CHAPTER 1

Placing Homer

A sense of place was very important in antiquity: one's home city (πατρίς) could be almost as important an identifier as one's father's name. Homer, however, seemed always to resist local placement because he was everywhere: no city could own him, anymore than it could be agreed who his father was. Not, however, that this stopped cities trying. Several Greek cities staked early and persistent claims – Athens, Chios, Colophon, Cyme, Ios, Rhodes, Smyrna were among the most persistent.[1] A set of (probably late Hellenistic) epigrams from Pergamum, inscribed on a statue base which must have supported an image of Homer, celebrates the squabbles of the cities over the poet, whose 'birthplace is known to Zeus alone', and seems to compare the quarrelling cities to hungry dogs fighting over a bone (*SGO* 06/02/18).[2] If the early claimants were very largely cities of the eastern Aegean and the coast of Asia Minor, more exotic claimants emerged over time: Egypt, Ethiopia, Babylon, even Rome.[3] Some of these claims were, of course, deliberately outlandish and comic, but the very number of them, and the fact that potential 'homes' for Homer expanded as the Greek world did (notably in the wake of Alexander's conquests), shows just how extraordinary Homer's 'universality' was felt to be. The Proclan *Life of Homer* (5 West) notes that 'it would be reasonable to call Homer a citizen of the world (κοσμοπολίτης)', or as Antipater of Thessaloniki put it in an epigram, 'the broad heaven was [Homer's] fatherland, and no mortal woman gave birth to [him], but [the Muse] Kalliope was [his] mother' (*APl.* 296.7–8 = *GP* 479–80).

[1] Cf. Hillgruber 1994: 84–6, Graziosi 2002: 83–6, Clay 2004: 137, citing earlier bibliography. The opening section of the Hesychian *Life of Homer* (*Suda* o 251 = 6.1–2 West) offers an illuminating collection of ancient attempts to identify Homer's homeland and parents.

[2] There is a text and English translation in Clay 2004: 137–8; the text and interpretation of the final couplet (the simile of the dogs) is not entirely certain. For 'literary' epigrams on Homer's birthplace cf. Skiadas 1965: 18–32.

[3] Cf. Heath 1998b.

If in this epigram Antipater seems to treat Homer as himself divine, then this too shares in a very familiar ancient rhetoric. Homer's omnipresence allowed him to be assimilated to other omnipresent beings, namely gods; like a god, he could have myriad local identities and cult sites which satisfied local needs and a sense of place, but never be confined to any particular site.[4] As another *Life* puts it, 'his homeland was disputed because the greatness of his nature made it unbelievable that he was a mortal at all' (Hesychian *Life* 6.2 West). At the end of the third century BC, Ptolemy IV Philopator established in Alexandria a shrine to Homer in which the cult image was surrounded by images of the cities which claimed the poet (Aelian, *VH* 13.22, cf. *SH* 979), and a famous late Hellenistic relief (the *Apotheosis of Homer*) sets Homer, crowned by Time and the Oikoumene (the inhabited world), in parallel with Zeus.[5] If in time 'divine' (θεῖος) became a banal description of poets, as it is already a standard epithet of bards in the *Odyssey*, with Homer the epithet retained its full force.[6] His omnipresence also manifested itself in a claim, sometimes intended literally and sometimes more symbolically, that all subsequent forms of literature, and indeed all culture more generally, drew inspiration (and often subject matter and verbal expression) from Homer; Dionysius of Halicarnassus asserts, against Plato's alleged envious hostility towards Homer, that 'through [Homer] all culture (παιδεία) and finally philosophy itself entered our lives'.[7] The most famous way in which this aspect of Homer's extraordinariness was expressed was in the image of the poet as the encircling Ocean from which all rivers and seas derived.[8] Ocean too has no single locality: it is everywhere, quite literally 'all around us'. Like so many of the ways in which Homeric influence was figured in antiquity,[9] Homer himself

[4] For a survey of known cults of Homer cf. Clay 2004: 136–43, and cf. also Brink 1972, Petrovic 2006: 16–24, Fournet 2012.

[5] Cf. the cover illustration for this book. For another picture and bibliography cf. Hunter 2004b: 235–7; for Homer as Zeus in epigram cf. Antipater Thess., *AP* 7.409 (= *HE* 638–47), Skiadas 1965: 118–24.

[6] Cf. e.g. Skiadas 1965: 63–75. In his (joking?) elegiac catalogue of the loves of famous poets (fr. 7 Powell = 3 Lightfoot), Hermesianax (? early third century BC) both calls Homer 'the sweetest δαίμων of all poets' and θεῖος and also has him settle on Ithaca (because he loved Penelope) 'leaving far behind his broad homeland' (perhaps a pointedly non-specific reference to Asia Minor).

[7] *Letter to Gnaeus Pompey* 1.13.

[8] For a collection of some of the evidence cf. Williams 1978: 88–9, 98–9; on Longinus, *De subl.* 9.13 cf. below pp. 187–8. In the same chapter in which he records Ptolemy Philopator's shrine to Homer, Aelian records a painting by one Galaton which (according to Aelian) depicted Homer vomiting and other poets gathering up his vomit; the anecdote is often connected with Philopator's shrine (e.g. Webster 1964: 144–5), but Galaton is otherwise completely unknown.

[9] Cf. Porter 2016: 362–3, who writes of 'a self-satisfying circle in which Homer comes to signify himself'; for another possible example cf. below pp. 57–60 on Homer's image of Eris.

was the 'source' of the image. The 'great strength of the river Ocean' surrounds the cosmic images on the Shield of Achilles (*Il.* 18.607–8), and in *Iliad* 21, the raging Achilles boasts that he is a descendant of Zeus, before whom even Ocean must yield:

> τῶι οὐδὲ κρείων Ἀχελώιος ἰσοφαρίζει,
> οὐδὲ βαθυρρείταο μέγα σθένος Ὠκεανοῖο,
> ἐξ οὗ περ πάντες ποταμοὶ καὶ πᾶσα θάλασσα
> καὶ πᾶσαι κρῆναι καὶ φρείατα μακρὰ νάουσιν.
>
> Homer, *Iliad* 21.194–7[10]

> Not even the mighty Achelous is a match for Zeus, not even the great power of deep-flowing Ocean, from whom all rivers and every sea and all springs and deep wells flow.

In *Iliad* 14 also, Ocean seems to come 'second', as it were, when Sleep tells Hera that he would easily put to sleep any god except Zeus, even 'the streams of the river Ocean, which is the origin (γένεσις) of all' (14.243–8). The shield of Achilles, on which Ocean encircled Hephaestus' images, was itself interpreted as a 'mimetic image of the cosmos' (κόσμου παντὸς μίμημα), and generated elaborate physical allegories to justify this;[11] 'Heraclitus' calls the images on the shield a description of 'the origin of all things' which Homer depicted 'with an intellect that was great and cosmogonical' (*Hom. Probl.* 43.1). The universal shield reflected the universal nature of its maker, Homer, who himself was 'the origin of all things'. Human life was essentially war or peace, pleasure or pain: the *Iliad* primarily depicted war and pain, whereas on the shield Homer foregrounded peace, civic life and pleasure to even the balance (bT-scholia on *Il.* 18.490). All of our existence is there.

As we have already noted from the Hellenistic *Apotheosis of Homer*, the poet could be associated not just with universalising images and with Ocean, but also with Zeus, and Homer is thus linked to the greatest powers in the heavens, as well as on the earth. In *On the sublime* Longinus linked images of Homer as the sun and as Ocean (*De subl.* 9.13),[12] and at the head of his review of Greek literature Quintilian links Homer as Zeus and Homer as Ocean through a reworking of the poet's description of Ocean in *Iliad* 21:[13]

[10] Some ancient texts omitted v. 195, thus making Achelous the source of all waters, and this was the text approved by Zenodotus, cf. D'Alessio 2004.

[11] For the label cf. e.g. [Plut.] *Hom.* 2.176, Schol. Arat. *Phain.* 26, 'Heraclitus', *Hom. Probl.* 43.2; for the allegorical interpretation cf. 'Heraclitus', *Hom. Probl.* 43–51, Eustathius, *Hom.* 1154.41–1155.3. On ancient interpretations and depictions of the shield cf. Hardie 1985, 1986: 340–6.

[12] Cf. below pp. 187–8.

[13] Asper 1997: 197 with n. 279 gathers other passages which may evoke the idea of Homer as Zeus, but they are of very variable certainty.

> igitur, ut Aratus ab Ioue incipiendum putat, ita nos rite coepturi ab Homero uidemur. hic enim, quem ad modum ex Oceano dicit ipse amnium fontiumque cursus initium capere, omnibus eloquentiae partibus exemplum et ortum dedit. (Quintilian 10.1.46)
>
> Just as Aratus thinks it right to begin from Jupiter [cf. *Phaenomena* 1], so it seems appropriate for us to begin from Homer. As Homer says that the courses of all rivers and streams have their origin from Ocean, so he gave a model and origin for all the elements of eloquence.

In this chapter I want to consider some of the ways in which Homer's universal reach across the Greek world is reflected at every level of literary sophistication; we will find Homer in some perhaps surprising places. In some senses, it is indeed Homer who makes the world Greek.

Homer and Inscribed Epigram

The Homeric poems were at the basis of ancient education; for centuries, to learn to read in school was to learn to read Homer,[14] and the advent of Christianity did not necessarily change that. The pseudo-Plutarchan *On Homer* explains that as Homer was the foremost (πρῶτος) poet, so it is appropriate that he is read first (πρῶτος), and 'this brings huge benefits for speaking, thinking and knowledge [or "experience"] of affairs' (2.1). The *Iliad*, and particularly the early books, seems to have been much more important in school education in the Hellenistic and Roman periods than the *Odyssey*. For the earlier, classical period, various texts attest to the role of Homer in the education of élite children,[15] but some of our best evidence for how the Homeric poems penetrated all levels of society, from the most literate and sophisticated to the most humble, are the hundreds of funerary and encomiastic poems which survive from right across the Greek world and beyond. The influence of epic, and indeed specifically Homeric, language and ideas is visible in our corpus of inscribed epigrams from the archaic period on,[16] just as Homer is never really absent from any Greek hexameter or elegiac verses; in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, however, both the corpus of poems and the signs of Homeric influence increase very greatly. Who wrote most of these poems we will never know, and it is very unlikely that any one answer will meet all cases; towns and villages will

[14] Cf. e.g. Hillgruber 1994: 9–11, Robb 1994, Cribiore 2001: 194–7, Chaniotis 2010, and the contributions of Pordomingo and Fernández Delgado to Bastianini and Casanova 2012.
[15] Cf. Pl. *Prt.* 325e–326a, *Laws* 7.810e–811a on the educational role of poets generally.
[16] Cf. e.g. Bing 2009: chap. 8, Hunter 2010: 281–2. For Homer and epigram more generally see also Durbec and Trajber 2017.

have had 'professional' composers, perhaps doubling as local γραμματικοί or schoolteachers, who knew how to write a few elegiac distichs at a time to meet the needs of their customers, and such poets are no doubt responsible for a significant proportion of surviving inscribed poetry, but many other poems are presumably the work of those whom they honour. It was probably no less uncommon in antiquity to make preparations for how one was to be commemorated after death than it is today. Homer offered to local poets at every level a high-status metrical language which served to ennoble what are often desperately sad messages; Homeric phrases, whether accurately recalled or not, also tended to linger from schooldays into later life, and were thus likely to reappear when men of relatively humble learning turned their hands to versification.

In a study of funerary epigrams from villages in Christianised inner Anatolia of the fourth and fifth centuries AD, Peter Thonemann has noted that these very humble artefacts are marked by a pervasive attempt to imitate, or quote, Homeric words and phrases, but that this consciousness of tradition is regularly combined with a marked inability to reproduce Homeric language and metre with any accuracy.[17] One of the poems which Thonemann discusses is the following epitaph from Cappadocia:

> ἦ ῥά τι καὶ νεκύεσιν ἐπαυρέμεν ἤνδανε κάλλους·
> Ἀνατόλις ὅτι τάχος ἔδραμεν εἰς Ἀείδα.
> ἔλινα δ' ἐν θαλάμοις πατὴρ φίλος Ἐλπίδιος ἡ δέ νυν μήτηρ Ἀντιπάτρα
> ὤμοξαν ἐρατοῦ πεδὸς ἀποφθιμένου. *SGO* 13/08/01
>
> Indeed the dead too took pleasure in the enjoyment of beauty. Anatoli(o)s ran with all speed to Hades. In his bedchamber his dear father Elpidios and his mother Antipatra now grievously bewailed the death of their lovely child.

In this epigram, as Thonemann notes,[18] 'virtually every phrase . . . has Homeric authority', and some of those expressions (such as the initial ἦ ῥά τι) are very far removed indeed from the Greek spoken in Anatolian villages in the late empire. Moreover, in the second couplet the poet evokes one of the most pathetic scenes of parental grief in Homer, as Priam and Hecuba watch Achilles drag Hector's corpse around the walls of Troy:

[17] Thonemann 2014. Mitchell 2010: 106–9 offers a related account of the influence of Homer and Hesiod in Roman Paphlagonia, cf. below p. 10.
[18] Thonemann 2014: 194–5.

ὣς τοῦ μὲν κεκόνιτο κάρη ἅπαν· ἣ δέ νυ μήτηρ
τίλλε κόμην, ἀπὸ δὲ λιπαρὴν ἔρριψε καλύπτρην
τηλόσε, κώκυσεν δὲ μάλα μέγα παῖδ' ἐσιδοῦσα·
ὤιμωξεν δ' ἐλεεινὰ πατὴρ φίλος, ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
κωκυτῷι τ' εἴχοντο καὶ οἰμωγῆι κατὰ ἄστυ.

Homer, *Iliad* 22.405–9

So was his whole head befouled in the dust. His mother tore her hair, and cast far off her gleaming veil, and gave a great wail when she saw her son. His dear father lamented piteously, and all around the people wailed and lamented through the city.

There is no reason to think that the Homeric allusion was recognisable only by the composer of the verses, and not also by the grieving parents and others who read the inscription. The Homeric language and the apposite allusion, however, are contained within verses which are 'hopelessly unmetrical'. Here Homer has indeed penetrated deep into everyday society: as Elpidios and Antipatra have been, quite literally, added to the second hexameter, so Anatolios and his bereft parents have been inserted into the heroic heritage, both re-enacting and almost replacing the terrible experiences of the Trojan royal family, and this 'epicisation' matters far more than the observation of metrical niceties.

At all levels of society Homer offered both a language and a series of models in which to describe the virtues of the dead. When a husband praises his wife for having 'eyes like a cow' (ὄμματα ὥστε βοός, *SGO* 14/06/22, perhaps fourth century AD),[19] he (and/or the composer) is presumably remembering and elaborating the Homeric epithet βοῶπις, applied both to Hera and to mortal women, just as μινυνθαδίη, 'short-lived', in the same verse uses another long-archaic Homeric term; we may be tempted to smile (and even perhaps fantasise about the place of cows in the life of the village), as the explicitness of the phrase seems to lack the mystery of the poetic 'cow-eyed', but we should remember that the poet and the husband had probably both learned in school that Homeric βοῶπις meant something like 'beautiful' or 'with beautiful/large eyes' (cf. D-scholia on *Il.* 1.551, 4.50).[20] The phrase thus reminds us that 'Homer' came with an exegetical apparatus of glosses and explanations which will have been familiar at relatively low levels of παιδεία; we tend to think of the extant scholia as reflecting fairly sophisticated levels of grammatical and literary

[19] Cf. Thonemann 2014: 198–200, who catalogues some of the Homeric echoes in the poem.
[20] Rufinus (? third century AD) wrote an epigram about his infatuation with a girl called Βοῶπις (*AP* 5.22 = 8 Page); in Longus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 1.17.3, Daphnis admires Chloe's eyes as 'large like a cow's', where the Homeric allusion is both naively rustic and amusingly out of place for Daphnis.

interpretation, but even the A- and bT-scholia offer very mixed bodies of material, and there is no clean divide between what we read in the scholia (let alone in a 'learned' work aimed at relatively early education, such as Plutarch's *How the Young Man Should Study Poetry*) and how Homer was taught by grammarians in schools across the Greek world.

If Homeric words and phrases naturally tended to stick in the minds of those who came to write local epitaphs, it is no more surprising that Homeric characters did so also. In Penelope, for example, Homer supplied a consoling paradigm of female virtues which could function as a kind of shorthand for commemorating the merits of a dead wife, and particularly the merit (most familiar from the Roman *uniuira*) of having only ever known one man. Thus, *SGO* 01/19/43 from late Hellenistic Didyma celebrates Gorgo, 'the Milesian Penelope among Ionian women', who died asleep 'in her husband's arms', a phrase which itself may evoke the Homeric ἐν ἀγκοίνησι, 'in the embracing arms of', a phrase used three times in Homer of women (mortal and immortal) who sleep with Zeus (*Il.* 14.213, *Od.* 11.261, 268); similarly in *GVI* 1736, from a Roman sarcophagus of the second century AD, a husband celebrates his dead wife Felicitas (Φηλικίτας) as the modern equivalent of Penelope, the very embodiment of σωφροσύνη. Severa, the wife of the priest Sacerdos, proudly proclaims in her epitaph from imperial Nicaea in Bithynia (*AP* 15.8 = *SGO* 09/05/08) that her 'husband, child, way of life (ἤθεα) and beauty', i.e. all the things in which Penelope herself might take pride, 'will make [her] more sung about (ἀοιδοτέρην) than Penelope of old'. If the claim might seem to us amusingly deluded (if not rather sad), many women might well have reflected that Penelope simply struck lucky in having Homer to celebrate her; a funerary poem for one Nomonia makes very nearly the same point (late Hellenistic from Kleonai):

> Ἰκαρίου μὲν παῖδα πολυζήλωτον Ὅμηρος
> ἤινησ' ἐν δέλτοις ἔξοχα Πηνελόπην·
> σὴν δ' ἀρετὴν καὶ κῦδος ὑπέρτατον οὔτις ἐπαρκῶς
> ἰσχύει λιγυρῶν ἅισαι ἀπὸ στομάτων. *GVI* 1735.1–4
>
> In his tablets Homer praised above all Penelope, the much-admired daughter of Icarius. But your virtue and unsurpassable renown no one has the capacity to sing from sweet-sounding mouths.

Women may in fact even hope to surpass the Homeric paradigm (cf. *GVI* 727); an imperial epitaph from Syria (*GVI* 1737 = *SGO* 19/19/02) celebrates a wife who embodied all the female virtues 'in reality' (ἔργοις), unlike Penelope who was a creation of Homer's 'fictions' (μύθοις).

If women could look to Penelope as a model against whom to measure themselves, Homer offered many paradigms of male excellence, to be exploited as appropriate. The swineherd Eumaeus, for example, a character with a very rich *Nachleben* in Hellenistic poetry, offered the obvious model of the loyal servant, as we can see on a late Hellenistic epitaph from Cos:

πρὶν μὲν Ὁμήρειο[ι γρα]φίδες φιλ[οδέσπο]τον ἦθος
Εὐμαίου χρυσέαις ἔκλαγον ἐν σελίσιν·
σεῦ δὲ καὶ εἰν Ἀίδαο σαόφρονα μῆτιν ἀείσει,
Ἴναχ', ἀείμνηστον γράμμα λαλεῦσα πέτρη. *GVI* 1729.1–4[21]

Once upon a time, Homer's pens celebrated the character of Eumaeus, devoted to his master, in golden columns; but even in Hades, Inachos, the stone which speaks a message preserving eternal memory, will sing of your wise intelligence.

That Inachos' μῆτις is praised suggests that he has passed beyond even Eumaeus to acquire some of the traits of Eumaeus' heroic, πολυμῆτις master.[22] Just as a woman might be praised for surpassing the Penelope of the past or of myth, so this poem consigns Eumaeus and Homer to the past (πρὶν μέν), whereas Inachos and the poem celebrating him are both the present and the future. The emphasis in this poem on the writtenness of Homer (γραφίδες, σελίσιν, γράμμα λαλεῦσα πέτρη, and cf. δέλτοις in *GVI* 1735, cited immediately before) suggests not merely the materiality of the inscription we are reading, but also the school-context in which the poet and his customers had learned their Homer.[23]

For those who were not servants, however, it was (unsurprisingly) Achilles who offered the most fitting paradigm for funerary encomium:

οὐκ ἄλλου, παροδῖτα, τόδε μνημῆον [⏑ – ×
ἀλλ' οὗ τὰν ἀρετὰν οὐδ' ὁ χρόνος μαρανεῖ
Ἐπιγόνου, πρωτῆα παρὰ ζωοῖσι λιπόντος
σωφροσύνας μορφᾶς θ' εἵνεκα θειοτάτας·
οὔτε γὰρ ὁ κτίνας Πριάμου παῖδ' Ἕκτορ' Ἀχιλλεύς
οὔθ' ὁ τὰ λέκτρα φυγὼν τοῦ πατρὸς Ἱππόλυτος
τοιοίδ' οὐκ ἐγένονθ' οἷος γένετ' Ἐπίγονος π[αῖς
Ἀνδρέου εὐγενέτα πατρὸς ἴσου βασιλεῖ.

[21] With ἀείμηνστον γράμμα λαλεῦσα πέτρη in v. 4 editors rightly compare Euphorion, *AP* 7.651.2 (= *HE* 1806) ἡ κυάνεον γράμμα λαχοῦσα [Hecker: λαβοῦσα] πέτρη; both phrases refer to the inscribed stone which we are reading. On the Coan poem cf. Herzog 1923/4: 399–400, Bing 2009: 157–8, Höschele 2010: 115–19, Garulli 2017: 144–5.

[22] The Homeric texture may be reinforced by an echo of the opening words of the *Iliad* (μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά) in μῆτιν ἀείσει (v. 3), cf. Höschele 2010: 116.

[23] Cf. below pp. 15–16 on *SGO* 08/05/08.

ἀλλ᾽ ὁ μὲν Ἐπίγονος μνᾶμα ζωιοῖς δια[μίμνει·
οὐδ᾽ Ἀχιλλεὺς δ᾽ ἔφυγεν μοῖραν ἀ(ε)ὶ Θέτιδος. 10

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It is the grave of no other, traveller, which [you see], but of one whose virtue not even time will wither, Epigonos, who left behind first place among the living for his good sense and most godlike form. But neither Achilles who killed Hector, Priam's son, nor Hippolytus who fled his father's bed was such as was Epigonos, son of Andreas, a noble father, the equal of a king. Epigonos remains as a memorial for the living; not even Achilles, son of Thetis, escaped fate.

This late Hellenistic or early imperial epigram from the Carian interior is marked not just by its mythological allusions, but also by an elaborated style which seems to include echoes of earlier high poetry.[24] With v. 2 editors compare the famous assertion of the chorus of Sophocles' *Ajax* that 'great expanse of time withers away all things' (πάνθ᾽ ὁ μέγας χρόνος μαραίνει, v. 714), though very many reworkings of the phrase will lie between Sophocles and the Carian poet. In context, however, following immediately upon a reference to the physical memorial to Epigonos, the verse recalls the persistent contrast in funerary poetry between the inevitable disappearance of material structures such as tombs, and the indestructibility of the virtue of the dead and our memory of it; the idea is most familiar from Simonides' poem on the dead of Thermopylae (*PMG* 531 = fr. 261 Poltera), 'all conquering time will not make [their story] dim' (οὔθ᾽ ὁ πανδαμάτωρ ἀμαυρώσει χρόνος), and Horace's redeployment of the idea in *Odes* 3.30. The Carian poet similarly plays with the analogy and difference between the physical memorial (μνημεῖον) to Epigonos[25] and the 'memorial/remembrance' (μνᾶμα) which he himself offers to those left behind. The motif, expressed in very similar language, also hovers (if less explicitly) over an honorific poem from Hellenistic Delos:

εἰκόνα σου, Πολύκλεις, ἀνὰ παστάδα τάνδε πολῖται
θῆκαν – ὁ μυριέτης δ᾽ οὐ μαρανεῖ σε χρόνος –
ἐν βουλαῖς μὲν ἄριστον, ἀγῶσι δὲ τοῖς περὶ πάτρας
ἄλκιμον, ἐν δὲ βίωι σώφρονα δερκόμενοι. *Epigr.* 854 Kaibel

[24] It is unclear whether the poem is complete or not; the image of the stone in Corsten 1997: 153 shows no trace of the start of a verse following v. 10, and some versions of v. 10 would give a pointed mythological exemplum with which to conclude. Editors note that there is perhaps a memory of Achilles' own verse of self-consolation at *Il.* 18.117, 'for not even the might of Heracles escaped death'; for the idea that 'not even' Achilles escaped death cf. e.g. *GVI* 1197, 1695, 1935.23–4. ἴσου βασιλεῖ in v. 8 is perhaps an attempt at a 'Homeric-style' phrase, such as the familiar brief Homeric comparisons with εἴκελος. The Doric forms of the poem are also very remarkable.

[25] A play on the dead man's name, 'descendant', seems likely at least in v. 7, where Ἐπίγονος and παῖς are all but certainly juxtaposed.

> The citizens placed your image, Polykles, in this colonnade – the long stretch of time will not wither you – when they saw your excellence in counsel, your bravery in contests on behalf of your homeland, and the good sense of your whole life.

Whereas Polykles seems to have embodied the combined virtues of Achilles and Nestor (or perhaps Achilles and Odysseus),[26] Achilles and Hippolytus, 'who fled from his father's marriage-bed', may seem a strange pairing of models for the Carian poet of *SGO* 02/14/11 to have chosen for those whom Epigonos surpassed, but between them they offer 'mythical' paradigms of Epigonos' virtues, ἀρετή (Achilles), σωφροσύνη (Hippolytus), μορφή (Hippolytus and Achilles, cf. *Il.* 2.674). Another poem from second-century AD Paphlagonia (*SGO* 10/02/28) celebrates a man who, when serving in the Roman army, 'met all the challenges which once upon a time Achilles and the son of Priam ever met', and he too is celebrated for 'his beauty, his youth, his strength and the bloom upon him'; one could say just the same of Achilles.[27]

At any level of society, citations of familiar Homeric tags in inscribed poetry will not surprise, though some examples of the practice may seem more imaginative than others. A painted welcome to a latrine built on to the gymnasium at Ephesos (? fourth century AD) is one such:

> λὰξ ποδὶ κινήσας καὶ πὺξ χερὶ μάκρον ἀείρας
> καὶ βήξας κραδίηθεν, ὅλον δὲ τὸ σῶμα δονήσας
> ἐξ ὀνύχων χέζων φρένα τέρπεο, μηδέ σε γαστὴρ
> μήποτε λυπήσειεν ἐμὸν ποτὶ δῶμα μολόντα *SGO* 03/02/47

> Move a wiper[28] with your foot and lift it in the fist of your hand, cough from the depths of your chest, and with a shake of your whole body delight your heart with a shit from very deep within![29] Let not your stomach ever trouble you when you come to my house!

There is here an obvious, and obviously amusing, contrast between high-style Homeric language and morphology (φρένα τέρπεο, ποτὶ δῶμα μολόντα etc.) and the vivid description of the pleasures of defecation in a public latrine. There are, however, also further suggestions that the author

[26] For Odysseus as βουλαῖς ἄριστος cf. e.g. *Od.* 13.297–8; for Nestor cf. e.g. *Il.* 7.325. Such language is, however, applied to many figures in high poetry.
[27] On this poem cf. Mitchell 2010: 106–7, Hunter 2014a: 40–5.
[28] μάκρον is apparently a form of (or mistake for) μάκτρον; for a different translation (by L. C. Muellner) and quite different interpretation of this poem, one that reads μακρόν as 'high', cf. Moorman in Jansen *et al.* 2011: 59.
[29] On ἐξ ὀνύχων and similar phrases cf. Nisbet and Rudd on Hor. *Odes* 3.6.23–4.