is not only that one cannot travel both routes at the same time; it is also simply that, as presented, there do not exist any other possible routes if one wants to get from the Sirens' Meadow to Thrinacia. That the two *hodoi* are part of the physical space of the story-world is central not only to their *mutual exclusiveness* but also, that is, to the *exhaustive* nature of the dichotomy they form; as a convenient shorthand, we may also refer to this phenomenon of the exclusive exhaustive disjunction (where one cannot choose both options, or neither, but must choose one) between the two paths of a forked road as a *krisis*. The *krisis* will be a feature of enormous importance in Parmenides' poem.

With this analysis in hand, we can now identify a second kind of operation in the syntax of the *hodos* as a form of catalogic discourse. The focus has been on the *ordered sequentiality* according to which items form entries in the series of the catalogic discourse organized by the figure of the *hodos* (see Table 4.4a, b, c). In the *exclusive disjunction* or *krisis*, we see a second possible relationship that can obtain between two items of a *hodos*-itinerary within one unit of *hodos*-discourse, one that relates these two items in the story-world at the level of description, not narration.

4.2.2 Types of Dependence: Description and Argument in the krisis Section

This has implications at the level of types of dependence for sections of text that depend from the entries that make up the catalogue of the *hodos*. Compared to *Od*. 12.39–54 and 12.127–41, however, the dynamics of lines *Od*. 12.55–126 are subtly but critically distinct. Since in lines 12.55–126 it is the places themselves – as opposed to actions (e.g. to kill or not to kill the Cattle of the Sun) – that form the possible choices in question, in the scenario of the *krisis* it is the *nature of the places themselves* (as opposed to the actions one can or cannot perform there) that now commands the narrator's attention. The places themselves must be

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Table 4.4a *Organization by (possible) episodes (after de Jong)*

	Sirens	Planctae	Scylla	Charybdis	Thrinacia	?
Prior Narration	39a	–	–	101	127a	55–57a, 81b–82?
Description	39b–46	59–72	73b–81a, 83–100, 118–20	101–106a	127b–136	73a
Instruction/ Argument	47–54	–	–	106b–110, 121–26	137–41	57b–58?, 81b–82?

Table 4.4b *Organization by discourse-units/episodes visited*

	SIRENS	CHOICE						**THR.**
		(**Two Roads**)	~~Planet.~~	Two Rocks	(**Two Rocks**)	Scylla	~~Charyb.~~	
PN	39a	55–57a	–	–	81b–82	–	101	127a
Desc.	39b–46	–	59–72	73a (both), 73b–100 (first rock)	–	(73b–81a), 83–100, 118–20	101–106a	127b–136
Inst.	47–54	57b–58, 81b–82	–	–	106b–110, 121–26	–	–	137–41

All caps = discourse-unit; bold = *hodos*-unit; underlined = place visited; strike through = place not visited.

Table 4.4c *Organization by* hodos-*units*

	Sirens	Two Roads	(Planct.)	(Two Rocks)	Two Rocks	(Scylla)	(Ch.)	Thrin.
PN	39a	55–57a	–	–	81b–82	–	101	127a
Desc.	39b–46	–	59–72	73a (both), 73b–100 (first rock)	–	(73b–81a), 83–100, 118–20	101–106a	127b–136
Inst.	47–54	57b–58, 81b–82	–	–	106b–110, 121–26	–	–	137–41

adequately described in order that a choice between them may be made. As a result, in lines *Od.* 59–126, description predominates to a far greater extent than in other sections: in the Sirens episode the portions are virtually even (7.5 lines of description to 8 lines of argument), while in the Thrinacia episode we find a description to argument ratio of nearly 2:1 (9.5 lines to 5) – between lines 12.59 and 126, however, the ratio stands at nearly 6:1 (52 lines of description to 9 of instruction/argument).[42]

This is significant, especially given the view that oral poetry is good at, and its linguistic resources designed for, 'describ[ing] the acts of persons and the happening of events', but offers few means of examining the world beyond 'verbs of doing and acting and happening'.[43] On this view, even when the language of oral poetry is mobilized to gain purchase on 'the nature of the outside world', its orientation towards the expression of actions and events inclines it strongly towards doing so 'in diachronic terms, as history rather than as philosophy or science'.[44]

The encounter with the Sirens and the passage by way of Thrinacia are, for geographical reasons, simply givens. Circe flatly declares that Odysseus 'will first reach the Sirens' (12.39). This certainty lets Circe get on straight away to 'what matters', which is what these Sirens do: they enchant (12.40). There is simply no need to further explore their underlying nature, their ontological status, their genealogy, their form (even their number).[45] Regarding Thrinacia, whether or not Odysseus and his men make land there is partly what is at stake in Tiresias' prophecy in book 11. Circe elides the question, however, simply listing it as the next place Odysseus 'will reach' in the sequence of his travels; what 'matters' for Circe is the question of the cattle. The element of choice in this section perhaps accounts for the increased

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[42] This excludes lines 12.111–15, Odysseus' sole interjection during Circe's speech (12.111–14) and the narrator's (i.e. Odysseus') framing of Circe's response (12.115).

[43] Havelock (1983) 13–14 and Havelock (1978) 233–34. These claims can still be seen as a substrate shaping the views of some contemporary scholars; see, for example, the reflections found in Ford (1992) 1–12 and Minchin (1999) 58 n. 25. For further discussion on this topic, see Section 6.2 below.

[44] Kirk (1983) 86–87.

[45] Much to the chagrin of commentators ancient and modern; see, for example, the lengthy entry in Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989).

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proportion of description relative to instruction: because what matters is the cattle (concerning whose fate there is to be a kind of choice), information about them – about their nature and their histories – *is* important. Not only is it what the cattle do that 'matters' here; what they *are* becomes more important.

This relationship between the introduction of a choice and the proliferation of description comes dramatically into view in the portion of Circe's *hodos* presented by lines 12.59–126. Without the simple givenness that defines the encounters with the Sirens and Thrinacia (viz. *that* there would be an encounter with the Sirens or the Cattle of the Sun), the nature of the possible destinations in the *hodos*-itinerary *are* 'what matter'. Accordingly, what we find is something akin to 'describing the setting for its own sake' here: what 'matters' is the very nature of the potential items making up Odysseus' itinerary, and what will form the 'argument' sections is, in part, an argument about *which* of the two exclusive, exhaustive alternatives forming the *krisis* to select, and why. It is to some notable aspects of these description and argument sections, and to the relationship between the two, that we shall now turn.

4.2.2.1 Three Features: einai, Negation, epei and gar

4.2.2.1.1 Einai

As Chatman puts it, 'if we were asked for the typical verb representing description, we would cite the copula'.[46] Today, this makes intuitive sense: if description is generally thought to deal with states of affairs rather than events (which would properly be the domain of narrative), one might expect the verb *einai* to be *the* key resource in addressing states of affairs. But this runs contrary to one influential understanding of the nature of oral poetics generally and Homeric strategies of description more specifically.[47] The Sirens episode provides a nice case in point. These seven lines of description, arguably among the most vivid and memorable in the *Odyssey*, pass by

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[46] Chatman (1990) 16.
[47] See Havelock (1978) and Havelock (1983), endorsed by Kirk (1983) 86; see also Becker (1995) 13 and de Jong (2011c) 12 n. 5; see also Section 6.2.1.1 below.

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without a single appearance of the verb.[48] Likewise, the eleven-line description of Thrinacia has only a single use of the verb *einai* (the shepherdesses of the Sun's flock are goddesses: θεαὶ δ᾽ ἐπιποιμένες εἰσίν, 12.131). As noted, the verbs in these passages emphasize doing and acting, not existing or being something or other.

It is entirely otherwise, however, in the interval between Circe's treatments of the Sirens and Thrinacia. The third-person form of the verb *einai* occurs ten times in the course of sixty-three lines (eleven if we count an infinitive that would be in the third person were it in direct speech). What is more, six of these take the form of the third person singular indicative – all in forty-one lines. This represents among the densest concentration of such uses of *esti* in Homer (or indeed anywhere in the epic corpus).[49]

We observed above that scholars have identified two major functions of description, namely introducing objects, items, and characters, and attributing qualities to them. As it happens, these functions correspond very neatly to two of the major grammatical functions that scholars have assigned to the verb *einai* in Greek.[50] Scylla's cave, for example, is introduced by an 'existential' *esti* (*Od.* 12.80):[51]

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[48] Another useful point of comparison is the celebrated description of Alcinous' palace (*Od.* 7.81–132). Although its fifty-one lines make up one of the longest, most elaborate descriptive passages in the *Odyssey*, we find only two uses of the verb *einai*, both in the third person plural indicative; see de Jong (2001) 176–77 for observations concerning this other passage of description formed from 'a combination of a spatial organization . . . and a list', which also features 'description-by-negation'. See further the illuminating discussion of other notable description-heavy passages in Homer in Koopman (2018) 41–67.

[49] The closest we find is three such uses in the course of *Od.* 4.805–46 (1 per 14 lines). In *Od.* 4.695–846 we have four uses (1 per 38 lines), in *Od.* 4.569–846 five (1 per 55 lines); in *Od.* 12.79–120 the figure is roughly one per seven lines. The description of the Cave of the Nymphs (*Od.* 13.96–113) has five instances of the third person indicative of *einai* in these eighteen lines; three of these are in the plural, however.

[50] The grammar and semantics of *einai* in ancient Greek are the subject of a notorious controversy; see Ch. 5, n. 41 below. The current analysis is indebted to Kahn (1973), and especially his recent rearticulations of the syntax and semantics of *einai* in Kahn (2009b).

[51] Likewise the fig tree above Charybdis (*Od.* 12.103).

μέσσῳ δ' ἐν σκοπέλῳ ἔστι σπέος ἠεροειδές.

At the midpoint of the crag there is a dim cave.

By contrast, a number of uses of *einai* in the third person indicative are predicative and attribute qualities to various objects. So Circe says of the first of two rocks, πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι ('For the rock is smooth', *Od.* 12.79). Furthermore, this predicative use of *einai* ultimately takes on an evaluative dimension, as when Circe makes the following assertion (*Od.* 12.109–10):

> . . . ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν
> ἓξ ἑτάρους ἐν νηὶ ποθήμεναι ἦ ἅμα πάντας.

> . . . since it is far better
> To mourn six men from your ship than all of them together.

In this section of Circe's *hodos*, then, the verb *einai* is frequently used to perform both roles of description – introducing story elements with existential uses of *einai*, and attributing qualities to them with predicative uses – as well as helping to justify the imperatives that make up the 'argument' sections. In this passage of unusually lengthy and extensive description, and in the arguments that follow from these descriptions, we may simply observe that the verb *einai* appears with unusual, indeed almost unprecedented frequency, and that a full range of semantic facets offered by the verb *einai* is exploited at key steps in the description and argument sections.

4.2.2.1.2 Negation

If this is all merely suggestive in light of Parmenides' subsequent use of *einai*, more immediately pertinent is the prevalence of the so-called 'description-by-negation' technique in the course of *Od.* 12.59–126. Of Odysseus' introduction to the Cyclopes episode, one scholar has seen fit to write the following:

The passage . . . is remarkable for its sustained rhetorical discourse on the subject of nothing. It would be difficult to find in Homer, or indeed anywhere else in Greek, a passage of comparable length so richly sown with negatives as *Od.* 9.106–48. Perhaps only Plato's *Parmenides* can equal it.[52]

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[52] Austin (1983) 22.

However true this may be for a passage a few dozen lines long, there is no portion of the passage cited by Austin that can compete with the description of Scylla's rock provided at *Od.* 12.75–78 for sheer density of negatives. In these four lines we find seven negatives, while the final lines (*Od.* 12.117–23) devoted to describing Scylla boast a further five negatives.[53]

De Jong writes of the description-by-negation technique that it 'is employed to define things or conditions which are the reverse of normal, mortal existence', and this is certainly true of the case at hand.[54] The introduction of Scylla's rock is itself a sustained rhetorical discourse on what does not happen (but normally would) (*Od.* 12.73–76):

> . . . ὁ μὲν οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἱκάνει
> ὀξείῃ κορυφῇ, νεφέλη δέ μιν ἀμφιβέβηκε
> κυανέη· τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτ᾽ ἐρωεῖ, οὐδέ ποτ᾽ αἴθρη
> κείνου ἔχει κορυφὴν οὔτ᾽ ἐν θέρει οὔτ᾽ ἐν ὀπώρῃ.

> . . . the one [rock] reaches to the broad sky
> With a pointed peak, and a dark cloud surrounds
> It: nor does it ever draw away, nor does sunlight ever
> Reach that peak, neither in the peak of summer nor in late summer.

This meditation on what *does not* occur then gives way to a further discourse on what *cannot* occur (*Od.* 12.76–78):

> οὐδέ κεν ἀμβαίη βροτὸς ἀνὴρ οὐδ᾽ ἐπιβαίη,
> οὐδ᾽εἴ οἱ χεῖρές τε ἐείκοσι καὶ πόδες εἶεν·
> πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι, περιξεστῇ ἐικυῖα.

> Nor could any mortal man scale it, nor could he set foot on it,
> Not if he had twenty hands and twenty feet,
> For the rock is smooth, as if it were polished.

Two points stand out. One is the increasing relevance to the story setting of the qualities attributed to Scylla's rock through the

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[53] De Jong calls *Od.* 9.116–41 the 'longest Homeric instance of the "description by negation technique"' but then goes on to cite longer passages, such as '*Od.* 12.66–107': de Jong (2001) ad loc. The eponymous figure of the Platonic dialogue cited by Austin above is more than a rival in this respect as well: note the seven negatives in Fr. 2.3–8, counting both *ou* and *mē*, and the twenty-six instances in Fr. 8.5–49, excluding privative lexical items. For negation of this sort, see Moorhouse (1959) 138 and for the use of negatives in Parmenides see esp. Austin (1986) 11–43.

[54] See de Jong (2001) *ad* 9.116–41; Byre (1994).

'descriptions-by-negation'. The relationship between the rock's peak and the clouds of summer paint a vivid picture; nor are the details irrelevant, since we will later learn that Scylla's cave is about halfway up the crag. More germane to the dramatic situation than the height of the rock, however, is what a man who happens to pass by would or would not be able to do with or on it. Another way of making the point is that although they echo the famous invocation of the Muses in *Iliad* 2, the lines do not claim privileged access to knowledge guaranteeing the authority of what follows (as we have seen, such a claim would be otiose for Circe anyway), but rather serve to rule out, emphatically, the possibility of the action presented via negation being accomplshed successfully. In *Iliad* 2, the negations emphasize the extraordinary nature of what *will* happen; here, they make precisely the opposite point, underscoring with absolute certainty what will *not*, indeed *cannot*, happen.

The second feature of interest is the introduction of a modal valence to the description-by-negation, primarily through the modal particle *ken* (and emphasized with the counterfactual conditional 'even if he had twenty hands and twenty feet'). The emphatic 'even if' technique occurs four times in the course of this phase in Circe's *hodos* and – looking ahead to Parmenides' commitment to description through an explicitly modally oriented examination of the possible (or rather, a declaration of the impossible) – is particularly striking.[55]

Circe's descriptions-by-negation grow ever more sharply pointed. Having introduced Scylla's cave, she says (*Od*. 12.83–84):

> οὐδέ κεν ἐκ νηὸς γλαφυρῆς αἰζήιος ἀνὴρ
> τόξῳ ὀιστεύσας κοῖλον σπέος εἰσαφίκοιτο.

> Nor from a hollow ship could a vigorous man
> Shooting a bow reach the mouth of the cave.

This is a comment that will have a direct bearing on her exchange with Odysseus a few lines later (to be examined below). The κεν +

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[55] See esp. Palmer (2009) for Parmenides' ground-breaking use of what we would call modal language and arguments.

optative construction is not her only way of investing her descriptions with a kind of modal charge, however. Before moving on to Charybdis, Circe's description of Scylla culminates in an even more pointed, indeed poignant, set of descriptive negations. These, too will have an important bearing on the instructions Circe gives at 12.106–10 (*Od.* 12.98–99):

> τῇ δ᾽ <u>οὔ πώ ποτε</u> ναῦται ἀκήριοι εὐχετόωνται
> παρφυγέειν σὺν νηί.

> <u>No</u> sailors <u>yet</u> may boast
> That they passed this way by ship unharmed.

Here, Circe's 'descriptions-by-negation' come via a categorical statement; the lines just examined have the force of '*all* who have passed by', but the matter is framed empirically, and the general force – 'all who [have ever passed or will ever] pass' – left implicit.

Most striking of all, however, is Circe's description of the route that goes via the Planctae (*Od.* 12.62–63, 66):

> τῇ μέν τ᾽ <u>οὐδὲ</u> ποτητὰ παρέρχεται <u>οὐδὲ</u> πέλειαι
> τρήρωνες ταί τ᾽ ἀμβροσίην Διὶ πατρὶ φέρουσιν . . .
> τῇ δ᾽ <u>οὔ πώ τις</u> νηῦς φύγεν ἀνδρῶν, ἥ τις ἵκηται.

> By this way <u>no</u> flying thing can pass, <u>not even</u> the timid
> Doves, who bear ambrosia to Father Zeus . . .
> And <u>no</u> ship of men, whichever comes, has <u>yet</u> passed through this way.

We are now in a position to see how much more is at stake in the negative descriptions Circe provides here: the force of this final pair of descriptions plainly lies not in the abnormality of these rocks, but in what their qualities and nature imply for the feasibility of the routes Odysseus can select (recalling that Circe frames this section as a choice Odysseus must make between two *hodoi*, *Od.* 12.57–58). In effect, this description-by-negation – no ship of men has yet made it through, and even things that fly, Zeus's own bartenders, cannot – amounts to an implicit *proscription* by negation. Circe's description effectively rejects this route as a *via*ble option. We shall examine this point further below.

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4.2.2.1.3 *Gar* and *epei*

But had not the Argo sailed between just these rocks?[56] Yes, but there were special circumstances in that case, Circe is careful to point out. So, having noted the Argo's successful passage through this strait, she ends with the following counterfactual observation (*Od.* 12.71–72):

καὶ νύ κε τὴν ἔνθ' ὧκα βάλεν μεγάλας ποτὶ πέτρας,
ἀλλ' Ἥρη παρέπεμψεν, ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν Ἰήσων.

And even in that instance the ship would quickly have been
    cast upon the great rocks,
But Hera escorted them through, since Jason was dear to her.

Here we find the third notable textual feature of the passage *Od.* 12.55–126: the explicit use of logically potent connectors such as *epei* and the particle *gar* to articulate a series of causal, inferential, explanatory, or justificatory relationships (relationships expressed by syntactical means in the other two episodes examined).[57] The clause filling out the second half of the line after the caesura (ἐπεὶ φίλος ἦεν Ἰήσων) is of great importance, both for Circe's description of the Planctae and its implications for Odysseus. It emphasizes that the successful passage of the Argo through the Wandering Rocks says everything about the Argo (or rather its captain) and very little about the Wandering Rocks: the ship made it through, not because ships sometimes do, but because the queen of the gods went to exceptional lengths on account of *philia*. *Epei* introduces an implicit paradigm or analogy (not unlike the general relative clause in the description of the Sirens) that also operates by negation; the lines prompt the question, 'Are we, too, dear to Hera'? If this term in the analogy does not fit, Jason's paradigm is inapplicable: the Planctae are impassable for anyone not granted special favours by Hera – and this includes Odysseus, of course.

Epei is here deployed in its most prototypically causal sense (establishing a 'real-world' causal relationship between two states

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[56] See Heubeck and Hoekstra (1989) for extensive bibliography, Hopman (2012) 26–31 for a more recent examination of the question (with further bibliography).

[57] On *epei* and *gar*, see above Ch. 3, nn. 37, 38, respectively.

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of affairs, viz. Hera's love caused the Argo not to be smashed)[58] with the third person singular indicative form of *einai* used in its predicative sense.[59] This would extend the explanatory tendencies noted in the instruction section of the Sirens (and of Thrinacia). As we saw, in the *hodos* she narrated in *Odyssey* 10, Circe does not develop her instructions through any additional explanatory or justificatory support or elaboration; instead, she simply dictates them to her mortal ward. In the Sirens and Thrinacia portions of the *hodos* in *Odyssey* 12, Circe raises questions of cause, effect, and consequentiality. Here, however, she goes even further: she highlights the causal relations in play by using *epei*; does so by linking two assertions concerning states of affairs (the smashing of the Argo, Hera's love for Jason), rather than linking an illocutionary utterance like an instruction, suggestion, or command; and, moreover, anchors her claim in a fundamental fact of 'what is' in the world.[60]

With this in mind, consider again *Od*. 12.77–79:

οὐδέ κεν ἀμβαίη βροτὸς ἀνὴρ οὐδ' ἐπιβαίη,
οὐδ' εἴ οἱ χεῖρές τε ἐείκοσι καὶ πόδες εἶεν·
πέτρη γὰρ λίς ἐστι.

Nor could any mortal man scale it, nor could he set foot on it,
Not if he had twenty hands and twenty feet,
For the rock is smooth.

With a glance forward to Parmenides, we should observe how the modally oriented examination of what would or would not be

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[58] See esp. Sweetser (1990) 76–86 for the theory underlying Muchnová's analysis of the Greek typology of uses.

[59] This fulfils in textbook fashion the predicative use of *einai* (viz. 'N is Noun/Adjective'). See Kahn (2009a) for the importance of these 'first-order' uses; these will play an important role in Parmenides' Fragment 8, of course.

[60] By comparison, consider the frequent collocation of *epei* and *esti* in several speeches in the *Iliad*, for example the *agōn* between Agamemnon and Achilles in *Iliad* 1, Agamemnon's catastrophic speech to the Argive army in *Iliad* 2, and Achilles' response to the embassy in *Iliad* 9. Muchnová (2011) 119–24, 134–40 examines many of these instances in respect to two subcategories of illocutionary acts, *directifs* and the assertion, respectively. *Iliad* 1 is also Havelock's sample text for his examination of the verb *einai* (Havelock (1978)). Significantly, regarding several of the uses of *epei* + *esti/eisi* categorized by Muchnová as 'directifs' or 'assertions', Havelock comes as near as he can to conceding 'that *einai*, used in these … contexts to connect neuter subjects to neuter predicates … has assumed the role of a true copula' (Havelock (1978) 242).

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possible (under not only the present circumstances but also hypothetically posited variations) is expressly causally linked, via the particle *gar*, to the underlying attributes of the object in question (the smoothness of the rock), expressed through the predicative use of *esti* (in Kahn's first-order 'Noun is Adjective' form). That is, a modally charged claim about the possibility of an action (one carefully tailored to the possible future activity of the interlocutor) is justified by a statement of fact about the world expressed through a predicative *einai*.

Two further portions of Circe's treatment of Scylla and Charybdis display this constellation of textual features and patterns of thought. After finally describing Charybdis, Circe concludes (*Od.* 12.106–110):

> . . . μὴ σύ γε κεῖθι τύχοις, ὅτε ῥοιβδήσειεν·
> οὐ γάρ κεν ῥύσαιτό σ᾽ ὑπὲκ κακοῦ οὐδ᾽ ἐνοσίχθων.
> ἀλλὰ μάλα Σκύλλης σκοπέλῳ πεπλημένος ὦκα
> νῆα παρὲξ ἐλάαν, ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν
> ἓξ ἑτάρους ἐν νηὶ ποθήμεναι ἢ ἅμα πάντας.

> . . . May you not chance to be present there when Charybdis sucks down,
> For no one could rescue you from out of that ill, not even Poseidon
> But driving your ship hard by Scylla's rock
> Sail on swiftly, since it is far better
> To mourn six men from your ship than all of them together.

Here the entirety of Gill's and Knudsen's deliberative programmes are condensed into five lines. As with the Sirens episode, the conclusion comes first, in the imperative-like optative: 'do not happen to be present there' (106b). Then immediately we have the premise, linked by the *gar* in line 107: 'for nobody could rescue you out from out of that ill, not even Poseidon.' In a move that Gill suggests is typical, Circe teases out the implications of the first course of action before moving on to the second, her rejection a 'crucial preliminary to the reaching of a conclusion', which is expressed in another imperative (lines 108–09) that concludes the chain of inferences linked to the premises (109–10), as Knudsen suggests is common, by the word *epei* (109).[61] This premise is stated with a normative colouring of the sort pinpointed by Gill's

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[61] Gill (1998) 54; Knudsen (2014).

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formulation 'if I do *x*, then *y* will happen, and this involves *z*, which is bad or good': πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν ('it is better by far') to lose six men than all of them.

This line of argument is further elaborated thanks to Odysseus' only interjection during Circe's exposition. He tests the validity of the premise that yields her second conclusion: is it really necessary, he asks, to lose even six men? Circe's response is unsparing (*Od.* 12.117–23):

> . . . οὐδὲ θεοῖσιν ὑπείξεαι ἀθανάτοισιν;
> ἥ δέ τοι οὐ θνητή, ἀλλ᾽ ἀθάνατον κακόν ἐστι,
> δεινόν τ᾽ ἀργαλέον τε καὶ ἄγριον οὐδὲ μαχητόν·
> οὐδέ τις ἔστ᾽ ἀλκή· φυγέειν κάρτιστον ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς.
> ἢν γὰρ δηθύνῃσθα κορυσσόμενος παρὰ πέτρῃ,
> δείδω, μή σ᾽ ἐξαῦτις ἐφορμηθεῖσα κίχῃσι
> τόσσῃσιν κεφαλῇσι, τόσους δ᾽ ἐκ φῶτας ἕληται.

> . . . Will you <u>not</u> yield to the immortal gods?
> For she <u>is</u> no mortal, but an immortal bane,
> Terrible and grievous, wild and <u>not able to be fought:</u>
> <u>No defence of any kind is possible:</u> to flee from her is best.
> <u>For</u> if you should tarry, arming yourself alongside the rock,
> I fear she will dart out and attack you again
> With all six heads and seize six more men.

In this reaffirmation of the premise that six men will be lost if Odysseus travels via Scylla, one sees most clearly the role of the unusually lengthy description section (12.73–81a, 83–100), continued briefly here (12.118–120a), in which Scylla is presented: a bane, immortal, terrible, grievous, not to be fought. The use of the classic form of description – verbs in the omnitemporal present (and especially the predicative use of *einai*), textual ordering on the basis of a non-temporal underlying pattern – establishes basic facts about what the world is like by attributing qualities to the individual in question, and these basic facts in turn serve as the key evidence supporting larger claims (notably also expressed in negative modal terms) – οὐδέ τις ἔστ᾽ ἀλκή· φυγέειν κάρτιστον ἀπ᾽ αὐτῆς – which lead to or logically require a particular conclusion, expressed in the form of the advice that Circe gives. At the bottom of this complexly woven chain of argument, then, one which culminates in the necessary selection of one item in an exclusive disjunction by virtue of a modally mandated

rejection of the other, is a series of facts about the world being traversed: what-there-is, what what-there-is is like in such-and-such a way, and what what-there-is in such-and-such a way makes or does not make possible.

4.2.3 Krisis*: Assessments and Cautions*

What we see, then, is a remarkable coalescence of (a) the three linguistic features we have so far been discussing within (b) the framework of the type of dependence we have so far sketched out (see Section 4.2.2) involving (c) one of the two possibilities of the rhetorical schema of the *hodos* (viz. an exclusive, exhaustive disjunction, or *krisis*). Key features (often expressed through a predicative *esti* and/or a modally charged negation) of characters introduced (often with an existential *esti*) in the course of extraordinarily lengthy, well-developed description sections establish basic states of affairs; these in turn go on to serve as the evidence on the basis of which (a relationship articulated, as suggested by Knudsen, by *gar* or *epei*) Circe's instruction (which is thus also the conclusion of an inferential process) is supported in the instruction/argument section that follows. This process in turn proceeds according to Gill's pattern of working through the implications of a course (no longer only of action, but now a physical course in the sense of *cursus*). What is more, this plays out within the context of the exclusive, exhaustive disjunction formed by a fork in the physical *hodos* and, paired with the modally charged negations introduced in the description sections, amounts to a 'proscription-by-negation' rendering one option strictly impassable and impossible, which thus forces, implicitly or explicitly, her male mortal charge to choose the alternative path.

What does this mean for Parmenides? Much in the preceding paragraph should sound arrestingly familiar to scholars of Parmenides' poem. Evaluating the nature and significance of the overlaps between the features of *Odyssey* 12.55–126 explored in this last section and Parmenides' poem (to be explored in Chapter 5 below) is a delicate task, however – and not least because these involve similarities of different kinds and at different scales, and these in turn differ considerably in their degree of closeness or

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markedness. In some cases, we may feel we can advance claims with considerable confidence; in others, definitive answers will be in short supply. There can be no debating the extremely high degree of commonality between the scenario described in preceding paragraph and, as we shall explore in the next chapter, in parts of Parmenides' 'Route to Truth'. By contrast, regarding the use of *esti*, or *gar* and *epei*, we might be content to note the striking similarities without feeling compelled to make firmer, or unduly grandiose, claims.

Three factors should be considered when assessing these aspects of the relationship between Parmenides and *Od.*12.55–126. The first concerns how distinctive the features in question are to *Od.*12.55–126. The second concerns how close or precise the overlaps between *Odyssey* 12 and Parmenides' 'Route to Truth' are.[62] The third concerns the Parmenidean side of the ledger: to what extent is Parmenides' own intellectual agenda likely to be the driving force behind the specificities of his usage, rather than the particular features of the Homeric text he inherited?[63] In the

[62] Here we find ourselves on ground familiar to other analysts of archaic poetry; these two qualities, particularly the first, might seem to comprise, or at least roughly map onto, the condition of 'markedness' described by Currie (2016) 33–34, which in turn is similar in important ways to, for example, Kelly (2015), esp. 22–24. Perhaps even more useful is the discussion at Bakker (2013) 157–69, for two reasons. First, Bakker's framework – which, in keeping with his concern for the relationship between two oral poems, develops the concept of 'interformularity' – allows for a more open-ended conception of how poems interact than Currie's 'allusion' in a way that better fits the notion of discursive architecture in play here. Second, Bakker's graduated notion of higher or lower 'interformularity' might also be seen as a useful parallel to the spectrum-oriented framework that will be gestured towards below.

[63] The connection between this idea and the second condition discussed by Currie, 'meaningfulness' (emphasized particularly in Kelly (2015)) is less straightforward than might appear. At the level of discursive architecture, the point is not really that Parmenides performs any 'pointed or systematic reversals' of *Odyssey* 12 (as per Currie (2016) 34), nor do I want to suggest that Parmenides' primary benefit from reworking Homer is best cashed out in terms of 'what the supposed interaction asks the audience to invoke about the Homeric poems' or whether 'the audience . . . seem[s] required to do very much, intertextually or interpretatively, with the Homeric passage' (Kelly (2015) 24) – or, for that matter, 'what is for . . . his [the epic poet's] audience the specificity of the similarity of scenes to each other' (Bakker (2013) 159). That is because, for Bakker, as well as for Kelly and Currie, the point of the exercise is inextricably tied to a question concerning the problem of 'seeing *literary* significance in repetitions across the boundary of work or poet' (Bakker (2013) 157; 'literary' should of course be understood here in the broad sense of Bakker's 'text': the idea is not to differentiate between oral and written poetry, but between a concern for meaning-making processes that centre on pointed reworkings and those that do not). Whether observing the interaction between Parmenides and Homer at the level of rhetorical schemata or types of dependence (though not necessarily that of dramatic scenario, or other matters discussed in

remainder of the chapter, I shall consider the first and (more briefly) the third points; the second (and, again rather briefly, the third) will be discussed at length in the following two chapters, particularly Chapter 5.

The second half of this chapter has been devoted to examining how the forks in the *hodos* at *Od.* 12.55–126 play out at the levels of rhetorical schemata and types of dependence. But are these forks really so distinctive? Early archaic Greek poetry furnishes a pair of celebrated instances where a similar image is leveraged to great effect, Hesiod's *Works and Days* 213–18 and 287–92. Nor was Parmenides alone in making use of this image in the late archaic period; the presumed influence of these two passages from Hesiod on Theognis 911–14 has often been discussed.[64] So is this not simply a stock image?[65]

To this mix some scholars have also been tempted to add the texts inscribed on a dozen or so gold tablets (sometimes dubbed 'Orphic') discovered in tombs across Magna Graecia, some of which seem to have suggestive points of overlap with Parmenides' poem.[66] Do these tablets not also provide directions for travelling

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Chapter 2), the point has very little to do with what demands for comparison are made of the audience, or even of the audience's ability to recognize the similarities between the two passages at all. To over-elaborate the architectural analogy deployed here, the intertextuality to be analysed in chapters 5 and 6 is not a textual analogue of admiring the clever or pointed inversion of tropes in a beautiful fresco upon a wall; rather, it concerns the design of the weight-bearing elements that define the shape and structure of the building the surfaces on which one finds the frescoes.

[64] See recently Koning (2010) 144–49, also remarks in Hunter (2014) 141 n. 50.

[65] As at e.g. Ranzato (2015) 130–38.

[66] On the tablets themselves, see e.g. Pugliese Carratelli (2001), Bernabé and San Cristóbal (2008), Edmonds (2004), Edmonds (2011), GJ. For the relationship between Parmenides and the tablets, see Burkert (1969); Feyerabend (1984); Sassi (1988); Pugliese Carratelli (1988); Cassio (1996); Kingsley (1999); Ferrari (2005); Battezzato (2005); Gemelli Marciano (2008); Gemelli Marciano (2013); Palmer (2009) 58–61; Ranzato (2015) esp. 66–70, 122; Ferella (2017) 122–24; Tor (2017) 265–77 (see also Introduction, n. 82 above).

It is not easy to know how to assess the relationship between these tablets and Parmenides. On the one hand, it is certainly striking that a number of the so-called 'B' tablets do seem to come from the parts of Italian Magna Graecia not so distant from Parmenides' hometown of Elea. On the other hand, it seems rather a stretch to characterize these tablets – at least the ones we know about – as 'coeval' with Parmenides' poem (as at e.g. Ferella (2017) 122); the oldest tablet discovered so far, GJ 1 = Edmonds B10, from Hipponion, Italy, is traditionally placed at the very end of the fifth century BC, very likely putting the better part of a century between it and Parmenides' poem (the remaining tablets come from the fourth, third, or even second century BC. Of course, scholars have often seen a longer tradition standing behind these tablets, but it is difficult

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a *hodos* traversing the Beyond[67] – perhaps even one where some sort of a fork in the road must be confronted?[68] Are not the set of religious and eschatological associations conjured by this itinerary no less suggestive, no less potent (and perhaps even more so) than the social or ethical ones conjured by Hesiod's *hodoi* in *Works and Days*?

To be sure, some of the similarities between parts of Parmenides' poem and Hesiod's crossroads or the golden tablets are indeed evocative. And, as will be clear from the Introduction, I am strongly in favour of any readings of Parmenides' poem that can help relocate him more firmly in his time, place, and poetic and sociocultural context. Similarly, it is not at all my goal to advocate

to say anything concrete about this with respect to specific uses of road imagery). Finally, it is worth noting that those scholars prepared to make a strong case for comparing the gold tablets and Parmenides' poem do so yet again almost entirely with respect to the proem, and *not*, as I shall discuss below, in relation to the 'Route to Truth' (though see also Sassi (1988), Ranzato (2015), and Ferella (2017)).

[67] See e.g. Sassi (1988); Cassio (1996); Battezzato (2005); Ranzato (2015) 66–70; Ferella (2017).

[68] See on this point esp. Sassi (1988); Ranzato (2015) 66–70; Ferella (2017) 122–24. But this is less clear than might first appear, and it is notable that little of the language in these tablets appears to thematize or articulate expressly the idea of a fork in the road in the way that we find in *Od.* 12. 55–58 or *WD* 213–218 and 287–92; while in both epic texts we find *men . . . de . . .* clauses (*Od.* 59, 74; *Od.* 74, 1010; *WD* 214–15; *WD* 288), carefully balanced pairs (the Wandering Rocks and the Two Rocks, Scylla and Charybdis; *dikē* and *hybris*, *kakotēs* and *aretē*), and explicit phrases such as ὁππότέρη δή τοι ὁδὸς ἔσσεται (*Od.* 12.57) and ὁδὸς δ᾽ ἑτέρηφι παρελθεῖν (*WD* 216), we find hardly anything of the sort in the tablets. Only on one extant tablet (GJ 3 = Edmonds A4) do we find something that might be potentially be considered a clearly articulated fork in the *hodos* (see line 5: δεξιὰν ὁδοιπόρ[ει], which GJ render 'journey along the right-hand road' but Edmonds leaves as simply 'make your way to the right'). In the other tablets still extant, all we are told is that, for example, at some point or other, 'on the right-hand side' (ἐπὶ δ<ε>ξιὰ) is a spring and a white cypress, 'where souls of the dead descend (κατερχόμεναι) and refresh themselves' (line 4 GJ 1=Edmonds B10) or other similar phrases and scenarios. This scenario seems to differ in important ways from what we find with respect to the Wandering Rocks and the Two Rocks, or Scylla and Charybdis. In the tablets, the spring by the white cypress is presented as a diversion, a departure from the path the soul of the initiate seems to be on; note that the instruction is not to head left instead of right, but simply not to veer off the path one is evidently already following. In Circe's *hodos*, by contrast, there is no default 'straight on', a fact that is underscored by the pointed ambivalence of lines *Od.* 12.55–58, discussed above. Circe's *hodos* thus presents a genuine 'crossroads', while the golden tablets seem to depict a possible deviation to be rejected. This fundamentally weakens the comparison with Parmenides' routes 'IS' and 'IS NOT', where neither is the default path forward or merely a diversion – which is not, however, to say that these comparisons are without merit or interest.

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for a single-mindedly Homeric reading of Parmenides, one that claims for Homer a monopoly on influencing Parmenides to the exclusion of all other forms of archaic poetic, cultural, and religious life. Far from it. But from the perspective of Parmenides' place in the history of thought, there are nevertheless crucial differences between lines 12.55–126 of the *Odyssey* and the two passages of Hesiod (and archaic epigone) just cited or the texts of the gold tablets recovered from various sites in Magna Graecia. It is to these latter we must now turn.

First, in the golden tablets, unlike in *Odyssey* 12, when the possibility of taking more than one path emerges, there is no interest whatsoever in arguing for – or against – a specific selection. Rather, one simply receives a one-line injunction along the lines of, for example, 'Do not even go near this spring!' (ταύτᾱς τᾱς κράνᾱς μēδὲ σχεδὸν ἐνγύθεν ἔλθēις, GJ 1 = Edmonds B10), before the instructions continue on (space is at a premium on a gold tablet, one might think, and the important thing is just to make the right choice, not to prove the merits of choosing one way or the other).[69] Since my interest is in understanding Parmenides' development of extended deductive argumentation and the constitutive elements of demonstration, this is a very important point.

On the other hand, the diversion towards the lake and the white cypress is, one presumes, a genuine feature of the physical landscape (however this might be understood by initiates). What is more, it is hard to imagine that a deceased mortal, initiated or otherwise, might try to reject the two options available and instead advocate the merits of fashioning some kind of third, alternative route or course of action. In this, some tablets are indeed like *Odyssey* 12.55–126. By contrast, Hesiod's conceptualization of qualities like *hybris* and *dikē*, *kakotēs* and *aretē* [70] by mapping them onto an imagined spatial domain, and then figuring a dichotomy between them via the apparently exclusive,

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[69] See also line 3 of the Petelia tablet (GJ 2= Edmonds B1) and line 7 of the Entella table (GJ 8 = Edmonds B11).

[70] In what follows, I leave untranslated *dikē* and *hybris*, *kakotēs* and *aretē* to steer clear of debates concerning their precise meaning; see n. 75 below. On the question of capitalization, see e.g. West (1978) 210; in what follows, I have rather arbitrarily used capital letters for the sake of avoiding clumsiness rather than to stake out a position on debates about personification.

exhaustive disjunction of a forked path, does not change the fact that it leaves open an entire terrain of potential responses. As Lloyd pointed out, even in the context of traditional polar expressions, when these involve different ways of addressing a problem or articulating an ethical choice, there is always the possibility of elaborating a third option, be that a middle way or a new axis along which to construct the dichotomy.[71] Might not a resourceful Perses always have been able to respond that there is a third way between pure *hybris* and pure *dikē*, pure *kakotēs* and pure *aretē*? Or could he not transpose the problem to a different landscape, a pragmatic one, say, rather than an ethical one (or vice versa, depending on how one understands the meaning of *aretē* and *kakotēs*)?[72] Odysseus (and an initiate travelling the route from the golden tablet), however, is stuck in the physical world as it is; there is no option for him to invent some unthought of third way to Thrinacia between Scylla and Charybdis, or to transpose himself to a differently configured map.

Furthermore, it is extremely telling that we see no hint of any kind of modal charge to the negations in either *Works and Days* or the golden tablets. That is precisely because the choices presented in both texts are in fact genuine choices. Indeed, in both *Works and Days* and the golden tablets, the conundrum – and thus the need for advice in the first place – lies in the fact that either route could be, and in fact routinely is, selected. One could very easily divert from one's path forward by veering right to refresh oneself at the spring by the white cypress (as the imperfective participle suggests – cf. e.g. κατερχόμεναι (GJ 1=Edmonds B10) – the souls of the dead do so regularly). Equally, one could all too easily choose the route to *kakotēs*, to whose dwelling the *hodos* is short and smooth; that it is ever so much more inviting than the long, rough, steep path of *aretē*

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[71] See Section 4.2 above.

[72] For example: 'You say the choice is between these two paths, but I say the choice is rather between (say) prosperity and penury, or the rentier's ease and the sweated brow of the labourer . . .'. Of course, the sense of the possible alternative depends on what we are to understand by *aretē* and *kakotēs*: superior/inferior social standing (West (1978) 229), success/failure (Tandy (1996) 81–82), or virtue/vice (Clay (2003) 43 n. 38; Clay (2009)).

is precisely why one needs to be warned from it. There is no 'proscription-by-negation' in either the *Works and Days* or in the golden tablets because there could not be: in each case, the path one is advised against taking is simply the ordinary path that mortals, or their souls, *do* so often take. As we shall see, this difference between the *hodoi* enumerated by Circe (in which only one of the possibilities is truly viable at each *krisis*) and those we find in Hesiod and on the golden tablets is of the utmost importance for Parmenides and his invention of extended deductive argumentation and key features of demonstration.

There is another important pair of points to be made concerning the relationship between the itinerary Circe sketches out in *Od.* 12.55–126 and some similarities this shares with other cultural artefacts of the archaic (or, in the case of the golden tablets, the classical) era, be these the confronting of a crossroads, the navigation of a *hodos* through the Beyond, the use of a pattern of deliberation, or thinking in terms of polar opposites. While there are important points of overlap with Hesiod's *Works and Days* 216–17 and 287–92, the golden tablets, and the texts analysed by Lloyd, Gill, and Knudsen, it happens that *all* the features that *Odyssey* 12.55–126 shares with one or another of the texts discussed coalesce in the *hodos* that Circe details in the same book. Just as neither the analyses of Gill and Knudsen nor Lloyd's discussion of polar opposites implies that there is nothing unique in Circe's particular use of the general structures that each scholar described, so we may observe that in *Odyssey* 12, it is not *only* that a *hodos* is presented which helps a mortal navigate the physical geography of some portion of the Beyond, as in the tablets – nor *only* that the crossroads imagery constructs a choice between two alternatives that come into their own as alternatives, as in *Works and Days*. Likewise, what we find in *Odyssey* 12 is not *just* another instantiation of a polar expression; nor is it *just* another instance of a deliberative process that considers alternatives only to eliminate one and select the other; nor is it *just* another use of road imagery in providing instructions for navigating the physical geography of an Elsewhere; nor is it *just* another example of the use of a forked path to articulate a dichotomy. Each aspect of *Odyssey* 12.55–126 that overlaps with the different expressions of archaic Greek

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culture surveyed above in fact reveals just how distinctive this portion of the *Odyssey* is.

Indeed, it is precisely this very confluence of these features in one passage that makes *Odyssey* 12.55–126 so distinctive and so valuable for Parmenides.[73] The whole of this passage of *Odyssey* 12 is incomparably greater than the sum of its archaic Greek parts. That the dichotomous choice between courses of action is quite literally between *physical courses* (of action) creates an extraordinarily powerful tool – the exclusive, exhaustive disjunction or *krisis* – which, when combined with argumentative support for the route to be chosen (or rather, a modally charged argument strictly ruling out one possibility, and therefore *requiring* that the other be chosen), simply cannot be found in any of these features individually. As we have seen, Lloyd observes that in very many cases there is the possibility of elaborating a third option in a polar expression. In the golden tablets, there is no interest at all in examining the other route in the fashion described by Gill; it is simply a wrong turn one should avoid on the way to the Lake of Memory, and there is apparently no need to explore the possibility of going to this spring, to think through the consequences of this course (of action), to reject it in favour of another alternative. Nor is there any interest in providing an argumentatively pregnant justification for selecting the one route over the other. If, as we shall see in Chapter 5, what matters to Parmenides is having the ability to leverage a uniquely potent argumentative tool that *forces* a voyager down one route or the other, this is something that neither a generic 'polar expression' nor the topography of the afterlife, nor even the rhetorical device of Hesiod's two *hodoi*, can offer. Rather, this is a distinctive feature of the exclusive, exhaustive disjunction formed by a choice between two physical routes, and two physical routes alone, when one must press forward (and so cannot take neither), when one has a body that cannot be divided (and so one cannot take both), and when, in the end, only of the routes is actually viable. What we find in Hesiod, the golden tablets, and in most of the examples discussed by Lloyd

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[73] See here the discussion of 'markedness' and also 'meaningfulness' in nn. 62 and 63 above.

and Gill are in fact genuine choices; what we find in Circe's *hodos*, and what we shall find in Parmenides, is an apparent choice that, upon further descriptive reflection and argumentation, is in fact no choice at all. And for Parmenides, for the emergence of demonstration (which must begin from a point that all accept and cannot be rejected), and for the Western tradition of thought defined by the kind of knowledge demonstration produces, that makes all the difference.

This much concerns largely (though not exclusively) the level of rhetorical schemata. But there are other distinctive features of the *krisis* in Circe's *hodos* at the level of dependence. An essential part of what we have been building up in the second half of this chapter is an analysis of the discursive framework used to express the options forming this choice – the description of the two alternatives – and the process by which one or the other is to be selected. At the level of types of dependence, the description sections play a vital role in establishing the possible courses (of action) insofar as they provide the raw material for the premises in the ensuing argument sections that, in their turn, ultimately yield a conclusion in the form of an imperative to a certain kind of action. In *Odyssey* 12, Circe is judicious about introducing only those characters and places, and describing only those qualities, that have a direct bearing on the choice to be made and the argument to be supplied in support of her instructions. This in turn means that the description sections become much longer and more extensive than in the other entries in Circe's *hodos*-catalogue (or in Homer generally) in order to present the information necessary for the argument. By contrast, the role of narration sections is much diminished: what matters is the state of affairs that constitutes the options of the choice. Again, this is something that is entirely different from both the *Works and Days* and the golden tablets.[74]

Finally, what are we to make of the three textual features discussed above? Functioning as limit cases of a sort, they present

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[74] Indeed, what we find in the golden tablets is some respects like what we saw in *Odyssey* 10, both in terms of geography and dramatic scenario; what is radically scaled back, however, is the level of description and instruction (as in *Odyssey* 10, this comes without any argumentative justification). On the similarities in geography, see e.g. Cerri (1995), Battezzato (2005) and Ferarri (2007).

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a rather more complex picture. Taken individually, it is hard to say that their appearance in *Od*. 12.55–126 seems terribly distinctive or marked. One finds the verb form *esti* often enough in archaic poetry (though, as noted, almost never with such frequency). Similarly, the practice of negating statements with a modal charge is not only to be found in such passages already discussed as the Invocation to the Muses in *Iliad* 2, but also, *inter alia*, in some of the reworkings it underwent at the hands of other archaic poets, as well as in plenty of other unrelated contexts.[75] *Epei* and *gar*, meanwhile, are of course simply basic linguistic items whose use, particularly in the case of *gar*, are an extremely ordinary feature of the syntax of oral poetry.[76]

These questions take on special importance when we consider the Parmenidean side of the ledger. It would be a great folly, for example, to suggest that *Od*. 12.55–126 is somehow the primary driver motivating Parmenides' thematization of the question what-is, or that his ground-breaking examination of modality is merely the result of his engagement with this passage, or that his interest in rigorously supporting his claims with arguments is just a minor outgrowth of Homer's practice in *Odyssey* 12 or elsewhere. Any sensible attempt to address these questions would of course consider Parmenides in relation to a much, much broader array of predecessors, contemporaries, and even successors, and would place his own agenda squarely at the centre of the answers provided.[77]

Pinning down the exact nature of the relationship between *Od*. 12.55–126 and Parmenides' 'Route to Truth' at this word-by-word level of granularity will always be difficult, and little in my argument hangs on the specific answers one might wish to supply (or even on answers being hazarded at all). Nevertheless, to the extent that they force us to ask other interesting questions, they are worthy of brief consideration

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[75] See Ch. 2 above.

[76] See esp. Bakker (1997), and Ch. 3, n. 38 above.

[77] On the other hand, it would seem entirely appropriate to consider: (1) which resources the passage in question offered him in pursuing his agenda; (2) how the shape of the answers he provided might have been influenced by this passage; and (3) how what made it onto his agenda in the first place might be related to this passage of the *Odyssey*.

here. At just what point do unmarked, not terribly distinctive features become distinctive? How much does it matter that in this passage of the *Odyssey* we encounter with unprecedented frequency the use of modally charged negations or the third person singular *esti*, both of which are, of course, distinctive hallmarks of Parmenides' poem? Are there ways in which specific combinations of the features identified – for example, the use of *esti* to provide the evidence upon which is based, via a *gar* or an *epei*, an instruction that serves as the conclusion of a practical deliberation; or, similarly, the combination of a modally charged negation and an exclusive, exhaustive disjunction, to form a proscription, and thus a prescription, by negation – can, when taken as unit, form something more marked and less typical, more distinctive and less frequently trafficked? How ought we to weigh this against the importance of these features for Parmenides' own philosophical agenda? And – to turn this question on its head – to what extent could we imagine that his agenda might have been shaped in part by the fact that it was *this* passage, with its distinctive or marked use of indistinctive and unmarked features of the Greek language, that Parmenides reworked?

This is not the place to attempt to answer these questions, since it is the commonalities at the level of the rhetorical schema and levels of dependence that are central to the points that I want to make. For the moment, one might simply observe that the similarities are there, whatever one is to make of them, and that what is desirable is perhaps a more subtly graded spectrum than a simple declaration that something 'IS' or 'IS NOT' intertextual;[78] rather, we might ideally locate different *degrees* of intertextual proximity or distance.

4.3 Concluding Remarks

In this chapter, we have examined two key aspects of the *hodos* that spans *Odyssey* 12.39–141. As our analysis in Chapter 3 would lead us to expect, at the level of rhetorical schemata we saw that, as a form of catalogic discourse, Circe's *hodos* formed a catalogue with three entries, *Od.* 12.39–54, 12.55–126, and 12.127–41

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[78] See nn. 62 above for the appealing aspects of Bakker's notion of 'interformularity'.

(Section 4.1). These were ordered in accordance with the narrative movement in time through a sequence of spatially contiguous places – according to the principle of spatio-temporal consequence, that is, proper to the *hodos* (Section 4.1.1). At the level of types of dependence, meanwhile, we again saw a clear pattern according to which very brief narrative frames introduce portions of description, which were in turn followed by portions of justified instruction or argument (Section 4.1.2.1). Compared to the *hodos* in *Odyssey* 10, the relationship between the description and instruction/argument sections is notably more elaborate and developed in *Odyssey* 12: description sections introduce key characters and places, and then hone in on attributes of the story-world that prove crucial for the argumentatively justified instructions that follow, which explore the details introduced in a remarkably probing, sophisticated manner (Section 4.1.2.2). This analysis will form the basis of the discussion of Fragment 8 in Chapter 6.

Examining *Od*. 12.55–126 revealed further nuances to this basic format (Section 4.2). At the level of rhetorical schemata, the notion of a *hodos*-unit helped accommodate the phenomenon of the *krisis*, or exclusive, exhaustive disjunction between two possible places (each with the potential to form its own episode; Section 4.2.1). Seen through this unit of analysis, Circe's *hodos* was made of four entries – the Sirens (*Od*. 12.39–54), a choice between the Planctae and the Two Rocks (*Od*. 12.59–71a), a choice between Scylla and Charybdis (*Od*. 12.71b–126), and then Thrinacia (*Od*. 12.127–41; Section 4.2.1).

What is more, there are two major implications at the level of dependence. In the first place, these two *krisis* sections involve very little activity at the top level of narration – the instruction or argument level of the first choice (viz. *Od*. 12.81b–82) in effect usurped, or at least did double duty, as the narration section for the second choice (Section 4.2.1). Second, since the argument sections involve instructions about which place to choose, and not merely how to behave (or not) when arriving there, the amount of description involved in presenting the options of the *krisis* balloons tremendously: when, in Richardson's terms, the places

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themselves are 'what matters', the result is a section of description long enough to rival any other portion of description we find in the surviving Homeric corpus (Section 4.2.2). Third, this also results in an even more sophisticated, and deeply intertwined relationship between the description and instruction/argument sections ('Three features', Section 4.2.2.1). Particularly important features of this relationship are the use of *esti* (in several of its senses: announcing the existence of entities in the story-world, and attributing crucial qualities to them in order to ground the instructions to come and assessing the relative merits of two courses of action); *gar* and *epei* (to articulate the inferential and justificatory relationships between premises and conclusions); and descriptions-by-negation, especially with a modal charge. Ultimately, this yielded complex, multilayered chains of argumentation that repeatedly (and, ultimately, recursively) drew on the facts of the world presented in the description section. Of particular significance for the following chapter, this nexus of features – and, in particular, the combination of modally charged negations; the Homeric mode of deliberation explored by Gill; and the exclusive, exhaustive disjunction or *krisis* formed by a fork in the *hodos* – offers Parmenides a set of resources he will put to ground-breaking use.

Finally, careful consideration of other texts or traditions, especially Hesiod's *Works and Days* and the Orphic gold tablets, often cited as similar to *Od.* 12.55–126 or as parallels to aspects of Parmenides' poem, reveal in the end just how distinctive this portion of the *Odyssey* is (Section 4.2.3, '*Krisis*: Assessments and Cautions') – and, as we shall see in Chapter 5, just how important it is for Parmenides' ground-breaking poem, and the history of Western thought. By identifying these similarities explored in sections 4.1 and 4.2 and Parmenides' poem (especially in chapters 6 and 5, respectively) – and by tracing the differences that emerge in the course of comparing them – we can glean key insights into the discursive strategies deployed by Parmenides as he pieces together his new way of constructing an argument and making it inconvertibly persuasive. To develop a view of the basic outline of the architecture of Circe's *hodos* is thus to develop a view of precisely the

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framework Parmenides uses to fashion his revolutionary argument, to mediate his new concept of thinking with certainty, knowing with certainty, and proving with certainty – or so I shall argue in chapters 5 and 6. Should this analysis of Circe's *hodos* prove compelling, we would have before our eyes the blueprint of the discursive architecture Parmenides used to build the first recorded sequence of extended deductive argumentation in Western thought.