

ODYSSEUS: NARRATOR, STORYTELLER, POET?

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THIS ARTICLE EXAMINES one feature of Odysseus' narrative technique, namely, how he frames the direct speech of other characters that he reports in his long narrative in Books 9–12 of the *Odyssey*. It compares his technique to that of the other narrators in the poem who retell extended conversations in direct speech, namely, Demodocus, Menelaus, and the primary narrator. This analysis will have two main conclusions: first, that different characters vary more widely in how they report embedded speech than has previously been appreciated; and second, that Demodocus, although he is a character, in fact resembles the primary narrator more closely than he resembles non-poet characters who report conversations. Indeed, the distinction between poet and non-poet is a more important one in understanding at least one aspect of narrative presentation in the *Odyssey* than the distinction between character-narrators and the primary narrator. In addition, this paper will show that the notion of "formulaic," even in the most regular and common formulas in the Homeric epics, has a high degree of nuance: phrasing that is formulaic for one narrator in one context is not formulaic for another, and this affects our notion not only of narrative but also of formula.

Essentially, this argument adds a new facet to the ongoing narratological work on character-narrators, which has shown us that the personal involvement of a character in his story has a wide-ranging effect on the form and content of the story.¹ This study extends such insights by evaluating together three different kinds of narrators that have not previously been studied as a group: non-poet characters, Demodocus, and the primary narrator. Speech-framing formulas provide a useful basis for comparing these various narrators because they are both extremely common and extremely regular for both the primary narrator and the character-narrators, thus minimizing the likelihood that variations we may observe among different characters are fortuitous or not significant. This comparison highlights the differences between

1. Useful studies of this sort include Griffin 1986 (on the different vocabulary of characters and the primary narrator); de Jong 1992 (on the same general idea in relation to Odysseus in particular); Mackie 1997 (on first-person storytelling in the *Odyssey* in comparison to third-person song or poetry); Scodel 1998 (on differences in the source of the narrative's authority and the narrator's own relationship to it in poetry and nonprofessional narration). Most recently, de Jong 2001 provides narratological commentary on the entire *Odyssey*.

“primary narrator” and “character-narrator”² and the genre contrast between “story” and “poem.”³ Previous work has tended to focus on one of these oppositions at a time, which obscures the significant interplay between the two.

SPEECH-FRAMING FORMULAS AND NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

All of the characters who appear in this study make consistent use of speech-framing formulas to introduce direct speech. The main narrator’s formulaic repertoire should be considered the baseline for evaluating how these formulas work, since the main narrator uses such formulas much more than any of the characters. Comparing the specific language of the speech-framing formulas of the various narrators under study will show that, although all of them have the same basic conception of what conversation is and how to link individual speeches together into a conversation, the personal involvement of the character-narrators in their stories affects their speech-framing formulaic repertoire as well as other aspects of their storytelling technique.

1. Poets

The *Odyssey* contains a number of extremely common and regular formulas to introduce replies by the characters and organize the conversations that the primary narrator relates to his audience.⁴ These formulas are among the most common and the most regular types of language in the poems. Accordingly, they establish a consistent and reliable standard both for one aspect of the primary narrator’s style and for the structure of conversation and conversation-related formulas. The most frequently found pattern of such formulas contains an initial half-verse formula for the idea of “answered him [or her]” and a second half-verse formula that names the speaker and modifies him or her with an epithet or other descriptive language, such as:

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| i) <u>τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη</u> <u>ξανθὸς</u>
<u>Μενέλαος</u> (e.g., <i>Od.</i> 4.203) | Then in answer replied to him fair-haired
Menelaos |
| τὸν/τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη (68x
<i>Odyssey</i>) | |
| ii) τὸν δ' ἡμείβετ' ἔπειτα <u>πολύτλας</u> <u>δῖος</u>
<u>Ὀδυσσεύς</u> (e.g., <i>Od.</i> 15.340) ⁵ | Then much-enduring great Odysseus said
to him in answer ⁶ |

2. In addition to the various works of de Jong, Richardson (1990) sheds some light on the differences between characters in the course of delineating the characteristics of what he calls “the Homeric narrator.”

3. The nature of poetry, and in particular Homeric views on this question, is of course the topic of an enormous quantity of scholarship, although most such work focuses on defining poetry’s characteristics by teasing out the implications of what Homeric epic says about poetry (see, e.g., Ford 1992) rather than by making detailed and sustained comparisons between poetry and other types of narrative found in the *Odyssey*.

4. The most common introductory formulas, like those quoted below, in fact introduce replies specifically rather than speech in general.

5. The totals for various formulas will be given for the *Odyssey* only, because one of the implications of this work is that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are fundamentally different in their approaches to character-narrated speech. Throughout, double underlining indicates a formulaic expression for “said,” and single underlining identifies a formulaic name-epithet expression.

6. All translations are from Lattimore 1965, and follow his spellings of proper names where they differ from my own.

<u>τὸν δ' ἡμείβεται ἔπειτα διάκτορος</u> <u>ἀργεῖφόντης</u> (<i>Od.</i> 8.338)	Then in turn answered the courier Argeiphontes
τὸν/τὴν δ' ἡμείβεται ἔπειτα (24x <i>Odyssey</i>)	
iii) <u>τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε πολύτλας δῖος</u> <u>Ὀδυσσεύς</u> (e.g., <i>Od.</i> 14.148)	Then long-suffering great Odysseus spoke to him in answer
<u>τὸν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε περικλυτὸς</u> <u>ἄμφιγυῖς</u> (e.g., <i>Od.</i> 8.349)	Then in turn the renowned smith of the strong arms answered
τὸν/τὴν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε (57x <i>Odyssey</i>)	

For formulas like verse i, other participles besides ἀπαμειβόμενος can be used to describe various aspects of the speaker: he was annoyed (ὑπόδρα ἰδών), he smiled (ἐπιμειδήσας), he was angry (μέγ' ὀχθήσας). Besides being the most common kind of formulaic reply introduction, verses of this pattern are also the shortest way to introduce a reply, and they provide the least information about the speaker and context of the speech in question. For a slightly longer description of a speaker's emotions, a formulaic couplet like the following may precede a reply:

iv) <u>ὥς φάτο, ῥίγησεν δὲ πολύτλας δῖος</u> <u>Ὀδυσσεύς,</u> <u>καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπειτα πτερόεντα</u> <u>προσηύδα,</u> ⁷ (<i>Od.</i> 5.171–72)	So she [Calypso] spoke to him, but long- suffering great Odysseus shuddered to hear, and spoke again in turn and addressed her in winged words
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This pattern gives a full verse to the person speaking and his feelings, and a second verse to the idea of “he said.”

We can see encapsulated in these reply-introductory formulas some basic aspects of the poet's approach to narration: he is personally detached from the action, but knows a fair amount about the characters whose tale he is telling his audience. The characters who tell stories about themselves, on the other hand, are shaped as narrators largely by their participation in the events that they narrate. This perspective comes out clearly in the language and structure of the introductory formulas that characters use when they include conversation in the stories they tell. While the characters and the primary narrators share the same basic idea of conversation, their different perspectives on the conversations they narrate affect the presentation of these conversations on many different levels.

Like the primary narrator, Demodocus regularly uses names and epithets as part of his reply-introductory formulas, and he does not participate in the events that he narrates. In his first and third songs, both of which are about the Trojan War, the primary narrator relays Demodocus' tales to the audience of the *Odyssey* indirectly. These songs contain no direct speech and we do not hear Demodocus' voice.⁸ The second song, in which Demodocus relates

7. Verse 172, with slight variants for a feminine speaker (φωνήσασ' for φωνήσας) or a plural addressee (σφεας for μιν), appears 24 times in the *Odyssey*.

8. I suspect that this is at least partly in order to highlight and privilege the first-person immediacy of Odysseus' narrative about his own experiences related to the war.

a humorous story about Ares and Aphrodite committing adultery, not only does not involve Demodocus personally but for obvious reasons is not susceptible to eyewitness verification in any way. This passage of the *Odyssey*, partly because of its flippant tone toward the gods, caused a sufficient degree of discomfort among previous generations of scholars that many resorted to excising it from the poem as spurious.⁹ Recent attempts to rehabilitate the song have resulted in a number of persuasive studies that point out various thematic connections between the subject of the song of Ares and Aphrodite and either its immediate context or the *Odyssey* as a whole.¹⁰ Even though the song is now generally accepted, for the most part scholars are still pursuing the same lines of inquiry about it that were generated by doubts about its authenticity. Thus, although the song presents a unique opportunity to observe a poet in the *Odyssey* making a poem that is presented directly to the audience, it has not been well studied from this vantage point.

The second song begins like the other two: the primary narrator reports that Demodocus began singing (φορμίζων ἀνεβάλλετο καλὸν ἀεΐδειν, 8.266) but does not quote Demodocus directly. The song proceeds for a while in indirect speech as we are given an overview of the song's subject and the initial events in the story (268–88). Once the two lovers meet, however, the song changes in form. First, it tells us what the characters said in the form of direct speech, instead of the speech mentions that appear in the indirectly narrated portion of the poem (e.g., "Ἥραιστος δ' ὥς οὖν θυμαλγέα μῦθον [i.e., of Helius, who came to him with a report of Aphrodite's infidelity] ἄκουσε, 272). At the same time, the primary narrator's presence essentially disappears, giving the sense that Demodocus is singing his song for the external audience without the intermediate presence of the primary narrator.

Throughout the section of the song that contains direct speech, Demodocus uses reply-introductory formulas that are identical to those used by the primary narrator.¹¹ Only Demodocus consistently duplicates the formulas that the primary narrator uses in both the language itself and the manner in which it is used. This overlap goes beyond single verse formulas like those given in ii and iii above. Demodocus also uses other kinds of speech introductory language in the same way that the narrator uses it. For instance, when Ares persuades Aphrodite to go to bed with him, he introduces Ares' speech with ἐν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῶ χειρὶ ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε (291), a verse that the primary narrator regularly uses to indicate intimacy between the people who are talking.¹² Later on, Demodocus opens the scene in which all the gods come to gawk at the trapped lovers with a single speech by an unidentified speaker that gives a representative overview of the opinions of the group to which the speaker belongs (329–32). The formula ὧδε δέ τις

9. Burkert 1960 argues strongly for the passage being genuine, partly on the grounds that ribald stories about the gods are very old. See in particular pp. 132–35 for a comprehensive overview of arguments for and against the authenticity of the passage.

10. On the former, see Braswell 1982; on the latter, Alden 1997, with bibliography.

11. The specific names and epithets that Demodocus uses are attested only in the *Iliad*, however.

12. Edwards 1970, p. 10, n. 18. This verse is also used twice by Odysseus (10.280, with μοι for οἱ, and 11.247, where he is narrating the story of Tyro and Poseidon).

εἵπεσκεν ἰδὼν ἐς πλησίον ἄλλον precedes the speech (328).¹³ The primary narrator regularly uses this formula in the broader context of using a speech by no one in particular to represent the views of a whole group.¹⁴ In fact, the vast majority of the introductory verses that Demodocus uses are also attested for the primary narrator.

Indeed, except for the comparative brevity of his songs, Demodocus is indistinguishable as a poet and narrator from the primary narrator. The two have the same formulaic repertoire, including both reply introductions that contain name-epithet formulas and more context-specific kinds of speech introductory formulas; they use this language in the same way; they relate events at which they were not personally present without commenting on this fact or explaining how they came to know about the events. Their lack of personal involvement in what they are narrating allows both poets to give their audiences a wider view of the events they describe than character-storytellers have, including the feelings and thoughts of many different characters. In fact, on a very literal level, Demodocus is indistinguishable from the primary narrator in his second song. In the course of this song, Demodocus takes over the voice of the primary narrator, in that there are no references in the primary narrator's voice to Demodocus during the direct speech portion of Demodocus' song. The form of this song allows the audience to forget, temporarily, that the storyteller is a character inside the *Odyssey* rather than the primary narrator of the *Odyssey* itself.

It is only in these speeches in the second song that the audience experiences a direct speech by Demodocus. Outside of poetic performance, we never "hear" the voice of Demodocus. Even when Odysseus addresses him, to praise his performance and to ask for another song about the Trojan War (8.487–98), Demodocus does not speak in reply. Instead, he "replies" by beginning his third song (499), which describes the Trojan Horse and the sack of the city. An unanswered speech is unusual for the *Odyssey*, in which over 80 percent of speech takes place within conversation, and it is quite striking that Demodocus responds not by speaking but by singing. Presumably he does speak at some point during the events of *Odyssey* 8, but none of his nonpoetic speech is reported or even mentioned by the primary narrator.¹⁵ Phemius, conversely, speaks a number of times,¹⁶ but is never quoted directly while singing poetry. In fact, we either hear a poet singing, or we hear him talking, but we never hear the same poet do both. That is to say, poets as well as non-poets in the *Odyssey* observe the separation between talking about oneself and telling stories on the one hand, and making poems on the other. Not only do Menelaus and Odysseus not make poetry, but poets who are heard speaking in the *Odyssey* as poets—both those who are

13. See de Jong 1987 for an overview of this formula in the *Iliad* and the function of so-called *tis* speeches.

14. In the *Odyssey* the primary narrator uses it four times; it is more common in the *Iliad*.

15. When the herald brings him the complimentary cut of meat that Odysseus has sent, we are simply told ὁ δ' ἐδέξατο, χαίρει δὲ θυμῷ (8.483).

16. Perhaps most memorably when begging Odysseus for his life on account of his profession, 22.344–53.

characters in the *Odyssey* and the primary narrator—do not make stories or talk about themselves.

2. Characters

Formulaic repertoire and narrative techniques common to both Menelaus and Odysseus. Generally speaking, Odysseus has overshadowed Menelaus in the scholarly literature on characters as narrators, and Menelaus' potential to help us understand narration in the *Odyssey* has not been exploited. Scholars have been more interested in the content of Menelaus' tale in *Odyssey* 4 and its wide-ranging implications for other tales about heroes who came home from Troy than they have been in its form.¹⁷ In fact, Odysseus resembles Menelaus as a narrator of direct speech more closely than he resembles either of the other narrators in the poem to whom he has most often been compared, namely Demodocus and the primary narrator.

Menelaus and Odysseus structure their conversations in a manner broadly similar to that of the primary narrator:¹⁸ they use full-verse formulas to introduce speeches and replies that use basically the same vocabulary that the primary narrator uses in his reply introductions. At the same time, their use of formulaic language and their attitudes toward what they relate differ consistently from those of the primary narrator because of their more limited perspective on what they are talking about. Menelaus never narrates any conversations at which he was not present (although Odysseus does once, on which see pp. 224–25 below), and his viewpoint throughout his story stays firmly tied to his own feelings and experiences.

We can see small but significant differences when we compare the formulaic reply introductions that Menelaus and Odysseus use to those of the primary narrator and Demodocus. As poets do, they repeatedly use the same verse-long expressions to introduce speeches. These are broadly similar in structure to the ones that the primary narrator favors. Unlike poets, however, character-narrators always participate in the conversations they are retelling. Most basically, this means that reply-introductory verses have the forms "I said to him," "he said to me," or "X said to me," rather than "X said to him."¹⁹

17. Steinrück (1992), for example, argues persuasively that Menelaus structures the story of Odysseus differently from the stories of either Ajax or Agamemnon. However, his interest in structure focuses mainly on the specific items that are included in each story of homecoming rather than on the language that Menelaus uses. For the presentation of character speech in particular, see, e.g., the commentary of Ameis, Hentze, and Cauer (1964), who note the repeated formulas for introducing speech that Menelaus uses but show no interest in them beyond counting them. More recent modern commentators (Heubeck et al. [1990], de Jong [2001]) do not mention them.

18. de Jong (2001, 106) indeed, states that although Menelaus tells a first-person narrative, "his narrative style actually comes close to that of the narrator" (mainly because of the way he includes various pieces of information about his characters at the relevant point in the story, rather than at the point when he learned the information in question). Lonsdale (1988, 171) goes even further, claiming that Menelaus "actually plays the role of a poet." While Menelaus' tale does have a wide sweep as far as its content goes, in some important ways his perspective remains limited by his own experience in a way that the primary narrator's does not.

19. Interestingly enough, they rarely say "X [as opposed to "he"] said to me," and never say "I said to X"; see Austin 1975, 47–52, for characters' avoidance of name-epithet expressions in their speeches. Austin claims that Odysseus' use of epithets approaches that of the poet and connects this to the notion that Odysseus "substitutes for the poet through much of the poem" (50). As we will see, this is far from true in formulaic reply introductions.

So, we find the following group of verses in the reply-introductory formula repertoire of Menelaus and Odysseus:

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|---|---|
| v) ὥς ἔφατ', αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ μιν ἀμειβόμενος
προσέειπον (<i>Od.</i> 4.375 = 394 = 464;
11x <i>Od.</i> 9–12) | So s/he spoke, and I in turn spoke up and
made answer |
| vi) ὥς ἐφάμην, ὁ δέ μ' αὐτίκ' ἀμειβόμενος
προσέειπεν (<i>Od.</i> 4.471 = 491 = 554;
4x <i>Od.</i> 11) | So I spoke, and he in turn spoke up and
made answer |
| vii) ὥς ἐφάμην, ἥ δ' αὐτίκ' ἀμειβετο δῖα
θεῶων (<i>Od.</i> 4.382 = 398; 3x <i>Od.</i> 9–12) ²⁰ | So I spoke, and she, shining among the
goddesses, answered |

These, obviously, differ from analogous verses used by poets in that they contain first-person references to the person telling about the conversation. In addition, they have more subtle variations in wording and word placement compared to what the primary narrator tends to do. Simply put, Menelaus and Odysseus generally use the same words as the primary narrator, but they are used differently: they appear in different places in the verse, in different contexts, and/or in different forms from what we would expect from the primary narrator. As we will see, these differences result from a basic contrast in perspective on what the narrator in question is talking about, not simply from the structural and metrical differences between the first and the third person.

For instance, although the primary narrator very frequently uses the expression ὥς ἔφατ' (or its metrical variants ὥς ἔφατο, ὥς φάτο, ὥς φάτ'), it never appears in a single-verse reply-introduction formula. Instead, one of these expressions usually appears either in the first verse of several that appear between one speech and the next (as in iv above), or at the end of a conversation. Similarly, in verses v and vi we find the participial form ἀμειβόμενος, a very frequent word in characters' reply introductions (twenty-four occurrences). In contrast, the primary narrator in the *Odyssey* uses this word only twelve times in introductory formulas (including four instances of ἀμειβομένη). On the other hand, character-narrators never use the primary narrator's ubiquitous ἀπαμειβόμενος (seventy-one uses).

Moreover, although the verb προσέειπεν is commonly used by both characters and poets as the main verb of a reply-introductory formula, the characters' verses always put it at the end of the line, whereas the primary narrator's formulas put it mid-verse (immediately before the caesura, fifty-seven times in the formula τὸν or τήν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε[v]). When προσέειπεν appears at the end of a verse given by the primary narrator (nineteen times), it is always a unique verse rather than a formula. Similarly, verse vii

20. Odysseus names other speakers in this way besides δῖα θεῶων. Twice in the *nekuia* in Book 11 he has πότνια μήτηρ. He also has a verse to introduce speeches that are not replies, which can include a name of the same metrical shape: καὶ τότε δὴ με ἔπεσοι προσηύδα μάντις ἀμύμων (11.99; πότνια Κίρκη, 12.36). In all of these cases, Odysseus follows the same practice as Menelaus in favoring name-epithet combinations that follow the bucolic diaeresis rather than the primary narrator's preference in speech-introductory verses for name-epithet formulas that are half a verse long.

has the form ἀμείβετο as its main verb, used three times by the primary narrator but eleven times by characters. We find a third-person imperfect form of ἀμείβομαι often in reply introductions of the primary narrator (as in verse ii above), but in a different form and at a different spot in the verse.

The characters' verse-final formula for a goddess, δῖα θεάων, superficially resembles those used by the primary narrator. However, the primary narrator very rarely uses name-epithet formulas that follow the bucolic diaeresis in reply-introductory verses. For instance, the expression Καλυψὼ δῖα θεάων regularly appears,²¹ but δῖα θεάων alone is much less common.²² In general, name-epithet combinations of this shape are often found outside of reply introductions, and they may form part of a longer name-epithet combination in a reply-introductory formula, but they rarely occur as the entire identification of the speaker in a reply introduction. The different formulas available for Odysseus give a clearer example of the primary narrator's practices concerning name-epithet formulas following the bucolic diaeresis: in verses ii and iii, we find πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς (thirty-seven times in the *Odyssey*, of which ten are reply introductions). The shorter expression δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς is found only rarely in speech-introductory verses, and always in less regular speech introductions (*Od.* 6.217, 7.21, 8.381). On the other hand, δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς is frequent outside of speech introductions (forty-two occurrences).

All this is to say that although these two characters use language in their formulaic reply introductions that is roughly similar to that used by the primary narrator, in fact, they and the primary narrator consistently assemble language differently at a number of levels when they make reply-introductory verses. They use the same basic vocabulary for speaking and replying in their formulaic reply introductions, but in different forms and in different combinations. This is emblematic of the common view they have of the basic notion of "conversation"—two characters exchanging speeches—but the dissimilarity in their perspectives on the conversations they narrate. Within a formulaic reply verse, a poet routinely names the speaker and describes him in brief or sometimes in more lengthy terms, whereas Menelaus in particular shows only the most rudimentary interest (in the form of names or epithets) in his interlocutors.²³ Usually, he focuses almost exclusively on delineating the order of the acts of speaking and rarely describes aspects of the conversation or its participants. The lack of any but the most cursory names or epithets for the persons with whom he speaks suggests that these people are of interest to Menelaus because he is speaking with them. They seem to lack any intrinsic interest of their own.

This contrasts strongly with the practice of the primary narrator and Demodocus, who regularly name the speaker within formulaic reply introductions. Indeed, the typical formulaic introductory verse for the primary narrator gives as much space to the name and description of the speaker as to the verb(s) of speaking. Metrical necessity alone cannot explain Mene-

21. Used ten times by the primary narrator; once by Odysseus (9.29).

22. Used five times by the primary narrator, once in a speech introduction (5.159).

23. As we will see, Odysseus has a greater ability than Menelaus does to notice and describe the feelings of people other than himself.

laus' pervasive lack of interest in the identity, names, and description of the characters speaking in favor of focusing strictly on speaking itself. It makes more sense to see these differences in the formulas that introduce replies as one aspect of a character's more direct participation in what he narrates. This personal involvement produces a corresponding immediacy and limitation to a character narrator's perspective on the tale for both what he talks about and the specific way in which he prefaces speeches that he reports to his audience. These same features characterize Odysseus' language, but are absent from Demodocus' songs.

Although for the most part Menelaus does not show a lot of interest in describing the nonspeech aspects of a conversation, he is capable at times of representing emotion. Occasionally he even uses language resembling that of the primary narrator to do so, and like the primary narrator, he uses length to convey emphasis. The emotion that he describes is always his own, however. Indeed, his emotion centers on things that affect him very directly. Within the conversation between Proteus and Menelaus, Menelaus reports his own grief, first at hearing that he has to make a detour to Egypt before he can return home (4.481–84), and again when he learns of Agamemnon's death (538–41). Here, as in the reply-introductory formulas that he uses, Menelaus' perspective remains closely tied to his own experiences. Just as Menelaus does not use epithets to identify his interlocutors, so too he does not describe the emotions or other features of the characters with whom he speaks.

So, the narrative technique of Menelaus has some similarities to that of poets: Menelaus uses formulaic verses to introduce speeches; they may contain language that appears in introductory formulas used by the primary narrator and Demodocus; he sometimes amplifies a particularly emotional point in his story by describing his own feelings. Here, however, the similarities end. Even though Menelaus and poets have some vocabulary in common, Menelaus' reply formulas show how different his interests are from those of the primary narrator and Demodocus. His formulas function almost exclusively to order the sequence of speeches. They lack names and epithets, not because Menelaus has no such expressions at his command—we see him use one for Proteus²⁴—but because, unlike the primary narrator, Menelaus has little interest in making observations about people other than himself. Indeed, Menelaus only reports conversations in which he himself was a participant. Moreover, when he comments on the emotional response of a participant in these conversations, it is always his own response that he describes and not that of the person he is talking to. He appears not to have any special knowledge or understanding of the feelings of people other than himself when he retells conversations. Thus, we can see that Menelaus' formulaic repertoire and overall approach to reporting conversation demonstrate how central his own perspective and experiences are to what he narrates.

24. δὴ τότε με προσέειπε γέρων ἄλιος νημερτής, 4.542. The existence of this verse shows that Menelaus is capable of using epithets in a manner like a poet's. It gives an idea of what more "narrator-like" reply introductions in the mouth of Menelaus might look like. This strengthens the contention that the language Menelaus uses to structure the conversations he narrates is not simply a result of metrical or structural factors.

Formulaic repertoire and narrative techniques specific to Odysseus. For the most part, Odysseus shares his formulaic repertoire with Menelaus, not with Demodocus and the primary narrator. He talks about a wider range of things than Menelaus does in his tale, but his approach to narrative expands on that of Menelaus rather than departing from it in any essential way. At the level of individual formulas, Odysseus uses more different formulas than Menelaus does. However, with one exception, he does not regularly use any formulas that poets use, and the form of the bulk of his formulas follows the patterns that we have already seen in Menelaus' repertoire. Odysseus reports the occasional conversation at which he was present but in which he did not participate, but the vast majority of the conversations he narrates involve him as a speaker. So, he resembles Menelaus in this aspect of his narrative as well. The very last conversation he relates took place on Olympus. This, as we will see, is the exception that proves the rule, since, unlike Demodocus in his second song, Odysseus perceives his tale as anomalous here and immediately explains how he came to know of this divine conversation. In sum, although Odysseus has a broader view of the events he relates to the Phaeacians than Menelaus shows in his story, he follows the practices of storytellers when he relates conversations, not those of Demodocus and the primary narrator. Although Odysseus shares the most prevalent formulas in his repertoire with Menelaus, he also uses a number of other formulas to introduce speeches for which he wants to provide some information about the context. This gives his narrative a wider range than that of Menelaus, but does not make it qualitatively different.

While Odysseus apparently has no interest in relating what his men have to say,²⁵ he is much more likely than Menelaus to tell his audience about the emotions of most other people with whom he speaks. In fact, he has formulas in his repertoire for this purpose:²⁶

viii) καὶ μ' ὀλοφυρομένη (or -ος) ἔπεα πτερόεντα προσηύδα (5x <i>Od.</i> 9–12)	And in lamentation [s/he, they] addressed me in winged words
ix) ὧς ἐφάμην, ὃ δέ μ' οἰμώξας ἡμείβετο μύθῳ (2x <i>Od.</i> 9–12)	So I spoke, and he groaned aloud and answered me, saying

Four of the seven instances of these “grief-stricken answer” verses appear in the *nekuia* in Book 11, much of whose considerable impact arises from the moving depiction of Odysseus' friends and loved ones meeting him in the underworld. Menelaus describes his own emotions in somewhat similar circumstances (learning of the death of his brother from Proteus), but his more limited perspective focuses only on his own emotion, and his more limited formulaic repertoire does not extend to the description of feelings, whether his or anyone else's. Odysseus' formulaic repertoire, on the other

25. He may even wish to avoid reporting what they said—another possible explanation for not giving their speeches. Out of eight instances where a repeated introductory formula says that Odysseus addresses his men (9.171; 10.173, 188, 547; 12.153, 207, 270, 319), a reply from the men is mentioned in only one case.

26. Verse viii is the only verse in Odysseus' formulaic repertoire that is also used repeatedly by the primary narrator, although Odysseus uses it more often than the primary narrator does (3x *Odyssey*).

hand, provides him with some of the means by which he draws his audience into his story. Indeed, repetition through the formulaic language of emotion makes grief shared through conversation one of the things that the *nekuia* is about, just as the trickiness of πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς is one of the things that the *Odyssey* itself is about.²⁷

Overall, it appears from the formulaic standpoint that Odysseus has a more multifaceted approach to narration than Menelaus does. At the same time, his system of formulas for introducing speeches in conversation is a more extensive version of Menelaus', not a more limited version of a poet's. Menelaus relates conversation in a quite straightforward "he said, I said" style, with occasional extended comments on his own feelings in response to what has been said to him. Odysseus, on the other hand, shows a disinclination to report the conversations in his tale in so simple a manner. He has a correspondingly larger formulaic repertoire with which to introduce the speeches he reports. However, with the exception of verses that contain the formula ἔπεα πτερόεντα, he does not share these additional formulas with the primary narrator. On the other hand, many of Odysseus' formulas—even those that Menelaus does not use himself—share language or structural features with verses in Menelaus' repertoire. At the level of formulaic speech-introductory language, Odysseus is a storyteller with a wide range, not a poet.

Unlike Menelaus, Odysseus sometimes reports conversations in which he did not speak. In Book 9, he reports a conversation among the Cyclopes at which he was present, but in which he was not a participant. The very last conversation he relates features Helios and Zeus on Olympus, where clearly Odysseus could not have been present, let alone speaking. Significantly, these conversations use reply-introductory language that resembles the primary narrator's much more closely than does the bulk of Odysseus' formulaic repertoire. When Odysseus is less directly involved in what he is retelling, his formulas become more like the primary narrator's. Even here we can see that although Odysseus has greater range as a narrator than Menelaus does, in the form of a greater possibility of reporting conversations from which he is somewhat disengaged, he differs from a poet in his narrative approach to these conversations.

In the episode of the Cyclops, Odysseus includes a conversation between Polyphemus and the other Cyclopes. The blinded Polyphemus bellows in pain at his injury, attracting the attention of his comrades. A summary of this conversation (9.403–13), with reply introductions quoted in full, is given here:

Cyclopes to P: "What's wrong?" (*Od.*
9.403–6)

τοὺς δ' αὖτ' ἐξ ἄντρου προσέφη κρατερὸς
Πολύφημος (407)

Then from inside the cave strong
Polyphemos answered them

P to Cyclopes: "οὐτίς is attacking me!"
(408)

27. For formulaic epithets as an enactment of a basic feature of a character's personality and story, see Foley, e.g., 1991, 141.

οἱ δ' ἀπαμειβόμενοι ἔπεα πτερόεντ'
 ἄγόμενον (409)

So then the others speaking in winged
 words gave him an answer

Cyclopes to P: "If you're ill, pray to
 Poseidon" (410–12)

It seems probable that Odysseus reports this conversation in the first place, even though he was not a participant, in order to develop the punning notion of telling Polyphemus that his name is Outis. The effect of his ruse comes across much more effectively if we hear Polyphemus falling victim to it than it would if Odysseus merely mentioned this conversation to his audience. Both of the reply-introductory verses quoted here superficially resemble common formulas used by the primary narrator. However, both verses put this language together differently from the primary narrator, or use it differently in context. In the case of 407, Odysseus is using language that has very common and very regular patterns when the primary narrator uses it. This suggests that his departures from the primary narrator's practices when using the same kind of language are significant for evaluating his style as a narrator, even though they are not large departures.

First, Odysseus matches a plural object pronoun with the verbal prefix προσ- in verse 407. The primary narrator, in contrast, uses a plural object only once with προσέφη in ninety-eight occurrences (at 22.34). Moreover, this is the only instance of a prepositional phrase in the same verse as προσέφη. As we have seen, the primary narrator most commonly includes a participle in addition to the main verb of speaking in the first half of the verse; we also regularly find the names of both the speaker and the addressee in a speech-introductory verse whose main verb is προσέφη.²⁸ The only verse of the primary narrator's that resembles Odysseus' verse here is 2.348, τὴν τότε Τηλέμαχος προσέφη θαλαμὸνδε καλέσας. This is an unusual verse for the primary narrator in several ways.²⁹ So, Odysseus is following the general pattern of "name-epithet formula preceded by προσέφη," a pattern that character-narrators in general avoid. However, he arranges the other language in his verse quite differently from patterns that are extensive and well established for the primary narrator. Similarly, the primary narrator uses the expression ἔπεα πτερόεντ' ἄγόμενον, but not to introduce a reply in a conversation that is in progress.³⁰ In a conversation in which he is not directly involved, Odysseus uses language that is more similar to that used by the primary narrator than anything we find in Menelaus' story, or, indeed, elsewhere in Odysseus' tale. Even so, he does not use the primary narrator's repertoire in the way in which the primary narrator does.

The last conversation that Odysseus reports in Books 9–12 takes place between Zeus and Helios on Olympus. Odysseus says that a messenger came to Helios to report that Odysseus' men had sacrificed his cattle (12.374–76). Helios, aggrieved, asked the gods to avenge his cattle, or he would enter Hades

28. Such as 8.486: δὴ τότε Δημόδοκον προσέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς.

29. For instance, it is one of only two verses in which Telemachus' name appears as the subject of the verb προσέφη, although each, separately, is very common in the *Odyssey*.

30. 13.165 in the *Odyssey*, where it introduces the first speech in a series; also twice in the *Iliad*.

(377–83). Zeus promises to strike Odysseus' ship with a thunderbolt (385–88). To introduce Zeus' answer, Odysseus exactly duplicates a reply-introductory formula commonly used by the primary narrator: τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς (12.384). This is the only instance in which Odysseus uses a full-verse reply-introductory formula with a name-epithet combination that commonly appears in the primary narrator's repertoire; it is also the only conversation Odysseus reports at which he was not present. Once again, we see that when a character lacks direct involvement in a conversation he reports, his introductory formulas become correspondingly more like those of the primary narrator. Here, the only occasion when Odysseus is completely absent from a conversation he reports is also the only occasion when he mirrors exactly a name-epithet formula used by the primary narrator. It appears, in fact, that the degree of a character-narrator's involvement in his narrative has a significant impact on the type of speech-introductory language that the character uses.

Odysseus, however, is telling a story, not singing a poem, and so this material for which he has no direct personal authority does not suit his context. Unlike the poet Demodocus in his song about Ares and Aphrodite, Odysseus does not even give a speech-concluding formula before hastening to explain to his audience how he came to learn of this divine conversation (12.389–90):

ταῦτα δ' ἐγὼν ἤκουσα Καλυψοῦς ἡὔκόμοιο·
ἥ δ' ἔφη Ἑρμείῳ διακτόρου αὐτὴ ἀκοῦσαι.

All this I heard afterward from fair-haired Kalypso,
and she told me she herself had heard it from the guide, Hermes.

Odysseus seems aware here of the proper narrative practices for nonprofessionals as distinct from poets, and to put himself in the first category. Demodocus makes no comment on the divine subject of his second song, and none seems expected by anyone in the audience.³¹ In contrast, Odysseus feels that some kind of explanation will be required from him about how he is in a position to report this conversation,³² even though he is the subject of the conversation in question, while Demodocus has no personal connection at all to the tale of Ares and Aphrodite. Once again, Odysseus shows that he has a broader range as a storyteller than Menelaus. Paradoxically, he does this both by briefly duplicating the language of the primary narrator for relating a conversation in which he is not involved, and by immediately recognizing that he has done something odd.

Odysseus, then, not only tells a longer story than Menelaus does, he also uses a wider range of narrative techniques to relate his tale, comprising not

31. Scodel (1998, 179–80) notes that what happens on Olympus is the one area where professional singers know more than others might be expected to.

32. In fact, no mention of this supposed conversation between Calypso and Hermes appears in Book 5, which has exercised many critics because they contend that that leaves Odysseus without a believable explanation for how he learned about the conversation (see Suerbaum 1968, 158–61, for a defense of this couplet and the conversation between Zeus and Helios). It is quite true that Book 5 contains no specific reference to the conversation. However, it seems to me that Calypso's comment that Odysseus would stay with her if he knew what he would have to endure before reaching home (5.206–10) is certainly consistent with her having learned things from Hermes about Odysseus' journey home that the audience is not told.

only the formulas and strategies of Menelaus but also varieties of language and situations that Menelaus never uses. Odysseus, unlike Menelaus, shows a consistent interest in describing the emotions and behavior of the characters he is speaking to, and his formulaic repertoire contains language for doing this. He also differs from Menelaus in occasionally reporting conversations in which he does not speak. In fact, there is a consistent correlation in the language that Odysseus uses between how directly he participated in conversations that he relates and how closely the introductory formulas that he uses resemble those of a poet. Unlike Demodocus, however, he feels he has to explain himself on the one occasion when he reports events at which he was not present. Overall, these results suggest that while Odysseus shows a storytelling ability that is in many ways more compelling and wide-ranging than Menelaus', he is following the same basic patterns as Menelaus does in *Odyssey* 4. He does not transcend the conventions of storytelling and become a poet.

The strategy of studying different kinds of characters as narrators not only improves our understanding of how personal involvement affects the presentation of speech within a story by characters; as we have seen, this approach underlines the notion that Odysseus is a superb storyteller and not the poet or poet-equivalent that some readers have seen in him. By examining in detail the formulaic repertoire of Odysseus and Menelaus in comparison to that of Demodocus and the primary narrator, we can see that the formulaic repertoire of speech frames, and indeed the notion of what constitutes a "formula" at all in a speech frame, are heavily dependent on the involvement or lack thereof of the narrator in his tale.

This approach also allows us to see that the opposition of "poetry" and "story" has an even broader importance for understanding some aspects of the *Odyssey* than has been realized. It has long been realized that personal involvement plays a crucial role in many different areas of character narration. However, the noninvolvement of characters who are poets affects not only the way they tell their stories, but the way they are depicted as speakers when they are not actively engaged in singing. The poet/storyteller divide may explain the fact that no poet in the *Odyssey*—including the primary narrator—has both a speaking voice and a poetic voice. Phemius only speaks, while Demodocus and the primary narrator only sing. In fact, different narrators who are poets (i.e., the primary narrator and Demodocus) in some respects show much greater similarities in their approach to narration than do characters who practice different kinds of narration (i.e., Menelaus and Demodocus). This highlights the unique position of Demodocus in the *Odyssey* as a character who has more in common with the main narrator of the poem than he does with his fellow characters.³³

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