

Why (a) would one compose an epos about a liar? In **which way, how (b)**, has a poet to compose an epos about a liar?

(b)

1: characters with nostos stories (Odyssee and fragments of the *epikos kyklos*):

Nestor, Agamemnon, Menelaos, Ajax the Letter, Idomeneus, Diomedes

2: heroes exceedingly good in words and tricks:

Nestor, Phoinix, Diomedes, Epeios, Ajax the Great; Achilles, Agamemnon, Kalchas, Teiresias

result: one character, one problem solved by words, once

in contrast: conflicts to solve by force: the same heroes again and again

(a)

(a.1): the theme of the Odyssey

battle, war, change of government, revenge : conflicts solved by force

↑↓

conquest of a way with the corresponding adventures, team project : conflicts solved by words

Odyssey = *nostos*, but only one main character, half the way without his *hetairoi*

Excursus:

Ilias: main theme: war; intarsia: conflict of two allies

Odyssey: main theme: team project: way home (3 social layers); intarsia: conflicts with enemies

(a.2): the qualities of a hero

• Ilias 9, 443: Phoinix to Achilles in the embassy:

... didaskevmenai tavde pavnta/muqwn`n te rJhth`rΔ e[menai prhkth`rav te e[rgwn

• Ilias 9, 53f.: Nestor to Diomedes before the embassy:

peri; me;n polevmw/ e[ni karterov~ ejssi/kai; boulh/` meta; pavnta~
oJmhvlika~ e[pleu a[risto~

„you are most powerful and strong in the battle and in the council the best of your peers“

• Il. 3, 208: Priamos to Helena on the wall about Odysseus and Menelaos

ajmfotevrwn de; fuh;n ejdavhn kai; mhvdea puknav

„of both I have come to know the figure and their dense thoughts“

• Od. 8, 167-177:

ξεῖν', οὐ καλὸν εἶπες: ἀτασθάλω ἀνδρὶ ἔοικας.
οὕτως οὐ πάντεςσι θεοὶ **χαρίεντα** διδοῦσιν
ἀνδράσιν, οὔτε **φύην** οὔτ' ἄρ **φρένας** οὔτ' **ἀγορητύν**.
ἄλλος μὲν γάρ τ' εἶδος ἀκιδνότερος πέλει ἀνήρ,
ἀλλὰ θεὸς **μορφήν ἔπεσι** στέφει, οἱ δὲ τ' ἐς αὐτὸν
τερπόμενοι λεύσσοισιν: ὁ δ' ἀσφαλῆως ἀγορεύει
αἰδοῖ μιλίχῃ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπει ἀγομένοισιν,
ἐρχόμενον δ' ἀνά ἄστῳ θεὸν ὡς εἰσορόωσιν.
ἄλλος δ' αὖ εἶδος μὲν ἀλίγκιος ἀθανάτοισιν,
ἀλλ' οὐ οἱ **χάρις** ἀμφιπεριστέφεται **ἐπέεσσιν**,
ὡς καὶ σοὶ εἶδος μὲν ἀριπρεπές, οὐδέ κεν ἄλλως
οὐδὲ θεὸς τεύξειε, **νόον** δ' ἀποφώλιός ἐστι.

Translation: A.T. Murray (Perseus Digital Library)

Stranger, thou hast not spoken well; thou art as one blind with folly.
So true is it that the gods do not give gracious gifts (**charis**)
to all alike, not **form** nor **mind** nor **eloquence**.
For one man is inferior in **comeliness**,
but the god sets a crown of beauty (**morphee**) upon his words, and
men look upon him with delight, and he speaks on unfalteringly
with sweet modesty, and is conspicuous among the gathered people,
and as he goes through the city men gaze upon him as upon a god.
Another again is in **comeliness** like the immortals,
but no crown of **grace** is set about his words.
So, in thy case, thy **comeliness** is preeminent, nor could
a god himself mend it, but in **mind** thou art stunted.

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Textblatt

• Hes. Theog. 81-103:

ὄν τινα τιμήσωσι Διὸς κοῦραι μέγαλοιο
 γεινόμενόν τε ἴδωσι διοτρεφέων βασιλῆων,
 τῷ μὲν ἐπὶ γλῶσση γλυκερὴν χεῖουσι ἐέρσην,
 τοῦ δ' ἔπτε' ἐκ στόματος ῥεῖ μείλιχα: οἱ δέ τε λαοὶ
 πάντες ἐς αὐτὸν ὄρωσι διακρίνοντα θέμιστας
 ἰθείησι δίκησιν: ὃ δ' ἀσφαλῆως ἀγορεύων
 αἰψὰ κε καὶ μέγα νεῖκος ἐπισταμένως κατέπαυσεν:
 τοῦνεκα γὰρ βασιλῆες ἐχέφρονες, οὔνεκα λαοῖς
 βλαπτομένοις ἀγορήφι μετὰτροπα ἔργα τελευτοῖσι
 ῥηιδίως, μαλακοῖσι παραφάμενοι ἐπέεσσιν.
 ἐρχόμενον δ' ἄν' ἀγῶνα θεὸν ὡς ἰλάσκονται
 αἰδοῖ μείλιχῆ, μετὰ δὲ πρέπεται ἀγορομένοισιν:
 τοίη Μουσῶν ἱερὴ δόσις ἀνθρώποισιν.
 ἐκ γάρ τοι Μουσῶν καὶ ἐκὼς Ἄπόλλωνος
 ἄνδρες ἀοῖδοι ἔασιν ἐπὶ χθόνα καὶ κίθαρισταί,
 ἐκ δὲ Διὸς βασιλῆες: ὃ δ' ὄλβιος, ὄν τινα Μοῦσαι
 φίλωνται: γλυκερὴ οἱ ἀπὸ στόματος ῥεῖ αὐδῆ.
 εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδεῖ θυμῷ
 ἄζηται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὸς
 Μουσῶν θεράπων κλέεα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
 ὑμνήσῃ μάκαράς τε θεοῦς, οἳ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν,
 αἰψ' ὃ γε δυσφροσυνῶν ἐπιλήθεται οὐδέ τι κηδέων
 μέμνηται: ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεῶν.

Translation: William Heinemann (Perseus Digital Library):

Whomever of heaven-nourished princes the daughters of great Zeus
 honor and behold at his birth,
 they pour sweet dew upon his tongue,
 and from his lips flow gracious words. All the people
 look towards him while he settles causes
 with true judgements: and he, speaking surely,
 would soon make wise end even of a great quarrel;
 for therefore are there princes wise in heart, because when the people
 are being misguided in their assembly, they set right the matter again
 with ease, persuading them with gentle words.
 And when he passes through a gathering, they greet him as a god
 with gentle reverence, and he is conspicuous amongst the assembled:
 such is the holy gift of the Muses to men.
 For it is through the Muses and far-shooting Apollo that
 there are singers and harpers upon the earth;
 but princes are of Zeus, and happy is he whom the Muses
 love: sweet flows speech from his mouth.
 For although a man has sorrow and grief in his newly-troubled soul
 and lives in dread because his heart is distressed, yet, when a singer,
 the servant of the Muses, chants the glorious deeds of men of old
 and the blessed gods who inhabit Olympus,
 at once he forgets his heaviness and remembers not his sorrows
 at all; but the gifts of the goddesses soon turn him away from these.

(a.3): The hero who exceeds solely in words

old hero (1)

or special man (2)

didaskalos

seer

singer

Nestor

Athene in disguise

Halithernes

Phemios

Menelaos

Teiresias

Agamemnon's singer

mavla pepnumevno~

Demodokos

oujk ejrevei yeu`do~

Odysseus

(Od. 3, 20)

Od. 2, 186: oujk a|n tovssa qeopropevwn ajgovreue~/oujdev ke Thlevmacon
 kecolwmevnon w/|dΔ ajnieivh~/sw`/ oi[kw/ dw`ron potidevgmeno~, ai[ke
 povrhsin.

„You would not talk so much about the future, and you did not let so much Telemachos being in rage against
 us, if you did not expect him to come to your house and bring a present.“

(a.4): The quality we would have expected

(a.5): The hero of the Odyssey is not impeccable

• Thersites (Il. 2, 212-277)

• Eurylochos (Od. 10, 430-437)

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(a.6): conclusion: The special gift of dolos, disguise and lie extended to telling tales