Steadfast in a Multiform Tradition: ἐμπεδος and ἀσφαλές in Homer and Beyond

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ABSTRACT

Steadfast in a Multiform Tradition: émpedos and asphalés in Homer and Beyond

A thesis presented to the Graduate Program in Ancient Greek and Roman Studies

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This Homeric word study of émpedos and asphalés offers the first comprehensive investigation of steadfastness in the ancient Greek mytho-poetic system. Prompted by the idea expressed in the name Empedokles, this work attempts to describe the potential relationship between steadfastness and kléos, ‘poetic fame’. Using formulaic and contextual analysis to consider every occurrence of émpedos in Homer and drawing generously upon supplemental evidence from other authors and traditions, this work seeks to rebuild the social, mythical, and poetic concepts of steadfastness from an internal perspective. We find that the use of émpedos and asphalés reflects traditional Indo-European concepts of stability that are highly appropriate to a system based on multiformity and composition-in-performance. Evidence also shows that these words
are appropriate to metapoetic and metapragmatic discussions of stability. Thus, the name Empedokles offers a highly relevant perspective on the nature of poetic glory, and concepts of steadfastness become crucial to our understanding of this multiform tradition.

The foundation of this study is an understanding of the metaphors associated with these terms and close readings of the contexts in which they occur. This analysis leads to refined definitions. Specifically, this work argues that émpedos and asphalés denote a steady, continual, and even ritually appropriate state, and that these terms are equally appropriate to describe subjects that are steadfastly fixed in place or steadfastly kinetic. Further, émpedos and asphalés are explicitly associated with subjects that switch from one steadfast state to another. These findings develop through analysis focused on several topics: the idea of perishable fame, the stability of Zeus’ divine authority vs. the instability of human prosperity, the steadfastness of scepter bearers, the value of steadfast strength and intelligence, descriptions of charioteering and homecoming, and the pairing of steadfastness in epic couples such as Odysseus and Penelope. Uniting the esthetics of rigidity and fluidity with the careful balance of incitement and restraint, the study of émpedos and asphalés reveals a single aesthetic principle stabilizing the
Homeric cosmos, from the progression of individual lines of poetry, to the fixed path and endless motion of the stars and moon above.
# Table of Contents

Introduction: Homeric Epic as *émpedon kléos* ............................................................................. 1

Chapter 1  The Diction of Steadfastness: émpedos and asphalès in Homer, Hesiod, and Herodotus ................................................................................................................. 11

  1.1 Preliminary Definitions and Built-in Metaphors ................................................................. 11
  1.2 Herodotean Concerns ......................................................................................................... 15
  1.3 Homeric Metaphor: Laying an émpedos Foundation ......................................................... 22

Chapter 2  Steadfast Thrones and Scepters ................................................................................. 33

  2.1 Émpedos, asphalès, and the Steadfastness of Scepter-bearers .......................................... 33
  2.2 The Formula hédos asphalès aieí ....................................................................................... 35
  2.3 The Steadfast Scepter of Poets, Seers, and Heralds ......................................................... 48
  2.4 Steadfast and Appropriate Honor .................................................................................... 54

Chapter 3  Steadfast Strength and Steadfast Intelligence ......................................................... 62

  3.1 Ménon émpedon, with émpedon in the fourth foot ......................................................... 62
  3.2 Maintaining Steadfast Strength and Intelligence ........................................................... 65
  3.3 Wishing for Youthful Strength ......................................................................................... 67
  3.4 Rebuking Inappropriate Thoughts .................................................................................. 70
Chapter 4  Poetic Fame, Steadfast Fame ................................................................. 76
  4.1 Kinetic Fame ................................................................................................. 76
  4.2 Steadfast Fame: Transferring the Metaphor .................................................. 81

Chapter 5  Steadfast Is the Warp, Steadfast Is the Weft: émpedos and the couples of the
          Odyssey and Argonautica .............................................................................. 99
          5.1 The Odyssey: Penelope as Warp, Odysseus as Weft ............................... 100
          5.2 Jason and Medea .................................................................................. 105

Chapter 6  On Not Being émpedos and the Metapoetic Destruction of the Achaean Wall
          .................................................................................................................. 111
          6.1 Reornamenting the Epic Landscape ...................................................... 111

Appendix .............................................................................................................. 123

Table 1: Subjects and Actions Described as Being émpedos ................................. 123
Table 2: Subjects and Actions Described as or Implied to Be Not émpedos .......... 126
Table 3: Partial Formulaic Analysis of émpedos (˘˘) ................................................ 127
Table 4: Comparison: Localization of Generic Dactylic Word vs. émpedos .......... 131
Table 5: Localization of émpedos in Homeric Epic, by Case and Location .......... 132

Bibliography ........................................................................................................ 137
Ἑλένης μὲν ταύτην ἀπιζην παρὰ Πρωτέα ἔλεγον οἱ ἱρέες γενέσθαι. Δοκεῖ δὲ μοι καὶ Ὅμηρος τὸν λόγον τούτον πυθέσθαι ἅλλ᾽, ὥρ γὰρ ὁμοίως ἐς τὴν ἐποποιήν εὔπρεπῆς ἦν, τῷ ἑτέρῳ τῷ περ ἐχρήσατο, ὡς δὲ μετήκε αὐτόν.

The priests say that this is the way Helen came to Proteus. And it seems to me that Homer was aware of this version of the story, but since it wasn’t as appropriate to the epic poem as the other version that he used, he released it.

Herodotus, Histories 2.116.1–6

οὐχ ὀράς ὅτι δ᾽ αὖτε κάρη κομῶντες Ἀχαιοὶ τεῖχος ἐτειχίσσαντο νεὼν ὑπὲρ, ἀμφὶ δὲ τάφρον ἠλασαν, οὐδὲ θεοὶ δόσαν κλειτὰς ἐκατόμβας; τοῦ δ᾽ ἄγαλμα θεοῦ ἦσαν τὸν τῆς ἐπικίδνατι ἠώς τοῦ δ᾽ ἐπιλήσονται τὸ ἐγὼ καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων ἥρῳ Λαομέδοντι πολίσσαμεν ἀθλήσαντε.

Don’t you see that once again the flowing-haired Achaeans built a wall inland of the ships, and drove around it a ditch, and in no way gave glorious hecatombs to the gods? Surely the fame of this will last as long as the dawn is scattered, and they will forget that wall which I and Phoebus Apollo, struggling, built for the hero Laomedon.

*Iliad* 7.448–453

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1 Translations by author, unless noted otherwise. This translation is based in part on the translation of Andrea L. Purvis in Strassler 2007:166–167.
Introduction

Homeric Epic as *émpedon kléos

The overriding pressure upon the oral poet composing in performance is to express the themes of a song with multiformity appropriate to the occasion. A "variation esthetic" in the context of such composition simultaneously promotes both the preservation of traditional, fixed elements as well as innovative variations in diction and theme. Assuming that a skilled singer is interacting with an audience steeped in tradition, both innovations and fixed elements are equally appropriate to the moment of performance.

This esthetic of variation is crucial because within a thriving oral tradition an individual performance is definitive and perfectly appropriate to its occasion, yet inevitably unable to express the totality of information associated with any specific song tradition. Meaning is derived from how the poet artistically selects and weaves together multiform constituent elements, and even how one multiform compares to other multiforms in the poetic tradition. The possibilities are immense and both singer

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2 Muellner 1976:25.
and audience experience multiformity in meaningful ways.

Given this variation esthetic driving preservation and innovation, it is fitting that the Homeric tradition internally promotes and even idealizes what Gregory Nagy has called an “esthetic of rigidity” and an “esthetic of fluidity.”\(^3\) Nagy’s analysis shows that Homeric poetry idealizes itself as perfectly rigid, yet simultaneously sees itself as the product of a fluid performance tradition.

The formula *kléos áphthiton* in some sense captures both views of poetry. Scholars have rightfully given attention to this expression of imperishable or unfailing fame, yet the quotations above acknowledge how stories and the glory they convey can be used, rejected, or forgotten. How does glory become and remain imperishable in such a dynamic system? In *Pindar’s Homer*, Nagy observes that *álétheia*, the archaic Greek word for truth, denotes a specialized form of memory, one that utilizes forgetting in order to actively remove stories and themes which are no longer appropriate from the larger mytho-poetic system.\(^4\) Working from the constituent lexical units *a-* and *lēth-*, Nagy shows that truth can be conceptualized as the sum of all that is not forgotten and that

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\(^3\) See Nagy 2009a, chapters 1 and 2.

it is established and maintained not by actively remembering what is true, but by forgetting what is false.

This view of truth fits with our understanding of the process of composition in performance. For instance, Nagy notes Lévi-Strauss’s observation that “the latest performance of myth is in principle an occasion for selecting from and thereby potentially erasing versions available from countless previous performances.”

According to this line of thought, the creation of one poetic multiform in performance facilitates the forgetting of multiple others. The process of composition-in-performance allows the oral poet to create “truth” by excluding from his song the themes and formulae which are found to be less appropriate at the moment of storytelling. While this flexibility helps to preserve the poetic system, over time single themes and formulae will be forgotten. Unlike the imperishable fame (kléos áphthiton) offered to Achilles in the form of the Iliad, some tales of glory will eventually be forgotten and can be conceived of as perishable. In such a light, the creation of imperishable fame is entirely dependent upon perishable fame.

The fact that we are still talking about the anger of Achilles and the wanderings of Odysseus certainly suggests that the Homeric poems, from our perspective, can rightfully be labeled imperishable. Yet Parry’s revelation that these epics are the

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Nagy 1990a:60.
products of an oral poetic system draws our attention back to a time when the poems were not yet fixed in the form we have inherited.\textsuperscript{6} Given the reality that our \textit{Iliad} and \textit{Odyssey} are the most privileged multiforms among countless others that have, for the most part, faded into oblivion, the idea of perishable \textit{kléos} becomes more relevant. Since Parry and Lord, many scholars have managed to reveal and read what Christos Tsagalis beautifully calls the “oral palimpsest,” and they have found abundant confirmation of other multiforms and traditions still evident to the philologist and specialist.\textsuperscript{7} But it remains to be asked, what does the poetic tradition itself have to say about the issue of perishable fame, and what does this evidence suggest about the traditional function and form of poems such as the \textit{Iliad} and \textit{Odyssey}? Further, does this internal view of perishable glory support the idea that the Homeric poems are products of an oral tradition? If answers are to be found in the diction of the poems, we need to find a term that might appropriately describe multiforms that were once appropriate and authoritative but eventually proved less than imperishable.

The name Empedokles\textsuperscript{8}, though occurring outside the Homeric tradition, offers valuable and relevant evidence for this discussion by providing another view of poetic

\textsuperscript{6} On the evolutionary model of the Homeric poems, seen Nagy 1996.
\textsuperscript{7} Tsagalis 2008.
\textsuperscript{8} As a parallel consider the name Sophokles, which also joins a second declension adjective with –\textit{klēs}. 
glory. Derived from the adjective émpedos (usually translated as ‘firm, steadfast, continual’) and the noun kléos, this name hints at a traditional association between the term used by Homeric epic to reference itself and the theme of being steadfast. In part, this work attempts to describe the potential relationship between these two themes and to gain some understanding of what might be appropriately labeled *kléos émpedon.

Working from the assumption that diction is the most accurate expression of theme, I have approached these questions by pursuing a close reading of the diction of steadfastness in Homer and Hesiod. Specifically, the heart of this work is a Homeric word study of the adjective émpedos and its prose counterpart asphalé̱s, which is typically glossed as ‘not liable to fall, immovable, steadfast.’ Applying the method

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9 From the prefix ἐν-/ἐμ- ‘in/on’, and either the root πεδ-, ποδ-, πους, ‘foot’ or πέδον, ‘ground’. Chantraine derives it from πέδον, s.v. πέδον.

10 The collocation of émpedos and kléos is not attested in extant versions of Homer. Other attested name forms beginning with ἐμπεδο- include Ἐμπεδονίκα, Ἐμπεδοξέ̱νω, Ἐμπεδοκράτη. Although names might pair nontraditional elements, these names suggest that the term ἐμπεδος is appropriate for expressions of praise.


12 Liddell-Scott 1996, s.v. ἐμπεδος. To my knowledge, there has not yet been a full-length study of these terms, nor has anyone studied these terms via formulaic analysis. Still, several scholars have considered émpedos while exploring other topics. In his forthcoming Homeric Durability: Telling Time in the Iliad, Lorenzo F. Garcia discusses the transitory nature of being émpedos. I hope to incorporate his analysis in a future edition of my work. Alex Purves also offers a recent scholarly discussion of the word émpedos in Homer with a focus on the concepts of time and falling. In particular, see Purves
outlined by Leonard Muellner, I have used formulaic and contextual analysis to work inductively seeking “to rebuild the categories of thought and expression from within the epic world, not to impose them from without”. This reading is extended through analysis of key passages and themes in related authors and traditions.

My guiding questions in this study are as follows: What do ἐμπεδος and ἀσφαλές really mean and what themes do they evoke in context? Is there a relevant collocation of the diction and themes of steadfastness with the diction and themes associated with

2006:191. Froma Zeitlin sees ἐμπεδος as a desirable and typically masculine human trait. Yet she notes a certain kind of “symmetry” in the relationship of Odysseus and Penelope, where the hero must be ἐμπεδος, while the heroine must keep everything ἐμπεδος. See Zeitlin 1996:29-32. In chapter 5, I argue for a different view of the steadfast nature of this couple. Moreover, I see the pairing of steadfastness in such couples as a traditional compositional technique played out on the macro-narrative level. J.-P. Vernant sees the human condition as unstable in contrast to the ἐμπεδος nature of the immortal realm. For the mortal hero, only grave markers and songs of praise remain steadfast after death. For this reading, see Vernant 1991:39-41.

On ἐμπεδος as a poetic synonym for ἀσφαλές see my discussion to follow on the D Scholia (4.314.2, 5.254.1–2, 6.352.1) and the following Homeric passage which describes the immortal horses of Achilles: ἀλλ' ὡς τε στήλη μένει ἐμπεδον, ἢ τ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ / ἄνέρος ἐστήκη τεθνητός ἦ γυναικός, / ὡς μένον ἀσφαλέως περικαλλέα δίφρον ἔχοντες. (Iliad 17.434–436).

Further, a review of the use of ἐμπεδος as attested in the corpus of Greek literature shows that a vast majority of examples come from poetry.


On the need to rebuild the meaning of Homeric words from scratch in light of the paradigm shift brought about by Parry and Lord and taking into account recent work on Indo-European poetics, see Muellner 2007. I draw special attention to his reading of Nietzsche's description of philology and the inspiration he draws from Emile Benveniste's statement that the study of the Homeric vocabulary is "in its infancy," dans l'enfance.
the creation of poetic glory, within epic or beyond the boundaries of that genre? If these themes can be traditionally linked as in the name Empedokles, what does this pairing tell us about the nature of kléos? What does all this imply about the powers of the oral poet and the process of composition in performance?

My analysis yields several results. First and foremost, this work posits a more nuanced semantic field for émpedos. Contextual evidence reveals that while this term denotes a steady state in relation to space and/or time and can in fact be glossed as ‘steadfast’ or ‘continual’, émpedos can also express the idea of an uninterrupted sequence. In certain situations this word can even denote ritually appropriate thoughts and behaviors. Formulaic analysis shows that émpedos tends to function in very specific thematic contexts. First, we will see that émpedos and asphalēs are used to describe the instability of human fortune in contrast to the stability of the cosmic order ruled by Zeus. Second, we will explore the use of émpedos to describe force and intelligence, as well as the parts of the body associated with these heroic traits. When collocated with bīē ‘force, violence’, émpedos becomes associated with the stance of warriors remaining firm in battle. With nóos ‘intelligence, consciousness’ and related diction, émpedos and asphalēs become associated with a constellation of themes used to describe horses and charioteering—including chariot racing and the crucial concept of nóstos. Through
rebukes and wishes, we will see that émpedos and asphalês offer speakers the opportunity to incite steadfastness in their listeners or recreate their own moments of former glory.

On the narrative level, I argue that steadfastness is a concern in Herodotus, Homer, Hesiod and Apollonius of Rhodes, as evidenced by the fact that émpedos and asphalês occur time and again at crucial moments. Moreover, these themes can serve as an organizing principle in such works. This becomes evident when looking at the four categories of steadfastness which emerge from this study: 1) subjects that are steady and constant in their motion or action, 2) those that are steadfastly immobile or stable in their state, 3) subjects and actions that are ritually appropriate or uninterrupted in their sequence, and 4) subjects that are involuntarily fixed in place. I argue that the deliberate coupling of these categories, seen in pairings such as Odysseus and Penelope or Jason and Medea, reflects a deeply imbedded tendency to create poetic stability by joining steadfastly static subjects with others that are steadfastly kinetic. In a sense, these different categories of being émpedos can be seen as the warp and weft from which the poetic narrative is woven on the level of micro-narrative as well as on an epic scale.
Applying a broader perspective, analysis shows that émpedos and the semantically related asphaléς display thematic links to the Indo-European root meaning ‘firm, solid, sound’\(^\text{15}\) As part of this system, they become associated with the traditional Indo-European concepts of kingship, poetic authority, and truth, and via the formula ἔδος ἀσφαλές αἰεί (‘ever steadfast seat’) these themes sit at the very foundation of cosmic and divine stability.\(^\text{16}\) Yet, as will be shown, even here connotations of potential instability are present and built into the cosmic order.

The null category of steadfastness is also relevant to this discussion. In fact, the Homeric presentation of subjects described as not émpedos proves crucial to our understanding of heroic success and poetic fame. Specifically, I hope to show that passages describing the destruction of the Achaean wall are thematically linked to the poet’s ability to create (and re-create) steadfast glory.

Finally, metrical analysis detailed in the appendix shows that the theme of being émpedos is a traditional one, involved in multiple formulas and formulaic constituents such as ménon émpedon.\(^\text{17}\) From our external perspective, evidence suggests that émpedos might describe the formulas and themes, fixed and flexible, which the oral poet weaves


\(^{16}\) Martin 2001:65–84. In particular, see his discussion of asphalé̂s and related themes in the Audacht Morainn, pp. 72–73.

\(^{17}\) All tables are located in the appendix.
together to create his song of praise. Further, I would posit that from our external perspective, *kléos émpedon is a fitting label for the properly sequenced, occasion-appropriate, and flexibly steadfast multiform created during an oral poet’s performance. If so, the name Empedokles offers a view of fame that is steadfastly fixed, constantly advancing in an unswerving, uninterrupted way, and always appropriate in its sequence and timing.
11

Chapter 1

The Diction of Steadfastness: ἐμπεδός and ἀσφαλής in Homer, Hesiod, and Herodotus

1.1 Preliminary Definitions and Built-in Metaphors

ἀλλ’ ὡς τε στήλη μένει ἐμπεδόν, ἦ τ’ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ ἄνερος ἑστήκῃ τεθνηότος ἢ γυναικός, ὡς μένον ἀσφαλέως περικαλλέα δίφρον ἔχοντες...

but as a grave marker remains steadfast, which upon a tomb of a dead man or woman stands, so they remained steadfastly holding the very beautiful chariot...

*Iliad* 17.434–436

Let us begin by establishing working definitions for both ἐμπεδός and ἀσφαλής. The Homeric passage above reveals a traditional relationship between ἐμπεδόν used adverbially and the adverb ἀσφαλῆς from the adjective ἀσφαλής. In particular, the use above suggests that the terms can sometimes function as synonyms. The D scholia provide evidence in support of this idea. Forms of ἐμπεδός are glossed six times in the scholia and these entries generally offer some form of the following three words as
explanation: *asphalēs*, *bébaios*, and *hedraīos*.\(^\text{18}\) From this it can be inferred that all four words convey the same basic meaning which might be stated as ‘steadfast, secure’.

Valuable information can also be gleaned from the relative distribution of these terms throughout both Homeric epic and the ancient Greek corpus. Forms of *émpedos* occur 58 times in Homer, while forms of *asphalēs* are much less frequent: only eight instances throughout both epics;\(^\text{19}\) three times collocating with *émpedos*.\(^\text{20}\) Beyond Homer, however, analysis shows that *asphalēs* is by far the more common term and most frequently occurs in prose. Furthermore, in the scholia, *asphalēs* is used to gloss *émpedos*, while *asphalēs* is generally not glossed, and, if so, is glossed with terms other than *émpedos*. To my knowledge, the adjectives *bébaios*, and *hedraīos* never occur in Homeric epic. Taken all together, this evidence suggests that *émpedos* might be understood as a poetic synonym for terms such as *asphalēs*, *bébaios*, and *hedraīos*.

Yet, other scholia suggest these words are not absolute synonyms. The following passage, which will be discussed in greater detail further on, reveals the built-in metaphors underlying each word and provides insight into the connotations carried by each term.

\(^{18}\) D scholia at *Iliad* 4.314, 5.254, 6.352.

\(^{19}\) *Iliad* 13.141, 15.683, 17.436, 23.325; *Odyssey* 6.42, 8.171, 13.86, 17.235. Each passage is discussed during the course of this study.

\(^{20}\) *Iliad* 13.141, 15.683; *Odyssey* 13.86.
ἀσφαλῶς, κυρίως ἐπὶ τῶν μὴ σφαλλομένων, ἐμπέδως δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἐρρίζωμένων.

“ἀσφαλῶς” properly with reference to not being tripped up/thrown down/overthrown, and “ἐμπέδως” with reference to things having been rooted firmly in the ground.

BQ scholia at Odyssey 13.86

The word ἐμπέδος seems to offer connotations of being rooted in the ground (as indicated by the root ῥιζ- and fixed along what we might understand as a horizontal plane, while ἀσφαλές can carry with it connotations of things not tripped up and secure along a vertical plane.

These connotations are also present in the bΤ scholia for Iliad 12.9–12 which discuss the use of ἐμπεδὸν. The context here is that the narrator of the poem has prophesied the future destruction of the Achaean wall by saying it would not remain ἐμπεδὸν for long:

tὸ δὲ ἐμπεδὸν οὐκ ἔστιν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἀσφαλές· ἐπεπόρθητο γὰρ ὑπὸ Σαρπηδόνος, Ἐκτορος, Ἀπόλλωνος; ἀλλ᾿ ἐμπεδὸν ἀντὶ τοῦ ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ κείμενον ὑπερτερον γὰρ ἅλιπλοον ἐγένετο σὺν τοῖς θεμελίοις.

ἐμπεδὸν not instead of ἀσφαλές, for it had been destroyed by Sarpedon, Hector, and Apollo, but instead of τῷ πεδίῳ κείμενον (having been placed on the ground), for later it becomes covered with water along with the foundations.

bΤ scholia at 12.9–12
To be clear, this passage says that asphalēs would be an inappropriate term for describing the visible remains of a wall that had failed, while émpedos would be appropriate in this context. For the moment, I would delay an in-depth discussion of this passage and of what it means to be not émpedos\textsuperscript{21} and simply note the distinction being made between these two terms, and that émpedon is being used here to describe something that cannot appropriately be called asphalēs.

Though the scholia provide a useful starting point, analysis of the contexts in which émpedos and asphalēs appear offers the best evidence for a nuanced understanding of these terms. For convenience, tables have been included (in the appendix) that categorize these examples in a variety of ways. Table 1 outlines all of the objects, characteristics, and activities in Homeric epic that are described as émpedos and Table 2 those that are not émpedos. Within each table I have further organized the list by grouping similar subjects and actions together. Included are terms said to be émpedos through involvement in a simile. For instance, if the epic describes a hero as steadfast like a rock in the ocean, the rock is included in the table.

Although my focus is generally on the use of émpedos and asphalēs in Greek epic, I will also cite examples from other sources, as well as draw attention to passages with

\textsuperscript{21} For a discussion of the Achaean wall and the theme of being not émpedos, see Chapter 6.
related diction and themes. Throughout my analysis, passages will be examined to see how the metaphors inherent in émpedos and asphalés emerge to shed light on their use and to see how these metaphors might apply to descriptions of poetic glory. I hope to show that émpedos and asphalés are traditionally appropriate terms for describing both the perishable nature of the human condition and the enduring nature of the poems that offer immortal glory as compensation for our mortality.

1.2 Herodotean Concerns

Taken as a whole, one might say that the poetics of émpedos holds within its domain all that is fixed and all that is fixed in its movement. Such concepts are not unusual within the Indo-European poetic tradition. For example, two common formulaic descriptions of Indra in the Rig Veda describe him as the lord of “all that stands and moves”\(^22\) and the god before whom “everything firm is afraid.”\(^23\) For the Indo-European poet, there is a built-in system for describing a totality, whether the sum of human wealth or the entire cosmos, in terms of what moves and what does not. The poetry of émpedos is, in some sense, built upon this view. Moreover, émpedos is traditionally used to describe and express concerns about the instability and

\(^{22}\) Rig Veda 1.89.5. Quotations from the Rig Veda are taken from the translation of Griffith 1920–1926.
\(^{23}\) Rig Veda 1.58.5, 1.166.5. On the contrast between standing firm and fear, see below.
perishability of all human affairs. Such concerns might threaten the very foundation of a mytho-poetic system which values imperishability so highly.

On some level, our whole human experience can be categorized into things that are fixed, things that are not, and things that are fixed in their continual and timely renewal. Such are the sentiments so poignantly expressed in Glaucos’ “generation of men” speech (*Iliad* 6.144-149).

The idea that human experience is inherently unstable is also expressed in the prose of Herodotus. His use of ἐπεδός, ασφαλές, and related themes suggests that his public demonstration is in part designed to express and help alleviate traditional concerns about the perishable and variable nature of human existence. Thus, through Herodotus we can gain a greater understanding of what is at stake and possible solutions. One key passage describes the last-minute intercession of Cyrus on behalf of Croesus. Although Croesus once considered himself the most fortunate of men, at this point in the micro-narrative, he is about to be burned alive.

. . . Καὶ τὸν Κῦρον ἀκούσαντα τῶν ἐρμηνεύων τὰ Κροῖσος εἶπε, μεταγγόντα τε καὶ ἐννώσαντα ὅτι καὶ αὐτὸς ἄνθρωπος ἐών ἄλλον ἄνθρωπον, γενόμενον ἐωστοῦ εὐδαιμονίη οὐκ ἔλάσσω, ἰώντα πυρὶ διδοὶ, πρὸς τε τούτοις δὲισαντα τὴν τίσιν καὶ ἐπιλεξάμενον ὡς οὐδὲν εἴη τῶν ἐν ἄνθρωποια ἁψαλέως ἔχον, κελεύειν σβεννύναι τὴν ταχίστην τὸ καιόμενον πῦρ καὶ καταβιβάζειν Κροῖσον τε καὶ τοὺς μετὰ Κροίσου.
Cyrus, learning from the interpreters what Croesus said, changed his mind and thought about how he, although human, was burning alive another human being who was previously no less fortunate than himself. Further, since he feared retribution for these acts and thought about how not one thing having to do with human beings is secure, he ordered that the kindled fire be put out immediately and Croesus and those with him be brought down.

Histories 1.86.32–39

During this critical moment marked by a conjunction of fire and fear, Cyrus has realized that human fortune is, by its very nature, unstable and variable. In fact, Cyrus’ story offers Herodotus a chance to relate the rise and fall of individual fortunes to his own thoughts about the waxing and waning of entire cities.

Ταῦτα μέν νυν Πέρσαι τε καὶ Φοίνικες λέγουσι. Ἔγω δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐφάμδου σὺτις ἢ ἄλλως καὶς ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἄδικων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἑλλήνας, τούτων σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τού λόγου, ὡμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἀντει ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ᾗν, τὰ πολλά αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ᾽ ἐμέ ᾗν μεγάλα, πρότερον ᾗν σμικρά. Τὴν ἀνθρωπήνην ὄν ἐπιστάμενον εὐδαιμονίην συμφασία ἐν τὸ ὅτι μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὡμοίως.

These are the things that the Persians and Phoenicians say. I am not going to say that these things happened one way or another, but I know who was the first to begin unjust acts against the Greeks, and indicating this man I will advance further my λόγος describing cities great and small alike. For those that previously were great, many of them have become small, while those that are great in my own time were previously small.24

24 Note that ἐμπεδος can also be used to describe the steadfast nature of a city. Cf. the description of Aea at Argonautica 4.277, “Αἰα γε μὴν ἔτι νῦν μένει ἐμπεδον.”
Knowing that no aspect of human prosperity remains in place, I will mention both alike.

Herodotus Histories 1.5.9–18

Human prosperity, whether associated with a single man or an entire city, is predictably unstable, and this truth is a significant influence on the composition of the Histories. Herodotus points towards this knowledge as a reason for his particular editorial stance and the inclusion of multiformity within his own narrative. As evidenced by the prooimium, Herodotus’ inquiry is meant to counteract the perishable nature of greatness and associated fame:

Ἡροδοτοῦ Ἀλικαρνησσέος ἱστορίης ἀπόδεξις ἥδε, ὡς μήτε τὰ γενόμενα ἐξ ἀνθρώπων τῷ χρόνῳ ἔξειτηλα γένηται, μήτε ἔργα μεγάλα τε καὶ θωμαστά, τὰ μὲν Ἑλλησὶ, τὰ δὲ βαρβάροις ἀποδεχθέντα, ἀκλέα γένηται, τὰ τε ἄλλα καὶ δι’ ἣν αἰτίην ἐπολέμησαν ἀλλήλοις.

This is the public demonstration of the inquiry of Herodotus of Halicarnassus, so that human events do not become faded in time, nor the great and wondrous accomplishments, some displayed by the Greeks, some by the non-Greeks, be without kléos, along with other things, starting with the reason they made war upon one another.

Herodotus Histories Prologue

Just as Herodotus is willing to name the man who first started the conflict, he is also willing to personally and publicly declare that Athens saved Greece (7.139.20-21).

Herodotus is compelled to pause his narrative and make this statement just before the

battles of Thermopylae and Salamis, a pivotal moment in the history of the West. The Athenians seem to be facing sure defeat, but instead of hiding behind the city walls, they rest their fate in the fleet. Taking to their ships they evacuate the city, leaving it to be burned. As we are about to see, the decisive moment for Athens is marked, like Cyrus’ epiphany, by fear, fire and the diction of steadfastness.

Herodotus begins this section of the narrative by saying that he is compelled to give a judgment which is liable to cause envy or hatred (ἐπίφθονον [7.139.2]), but appears to him to be true (ἀληθές [7.139.2]). He explains that if Athens had stayed and not resisted, or resisted but abandoned their land permanently, no one would have been able to oppose the Persians at sea or on land (7.139.3–20). After stating this opinion, he once again stresses the truth of his judgment saying: Νῦν δὲ Ἀθηναίους ἄν τις λέγων σωτῆρας γενέσθαι τῆς Ἑλλάδος οὐκ ἂν ἁμαρτάνοι τἀληθέος, “Someone saying now that the Athenians were the saviors of Greece would not miss the mark of truth.” (7.139.20–21). Herodotus then sums up the source of Athenian greatness: their decision and ability to remain steadfast.
Not even the fearful oracular responses that came from Delphi persuaded them to leave Hellas, but remaining fixed they endured to await the attack of the invader upon their land.

Herodotus *Histories* 7.139.27–29

In fact, these authoritative statements lead almost directly into the frightening oracles and the debate about what they might mean. For the purposes of our discussion here, we will limit our attention to the first. Surprisingly, given what Herodotus has just told us about how Athens saved Greece, the oracle explicitly tells the Athenians not to remain steadfast.

5 Ὦ μέλειοι, τί κάθησθε; Λιπὼν φῦν ἐς ἔσχατα γαίης δώματα καὶ πόλιος τροχοειδέος ἄκρα κάρηνα.
Οὔτε γὰρ ἢ κεφαλὴ μένει ἔμπεδον οὔτε τὸ σῶμα, οὔτε πόδες νέατοι οὔτ' ὄν χέρι, οὔτε τι μέσσης λείπει, ἀλλ' ἄζηλα πέλει κατὰ γάρ μιν ἐρείπει πῦρ τε καὶ ὀξὺς Ἄρης, συριηγενές ἁρμα διώκων.

10 Πολλὰ δὲ κάλλ' ἀπολεῖ πυργώματα, κοῦ τὸ σὸν οἴον· πολλοὺς δ' ἀθανάτων νησιὰς μαλερῷ πυρὶ δώσει, οἳ ποὺ νῦν ἱδρώτι ἐρεύμενοι ἐστήκασι, δείματι παλλόμενοι, κατὰ δ' ἀκροτάτοις ὀρόφοισιν αἷμα μέλαν κέχυται, προϊδὸν κακότητος ἀνάγκας.

15 Ἀλλ' ἴτον ἐξ ἀδύτοιο, κακοῖς δ' ἐπικιδνατε θυμόν.

5 Wretched men, why sit idle? Flee to the farthest reaches of the Earth leaving your homes and the high peaks of your circular city.

For neither does the head remain steadfast, nor the body, nor the lowest feet, nor the hands, nor does the middle remain, but they are unenviable. For fire and sharp Ares, driving his Syrian chariot are casting it down.
He will destroy many other fortified cities, not only yours. And many temples of the immortal gods he will give to raging fire, temples which now stand dripping with sweat and quaking with fear, and from the rooftops dark blood flows, foreseeing the necessity of misery. Now go from the sanctuary and cover your thūmós ['heart, spirit'] with these evils.

Herodotus Histories 7.140.5-16

This oracular response includes the only occurrence of ἐμπέδος in all of Herodotus, along with many themes and words which will quickly become familiar and useful markers in our discussion. I would draw the reader's attention to the following details in this passage. In essence, the oracle offers a poetic rebuke and warning. This rebuke delivered in dactylic hexameter features the phrase μένει ἐμπέδον 'remains steadfast' with ἐμπέδον in the fourth foot (7.140.7). This phrase is used in a metaphorical context, describing parts of the body. The metaphor focuses, in part, on hands and feet, both of which are associated with βίη 'force' (7.140.7–8). The oracle offers a terrifying vision featuring fire and the war god Ares as a charioteer (7.140.10–11). This vision of Ares is so horrible, it draws gore and trembling from the buildings (7.140.14–15). The oracle closes by telling the listeners to cover their thūmós (7.140.16), part of the mental and emotional faculties, which, along with ménos, resides in the phrēnes, somewhere around
the diaphram.26

Overall this oracle calls for terror, flight and total despair. Yet after receiving this rebuke prophesying that they won’t be émpedos, the Athenians manage to do the exact opposite. They find a way to remain steadfast — not by staying at Athens, or by leaving and going elsewhere permanently. Instead the Athenians become the “saviors” σωτῆρας of Greece by leaving home, standing firm against the enemy on the sea, and then returning home in a steadfast way. As will become evident over the course of this work, Herodotus is using themes and language which are highly traditional and evocative of Homeric themes and diction. In fact, I would go so far as to say that these Herodotean concerns are Homeric concerns. Therefore, with this oracle in mind, let us turn back to Homer.

1.3 Homeric Metaphor: Laying an émpedos Foundation

The oracle’s poetic metaphor about not being émpedos in the context of Herodotus’ praise for Athenian resolve points towards the use of poetry to create steadfastness and confer glory. Yet how is it possible to create something as permanent and stable as kléos áphthiton from this perishable and transient human existence? In nature the answer is the combination of death and birth. Like the leaves, we human beings are fixed in our

26 For the relationship between ménos, thūmós, and phréses, see Nagy 1990b:87–93.
individual ethereality yet persist in our uninterrupted, sequential re-creation and renewal as a group. Thus, the brilliant yet ephemeral leaves simultaneously highlight the problem and point to its solution. Similarly, ēmpedos and asphalēs serve double functions simultaneously expressing and mitigating the instability of human affairs.

Compare, for instance, the use of the line-terminal phrase ēmpedon aieī in Theognis:

Πολλοί τοι πλουτοῦσι κακοί, ἀγαθοὶ δὲ πένονται, ἀλλ’ ἡμεῖς τούτοι σὺ διαμειψόμεθα τῆς ἀρετῆς τὸν πλοῦτον, ἐπεὶ τὸ μὲν ἔμπεδον ἀιεί, χρήματα δ’ ἀνθρώπων ἄλλοτε ἄλλος ἔχει.’

Many bad men are wealthy and many good poor, but we will not exchange with these wealth for excellence, since it [excellence] is **always steadfast** while possessions, some men hold at one time, others at another.

315–318

These lines provide an explicit contrast between the steadfast nature of aretē ‘excellence’ and the variability of possessions. The Homeric tradition offers its own solutions for the instability of human affairs through its poetic techniques, themes and diction. One particularly effective technique is the Homeric simile. In his study of Homeric metaphor, Leonard Muellner describes the power of Homeric similes to portray ephemeral events in an imperishable way.
To use metaphoric terms appropriate to the epic itself, one can say that the conventional relation between tenor and vehicle in epic is like that between the generation of men and the generation of leaves: individual men die, but trees never cease losing their leaves in season. Yet on another level, while the events in the epic are, for the heroes, one-time, unrepeatable events that lead to inevitable death, for us, they are κλέος ἀφθιτον, because, like an event in a simile, they are performed again and again.27

Such a reading marks metaphors as crucial to a discussion of the poetry of steadfastness.

Along with the metaphors intrinsic to émpedos and asphalēs, two other similes lay the foundation of this work and, fittingly, both employ rocks as the vehicle; one depicts a stone steadfastly fixed in place; another depicts a stone steadfastly in motion. The first example comes from book 15 of the Iliad. In this passage, Hector and the Trojans are compared to powerful waves and wind, while the Greeks are equated to a rock wall that withstands the ocean’s wrath.

ἀλλ’ οὐδ’ ὡς δύνατο ἰδέαι μάλα περ μενεάινων· ἱσχεν γὰρ πυρηνὸν ἀφρότες, ἦτε πέτρῃ ἠλίβατος μεγάλη, πολιῆς ἀλὸς ἐγγύς ἐσούσα, ἢ τε μένει λιγέων ἀνέμων λαιψῆρα κέλευθα κύματα τε τροφόεντα, τὰ τε προσερεύγεται αὐτῆν· ὡς Δαναοὶ Τρώας μένον ἐμπεδον οὐδὲ φέβοντο.

But he [Hector] could not break through them, although greatly desiring it,

27 Muellner 1990:96.
for joined together like a tower\textsuperscript{28} they were restraining him, as a great steep cliff near the gray sea that withstands both the swift paths of the clear-voiced winds and swelling waves that break against it.

So the Danaans remained steadfast against the Trojans, nor were they fleeing.

\textit{Iliad} 15.617–622

There are several points to be made regarding the themes and diction of these lines.

First, the scholia for line 618 gloss the word \textit{purgēdón} with the words \textit{asphalōs} and \textit{puknōs}, thereby equating \textit{ménon émpedon} “firmly remaining” with these two terms.

Second, it should be noted that the Greeks remain steadfast by arranging themselves into a sort of human wall and that this action is described by the word \textit{ἀρηρότες}, built from the root \textit{*ar\textendash}. This root means “fit, join” and appears in words traditionally used to express the work of carpenters and poets.\textsuperscript{29} The word \textit{puknōs} is the adverbial form of \textit{puknós}, an adjective used to describe subjects that are dense and overlapping either in physical terms or in frequency. Like \textit{émpedos}, it can appropriately describe a range of subjects including the construction of a stone wall and \textit{phrénes}. It can even describe a special kind of speech, as attested by the phrase \textit{pukinôn épos}, which becomes

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{28}Thanks to Leonard Muellner for emphasizing the metaphorical use of the word \textit{purgēdón} here and for drawing my attention to the transition between vertical and horizontal space.
\end{flushright}

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{29}On this association between the root \textit{*ar\textendash}, the work of the carpenter, and the activity of the poet, see Nagy 1979:297–300.
\end{flushright}
“unassailable” in the mind of the listener.\textsuperscript{30} We might also note that the Vedic tradition reveals an association between carpenters and firmness. For instance the \textit{White Yajur Veda} includes evidence that those seeking firmness would metaphorically sacrifice a carpenter.\textsuperscript{31} Taken together, this evidence shows that the phrase \textit{ménon émpedon} can denote a condition in which a group of men are joined together in a manner similar to the way a carpenter or poet fits together his work. In each case the result is conceived as being physically dense and potentially enduring in both space and time. Furthermore, we can see that this act of standing firm is traditionally contrasted with fear and running away.

So lines 617–622 offer a powerful image, but the \textit{very next line} marks a change in momentum and triggers a new simile. This passage reveals another aspect of \textit{émpedos} that only becomes clear when viewed in context: being \textit{émpedos} is often a temporary state maintained through proper mental focus.

\begin{quote}
αὐτάρ ὁ λαμπόμενος πυρὶ πάντοθεν ἔνθορ ὑπαὶ νεφέων ἀνέμοιο,
ἐν δὲ ἔπεσ ὡς ὅτε κῦμα θοῇ ἐν νηῒ πέσηι
λάβρων ὑπὲρ νεφέων ἀνέμοιο στηθέντων ἐνηῒ
ἥτις εἰρημένη ἐν δὲ ἐπικρύψθη,
ἀνέμοιο δὲ δεινὸς ἀήτη
ιστίῳ ἐμβρέμεται, τρομέουσι δὲ τὸ ναῦται
τρομέουσι δὲ τὸ φρένα ναῦται

\textsuperscript{30} For this description of \textit{puknós} and \textit{pukinòn épos}, see Martin 1989:35–37.
\textsuperscript{31} See the \textit{White Yajur Veda} 30.6.
But he [Hector] shining with fire from all sides leapt into the throng, and he fell down upon them as a wave falls down upon a swift ship, furiously, a wind-fed wave from under the clouds, the ship is entirely hidden beneath the foam, and a fearful gale roars in the sail, and the sailors tremble, their minds in a panic, for they are being carried only a little bit out from under death, Just so the spirit in the breast of the Achaeans was being torn apart.

Iliad 15.623–629

Despite their original success, the Achaeans can only stand firm against Hector until their minds and spirits are overcome with fear. Like the oracle given to the Athenians, these similes explicitly contrast shaken minds and flight (phébonto 15.622) with remaining steadfast (ménon émpedon 15.622). In fact, this passage features many words and themes that appeared in the oracle, including fire, fear, shaking, as well as a reference to the thūmós of those affected. The Greeks are compared to sailors whose minds (φρένα, 15.627) are overcome because they are afraid (δειδιότες 15.628) and shaking (τρομέουσι 15.627). This contrast makes perfect sense when we consider that phobéomai is from the root *bhegh- meaning ‘run’.32 This contrast can also be seen in the Vedic tradition through the formulaic descriptions of Indra. In the Rig Veda he is twice called the god before whom “everything firm is afraid.”33 Thus, overcome by fear, the

32 Nagy 2010b:29–34
33 Rig Veda 1.58.5, 1.166.5.
steep cliff of the Greeks proves temporary. It is transformed and metaphorically falls, hidden and trembling, under the waves in the form of a ship just two lines later.

Perhaps the best example of the temporary aspect of *empedos* is the simile comparing Hector to a rampaging boulder. At this point in the narrative the Greeks have been roused by Poseidon’s speech. In response to his words, they form into a human wall bracing “shield against shield, helmet on helmet” (*Iliad* 13.130–131). Hector leading the attack is compared to a boulder flying down a hill.

... ἤρχε δ' ἂρ' Ἐκτωρ
ἀντικρὺ μεμαώς, ὀλοϊτροχὸς ὡς ἀπὸ πέτρης,
ἂν τε κατὰ στεφάνης ποταμὸς χειμάρρος ὡς
ῥήξας ἀσπέτῳ ὁμβρῷ ἀναιδέος ἔχματα πέτρης
ὕψι δ' ἀναθρῶσκον πέτεται, κτυπέει δὲ θ' ὑπ' αὐτοῦ
ὕλη· ὡς ἀσφαλέως θέει ἔμπεδον, ἦος ἰκηται
ισόπεδον, τότε δ' ὦ τι κυλίνδεται ἐσομισμένος περ·
ὥς Ἐκτωρ ἦος μὲν ἀπείλει μέχρι θαλάσσης
ῥέα διελεύσεσθαι κλισίας καὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν
κτείνων·

... and Hector led them furiously straight on, as a large boulder from a rocky peak that a river swollen with winter rain forces from the edge breaking the supports of the shameless rock by its ceaseless flow; leaping on high it flies on, and the forest resounds beneath it; the stone securely runs steadfast till it reaches the flat land, but then in no way rolls though eager; so Hector threatened just short of the sea to pass easily through the huts and ships of the Achaeans killing.

*Iliad* 13.136–145
Like all Homeric metaphors this passage, which equates Hector with the stalled boulder, is packed with meaning. On one level these lines reflect Hector’s larger fate within the *Iliad*; like the boulder rolling down the hill only to run out of energy before it reaches the ocean, Hector will run steadfastly (θέι ἔμπεδον) but stop before reaching his goal of destroying the ships and saving Troy. In fact Achilles is described by Pindar in just such terms as ὃς Ἐκτορα σφᾶλε, “the one who tripped up Hector” (*Olympian Ode* 2.81).

On another level, this simile is a description of the transition between being steadfastly kinetic and steadfastly fixed. The boulder is originally in a position of high potential energy up on the cliff. The force of the river sends it loose, releasing that pent up kinetic energy so that the stone securely and without faltering rolls until it reaches the level ground (ἀσφαλέως θέι ἔμπεδον, ὁφρ’ ἀν ἱκηταί/ισόπεδον). At first the stone is kinetically ἐμπέδος. Once it has stopped on the level ground, I would argue that it is once again ἐμπέδος, though the poem does not label it as such. As we have seen, being steadfastly placed in or on the ground is one way the authors of the scholia understood the basic meaning of ἐμπέδος. Thus, this simile highlights the important fact that ἐμπέδος denotes not just motion or rigidity, but a steady, almost inertial state.

On yet another level these lines show the boulder gaining a new function as it
transitions from a steadfastly kinetic state (θέει ἔμπεδον) to a steadfastly fixed state.

Just as boulders left behind by a receding glacier can become an awe-inspiring signpost for the power that once moved them, so, in its new fixed location on the level ground, the rock becomes a visible reminder and sign of the power of the once flooding river. I draw attention to these three levels of meaning because the themes and actions here will be echoed in other passages and metaphors during the course of this study.

Returning our attention to the phrase thēi émpedon, we see that these words help to create an association with a complementary simile involving Hector. The passage in question describes Achilles overtaking Hector outside the walls of Troy and contains the only other Iliadic occurrence of the three-word phrase thēi émpedon ὄφρα (“runs steadfastly until”):

"Εκτορα δ’ ἀσπερχὲς κλονέων ἐφεπ’ ὦκυς Ἀχιλλεύς. ὥς δ’ ὅτε νεβρὸν ὡρεσφί κύων ἔλαφοι δίηται, ὄρσας ἐξ εὐνῆς διὰ τ’ ἄγκεα καὶ διὰ βήσσας τὸν δ’ ἐξ αὐτὸς καταπτήξας ὑπὸ θάμνῳ, ἄλλα τ’ ἀνιχνεύων θέει ἔμπεδον, ὃφρα κεν εὐρη ὥς "Εκτωρ οὐ λῆθε ποδώκεα Πηλείωνα.

But swift Achilles unceasingly harassed and drove Hector. As a dog in the mountain puts to flight the fawn of a deer stirring it from its bed through the hollows and glens, and although the fawn is unseen cowering beneath a bush, the dog tracks it and runs steadfastly until he finds it.

34 In particular, see section 4.2.
Just so, Hector was not escaping the notice of swift-footed Achilles.

_Iliad_ 22.188–193

The occurrence of λάθησι ‘is unseen’ and οὐ λῆθε ‘not escaping notice’ shows that mental focus can be crucial to remaining steadfastly in motion and on the proper track, just as it was crucial for remaining steadfastly and defensively fixed in battle. Moreover, this passage echoes the previous example of théei émpedon at 13.141 and, in doing so, shows a transition of the diction of steadfastness from Hector to Achilles. Yet it is notable that in both similes Hector is equated with the object set in motion which eventually falters. Here it is the fawn; previously it was the boulder. I would argue that these similes, in a sense, create a relationship between Hector as the fixed stone on the ground and Hector as the doomed fawn cowering beneath a bush. On a metaphoric level the fixed stone becomes an unmistakable and immovable *émpedon sêma* (gravestone) for Hector and an eternal and sure *émpedon sêma* (sign) of Achilles’ superior glory. The phrase théei émpedon will reappear in the _Odyssey_ at a crucial moment to be discussed later, and that moment will once again feature the importance of mental focus.

With this foundation of knowledge about the diction and metaphors of
steadfastness, it is necessary to turn to a more systematic analysis of the formulas and contexts in which émpedos and asphalês occur.
Chapter 2

Steadfast Thrones and Scepters

'Ἡ μὲν ἄρ' ὡς εἶποο' ἀπέβη γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη
Οὐλυμπόνδ', ὅθι φασὶ θεῶν ἔδος ἀσφαλές αἰεὶ
ἐμμεναι:

Speaking thus beaming-eyed Athena went
toward Olympus, where they say the ever secure seat of the gods
is . . . .

*Odyssey* 6.41–43

2.1 Ἐμπεδος, Ἀσφαλῆς, and the Steadfastness of Scepter-bearers

This section explores the use of ἐμπεδος and ἀσφαλῆς to describe the foundation of
authority on both cosmic and human levels. In the epic world, one of the primary
symbols of authority, truth, stability, and kingship was the scepter. These associations
are made explicit in passages such as the dying words of Cyrus as presented by
Xenophon.
οἶσθα μὲν οὖν καὶ σύ, ὦ Καμβύση, ὅτι οὐ τόδε τὸ χρυσοῦν σκῆπτρον τὸ τὴν βασιλείαν διασῶζειν ἐστιν, ἀλλ' οἱ πιστοὶ φίλοι σκῆπτρον βασιλεύει ἀληθέστατον καί ἀσφαλέστατον.

And so, Cambyses, you must also know that this golden scepter does not maintain your kingdom, but trustworthy philoi are the truest and most secure scepter for kings.

_Cyropaedia_ 8.7.13.1–4

Evidence shows that the ancient Greek poetic tradition also associates scepter- and staff-bearing characters (poets, gods, kings, seers and heralds) with the diction of steadfastness. In examining the use of _émpedos_ and _asphalés_ with these authoritative figures, we will see that poetry—and theogonies in particular—are a means of making the cosmic and social order stable. This stability is maintained by a system of reciprocal exchange among gods, poets, and kings. Furthermore, the explicit association of steadfastness with the three “masters of truth” (i.e., poets, heralds, and seers) suggests that steadfastness was associated with these functions before they were differentiated into separate professions. Finally, over the course of this section, we will see that _émpedos_ can be used to designate uninterrupted, properly timed, and ritually appropriate events and actions.

35 On poets, seers, and kings as the “masters of truth,” see Detienne 1999.
2.2 The Formula hédos asphalès aiei

As we have seen, the word émpedos can be used to point out that nothing in regard to human beings is steadfast forever. This subsection seeks a greater understanding of the traditional use of the formula hédos asphalès aiei in light of the reading and syntactic analysis of the Theogony offered by Leonard Muellner.36 I hope to show that asphalés is used to describe the foundation of Zeus’ authority, and via the formula hédos asphalès aiei these themes sit at the very foundation of cosmic and divine stability.37 The basis for this argument comes from contextual analysis of the formula hédos asphalès aiei38 which is attested twice in the Hesiodic Theogony and once in the Odyssey. A close variant of the formula also appears once in Pindar. It is my contention that in all four cases the phrase helps to define the basis of divine stability and authority and that this stability is traditionally expressed by the word asphalés.

The only Homeric occurrence of the formula hédos asphalès aiei is from the passage cited above and involves a reference to an unstated authority. I believe this passage shows either the Homeric tradition referring to the Hesiodic tradition or to an earlier

37 Forms of asphalés occur three times in the Hesiodic corpus. All three occurrences are from the Theogony.
38 The Rig Veda offers a parallel phrase in Sanskrit, “váruṇasya dhruvám sádah,” at 8.41.9d. Griffith (1826:428) notes the parallel.
formula shared by both traditions. To understand this reference, we must turn back to
a mythical beginning of beginnings—the start of the Hesiodic cosmogony extant in our
Theogony:

'Ἡτοὶ μὲν πρώτιστα Χάος γένετ’· αὐτὰρ ἐπειτα
Γα’ι εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
ἀθανάτων ο’ι ἔχουσι κάρη νιφόεντος Ὀλύμπου,

First of all there was Chaos, but then
there was broad-bosomed Gaia, the ever-steadfast seat of all
the gods who inhabit the peak of snowy Olympus.39

Hesiod Theogony 116–118

There are several relevant points to be made about this diction. First, the line terminal
phrase *asphalès aiei* (with *asphalés* in the fifth foot) collocates with *émpedon* in the phrase
*émpedon asphalès aiei* seen at Iliad 15.683. It also partially matches the description of
Odysseus on the island of Calypso: *ménon émpedon heimata d’ aiei* (with *émpedon* in the
fourth foot).40 The parallels between these lines suggest that the line terminal phrases
*asphalès aiei* and *émpedon + — — + aiei* are formulaic.

Moreover, it must be acknowledged that the placement of *asphalés* in the Hesiodic

39 Lines 117–118 are omitted when this passage appears in Plato’s Symposium. By
truncating the enjambed genitive “of immortals” this variant labels Gaia not just the
steadfast foundation of the gods, but of all gods and men:
αὐτὰρ ἐπειτα / Γα’ι εὐρύστερνος, πάντων ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ, / ἡδ’ Ἕρος . . . . Plato
Symposium Stephanus 178b5–7
40 ἔνθα μὲν ἑπτάετες μένον ἐμπεδον, εἶματα δ’ αiei (Odyssey 7.259).
line once again raises the possibility that émpedos is not an exact poetic synonym, as émpedon could metrically replace asphalés in the fifth foot. What are we to make of this? I see two likely choices: first, that this “sporadic instance” of nonobservance of thrift reflects the fact that asphalés, in this context, functions as a distinctive modifier, or second, that the phrase émpedon aieí is not absolutely equivalent with asphalès aieí. In this case, I believe that asphalès is used because of the connotations it offers and due to a relationship with inherited Indo-European themes and diction. By implying that the home of the immortals is “not liable to fall” and secure along a vertical axis, asphalès points out the distinctions between mortals and immortals in terms of status, stability, and continuity.

Several comments can be made about these passages on a thematic level. In his analysis of the Theogony, Muellner notes, “From a syntactic standpoint, mythical thought is above all teleological. The narrative is intended to justify the situation that obtains at its conclusion.” The passage quoted above with the formula hédos asphalès aieí is a superlative example of this principle. Muellner also notes the following:

41 On the localization of ἐμπεδον in the fourth foot, see appendix, Table 5.
42 On the “trend toward thrift” as well as a brief discussion of distinctive vs. generic epithets, see Nagy 1990b:22–24.
43 Muellner 1996:54.
[The *Theogony*] . . . has as its goal the creation of the world and the establishment of the kingship of Zeus over gods and men; in turn, it actually represents an emergent, not a permanent or rigid, solution to a set of problems that do not thereby disappear forever.  

The first lines of the cosmogony express this teleological perspective by immediately pointing forward to a challenged but secure Olympian order, one which does not yet exist in the mythical time of the narrative.

In addition to pointing forward to the goal of Zeus’ kingship, these first lines also reflect upon the creative accomplishments of the poet in successfully reaching this point in the poem. Muellner argues that the *Theogony*, which is a *prooímion*, struggles with its own *prooímion*, stumbling and having to restart multiple times before successfully proceeding with the cosmogonic myth above. He sees this stumbling as betraying “a concern about its starting point.” This idea can be formulated in the poem’s own terms. By composing these lines and successfully beginning the cosmogony, the poet has accomplished something like the first acts of creation; he has brought forth an ever-steadfast seat of security and authority—a *héodos asphalēs aiei*—for the poem, the authority of Zeus, and the cosmos.

So within both the mythical narrative world and the world of performance, this

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44 Muellner 1996:55.
45 For a discussion of the importance of this early order, see Muellner 1996:57.
46 Muellner 1996:56.
hedos asphalès aieί is dependent upon the authority and skill of the poet. Yet there is a loop in the logic supporting this foundation. The poet is himself sustained and authorized by gifts from the divine Muses: his scepter and his divine voice, both granted specifically so that he might chant the Theogony (30–34). In fact, the inner poet of the narrative must receive the divine inspiration and scepter of the Muses before a successful cosmogony can be attempted.

As we will see, both the scepter and the gift of divinely inspired speech are related to the theme of being steadfast as expressed by the words asphalès and émpedos. The following passage from a hymn to Selene shows that the scepter can be described in just such terms.

... καὶ χρύ-
σεόν σκῆπτρον ἑαίς κατέχεις πα-
λάμαισιν. γράμματα σῷ σκῆπτρῳ
α[ὕ]το[c] Κρόνος ἀμφεχάραξεν, δῶ-
κε δὲ ὦι φορέειν, ὅφρε' ἔμπεδα πάν-
τα μένοιεν:

and you hold fast in the palm of your hand a golden scepter.
Kronos himself scratched the markings on your scepter and gave it to you to bear, in order that everything might remain steadfast.

47 It is not clear what these γράμματα might be, but it is interesting, given the internal context of binding, that the use of potent markings and writing is consistent with the physical evidence associated with curse tablets and binding spells. For more information on binding spells see Gager 1992.
I would also highlight the fact that this passage describes the passing of a scepter from one divinity to another. Specifically, it shows the passing of steadfastness from an overthrown figure of authority to a steadfast source of authority. Richard Martin has noted the reciprocal relationship among gods, kings, and poets, and that the passing of the scepter or rod (between the Muses and Hesiod, as well as between an Irish king and his poet) is one symbol of this relationship. Together these passages reveal that the ability to remain steadfast is a crucial part of the exchange. As the scepter moves from gods to poets to kings, the authority and power of being steadfast follows with it.

Another sign of the Muses’ authorization is divinely inspired speech which, like the scepter, is described with terms related to asphalēs and émpedos. In the Theogony, when the Muses mark the authority of mortal kings, their support is made apparent by the way the king speaks without stumbling: Ὅ δ’ ἀσφαλέως ἀγορεύων (Theogony, 86). Martin notes the abundance brought about by a king who speaks asphaléōs and points to this passage as highlighting an Indo-European concern with “steadiness in the context of

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48 My thanks to Graeme Bird for a lively discussion of this passage and its translation. Any errors are my own.
kingship."

This steadiness seems to be a crucial aspect of the exchange between poet, priest, and king as evidenced by hymn 10.173 from the *Rig Veda*. The hymn in question is part of the ritual consecration of the king and offers evidence of the collocation of the themes of kingship and stability within a related Indo-European poetic tradition:

1a. ā tvāhārṣam antár edhi dhruvās tiṣṭhāvicācaliḥ |
1c. vīśas tvā sārvā vāñchantu mā tvād rāṣṭrām ādhi bhraśat ||
2a. ihāvaidhi māpa cyoṣṭhāḥ pārvata 'vāvicācaliḥ |
2c. īndra 'vehā dhruvās tiṣṭha iḥā rāṣṭrām u dhāraya ||
3a. imām īndro adidharad dhruvāṁ dhruvēṇa havīśā |
3c. tásmai sómo ādhi bravat tásmā u brāhmaṇas pāṭiḥ ||
4a. dhruvā dyaūr dhruvā prthivi dhruvāsaḥ pārvatā imē |
4c. dhruvāṁ vīśam idāṃ jāgad dhruvō rājā viśām ayām ||
5a. dhruvāṁ te rājā vārūṇo dhruvāṁ devō bṛhaspātiḥ |
5c. dhruvāṁ ta īndraś cāgnīś ca rāṣṭrām dhārayatāṁ dhruvām ||
6a. dhruvāṁ dhruvēṇa havīśā abhī sómam mṛśāmasi |
6c. átho ta īndraḥ kévalir víśo balihāṭas karat ||

1. I have brought you here; remain among us. Stay steadfast and unwavering. Let all the people want you, and let the kingship never fall away from you.

2. Stay right here—do not slip away, but stay unwavering, like a mountain. Stand steadfast here, like Indra, and here uphold the kingdom.

3. Indra has supported him firmly with a firm oblation. Let Soma—and Brahmaṇaspati also—speak up for him.

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50 See Martin 2001. In particular, see the author’s discussion of asphaléōs and related themes in the *Audacht Morainn*, pp. 71–73. He notes parallels to this language at *Rig Veda* 10.173.4 and *Audacht Morainn* Sec. 55. I would in turn highlight the recurring themes of firmness and stability in the same passage of the *Audacht Morainn*. 
4. Firm is the sky and firm the earth, and firm are these mountains. Firm is all this world, and firm is the king of all the people.
5. Steadfast let King Varuṇa, steadfast the god Brhaspati, steadfast let Indra and Agni maintain your steadfast kingship.
6. With a firm oblation we touch the firm Soma. Thus let Indra make all the people who bring tribute yours alone.

*Rig Veda* 10.173

This hymn makes explicit a relationship of reciprocal firmness and stability among gods, poet, and king. Moreover, the repeated use of the word *dhruvāṁ* makes clear the importance of the diction of steadfastness in bringing about the desired stability. My sense is that forms of *asphalēς* and *έμπεδος* can serve as semantic reflexes of this traditional diction within the ancient Greek poetic tradition.

Returning to the Hesiodic tradition and its description of kings with divine authorization, I would note that the *Odyssey* uses the word *έμπεδος* to express the abundance attained through the rule of Muse-authorized kings. Included in a description of total prosperity and abundance involving plants, animals, and humans (*Odyssey* 19.109–114), the poem highlights the birth of animals:

τίκτῃ δ’ ἐμπεδα μῆλα...

the sheep give birth steadfastly...

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51 Translation by Doniger 1981:64. Doniger also notes that these verses appear in the *Atharva Veda* as protection against earthquakes. On the connection between Poseidon, earthquakes, and the word *asphalēς*, see below.
I draw special attention to this line because it provides additional insight into the meaning of épmedos. By using épmedos to describe the birth of animals—a process which is sequential and seasonal—the poetic tradition may be signaling not just prosperity, but prosperity through appropriately timed and uninterrupted sequence. This is relevant to our discussion of the Theogony since, as Muellner has shown, the theme of interrupted vs. uninterrupted births and generations is one of the primary narrative concerns of Hesiod’s cosmogony. And as already discussed, issues of interrupted sequence are evident in the structure of the prooimion. However, after the Muses breathe inspiration into him, the poet within the Theogony ends the verbal stumbling apparent in the starting and stopping of the prooimion and finally begins the appropriately sequenced story. With this public demonstration, the poet in the here and now of the performance proves his competence and divine support.

The second Hesiodic instance of hédos asphalès aieí develops and builds upon these themes. Eleven lines after Gaia appears, she brings forth her own equal, Ouranos, presumably for procreation. As a true equal, Ouranos is also granted the formula hédos asphalès aieí.

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52 For his reading of the Theogony with special attention to the concept of “sequence in performance,” see Muellner 1996:54–93.
Like the Muses who pass on the power to keep things émpeda, Gaia is capable of passing on her ability as well. Yet it is the poet who actually confers this epithet upon Ouranos. By transferring the formula from Earth to Heaven perhaps the poet reveals that he is equal to Gaia in the capacity to make equals.

The irony here is that Ouranos is going to be castrated and deposed just a few lines later. Given this truth, the use of asphalès aieí seems curious. Yet the text makes clear that Ouranos will provide a steadfast seat of authority for Kronos and siblings, and only then for the Olympians. That is, Zeus’ stability will be built upon the foundation of lost authority. Such a use of the phrase makes sense if we remember that myth tends to offer a teleological perspective. This use also reflects the metonymic, evolutionary nature of the myth that Muellner describes:

Hesiod *Theogony* 126–128
. . . the earlier manifestations are not eradicated or rendered obsolete by the later ones; on the contrary, later ones incorporate the former, which remain accessible constituents of reality and experience.\footnote{Muellner 1996:59.}

Certainly Gaia and Ouranos are not eradicated after Ouranos’ castration. Their later actions prove vital to the establishment of Zeus’ kingship. Though overthrown, Ouranos is still present and visible in the mythic world. This former king, like the Achaean wall, may no longer be asphalès, though he might still be labeled émpedos.

Returning to the example of héδos asphalès aieí at Odyssey 6.42, we can see that the next few lines offer a detailed description of why Olympus has earned this formula.

\begin{quote}
’Η μὲν ἄρ' ὡς εἶποῦσ' ἀπέβη γλαυκώπις Ἀθήνη
Οὐλυμπόνδ’, δὴ φασὶ θεῶν ἔδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ
ἔμμεναι: οὔτ' ἀνέμοις τινάσσεται οὔτε ποτ' ὀμβρῷ
dεύεται οὔτε χιών ἐπιπίλναται, ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰθρῇ
πέπταται ἀννέφελος, λευκὴ δ' ἐπιδέδρομεν αἴγλη:
tῷ ἔνι τέρπονται μάκαρες θεοὶ ἣματα πάντα.
\end{quote}

Speaking thus beaming-eyed Athena went toward Olympus, where they say the ever-secure seat of the gods is; neither is it shaken by the winds nor ever by the rains nor does it snow, but the sky spreads out cloudless, and a white radiance has run over it; in that place the blessed gods delight for all days.

\textit{Odyssey} 6.41–46

Olympus is asphalès, at least in part, by virtue of its supernatural environment. Despite the epithet “snowy Olympus” this special location reserved for the immortals provides
an atmosphere that is always pleasing.

Another key feature of this formula is the phrase hóthi phasí ‘where they say’, which may be seen as reaffirming the very foundation upon which the Iliadic tradition rests. In making this statement, I refer to Muellner’s argument of a “systematic and internal relationship” between the Iliad and the Theogony and his exploration of the Iliadic tradition as a “sequel in potential performance” to “an expanded prelude” such as the Theogony. If the Theogony can function as the prelude for a poem such as the Iliad, and the Hesiodic tradition presents the formula hédos asphalès aieí as a stable foundation for the order established within its cosmology, then this formula also serves as a hédos asphalès aieí (ever-steadfast foundation) for the Homeric tradition as well! Given the close ties between the Hesiodic and Iliadic traditions, this shared foundation between the two is especially significant.

Moreover, the words hóthi phasí in this distinctly pan-Hellenic tradition signal that this formula presents a well known tradition. For instance, Douglas Frame has argued that the word phasín [“they say’] helps to “bring to mind” authoritative statements made in the Iliad but referenced in the Odyssey. Thus, by using hóthi phasí in combination with hédos asphalès aieí to describe the stability of Zeus’ divine authority,

54 Muellner 1996, see specifically pp. 52–55.
55 On this use of phasín, see Frame 2009:10–11n2.
the Homeric tradition acknowledges a pan-Hellenic foundation of authority shared within the narrative world and the world of the performance.

The final example to discuss is the variant in Pindar at *Nemean* 6.4:

"Ἐν ἀνδρῶν, ἐν θεῶν γένος ἐκ μιᾶς δὲ πνέομεν ματρὸς ἁμφότεροι διείργει δὲ πᾶσα κεκριμένα δύναμις, ώς τὸ μὲν οὐδέν, ὦ δὲ χάλκεος ἁσφαλὲς αἰὲν ἔδος μένει οὐρανός.

One is the race of men, one, the race of gods; from one mother we both draw breath. Yet authority completely separates us, so that one is nothing, while [for] the other brazen heaven remains an ever-steadfast throne.

Pindar, *Nemean*. 6.1–4

Though not an exact repetition, this line offers the same basic idea—that the seat of divine authority is steadfast both in time and along a vertical axis of superiority. This use is highly appropriate to the argument being offered for the separation between gods and men. While both gods and men originated with the earth, the immortals were able to move higher and can claim heaven as a secure seat of power. This variant does not include an explicit reference to another tradition or authority through the use of φασί. That multiform seems to be traditionally associated with Olympus. Instead, the poetic tradition chooses to express the underlying idea behind the formula directly.

56 Text as in Maehler 1971.
It is significant that the phrase ἰθὶ φασὶ is used to express the common knowledge of Mount Olympus’ status as the seat of divine authority. In fact, a search for ἕδος asφαλὲς αἰεὶ shows that the entire formula ὅθι φασὶ θεῶν ἕδος ἀσφαλὲς αἰεὶ—that is, a reference to the tradition behind the statement—is the most common multiform for this idea. Thus, this phrase allows any poet to access and affirm this cosmic foundation. Like a star, or a mountain that provides a visual focal point which is steadfast in time and space, and to which whole populations can refer, this phrase provides a means of referencing Olympus as the steadfast pan-Hellenic symbol of divine authority. The symbol and the formula are perfectly synchronized.57

2.3 The Steadfast Scepter of Poets, Seers, and Heralds

So the scepter of the Muses offered to the poet Hesiod signals the gift of asphalēs speech. Other passages in which forms of ἐμπεδοὶ occur show a connection with scepters. In each case the scepter signals the steadfast nature of the holder in a professional realm of influence. For instance, the seer Teiresias who has ἐμπεδοὶ φρένες even in death (Odyssey 10.493) is specifically depicted as still holding his scepter in the underworld (Odyssey 11.90–91).58

58 For a more detailed discussion of this passage, see the next section.
We might also consider a highly relevant example of the phrase *émpedon aién* from another epic tradition, the *Argonautica*. The passage in question describes Aithalides, a herald and son of Hermes, who retains special mental abilities in death.

Then the leaders sent forth from the ship the swift herald Aithalides, to whom they turned over both the messages and the scepter of his father Hermes, who provided him with an imperishable memory of all things. Nor still now having departed to the unutterable eddies of Acheron has forgetfulness caught up to his soul. But it is destined to go continually back and forth forever, at one time counted among those beneath the earth, at another to be among living men in the light of the sun.

*Argonautica* 1.640–648

From this rich passage we see that *émpedos* can describe an uninterrupted sequence, and in this case, the context involves continual vertical motion. Through the gifts of his father (the scepter and an imperishable memory) Aithalides maintains a steadfast soul and can go back and forth between the worlds of the living and the dead, outpacing the
forgetfulness of death. The scepter in this passage is an important symbol both of his power and of his relationship to Hermes. In fact, epétrēpon from epitrépō can also carry the meaning “bequeath,” thereby marking the scepter as an inheritance from his immortal father. In this context the scepter is also being used both to signal the steadfast nature of the holder’s special sphere of influence as a messenger and the uninterrupted sequence of this divine lineage. His imperishable memory is matched and perhaps maintained by his ability to remain forever in motion.

Moreover, it should be noted that within the Indo-European poetic tradition the professions of poet, seer, and herald (the professions of Hesiod, Teiresias, and Aithalides respectively) were at one time undifferentiated. Nagy, citing Benveniste, argues that the power to “authorize” denoted by the verb κρίνω is an inherited feature of this merged profession and that this “authority” is at the root of the poet’s ability to confirm the authority of both gods and kings. Nagy also notes the traditional function of theogonies in “confirming the authority that regulates a social group.” I would posit that another role of theogonies (and the poet creating/performing them) is to

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60 On this Indo-European poet/herald/seer function and on Hesiod’s role as a poet/herald/seer, see Nagy 1990b: 59–60.
61 See Nagy 1990b:59, where the author cites Benvensite 1969: vol 2, 35–42.
make this authority stable and steadfast, and that émpedos and asphaléš are traditionally appropriate terms for this “stabilization” within the ancient Greek poetic tradition.

Further, the fact that the extant poetic tradition associates all three of these scepter-bearing figures with the diction of steadfastness (that is, épedon, asphaléšs) suggests that the theme of being steadfast was associated with this profession and with the scepter back when these roles were undifferentiated.

As additional evidence for a traditional association between cosmogonies and theogonies in the ancient Greek tradition, I would point to the occurrence of émpedos at the beginning of Orpheus’ cosmogony in the Argonautica:

"Ἡείδεν δ’ ως γαῖα καὶ οὐρανὸς ἡδὲ θάλασσα, τὸ πρὶν ἔτ’ ἀλλήλοις μιὴ συναρηρότα μορφῆ, νεῖκεος ἐξ ὀλοοῖο διέκριθεν ἄμφις ἰκαστὰ· ἦδ’ ως ἐμπεδον αἰεν ἐν αἰθέρι τέκμαρ ἔχουσιν ἀστρα, σεληναϊς τε καὶ ἦλιοιο κέλευθοι·

He sang how the earth, sky, and sea, once joined together into one form, and through destructive strife were each separated and how the stars and the paths of the moon and sun remain an ever steadfast fixed sign in the sky

Argonautica 1.496–500
With these examples in mind, I would return once again to the fascinating instance of the phrase émpeda pánta in the hymn to Selene. Below is a slightly expanded quotation:

... ἀρχὴ
καὶ τέλος εἶ, πάντων δὲ σὺ μούνη
ἀνάσσεις ἐκ σέο γὰρ πάντ' ἐστί
καὶ εἰς <σ'>, αἰών<ε>, πάντα τελευτᾶ. ἀένα-
ον διάδημα ἑώς λογείς φορέεις κροτά-
φοισιν, δεσμοὺς ἀρρήκτους, ἀλύ-
tους μεγάλοιο Κρόνοιο καὶ χρύ-
σεον σκῆπτρων ἐαίς κατέχεις πα-
λάμαι.ōν. γράμματα σῷ σκῆπτρῳ
α[υ]τ[σ] Κρόνος ἀμφεχάραξεν, δῶ-
ce δέ σοι φορέειν, ὥρ' ἐμπεδα πάν-
tα μένοιεν.

You are the beginning and the end, and you alone are mistress of all for all things are from you and in your time all things together are brought to fulfillment.

As an everlasting fillet you bear on your temples the invulnerable, unbreakable fetters of great Kronos, and you hold fast in the palm of your hand a golden scepter. Kronos himself scratched the markings on your scepter and gave it to you to bear, in order that everything might remain steadfast.

PGM 4.2833–2844

So Selene is associated with the proper timing, continual sequence, and fulfillment of everything in the natural world, and it is in this context that she is praised. Selene is
also given many names including Hekate at line 2812, and she is worshiped for her
multiform nature:

Κλωθῶ καὶ Λάχεσις ἥδ’ Ἄτροπος εἴ, τρικάρανε,
Περσεφόνη τε Μέγαιρα καὶ Ἀλληκτὼ,
pολύμορφε,

you are Klotho, Lachesis, and Atropos, three-headed one,
Persephone, Megaira, Allektro, multiform . . . .

PGM 4.2794–2796

She is also worshiped as subduer and subdued: ‘Δαμνώ, Δαμνομέ-/νεα· Δαμασάνδρα·
Δαμνοδαμία (2844–2845). This multiform moon goddess in chains is steadfast in every
way. She is securely steadfast in her bonds, kinetically steadfast in her movement and
multiformity, and completely steadfast in her course and uninterrupted sequence.63

Fittingly, her power and authority involve steadiness. Furthermore, the gift of a
scepter—the traditional symbol of kingship and authority—grants her the power and
authority to keep everything ἐμпедα and its ornamentation seems key to this potency.64

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63 One manifestation of this goddess, perhaps her Hekate persona, seems to have some
level of authority over all things. Compare Hesiod’s description of Hekate in which,
although strictly a Titan, Hekate’s powers remain steadfast into Zeus’ reign (Theogony,
421–425).

64 Alternately, James T. McDonough has proposed to me that Selene has “one end of the
chains holding Kronos as a crown for her, but as a source of authority over Kronos” and
that she “moves the chains and controls Kronos with a nod of her head.”
Interestingly, Selene is also associated with another symbol of cosmic kingship and authority; she was one of the gods featured on the ornamentation of the throne of Zeus at Olympia (Pausanias 5.11.8). If she is a goddess with the authority to keep all things steadfast, then her presence helps to establish Zeus’ throne as a hédos asphalès aiei.65

### 2.4 Steadfast and Appropriate Honor

The use of émpedos as ‘uninterrupted sequence’ or ‘appropriately timed and sequenced’ is particularly fitting in contexts where the term is used to discuss the honors given to gods and heroes. There are several passages in which the terms émpedos and asphalés are associated with such honors. One overt example describes the care that Odysseus received while on Calypso’s island.

τόφρα δέ οἱ κομιδή γε θεῷ ὡς ἐμπεδος ἦεν.

At that time his care was continual and ritually appropriate as for a god.

*Odyssey* 8.453

My translation of émpedos as “continual and ritually appropriate” may at first seem unjustified, but over the course of this subsection I hope to show that this is in fact the case. The diction is striking given that Calypso has offered to make Odysseus immortal.

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65 I would once again draw attention to the Sanskrit phrase váruṇasya dhruváṃ sádah, at *Rig Veda* 8.41.9d. The words dhruváṃ and ṣróvo ‘seat, throne’ share the same Indo-European root, *dher-*, meaning to hold firm, support.
(Odyssey 7.256–257). Pindar’s 10th Pythian Ode provides additional evidence of émpedos used in the context of worshiping a god. In that ode, the poet tells us that Apollo delights endlessly and appropriately (émpedon) in the feasts of the Hyperboreans (34–36). Apollo’s continual and appropriate pleasure suggests that the honors given to him were themselves émpedos.

Steadfast honors were also provided to the heroes of cult. In fact, one passage from the Argonautica uses émpedon adverbially to describe the permanent establishment of cult for Castor and Polydeuces on the Stoechades Islands.

ὅ δὲ βωμοί τε καὶ ἱερὰ τοῖσι τέτυκται
ἐμπεδὸν, οὐδ’ οἶον κεῖνης ἐπίουροι ἔποντο
ναυτιλίης, Ζεὺς δὲ σφίκα καὶ ὀφιγόνων πόρε νήας.

Therefore altars and offerings have been performed continually and appropriately for them; not only did the watchers attend that ship, but Zeus gave to them also the ships of later sailors.

Argonautica 4.651–653

The term émpedon offers useful connotations here on several levels. First, the idea of being émpedos highlights the physical steadfastness of the altars. Second, émpedon can be seen as signaling both the frequency and the perpetual nature of the offerings. Finally, the word émpedos is particularly appropriate to this pair since they offer an
important example of the Indo-European twin myth. Douglas Frame has shown that this myth generally pairs a strong and mortal warrior horseman with an intelligent, immortal cattleman. As shown in the next section, asphalēs and émpedos are traditionally associated with these roles, these twins, and the nexus of twin-myth themes—especially the crucially important word nóstos, which denotes the idea of homecoming but also conveys the idea ‘return to light and life’. In fact, the use of émpedos to describe the cult of Castor and Polydeuces is particularly appropriate given the details of their myth. The Odyssey tells us that the earth holds them alive and they endlessly alternate between the living and the dead (Odyssey 11.298–304). Thus, they are fixed in the ground, endlessly in motion, and constantly returning to light and life.

Another word which can appropriately describe the honor given to a god and to heroes through cult worship is tīmē. Forms of this word can combine with émpedos to produce names such as Empedotimos expressing the idea of steadfast honor. The

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66 For a complete analysis of the Dióskouroi in this mytho-poetic context, see Frame 2009.
67 On the meaning of nóstos, see Frame 1978 and Frame 2009.
68 For a discussion of the word tīmē as used to describe the honor associated with hero worship, see Nagy 1979:7§1n2.
69 Empedotimos and similar names are attested in works from Heraclides Ponticus in the 4th century B.C.E. through writers such as Gregory of Nazianzus in the 4th century C.E.
names Empedokles and Empedotimos show that émpedos is an appropriate term for describing the enduring and steadfast glory obtained through poetry or cult.

The scene in Quintus Smyrnaeus’ *Posthomerica* in which Priam responds to Penthesileia’s arrival offers further evidence of an association between the concept of honor and the word émpedos. These lines also reveal a thematic link to the concept of nóstos.

And he led her into his house and readily honored her appropriately, as a daughter returning home from afar after twenty years, and he furnished a meal for her with all sorts of food such as glorious kings eat . . . .

*Posthomerica* 1.85–89

At this point in my analysis I find it useful to draw upon the complementary research of Leonard Muellner and Gregory Nagy. Their work can help us to understand the network of associations between émpedos and the kingly, extended feast which is the

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70 The meaning of nóstos as ‘return to light and life’ is made explicit in the simile leading into this description. The poet tells us that at the sight of Penthesileia Priam was overjoyed as a blind man who regained his sight after longing to either see or die (*Posthomerica* 1.74–83).
ritually appropriate response to an epic homecoming by someone who is *philós* or ‘near and dear’. In his analysis of the relationship between *mênis* and *philótês* Muellner argues that *tîmê* ‘honor, prestige’ and *philótês* ‘friendship, affection’ are “interdependent if not synonymous in epic society and diction. It is heinous to dishonor one’s *phîloi*; it is inevitable that those whom one loves dearly be the objects of *tîmê*.”71 Muellner also notes a traditional collocation of the verb *philêô* ‘treat as a *philós*’ and the adverb *endukêôs*, which Gregory Nagy has shown means ‘in proper ritual sequence’.72 In his analysis of the uses of *endukêôs* Nagy cites the example at *Odyssey* 17.111 where “Telemachus says that Nestor as host *ephîlei* ‘loved’ him *endukêôs*, treating him as if he had been a son who had just returned after an absence.” He also cites *Odyssey* 15.491, and 14.11 where *endukêôs* is used to describe meals, and *Odyssey* 14.390 and 17.113 where *endukêôs* is used in combination with the verb *komîzô* ‘take care of, convey’.73 Furthermore, and equally significant to this study, Nagy notes that the glosses for *endukês* in Hesychius include *asphalês* ‘steady’, while the glosses for *endûkion* include ‘*bébaion*’.74 As noted at the start of this study, both *asphalês* and *bébaion* can be used to

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71 Muellner 1996:149.
72 For Muellner’s discussion of *philêô* and *endukêôs*, see Muellner 1996:173, especially notes 81 and 83. For Nagy’s insightful discussion of *endukêôs* as ‘in proper ritual sequence’ see Nagy 1996: chapter 2.
73 Nagy 1996:44.
74 Nagy 1996:48n27.
gloss émpedos!

Turning back to the simile describing Priam’s response to Penthesileia’s arrival, we can see that a meal in which food and drink is offered in uninterrupted sequence is the traditional and ritually appropriate response to the return of a loved one. For this reason, émpedos meaning something like ‘continual and ritually appropriate’ is a superior reading to ‘continual’ in such a context.

With all this in mind, let us return to the events on Ogygia, but this time to Odyssey scroll 7 where Odysseus himself describes his treatment by Calypso.

She took me and she loved and nurtured me in a continuous and ritually appropriate way, and said she would make me immortal and ageless for all my days; but never could she persuade the spirit in my chest.

For nine years I remained fixed there (in uninterrupted sequence), and with constant tears
I kept wetting my garments, the divine ones Calypso gave me.

Odyssey 7.255–260

With this diction Odysseus is contrasting the steadfast and appropriate immortalizing care conveyed by endukéōs with his equally steadfast (émpedos) embrace
of sorrow and his constant refusal of immortality. We might even say that this passage provides an expanded multiform for the narrator’s description of Odysseus’ care, with which we began this subsection.

τόφρα δὲ οἱ κομιδὴ γε θεῶ ὡς ἔμπεδος ἦν.

At that time his care was continual and appropriate as for a god.

Odyssey 8.453

When we view the narrator’s comments through the lens of Odysseus’ description, it is clear that ἔμπεδος in this context conveys the idea of ‘continual and ritually appropriate’.

In conclusion, I would cite one more passage which contains ἔμπεδος and which touches upon the theme of immortalization. The passage I have in mind is the moment in Iliad scroll 19 when Thetis protects Patroclus’ corpse from decay by means of nectar and ambrosia:

Πατρόκλῳ δ’ αὐτ’ ἀμβροσίην καὶ νέκταρ ἐρυθρὸν στάξε κατὰ ρινῶν, ἵνα οἱ χρώς ἔμπεδος εἴη.

But as for Patroclus, ambrosia and red nectar she trickled down his nose, in order that his flesh might be unchanging.

Iliad 19.38–39
When given to living mortals, ambrosia can convey immortality. Administered here after death, ambrosia and nectar protect the body from the natural process of decay. This use of ēmpedos to describe the preserved body of a fallen hero is in some ways parallel to the concept of imperishability expressed by ἀφθίτων.
Chapter 3

Steadfast Strength and Steadfast Intelligence

3.1 ménon émpedon with émpedon in the fourth foot

The previous sections analyzed how the words émpedos and asphalés are used to describe authority, power, and honor. Émpedos is also traditionally used to describe subjects that are steadfastly fixed or subjects that are steadfast in their continual motion. Contextual analysis shows that being steadfastly fixed is associated with strength and the mental ability to ward off overwhelming fear, while being steadfastly in motion is linked with intelligence. Through these associations émpedos and asphalés are used to describe the warrior who is able to stand firm in battle and the minds of those who think in ritually appropriate ways.

This subsection deals with passages in which the adverbial neuter émpedon localizes in the fourth foot. Just as émpedos is used to describe endless and secure motion seen in the description of Aithalides, it is equally as valid to use the word for staying fixed in place. One typical way to express this is the formulaic phrase ménon émpedon with
émpedon in the fourth foot. In fact, ménō is the second-most common verb used with émpedos after forms of the verb “to be.” Several relevant examples are given below:

ünde Δαναοὶ Τρῶας μένον ἔμπεδον οὐδὲ φέβοντο.

So the Danaans steadfastly remained and did not flee

Iliad 5.527, 15.622

Τρῶας ἐπερχομένους μένον ἔμπεδον . . .

[The Achaeans] steadfastly awaited the approaching Trojans . . .

Iliad 15.406

ἔνθα μὲν ἐπτάετες μένον ἔμπεδον . . .

There for seven years I remained steadfastly

Odyssey 7.259

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἔμπεδον, εἰ τις ἔλθῃ ἄνδρῶν ἡρώων, οἱ δὲ τὸ πρόσθεν ὀλοντο.

However I remained there steadfastly, if perhaps some hero might still come,

Odyssey 11.628

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἔμπεδον, . . .

Note that asphaléōs also collocates with ménō. When Odysseus is kicked by Melanthius, Odysseus doesn’t go off the path but remains steadfast (ἀλλ’ ἔμεν ἄσφαλέως) both physically and mentally. (Odyssey 17.233-238)
however I remained there steadfastly, . . .

*Odyssey* 11.152

This idea of remaining fixed in place in a special way is also captured by other lines in which *empedos* localizes in the fourth foot. Consider, for example, the following clause at *Iliad* 18.158 describing how Hector trusted securely in his *alké* ‘defensive strength’ (ὅ δ' ἔµπεδον ἀλκὶ πεποιθὼς). This example shows a link between the theme of remaining steadfast and the concept of *alké*. Derek Collins has fully analyzed the word *alké* as used within Homer. In the course of his work, he comments upon several words and themes relevant to this discussion. First, he argues for a dynamic, interdependent relationship between the action of staying firm and remembering *alké*. In other words, remaining fixed in place helps one to remember his *alké* and remembering one’s *alké* often has the outcome of one's standing firm.⁷⁶ I would argue that the steadfastness denoted by *empedos* displays a similar dynamic relationship between sustained mental effort and being firm; one aids the other.

Collins’s insights on the verb *ménō* are also relevant to this study.

I stress here that the meaning behind not forgetting (*lanthánō*) one’s *alké* is that direct action of some kind is taken, and the most common action

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⁷⁶ For this discussion of *alké* with *hístēmi* and *lanthánō*, see Collins 1998:95–97.
taken is represented by verbs of ‘standing/withstanding’ like histēmi, and, as we saw earlier, menō.\textsuperscript{77}

So maintaining steadfast strength has a strong connection with ménō and remaining steadfast (ménō émpedon). While Collins sees alké as bringing about an “irreversible mental and physical state,” I would note that émpedos can appropriately describe subjects that are temporarily steadfast.\textsuperscript{78}

3.2 Maintaining Steadfast Strength and Intelligence

Many of the Homeric passages describing steadfast strength or intelligence involve the line-terminal formula émpedos + BE, where émpedos localizes in the fifth foot and BE is a two-syllable form of the verb eimí. The phrase émpedos + BE occurs 16 times in Homer. Several examples are listed below:\textsuperscript{79}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{ἐτι μοι μένος ἐμπεδόν ἐστιν} #
\end{itemize}

...my spirit/mind [ménos] is still steadfast.

\textit{Iliad 5.254, Odyssey 21.426}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{νόος γε μὲν ἐμπεδὸς ἔεν}.
\end{itemize}

...but his consciousness [nóos] was remaining steadfast

\textit{Iliad 11.813}

\textsuperscript{77} Collins 1998:97.

\textsuperscript{78} On alké as an irreversible state, see Collins 1998:69.

\textsuperscript{79} For a full listing, see the appendix.
Would that I were young and my strength [bíē] were still steadfast

Old man, if only, as the spirit [thūmós] in your chest, your knees could keep up, and your strength [biē] could remain steadfast

... whose mind is steadfast

As these passages show, émpedos + BE # is used in a formulaic way to express the idea of maintaining steadfast strength with ‘bíē’ (strength, physical force, violence). We can also see that émpedos + BE # collocates with a cluster of terms related to intelligence, such as phrénes (‘mind’), nóos (‘consciousness, mind’), nóēma (‘thoughts’), and ménos (‘spirit, mind’). The ancient Greeks considered the hands and feet to be the agents of force, ‘bíē’, while they saw the midriff, phrénes, as the central physical location associated with the life forces that maintain emotional and mental power. The phrénes are also the seat of the breath and, as such, the life forces associated with the phrénes (that is, nóos, ménos and thūmós) are seen as interdependent with breathing. Less commonly noted is the fact that phrénes are also the location of visualization.
Telemachus] sat among the suitors grieving in his own heart, envisioning in his mind his noble father, if coming from somewhere he should scatter the suitors throughout the house and he himself have honor and rule over his property. Thinking these things, as he sat idle among the suitors, he saw Athena.

Odyssey 1.114–118

What is more, Pindar tells us that song and music can charm (thélgei) phrènes—even those of the immortals (Pindar Pythian 1.12). Through this complex, interconnected web of associations, the concept of the émpedos mind/body nexus becomes associated with the effect of epic song on both the singer and the listener. Perhaps the most significant example is Odysseus’ encounter with the Sirens. In that episode Odysseus ties himself to the mast of his ship in order to steadfastly and safely listen to the song of the Sirens. At this famous moment, the poem uses émpedos to describe how the hero stays in place (δφρ’ ἕμπεδον αὐτόθι μίμω [Odyssey 12.161]).

3.3 Wishing for Youthful Strength

The formulaic expression βίη δέ τοι ἕμπεδος εἶη, which Agamemnon uses at Iliad 4.314, also appears in a full-line formula that traditionally expresses the wish for youth, and which can be used to start or end a story about past heroic exploits.
εἴθ᾽ ὦς ἧβωσιμι, βίη δὲ μοι ἐμπέδος εἴη (Iliad 7.157)
eἴθ᾽ ὦς ἧβωσιμι βίη δὲ μοι ἐμπέδος εἴη . . . . (Iliad 11.670)
eἴθ᾽ ὦς ἧβωσιμι βίη τέ μοι ἐμπέδος εἴη . . . . (Iliad 23.629)
eἴθ᾽ ὦς ἧβωσιμι βίη τέ μοι ἐμπέδος εἴη . . . . (Odyssey 14.468)
ὡς νῦν ἧβωσιμι βίη τέ μοι ἐμπέδος εἴη (Odyssey 14.503)

If only/I wish now that I were in the prime of my youth, and my βίη was steadfast . . . .

The last two examples above from Odyssey scroll 14 show the line being used to open and close the fabricated story Odysseus tells about his cloak, creating a clear ring composition. Similarly, Nestor uses the formula at Iliad 7.157 as the closing of an expanded twenty five-line micro-narrative about his slaying of Ereuthalion and again as the opening to the almost hundred-line description of his former victories at 11.670.

The first speech is part of a rebuke causing seven young heroes to come forward as volunteers for a one-on-one battle. The second speech is part of the critical scene in which Nestor convinces Patroclus to take Achilles’ place in the war.

The use of the formula in re-creating past glory points to the fact that the speaker’s βίη is being strengthened, albeit in a fictional sense. In other words, the statement of lost βίη invokes an occasion to re-create it through storytelling. And, as can be seen from context, these stories have real power to evoke and strengthen the βίη of those present at the time of performance. In summary, the passages above reveal that ἐμπέδος is a traditionally appropriate term for describing the state of one’s βίη, that this
strength is steadfast in youth but not in old age, and that storytelling is an appropriate medium for making bijê steadfast.

These same ideas can apply to the use of émpedos in describing the life forces and physical locations associated with mental faculties. A quick review of Tables One and Two in the appendix shows a thematic link between the word émpedos and objects and activities that are related to mental energy. Consider ménos, phrênes, nóêma, ménô, aklê, nōs; each of these words has some relationship to one’s mental capacity. Other subjects are more closely related to the physical locations and life forces associated with martial activities and physical violence: bijê, guîa, poûs. Thus, émpedos can be used positively or negatively to describe one’s mental/physical state. Consider the use of émpedos when Patroclus meets the wounded Eurypylus:

... κατὰ δὲ νότιος ῥέεν ἱδρὼς
ὡμον καὶ κεφαλῆς, ἀπὸ δ᾽ ἐλκεος ἀργαλέοιο
ἀίμα μέλαν κελάρυζε· νόος γε μὲν ἔμπεδος ἦεν.

... and the wet sweat was running
down from his shoulders and head, and from the painful wound
dark blood gushed—even so his consciousness at least was steadfast.

Iliad 11.811–813

80 On the association between ménos and remembering, see Nagy 1974:266.
81 On the association between aklê, ménô, and memory, see Collins 1998 and the discussion below, specifically pages 49–50.
An opposition is being made here between the injured warrior’s ability to fight and his ability to think and speak appropriately. Like the rock at *Iliad* 15.617–622 withstanding the flowing wind and waves, his *nóos* is withstanding the pain, sweat, and blood that have overcome his martial strength. Although he looks as if he might lose consciousness, Eurypylus has maintained his wits and along with them the ability to convince Patroclus to remain by his side.

### 3.4 Rebuking Inappropriate Thoughts

At other times, epic describes a character as seeming to have a strong mental/physical core but not being *émpedos* with respect to his mental capacity. Rebukes can be used in such a case to prompt a mental readjustment. In this context *émpedos* might be translated ‘appropriate’. For example in *Odyssey* scroll 18, Penelope rebukes Telemachus for allowing the mistreatment of Odysseus while disguised as a stranger (*ξεῖνος*, 18.223) in the house:

> “Τηλέμαχ’, οὐκέτι τοι φρένες ἐμπεδοὶ οὐδὲ νόημα. παῖς ἐτ’ ἐὼν καὶ μᾶλλον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ κέρδε’ ἐνώμας· νῦν δ’ ὥτε δὴ μέγας ἐσσὶ καὶ ἠβης μέτρον ἰκάνες, καὶ κέν τις φαίη γόνον ἐμμεναὶ ὀλβίου ἄνδρος, ἐς μέγεθος καὶ κάλλος ὀρώμενος, ἀλλότριος φώς. οὐκέτι τοι φρένες εἰσὶν ἐναύσιμοι οὐδὲ νόημα,

Telemachus, no longer is your mind steadfast, nor your thoughts. Even being still a child you had better thoughts in mind.
But now that you are big and you are arriving at the limit of youth, and someone would say you are the child of a blessed man looking at your size and beauty, some foreigner; no longer is your mind proper [enaismoi], nor your thoughts . . . .

Odyssey 18.215–220

From this passage we may deduce several points: First, one’s mental state does not always correspond with one’s visible physical state. Second, one’s phrénes can be unstable, fluctuating between being émpedos and not émpedos. As has already been seen, the ability to maintain steadfast phrénes can depend upon the subject’s age.

Telemachus’ newly adult phrénes are set in stark contrast to the mind of his father, a man who is remarkable in his ability to remain physically and mentally émpedos during his quest for nóstos. In his encounter with Circe, Odysseus manages to keep these faculties steadfast, while members of his crew are physically transformed. Note, however, that the thoughts of the transformed sailors are specifically labeled as being émpedos (“... however their minds remained steadfast as before. / So, weeping, they were confined,” αὐτὰρ νοὺς ἦν ἐμπέδος ώς τὸ πάρος περ. / ὡς οἱ μὲν κλαίοντες ἐέρχατο) and that their crying signifies this (Odyssey 10.240–241). Similarly, while trapped on Calypso’s island, Odysseus describes himself in similar terms: “There, for seven years, I remained steadfastly, and my garments were always being drenched by tears,” ἐνθα μὲν ἐπτάετες μένον ἐμπεδον, εἰματα δ’ αἰεί / δάκρυσι δεύεσκον (Odyssey 7.259–260).
Returning to the passage about Telemachus’ inappropriate mind and thoughts, I would draw attention to the fact that Penelope is rebuking Telemachus for ritually inappropriate behavior. The treatment of guests is protected by Zeus, the highest authority in the cosmos, and mistreatment in these matters is of cosmic significance. In fact, the mistreatment of guests is an offence worthy of mēnis, the cosmic anger which is the subject of the *Iliad*. As Leonard Muellner has shown, mēnis is “the sacred name of the ultimate sanction against tabu behavior, and epic personages invoke it to forestall people from breaking fundamental cosmic rules.” Noting this, we can compare the rebuke of Telemachus with Apollo’s rebuke of the gods in *Iliad* 24. At this point in the narrative, Apollo is angered that the other gods are allowing Achilles to mistreat the corpse of Hector:

σχέτλιοί ἐστε, θεοί, δηλήμονες οὐ νῦ ποθ’ ύμῖν ἔκτωρ μηρὶ ἔκη βοῶν αἰγῶν τε τελείων; τὸν νῦν οὐκ ἔτλητε νέκυν περ ἔόντα σαῶσαι ἣ τ’ ἀλόχω ἱδέειν καὶ μητέρι καὶ τέκε送出 φεῖν καὶ πατέρι Πριάμῳ λαιοΐ τε, τοῖ κέ μιν ὦκα ἐν πυρὶ κῆαιεν καὶ ἐπὶ κτέρεα κτερίσαιεν. ἀλλ’ ὁλοὔ Ἀχιλῆί, θεοί, βούλεσθ’ ἐπαρήγειν, ὁ οὔτ’ ἂρ φρένες εἰσίν ἐναίσιμοι οὔτε νόημα γναμπτόν ἐνι στῆθεσοι

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82 Odyssey 14.283–284.
You are hard, gods, baneful! For did Hector
never burn for you the thigh-bones of perfect oxen and goats?
But now you do not endeavor to save him, even being a corpse,
for his wife to see, and his mother and son,
and his father Priam and his subjects, those who would swiftly
burn him in the fire and honor him with funeral gifts.
But you gods are willing to aid destructive Achilles
whose mind is not proper, nor is the thought
in his breast pliable

_Iliad_ 24.33–40

Apollo’s speech highlights the system of reciprocity and ritual exchange. Since Hector
acted in a ritually appropriate way by giving honors to the gods, the gods should, in
turn, make sure that he receives his own ritual honors in death. Instead the gods have
allowed Achilles to drag Hector’s corpse behind his chariot in an attempt to deny his
fallen opponent any proper and timely funeral rituals. Furthermore, as Muellner has
also shown, leaving the dead unburied is an act that can incur _mēnis._ As a result, his
behavior causes Apollo to label Achilles’ _phrēnes enaísimoi_.

With these passages in mind, let us return to Penelope’s rebuke of Telemachus.

“Τηλέμαχ’, οὐκέτι τοι φρένες ἐμπεδοὶ οὐδὲ νόημα.
paîs ēt’ ἐὼν καὶ μᾶλλον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ κέρδε’ ἐνώμας
vūn ὄτε δῆ μέγας ἔσσι καὶ ἱβῆς μέτρον ἰκάνεις,
kαὶ κέν τις φαίν γόνον ἐμμεναι ὀλβίου ἄνδρός,
ἐς μέγεθος καὶ κάλλος ὄρωμενος, ἀλλότριος φῶς.
οὐκέτι τοι φρένες εἰσὶν ἑναίσιμοι οὐδὲ νόημα.

84 Muellner 1996:32. For a list of offences that incur _mēnis_, see p. 8.
Telemachus, no longer is your mind steadfast, nor your thoughts. Even being still a child you had better thoughts in mind. But now in fact that you are big and you are arriving at the limit of youth, and someone would say you are the child of a blessed man looking at your size and beauty, some foreigner; no longer is your mind proper [enaísimoi], nor your thoughts . . . .

Odyssey 18.215–220

It is now clear that émpedoi as used here is closely related to, if not nearly synonymous with, enaísimoi. Telemachus’ neglect of proper ritual procedure could put the whole household at risk of Zeus’ destructive and indiscriminate mênis. To remedy the situation, Penelope rebukes him by suggesting that his mind and thoughts are inappropriate to his age and to customary ritual procedures.

If during the prime of life phrēnes and bīē can typically be described as émpedos, old age offers another stage to consider. The epic gives us two depictions here: Priam and Nestor. Passages involving Nestor have already been discussed. The lines involving Priam are also noteworthy since he is the only person to be labeled émpedos by the Homeric poem without a qualifying modifier—that is, we are not told that his actions, characteristics, or features are émpedos, but rather that he himself is émpedos. In this scene Achilles taunts Aeneas:

... ἀτὰρ ἐἲ κεν ἐμ' ἐξεναρίξης,
οὐ τοι τοῦνεκά γε Πρίαμος γέρας ἐν χερὶ θῆσεν
eἰσίν γάρ οἱ παῖδες, ὅ δ᾿ ἐμπεδὸς οὐδ᾿ ἀεσίφρων.

... nevertheless if you kill me
not even for that reason will Priam place privilege in your hand;
for he has sons, and he is steadfast and not witless.

*Iliad* 20.181–183

Though it is not mentioned explicitly I believe the *géras* discussed here is the scepter of
kingship, which, as already shown, is associated with the theme of being steadfast. Here
again, we can see resonances of understanding ritually appropriate sequence. Achilles
is saying that Aeneas will never receive the scepter because Priam’s lineage is yet
unbroken. He has sons to follow him, and he is right-minded. He understands the
proper sequence and ritual, and so he will pass the privilege of the scepter to his
children. In other words, Priam will maintain his social status so long as his mind and
his lineage remain *émpedos*. 
Chapter 4

Poetic Fame, Steadfast Fame

This chapter explores the ways in which the diction and themes of steadfastness are used to describe poetic fame, charioteers, and the pursuit of nóstos. Drawing upon evidence from the lyric and epic traditions, and giving special attention to the use of metaphor, I show that émpedos and asphalés offer valuable evidence about the nature of fame within this oral poetic tradition.

4.1 Kinetic Fame

Several passages from Pindar suggest that this poetic tradition sees its work as distinctly kinetic in nature. In fact, the opening lines of Nemean 5 explicitly note a preference for preserving and spreading fame through kinetic art.

Oὐκ ἄνδριαντοποιός εἰμ’, ὡς’ ἔλινύσοντα ἐργά-ζεσθαι ἁγάλματι ἐπ’ αὐτάς βαθμίδος ἐστάς ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ πάσας ὀλκάδος ἐν τ’ ἀκάτῳ, γλυκεῖ’ ἁοιδά, στεῖχ’ ἀπ’ Αἰγίνας διαγγέλλοις, ὅτι Λάμπωνος ὦιὸς Πυθέας εὐρυσθενής νίκη Νεμείοις παγκρατίου στέφανον,
I’m no sculptor, so as to make *statuary* that *stands idle* upon the same base, but upon each trading vessel and light boat, *sweet song*, go from Aegina announcing that Pytheas, son of Lampon, won the crown in the pancration.

Pindar *Nemean* 5.1–5

The poet defines his work by creating a distinction between himself and the creators of *agálmata elínúsonta*. Both of these words are significant. The noun *ágalma* works in this metaphor on several levels. In the passage above, the meaning expressed is “statue,” as made clear by the context, “I’m no sculptor.” On a more latent level, it must be noted that the semantic field of *ágalma* is quite broad, including meanings such as glory, honor, ornament, pleasing gift, gravestone, statue, cult statue, image, and portrait; by the third century A.D., it is even used in reference to hieroglyphics. Examination of this list suggests that these definitions carry two core meanings: static visual representation (statue, portrait, and so on) and the trappings of immortality (glory, honor). In some cases, the term derives meaning from both categories; that is, some ideas expressed by *ágalma* are visual representations which convey or help bring about some level of immortality (gravestone, cult statue, statue).

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85 Liddell-Scott 1996, s.v., *ágalma*.
86 Plotinus, Ennead 5, chapter 8, section 6, line 8.
With this in mind, let us return to Pindar and the passage under discussion. The main idea is that song is superior to static visual art in preserving and spreading glory because of its mobility. In fact, the hymn created by Pindar is so “active,” the poet addresses it directly like a person, commanding it to go off on every ship. Like the athlete who labors over his athletic ordeal, the poem will labor to spread the fame of the victor. This passage exploits an underlying assumption equating movement with praise and fame. Pindar expresses a similar idea in Isthmian 2.

μήτε ἀρετάν ποτε σιγάτω πατρίων,  
μηδὲ τούσδ' ὑμνοὺς ἐπεὶ τοι  
οὐκ ἐλινύσοντας αὐτοὺς ἔργασάμεν.

Let him never silence the excellence of his father,  
nor these hymns, since  
not to stand idle did I labor over them.

Pindar Isthmian 2.44–46

Here again Pindar uses the phrase οὐκ ἐλινύσοntas, “not idle,” to describe his poem. In this case, however, the poet is also discussing silence, which is equated to standing still in idleness. Within this poetic ideology, to move is to speak aloud and praise; to stand idle is to be silent.

These Pindaric passages reveal not just a merging of the themes of movement and glory but also a cycle of labor and compensation involving the athlete and the poet. The
poem is given as compensation for the athlete’s ordeal, which is described in terms of a mókhthos or pónos.\(^{87}\) The poet labors over the creation of a hymn. Because the hymn is well-crafted, it is not standing idle (ο网首页 €ιλινύων). By its own labor it spreads the fame of the victor both in time and in space. In a sense, it is the ordeal of the poet, as well as the poem, that compensates the athlete for his struggle.

In fact, there is a never-ending cycle of labor in the earning and compensation of the victory ode. The occasion of the pan-Hellenic contest is that of an ordeal created to compensate a hero from the past for his long-ago ordeal and death. The athlete achieves victory by struggling in his own contest. The poet then labors to produce a hymn that will not stand idle; the poem works to link the glory of the athlete to the glory of the heroic past. However, because the mythical hero must be compensated on a recurring basis for his catastrophic ordeal, athletic heroes must also participate in a successful and recurring ritual ordeal.\(^{88}\) The cycle of labor becomes never-ending.

Bacchylides’ 13\(^{th}\) victory ode offers evidence of these themes which is particularly relevant to the discussion of émpedos and asphalês. The first passage uses émpedon to describe how Aretê brings forth a good reputation.

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87 Another significant term used to express the toil of the athletic contest is the term at the root of our word athlete, āθλον 'contest, struggle, prize'.
... οὐ γὰρ ἀλαμπέϊ νυκ[τὸς] πασιφανῆς Ἀρετ[ᾶ] κρυφ- θεῖσ' ἀμαυρ[ὼ]τα καλύπτρᾳ,

αλλ' ἐμπεδον ἀκ[αμάτα] βρύ- οσα δόξα
στρωφᾶται κατὰ γᾶν [τὲ]
καὶ πολύπλαγκτον θ[άλασσαν.]

... for not by the lightless veil of night
is shining Excellence, having been covered,
obscured,
but steadfastly teeming with
an inexhaustible reputation
it roams down along the land
and the much-wandering sea.

Bacchylides 13.138–144

These lines create an association between the ἐμπεδον production of the reputation
and its tireless wandering. In this case, excellence remains ἐμπεδος and continues to
wander even after death.89 The word akamāta used here is particularly appropriate to
descriptions of this type of work as it is used by the Hesiodic tradition to describe the
voice of the Muses (Hesiod Theogony 39).

Earlier in this same hymn, the poet gives a similar description of how death affects
the athlete.

[-- παρ]ά βωμὸν ἀριστάρχου Διὸς

89 I would suggest that it is the poet’s mental effort of creating the hymn that keeps this
excellence ἐμπεδος.
According to Bacchylides, the glory of winning at Nemea will last beyond the grave. While the athlete is alive, his victory will continually uphold an untarnished reputation (δόξα). His death, however, will bring about a transformation. Once the cloud of death covers him, immortal fame will be left behind which, once set upon its journey, can never be tripped up.

4.2 Steadfast Fame: Transferring the Metaphor

So fame can traditionally be thought of as mobile and active, and this is one of the ways that ἐμπέδος is traditionally used: to describe steadfast motion. But what of the traditional use of ἐμπέδος to describe subjects that are steadfastly fixed in place? As we
have also seen, the word émpedos has a built-in metaphor of being rooted to the ground.

I believe the idea of steadfast fame as expressed in the name Empedokles resonates with both connotations of standing steadfastly fixed and of remaining steadfastly in motion. This subsection examines this idea with a focus on how the metaphor of standing still or being rooted to the ground might apply to something as traditionally kinetic as poetic glory.

Though invoking connotations of being rooted to the ground, émpedos is often used precisely of subjects in which this idea is not inherently appropriate. We can imagine a host of subjects—trees, roots, feet even—in which this built-in metaphor can help strengthen the already present sense of being rooted. But just as often the Homeric tradition offers some very unexpected subjects—mist, minds, and sailing ships. The idea here, I think, is that the word émpedos can be used to transfer the quality of steadfastness to subjects that inherently lack firmness. Through the use of émpedos the poet is able to transfer the firmness of things fixed in the ground to subjects which lack this stability, and to do so appropriately. Moreover, because émpedos most specifically denotes a steadfast state, whether fixed in place or in motion, it is particularly appropriate to descriptions of subjects that turn from being steadfastly kinetic to steadfastly fixed or vice versa.
Consider the scene in which Odysseus’ ship finally gets to Ithaca. The passage uses both émpedos and asphalēōs in comparing the unhindered movement of the ship to the running of horses, thus comparing travel on land to travel on sea.

. . . ἡ δ’, ὡς τ’ ἐν πεδίῳ τετράοροι ἀρσενες ἵπποι, πάντες ἁμ' ὀρμηθέντες ὑπὸ πληγῆσιν ἰμάσθης ὑψόσ' ἀειρόμενοι μέν ἀείρετο, κῦμα δ' ὀπισθὲν πορφύροσ πάντες πολυφλοίβοιο θαλάσσης.

. . . as in a plain, four stallions
are urged on all together driven by blows from the whip
and rising up high lightly undertake their voyage,
so the stern of the ship was being raised, and behind it seethed
a great heaving wave of the loud-roaring sea.
It ran on steadfastly and without faltering . . .

Odyssey 13.81–86

With twenty years of struggle and half an epic behind him, Odysseus is finally brought to his homeland with these six, compact, highly appropriate lines. First, I would point out that this is exactly the type of conveyance Odysseus requested of Alkinoos (πομπὴν δ' ὀτρύνει καὶ λίσσεται ἐμπεδον εἶναι [Odyssey 8.30]). More importantly, at this moment, Odysseus’ nóos is finally at rest. He is described as being in a death-like, motionless sleep during which he forgets the things he suffered (δὴ τότε γ'

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90 Note that émpedos has connotations of ‘uninterrupted sequence’ here.
ἀτρέμας εὕδε, λελασμένος ὄσο' ἐπεπόνθει [Odyssey 13.92]). As Douglas Frame has beautifully argued, Odysseus’ nóstos involves both a return to his homeland and a return from death and unconsciousness to “light and life.”91 In other words nóos is the key to his nóstos. To describe Odysseus’ ship as he undertakes this most important transition, the epic tradition uses the phrase asphaléōs théen émpedon. This is almost the same phrase, in the same location of the line, as appeared in the now familiar boulder simile (iliad 13.136–145). This time, however, there is no hindrance, no interruption of the momentum forward until the hero reaches his goal.

Yet the scholia for these lines note a sense of disconnection between the diction and the context.

... ἀσφαλῶς, κυρίως ἐπὶ τῶν μὴ σφαλλομένων, ἐμπέδως δὲ ἐπὶ τῶν ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἔρριζωμένων. ἦ δὲ ναῦς οὕτε ἀσφαλτός ἐστιν, οὕτε ἐν τῷ πεδίῳ ἔρριζωται. εἴληπται οὖν εἰς ἔμφασιν τῆς ἀκλίνούς καὶ μὴ σφαλλομένης ἐν τῷ πλώ.

“ἀσφαλῶς” properly with reference to not being tripped up/thrown down/overthrown, and “ἐμπέδως” with reference to things having been rooted firmly in the ground. But the ship is neither fallen, nor rooted in the ground, and so it [the diction] has been taken as a reflection / suggestion of not veering and of not being stopped in its course.

BQ scholia at 13.86

91 Odyssey 13.80, 92. On the connection between nóos and nóstos in this passage and the latent association between the root *nes- and the theme of “returning to light and life” in general, see Frame 1978:74–76.
These lines acknowledge how the poet is capable of transferring the physical firmness and steadfastness associated with the word émpedos and asphalēs to subjects that lack such qualities. This transfer of associations may even cross conceptual boundaries, from vertical space to horizontal space, from distance to time, or even from steadfastly fixed to steadfastly kinetic.

Returning to the simile itself, I would note that the phrase “ran steadfastly without faltering” (ἀσφαλέως θέεν ἐμπεδον) is appropriate to the language of charioteering. In fact, we must understand some traditional aspects of charioteering in order to grasp a deeper level of meaning in this simile.

In ancient Greece, the most dangerous point of a chariot race was the moment in the middle when the drivers had to skillfully guide their horses around the térmα or turning post. One such moment can be seen in the Funeral Games of Iliad 23, which offer not just a chariot race, but a lesson in chariot racing. I am referring here to Nestor’s instructions to his son Antilochus.

ος δε κε κερδεα ειδη ἐλαυνων ἕσσονας ἵππους, αιε τερμ' όρων στρεφει εγγύθεν, ουδε ε λήθει ὃπως το πρώτον τανύση βοεοισιν ιμᾶσιν, ἀλλ' ἔχει ἀσφαλέως και τὸν προὔχοντα δοκεύει.

But the one who, driving worse horses, knows all the tricks, he, keeping his eye on the turning post, turns close to it, and it does not escape his notice.
how he may first bring his horses to full speed with the oxhide reins, but he drives steadily and keeps his eye on the leader.\textsuperscript{92}

\textit{Iliad} 23.322–325

This use of \textit{asphalēōs} in this context is also supported by a passage in Theocritus’ \textit{Idyll} 24. Here, the poem makes explicit that learning to navigate this turn safely is a crucial aspect of the education of Herakles:

\begin{quote}
ática δ’ ἐξελάσασθαι υφ’ ἀρματι καὶ περὶ νύσσαν ἀσφαλέως κάμπτοντα τροχοῦ σύριγγα φυλάξαι Ἀμφιτρύων ὃν παῖδα φίλα φρονέων ἐδίδαξεν αὐτός...
\end{quote}

But to drive forth horses yoked to a chariot and to guard the nave of the wheel while safely rounding the turning post Amphitryon himself taught his son, thinking of him dearly...

\textit{Theocritus Idyll} 24 119-122

Like \textit{asphalēōs}, \textit{empedos} can be used adverbially to describe a successful turn in a race. To understand this, we must return to Nestor in \textit{Iliad} 23 when the old hero remembers a disastrous chariot race from his youth. As we will see, steadfastness is a key to the outcome of this race, so the hero highlights this by invoking the theme immediately. First Nestor states that his limbs are no longer steadfast (\textit{empeda}, 23.627).

Then he wishes that he were young and his strength were still steadfast (\textit{empedos},

\textsuperscript{92} Translation by Douglas Frame. Frame 2009:152.
23.629) as when he competed in funeral games among the Epeians. On that day he won every contest except the chariot race, which he lost to twins. Nestor claims he was outnumbered and that the twins each took their own role, one holding the reins, one driving the horses to go faster:

οἱ δὲ ἄρ' ἔσαν δίδυμοι: ὁ μὲν ἐμπεδὸν ἡνίοχευεν, ἐμπεδὸν ἡνίοχευ', ὁ δ' ἄρα μάστιγι κέλευεν.

They were twins, one held the reins steadfastly, held the reins steadfastly, while the other urged on with the whip.

Iliad 23.641-642

Douglas Frame offers a masterful reading of this episode which goes beyond the scope of the present study. For our purposes, it suffices to summarize one of Frame’s key findings: Nestor crashed at the turning post in this race precisely because he didn’t “hold the reins steadfastly.” In fact, the repetition of ἐμπεδὸν ἡνίοκχευεν signals the moment in which the twins safely make the dangerous turn around the turning post. So this passage presents a metapoetic metaphor in which the end of the hexameter line is

93 On Nestor’s role in the events of Iliad scroll 23, see Frame 2009:131–172. Frame argues that Nestor’s loss in the chariot race signals that “he had not yet learned to take his brother’s place, and that he had yet to become a horseman.” In contrast Frame sees Iliad 11 as the narrative in which Nestor does becomes a horseman.

94 In the future, I hope to expand this study to include a full discussion of the concept of steadfastness as it relates to Nestor and the Indo-European twin myth.
equated with the turning post in a race.\textsuperscript{95}

Gregory Nagy, prompted by Douglas Frame, has also shown that the successful execution of this dangerous racing maneuver depends upon the careful balance of restraint and incitement as well as careful attention to “signs.”\textsuperscript{96} From this metaphor we can infer that passing from the relatively fixed meter at the end of one hexameter verse to the relatively flexible beginning of another represents a potentially difficult turning point, and that this “turn” requires a balance of restraint and incitement on the part of the poet. But which is restraint, and which incitement? Given our strong tendency to think like readers and writers, we might be tempted to perceive fixed or rigid elements as restraint, while greater flexibility and fluidity might be perceived as allowing or promoting incitement. Within in an oral poetic system, however, it is just the opposite. Rather than restraining the poet, the formulaic system enables rapid and

\textsuperscript{95} We might even say that this metaphor reflects the metapoetic devise of metabasis as experienced on a microlevel of composition: the individual verse line. Inspired by the use of the verb \textit{metabainein} in the traditional closing lines of a \textit{Homeric Hymn}, Gregory Nagy has used the term metabasis to describe the way a hymn “refers to its own hymnic consequent” while moving ahead and shifting forward the subject of the performance. In Nagy’s reading, the hymn offers both the perfect beginning and the “perfect transition” to the rest of a performance, proceeding sequentially to its successful conclusion. For this concept of metabasis, see Nagy 2009a: 232-246, 326-335. Nagy also shows that in certain contexts this metabasis can even lead to a recycling back to previous subjects. Such recycling metabasis is typical of Cyclic epic but atypical of Homeric epic. On this distinction, see Nagy 2010a: 94-95.

\textsuperscript{96} Nagy 1990a:208. See especially footnote 40.
fluent composition. Thus, the particular concept of steadfastness expressed by émpedos and asphalés can be seen as emerging from and reflecting the traditional forces driving the composition of hexameter verses in performance. The poetics of steadfastness merge the complementary esthetics of rigidity and fluidity with the balance of incitement and restraint.**97**

Knowing this, let us return our attention to the description of Odysseus’ journey to Ithaca at *Odyssey* 13.81–86. As we saw, that passage features a simile about horses running securely and steadfastly (ἀσφαλέως θέεν ἔμπεδον). Given what we know about charioteering, we can see that this simile located about halfway through the epic might signal a metaphorical “turning point” in the *Odyssey*, thus equating the “turn” with the “return” as in nó̂stos ‘return to light and lift’.**98** If so, the epic diction is suggesting that steadfastness is a quality necessary for all three “turns”: the turn in a chariot race, the “turn” at the end of a verse, and the return of a hero.

Still, it should be noted that even this moment of steadfast motion is fleeting and that the transition is marked with a sêma, or sign. Like the stone left on the plain discussed in chapter one, the unhindered motion of the boat is doomed to end. Just as

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**97** Here, as earlier, I am invoking Nagy’s use of the terms “esthetics of rigidity” and “esthetics of fluidity.”

**98** On the connection between nó̂stos and the turn in a race, see Frame 2009:170–171.
the ship nears port on its return, Poseidon punishes the Phaeacians for helping his
enemy:

\[
\eta\ \delta\ \mu\alpha\\lambda\alpha\ σχε\delta\eta\ \eta\lambda\u03b9\nu\varepsilon\ \pi\omicron\omicron\tau\omicron\omicron\omicron\rho\omicron\sigma\omicron\ ι\nu\varepsilon\varsigma
\delta\imath\iota\mu\omicron\phi\alpha\ δι\omega\kappa\omicron\mu\acute{e}νη\ .\ \tau\omicron\varsigma\ \delta\ ο\omicron\sigma\chi\epsilon\delta\delta\nu\ η\lambda\theta\'\ ἕνοσίχθων,
\delta\varsigma\ μιν\ \lambda\alpha\α\ν\ \theta\nu\ke\kappa\αι\ \ἐρριζω\ς\εν\ \ἐνερ\θ\ε\
χειρ\ι\ \κατ\alpha\πρη\nuε\ieta\ έλα\ς\α\ς;
\]

And the seafaring ship came very near
being driven swiftly. But the Earthshaker came nearby
and he made it stone and rooted it below,
striking it with the flat of his hand.

*Odyssey* 13.161–164

Poseidon transforms the formerly kinetically ἐμπεδος ship into a statically fixed stone

(*Odyssey* 13.155–164). Though it is not labeled ἐμπεδος, it is thematically ἐμπεδος in that
the ship is now rooted in the ground. As we have seen, this is the exact unlikely
scenario which the scholia saw as the literal interpretation of ἐμπεδον at 13.86. Like the
boulder of the simile discussed in chapter one, the ship is now a secure sign or σημα of
the power that overwhelmed it.

That Poseidon would have the power to transform a kinetic object into something
fixed and secure is actually appropriate to the traditional function of the god. The
scholia at Hesiod *Works and Days* 790 discuss the eighth month, which is associated with
Poseidon. The following lines are particularly revealing:
... τοῦ δὲ αὐτοῦ ἐστι τὸ κινεῖν καὶ ἠρεμεῖν τὰς ἀστάτους τῶν κινουμένων ὀρμάς. διὸ καὶ ὁ θεὸς αὐτὸς οὐ μόνον Ἐνοσίχθων, ἀλλὰ καὶ Ἀσφάλειος ὑμνεῖται καὶ οἱ τοὺς σεισμοὺς παύειν ἐθέλοντες Ποσειδώνι θύουσιν.

His is to move and to fix the unresting rush of things set in motion. On account of which, the god is hymned not only as the Earthshaker, but also as the Securer, and those wishing to stop the shaking make offerings to Poseidon.

scholia at Hesiod Works and Days 790

As final evidence of the relationship between steadfastness, Poseidon, and the idea of nóstos, I would draw the reader’s attention to a beautiful epigram from the Greek Anthology which features émpedon in a remarkable way while commemorating nóstos and perhaps honoring Poseidon the Securer.

Νῆα Ποσειδάωνι πολύπλανος ἄνθετο Κράντας ἐμπεδὸν ἐς νηοῦ πέζαν ἐρεισάμενος, αὔρης οὐκ ἀλέγουσαν ἐπὶ χθονός, ἥς ἔπι Κράντας εὐρὺς ἀνακλινθεὶς ἄτρομον ὑπνὸν ἔχει.

Crantas, after his many voyages, dedicates his ship to Poseidon, fixing it firmly on the floor of the temple. It cares not for the winds now it is on the earth, the earth on which Crantas, stretching himself at ease, sleeps a fearless sleep.  

Greek Anthology 6.69

Crantas’ dedication is clearly reflecting Poseidon’s transformation of the Phaeacian ship as well as Odysseus’ sleep during his journey aboard the ship. Yet, given what we

have learned about the association between the adverb ἀσφαλέως and charioteering, I would posit that the epithet Ἀσφάλειος also reflects Poseidon’s association with horses and charioteering. If so, the epithet would mark Poseidon as the god who can make things secure in both kinetic and fixed ways and the god who challenges that security by making fixed things shake and break apart or by making steadfastly kinetic things crash, trip, and swerve. Like ἐμπέδος and ἀσφαλές, Poseidon with his various associations to water, horses, and earthquakes, can be seen as a divine expression of the balance between rigidity and fluidity, incitement and restraint.

Such a vision of Poseidon brings to mind the ritual at Onchestos described in the Homeric Hymn to Apollo at lines 229–238. In this ritual, the driver entering Poseidon’s sacred grove leaps off his chariot (232–233),\(^\text{100}\) allowing the horses to pull the empty and rattling vehicle through the grove without the restraint of a human driver (234).\(^\text{101}\) Some chariots make it through safely, but those which crash are left as fixed dedicatory offerings to the god, while the horses are given care (235–236). Richard Martin sees this ritual in part as a test of the craft of the carpenter or joiner who constructed the

\(^{100}\) On the apobatic leap from a chariot, see Nagy 2009b. Here the driver simply leaps off. In the apobatic athletic contest the fully-armed rider leaps off while the chariot is at full speed, hits the ground running, races on foot, and then leaps back on.

\(^{101}\) Compare the Phaeacian ships which also lack a human pilot. Instead, the boats steer by their own wits (Odyssey 8.556–559).
chariot.\textsuperscript{102} In section 1.3, we saw that the phrase \textit{ménon émpedon} could be associated with the word ἀρηρότες, built from the root \textit{*ar-}. At that time, we noted that this root means ‘fit, join’ and appears in words traditionally used to express the work of carpenters and poets.\textsuperscript{103}

I find Martin’s reading compelling and would suggest that although the words \textit{émpedos} and \textit{asphalēs} do not appear in the description of the ritual, these words express the quality which is being tested. Chariots and horses which make it through the grove without crashing or swerving off course have proven secure in their motion, while chariots and wheels which remain in one piece attest to the fixed and secure nature of their construction. Moreover, in the transformation of unsuccessful chariots into fixed dedicatory offerings, the ritual in some sense echoes the dedication of a fixed ship to Poseidon. The ritual at Onchestos, however, highlights the significance of being steadfast in all its forms not by foregrounding a successful and permanent

\textsuperscript{102} On this rite as a test of craft, see Martin 2010. Martin addresses this ritual in a larger discussion about the rhetoric of craft, the craft of talk, and the ways in which “the pressure of competition shapes authors and authority, contexts and content.” Martin notes, “It is the pressure of Greek agonism, of contests, of judgment (krisis) within a ritual situation—the Pythian Games on the one hand, and the Panathenaia on the other—that have encouraged the growth of an entire body of myth, lore, and explanation to undergird a set of rules and regulations. \textit{Out of crisis come criteria}” (3.35; emphasis in the original).

\textsuperscript{103} On this association between the root \textit{*ar-}, the work of the carpenter, and the activity of the poet, see Nagy 1979:297–300.
homecoming, but by highlighting failure and then transforming it into ritual success, since a crash in the ritual can be compensated for by a successful prayer and offering (237–238). Thus ritual, like metaphor, provides a context for transferring and transforming steadfastness.

Returning to our discussion about metaphor, we might also consider a passage from *Iliad* 15, which, like Odysseus’ journey home, involves four horses and features the word *émpedon*. Like the ritual at Onchestos, this also involves a leaping rider. The context here is that Aias is defending the Greek ships pulled up on the shore and is described as moving deftly from one ship to another.

... ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἄνηρ ἵπποις κελητίζειν ἐνεεἰδώς,
ὅς τ’ ἔπει ἐκ πολέων πίσυρας συναείρεται ἵππους,
σεῦας ἐκ πεδίου μέγα προτὶ ἄστυ δίηται
λαοφόρον καθ’ ὕδόν· πολέες τέ ἡ θησαύτῳ
ἀνέρες ἥδε γυναῖκες· ὅ δ’ ἐμπεδον ἄσφαλες αἰεὶ
θρῴσκων ἄλλοτ’ ἐπ’ ἄλλον ἀμείβεται, οἱ δὲ πέτονται:

104 We might also compare the episode in the *Odyssey* in which Teiresias (who has *émpedoi phrénes* even in death [*Odyssey* 10.493]) tells Odysseus to bring an oar inland until it is mistaken for a winnowing shovel (11.121–137; 23.265–284). Once it is mistaken, Odysseus must fix the oar in the ground (making it physically *émpedos* although it is not described as such) and make a sacrifice to Poseidon (11.129–130; 23.276–277). On the multiple meanings of this complex image see Nagy 1990a:231–232, especially n. 82 where Nagy remarks, “The complexity of the gesture of Odysseus in planting his implement is reinforced by the inherent symbolism of the winnowing shovel: just as this implement separates the grain from the chaff, so also it separates true things from false things; I compare the discussion of *krisis* in the sense of separating, discriminating, judging...”
... as when a man well-skilled in the knowledge of riding horses
yokes together four horses out of many
and drives them from the plain to the great town
and passes down along the road, and many are amazed,
both men and women, and he always securely
leaps and passes ceaselessly from one to the other while they fly,
so Aias over the wide decks of the swift ships
kept going back and forth striding

_Iliad_ 15.679–686

As we have seen, it is not unusual in the Homeric tradition to compare horses with
ships, but this example is particularly interesting because it equates the _fixed_ ships with
-moving_ horses. It is as if both the steadfastness of the boats in the world of the narrative
and the steadfastness of the horses and horseman within the frame of the metaphor is
being transferred to the hero. Thus, this metaphor equating steadfast motion with
steadfast rigidity once again makes clear that _émpedos_ most specifically signals a steady
and continual state in relation to both space and time.

We might also note that the verb _empedóō_ ‘confirm, ratify’ can be used specifically
to describe the act of making _speech_ steadfast.\(^{105}\) Built from the same root as the

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\(^{105}\) This verb is unattested in Homer, Hesiod, the _Argonautica_, and _Posthomerica_, but is
used by Euripides, Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Aristophanes. It also appears in prose
authors such as Xenophon and Plato. In the near future I will expand this study to
include a discussion of the use of _émpedos_ in tragedy.
adjective émpedos, empédоō comes to mean ‘ratify, confirm, uphold’ and is used of gifts, drink offerings, treaties, laws, and oaths. Given that émpedos is a word for signifying a steady continual state that can also be used to describe a ritually appropriate mind, the use of this root makes perfect sense. In other words, empédоō is about making words and rituals émpedos, continual, lasting, and appropriate. It is precisely through this power that the poet is able to create steadfast and imperishable glory from perishable human components.

In closing this discussion, I would draw attention to a phrase in another Indo-European tradition and to the name Empedokles, which we first considered in the opening pages of this work. The phrase comes from the Mahābhārata and explicitly uses the metaphor of standing fast to describe the imperishability of fame.

akṣayā tava kīrtiś ca loke sṛṣṭyati . . . .

your fame will stand imperishable in the world . . . .

3.42.22

If the ancient Greeks inherited a traditional understanding of fame as steadfast, then the name Empedokles may reflect traditional ideas about the nature of poetic

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106 This passage came to my attention from its inclusion in West 2007:408 (West’s translation used above). Compare also the closing lines (135–143) of the Old English poem Widsith which ends with the phrase “heahfæstne dom” ‘high and steadfast fame’.
glory. As we have seen, ἔμπεδος and ἀσφαλέσ are remarkably appropriate adjectives for describing poetic multiforms within an oral poetic system. Yet despite this “just right” fit, ἔμπεδος never collocates with κλέος within the extant ancient Greek poetic tradition. This fact could be viewed as refuting the appropriateness of the association, but I would argue for an alternative explanation. The universal avoidance of this collocation, despite the many links which mark it as appropriate, reflects an awareness of and aversion to acknowledging the potential relationship between these terms. Perhaps a formulaic collocation is avoided because the vision of steadfast fame evoked by the name Empedokles is most appropriate from an outside perspective. In fact, while forms of ἔμπεδος occur 58 times in the Iliad and Odyssey, and 627 times in the entire Greek corpus, the name Empedokles occurs over 1,700 times. Through sheer repetition, then, this name becomes the most dominant expression of ἔμπεδος, and κλέος becomes the primary subject of such steadfastness.

By uniting the esthetics of rigidity and fluidity with the careful balance of incitement and restraint, ἔμπεδος offers a single esthetic principle guaranteeing the steadfastness of the Homeric tradition across space and time. From the steady progression of individual verses uttered by singers thousands of years ago, to the relatively fixed manuscripts of Aristarchus in the second century BC, the name

107 Data based on a search of the TLG.
Empedokles reflects the enduring steadfastness of the Homeric poems. Moreover, if we consider the adoption of writing as a turning point in the transmission of the Homeric tradition, perhaps the name Empedokles even presents a compressed micronarrative that speaks to the poetic tradition’s ability to steadfastly “turn” from one medium to other.
Chapter 5

Steadfast Is the Warp, Steadfast Is the Weft: émpedos and the couples of the Odyssey and Argonautica.

So far we have focused our attention on three major categories of steadfastness: subjects that are steady and constant in their motion or action (kinetically émpedos like the boulder) and those that are steadfastly immobile or fixed (émpedos in a static way like the cliff). We have also seen that an underlying concept of uninterrupted sequence can, in certain contexts, give émpedos the meanings ‘continual, properly sequenced, ritually appropriate’. This chapter introduces a fourth category of steadfastness: steadfastly remaining in place while bound. I will refer to this category as ‘securely émpedos’. The deliberate coupling of these categories seen in pairings such as Odysseus and Penelope or Jason and Medea reflects a deeply imbedded tendency to create poetic stability by joining steadfastly fixed subjects with objects steadfastly in motion. In a
sense, these different categories of being émpedos can be seen as the warp and weft from which the poetic narrative is woven on a micro-narrative or epic scale.

5.1 The Odyssey: Penelope as Warp, Odysseus as Weft

Just as a human life is composed of various periods of mental and physical steadfastness, the kléos of the Odyssey can be seen as a weaving made up of different states of being émpedos. Specifically, I argue that the Homeric couple of Penelope and Odysseus, on a metaphoric level, form the warp and weft of the Odyssey: Penelope by staying steadfastly fixed (statically émpedos) in her marriage at home and Odysseus by steadfastly wandering and swerving (kinetically émpedos), weaving in and out of adventures on his journey. Like a woven textile, a successful Odyssey requires warp and weft, steadfast Penelope and wandering Odysseus. The epic poet weaves together these two story lines and themes in the creation of his song. In fact, the glory of both Odysseus and Penelope is, in part, dependent upon each one remaining émpedos. In Penelope’s case, she must not remarry and betray the steadfastness of her uniquely constructed marriage bed. For Odysseus, he must remain steadfast in his motion home, not allowing himself to become passively émpedos in some other location for too long.

By remaining firmly in place, Penelope provides the secure theme with which Odysseus’ quest for nóstos is paired. The theme of being émpedos occurs twice with the
theme of nóstos in the Homeric corpus. Although each is from a different epic, they are
linked thematically by the use of horses. Like the rock similes discussed earlier, these
passages describe horses as being émpedos both while motionless and while moving.

I turn first to the passage from the Iliad involving fettered horses. In this scene,
Poseidon has stopped at a cave to tie up and feed his immortal steeds.

There Earthshaker Poseidon stood his horses,
releasing them from the yoke, and before them threw immortal food
to eat, but he threw golden fetters around their feet,
unbreakable and not to be loosed, so that there they would steadfastly
await
their master achieving his nóstos.

Iliad 13.34–38

Though used to describe fettered horses, these lines also call to mind Penelope who is
waiting steadfastly for her lord to achieve his nóstos. If this connection seems unlikely,
consider the use of the phrase émpeda pánta in relation to Penelope. Within the Odyssey
this phrase is used in the formulaic lines that question whether Penelope (used twice of
Penelope, once spoken by Penelope herself at Odyssey 19.525) and Mentor (once) are, or
should remain, in place and guard everything at home.
So when Odysseus meets with his mother in the underworld he asks if his géras remains with his father and son (Odyssey 9.174–176). He also inquires specifically about Penelope asking the question: Does she remain by my son and guard everything émpeda or has the best of the Achaeans married her? There is some ambiguity about what exactly Odysseus is referring to when he says émpeda pánta108 in that émpeda may be either an adjective, “guard everything émpeda,” or an adverb, “continuously and appropriately guard everything.” If the former is the most appropriate reading of the line, as I suggest with my translation, then the question hints at the most crucial émpedos object and secure sign in the Odyssey: the hero’s bed. As we will see, to keep watch over everything émpedos is to maintain the security of his marriage and by extension his nóstos.

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Odysseus calls his bed a μέγα σῆμα ‘great sign’ (Odyssey 23.188) and it is the final key in the recognition scene with Penelope. When Penelope orders her servants to move the bed that Odysseus made out of the room (Odyssey 23.178–180), she is prompting Odysseus to offer information that only her true husband knows. The “secret,” which we as the external audience are in on, is that Odysseus built his bedroom around an enormous, living olive tree. The trunk of this plant, still rooted into the ground, forms one of the bedposts (Odyssey 23.190–204). So the bed, like the stone left on the plain by the raging river, is by its nature émpedos—rooted in the ground. After giving a description of how the bed was constructed, Odysseus admits he does not know whether his bed is still émpedos or whether some other man has placed it elsewhere (Odyssey 23.203). If it had been moved, the bed (like the displaced boulder) would become a sort of trophy for the force that displaced it. Since the bed is still firmly in place, it becomes, in part, a sign of the superior cunning required to create and maintain such a sêma (Odyssey 23.206).

The unmoved bed is also Penelope’s sêma of steadfastness, in that her cunning is one tool by which this achievement is accomplished. I am referring here specifically to the way she puts off marrying another man by means of her tricky weaving (Odyssey 2.94–106). For three years Penelope spends her days going back and forth in front of
her loom weaving a shroud for Laertes only to unravel the fabric at night. Though not literally bound by them, Penelope uses these threads to remain steadfast as she awaits her husband’s homecoming.

Odysseus’ kléos also depends upon maintaining an émpedos state. Unlike Penelope, however, Odysseus must remain émpedos in a kinetic way. In fact, like the boulder, Odysseus begins his epic in a fixed émpedos position. Consider the description of his time on Calypso’s island, “There seven years I remained fast” (μένον ἔμπεδον, Odyssey 7.259) or the narrator’s description of the care he received while there, “during that time his care was steadfast and appropriate as for a god” (τόφρα δὲ οἱ κομιδὴ γε θεῷ ὡς ἔμπεδος ἦεν, Odyssey 8.453). I will address this last line momentarily. For now, I would point out that this type of static émpedos position threatens the hero’s nóstos. If Odysseus remains émpedos in a static way like Penelope, he will lose his homecoming. Instead he must find a way to remain kinetically émpedos like the boulder that runs securely while being pushed on by the swollen river. Unlike the boulder, however, he must find a way to maintain that state. He must display his émpedos nature by remaining constantly in motion. Ideally he would go straight home, but without wandering there would be no Odyssey. Therefore, Odysseus must find a special way to remain kinetically émpedos.
Two passages display this kinetically ἐμπέδος aspect of Odysseus’ character: his voyage past the Sirens and his transport on the Phaeacian ship to Ithaca. I have discussed the journey to Ithaca at length. Regarding the episode with the Sirens, a key point seems to be that Odysseus uses his intelligence to remain steadfast in his journey home. First Odysseus has his crewmembers block their ears with wax in order that they not get enticed by the deadly song, but he leaves his own ears free (Odyssey 12.37–54). He also orders his men to tie him to the mast ὀφρ’ ἐμπέδον αὐτόθι μίμω, “in order that I may remain steadfastly in that spot” (Odyssey 12.160–161). But not surprisingly, Odysseus has managed something tricky here. The hero has bound himself to a decisively kinetic object, and his kléos is literally tied to his ability to remain securely in motion. Thus, he has managed to transfer the language of remaining fixed to a new and opposing context.

5.2 Jason and Medea

So the Odyssey displays the weaving of steadfastly fixed and steadfastly kinetic subjects on an epic scale. This subsection examines the use of the word ἐμπέδος in Apollonius of Rhodes’ Argonautica with a focus on actions taken by Jason and Medea to obtain the Golden Fleece.109 There are three main portions of the final contest to get the

109 In the future I hope to expand this section into a full chapter.
fleece: the plowing of the field with the fire-breathing oxen, the battle with the earthborn men, and the subduing of the snake. Each portion of this contest requires the hero or heroine to be émpedos or to overcome something émpedos. In addition, mastery over all three types of steadfastness is required for success.

The first of the tasks calls for Jason to yoke two fire-breathing oxen and then sow a field with magical teeth that sprout into an army of earthborn warriors. When the oxen first approach the field, the other heroes are frightened, but Jason takes a firm stance and awaits their charge.

And the heroes watching were afraid on the spot, but he, planting his feet firmly, awaits them, as a wave-dashed rock in the sea withstands the waves driven on by the boundless winds

Argonautica 3.1293–1295

Though the word émpedos is not used, the metaphor above offers diction and themes parallel to other Homeric metaphors in which émpedos does occur.
... as a great steep cliff near the gray sea that withstands both the swift paths of the clear-voiced winds and swelling waves that break against it, so the Danaans remained steadfast against the Trojans, nor were they fleeing.

Iliad 15.618–622

So the hero begins his ordeal by being émpedos in a fixed way.

Next Jason must yoke the oxen and plow the teeth into the field. In this episode the hero is described as successfully completing his task by guiding the plow in a steadfast way.

Argonautica 3.1321–1325

... and he grabbed the helmet full of pointy teeth and his resistless spear, and with it as a farmer with a Pelasgian goad he was jabbing the flanks in the middle and very steadily was guiding the well-constructed, finished plow of adamant.

Argonautica 3.1321–1325

For a detailed discussion of this passage, see Section 1.
Thus, in this task he is kinetically émpedos. Next, Jason must fight the earthborn men that grow out of the teeth he sows into the ground. Again, although the word émpedos does not occur in this passage, the earthborn men are by their nature émpedos in that many of them are still sprouting and fixed in the ground during the battle.

Οὐτα δὲ μίγδην ἄμώων, πολέας μὲν ἕτερ' ἐς νηδύν λαγόνας τε ἡμίσεας δ' ἀνέχοντας ἐς ἡέρα, τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἄχρις γούνων τελλομένους, τοὺς δὲ νέον ἐστηὼτας, τοὺς δ' ἣδη καὶ ποσσὶν ἐπειγομένους ἐς ἄρηα.

... he struck indiscriminately, reaping, while many [were] still in up to their bellies and ribs, half-emerged into the open air, some having risen as far as the knees, some just newly standing, others already hastening with their feet to the battle.

Argonautica 3.1381–1385

After Jason defeats the earthborn men with the help of advice from his lover, Medea, the couple accomplish the final feat together. In this task, Medea is actually the hero as she is the one who enchants the beast by means of singing and drugs (4.146–151).¹¹¹ She is also the one labeled by the epic as being émpedos just at the moment when the fleece is finally obtained.

¹¹¹ Note that the root of the verb thélgo is the same root traditionally used to describe the effect of the Muses and epic poetry. See also the effect of Orpheus’ alternate...
Then, with the girl urging, he took hold of the golden fleece from the tree. But she, standing steadfast, was stroking the head of the monster with the drug.

Argonautica 4.162–164

First, it is notable that this important mythic moment—the moment in which Jason actually takes the fleece—involves the concept of steadfastness. Second, it should be noted that Medea, like Penelope, is heroic for being \( \text{\'empedos} \) in a fixed way, and that this state was obtained through the use of skill and trickery. In this case, the heroine uses magic instead of weaving, but both women display feats of intelligence.\(^{112}\) Medea’s steadfast moment must be viewed in relation to the rest of the trials, which, as we’ve seen, have been trials of Jason’s steadfastness.

Thus, this sequence of episodes includes every category of steadfastness discussed so far: passive (Medea and Jason), kinetic (Jason) and secure (the earthborn warriors).

Taken together with the evidence from the Odyssey, these passages reveal a tendency to

\(^{112}\) I would also point out \( \text{\'empedos} \) is used in a passage describing Medea as an anti-Penelope. In the Argonautica, when Medea fears that Jason will leave her, the epic describes her thoughts: . . . ἔνθα δ’ ὑπὸ τὴν καταφλέξαι διά τ’ ἔμπεδα πάντα κεάσσαι,


For a discussion of the phrase \( \text{\'empe} \) in relation to Penelope, see page 63.
pair male and female characters that are steadfast in different ways. This tendency might also be seen in the pairing of Prometheus and Io in Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*. There, however, the male god is steadfastly fixed in place while the female is supernaturally kinetic.
Chapter 6
On Not Being émpedos and the Metapoetic Destruction of the Achaean Wall

6.1 Reornamenting the Epic Landscape

Contextual analysis has shown that the theme of being steadfast as expressed by émpedos and asphalês is linked to depictions of flooding waters, boulders rolling down from the mountains, and galloping steeds. We have seen that these themes are often invoked by the Homeric tradition when an epic hero either achieves one of the goals important to his (or her) epic kléos, or fails to achieve such a moment. Finally, we have seen how the diction of being émpedos is involved in transitions between life and death and the foundations of authority, on both micro- and macrocosmic levels.

This section examines one final category of steadfastness: subjects that are described as not émpedos. I have already addressed the unstable bîē and phrénes that
typically come with old age and death. There are two other examples I would like to examine quickly: Achilles’ *gēras* and the Achaean wall.

During the embassy of book nine, Achilles points out that all the γέρα ‘gifts’ distributed to the other leaders remain steadfastly in place (émpedon) except his own (*Iliad* 9.335). He is referring here to the fact that the honorific portion given to him (Briseis) was taken away. Because of this, and because of the way the system of reciprocal exchange fails in the beginning of the epic (Agamemnon refuses to give the appropriate ransom to Chryses), Achilles is, for a time, unwilling to participate in the exchange of his life and nóóstos for imperishable fame.

Although it can never be allowed within the epic tradition, what can we learn from Achilles’ claim that his kléos will be destroyed if he chooses a long life and nóóstos (*Iliad* 9.411–416)? In what ways can kléos be destroyed?  

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113 I would also add that in death one’s form becomes distinctly not émpedos. Not only does the corpse decay, but also the shade in the underworld is so not émpedos that it can’t be restrained even momentarily by an embrace. For an interesting discussion of the mobility of shades vs. the fixed nature of the corpse/funeral stele, see Steiner 2001, especially pp. 135–146.

114 Cf. Plato, *Timaeus*, 20e3–21a1, with the translation of Gregory Nagy: πρὸς δὲ Κριτίαν τὸν ἡμέτερον πάππον εἶπεν, . . . ὅτι μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστὰ τῇδ’ εἶπα παλαιὰ ἔργα τῆς πόλεως ὑπὸ χρόνου καὶ φθορᾶς ἀνθρώπων ἡφασμένα, πάντων δὲ ἐν μέγιστον, οὐ νῦν ἐπιμνησθείσιν πρέπον ἢν ἡμῖν εἰπstoff (“He [Solon] said to my grandfather . . . that there were, inherited by his city, ancient deeds, great and wondrous, that have disappeared through the passage of time and through the destruction brought about by
In pursuing these questions, I turn once again to the discussion between Poseidon and Zeus quoted in the opening lines of this study. The exchange is triggered by the construction of the Achaean wall and by the fact that the Greeks have neglected to offer a sacrifice in connection with their work. Poseidon feels threatened by both acts.

Zeũ πάτερ, ἦ ῥά τίς ἔστι βροτῶν ἐπ’ ἀπείρονα γαῖαν ὃς τις ἔτ' ἀθανάτοις νόον καὶ μῆτιν ἐνίψει;²¹⁵ οὐχ ὁράᾳς ὅτι δ' αὖτε κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοὶ τεῖχος ἐτειχίσσαντο νεῶν ὑπερ, ἀμφὶ δὲ τάφρον ἡλασαν, οὔδὲ θεοῖσι δόσαν κλειτὰς ἑκατόμβας; τοῦ δ' ἢτοι κλέος ἔσται δόσει τ' ἐπικίδναται ἡώς τοῦ δ' ἐπιλήσονται τὸ ἐγὼ καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων ἠρῳ Λαομέδοντι πολίσσαμεν ἀθλήσαντε.

Father Zeus, what mortal is there upon the wide earth who will still sing/tell to the immortals his mind and counsel? Don't you see that once again the flowing-haired Achaeans built a wall inland of the ships, and drove around it a ditch, and in no way have given glorious hecatombs to the gods? But surely the fame of this will last as long as the dawn is scattered, and they will forget that wall which I and Phoebus Apollo, struggling, built for the hero Laomedon.

_Iliad_ 7.448–453

human agency. He went on to say that of all of these deeds, there was one in particular that was the greatest, which it would be fitting for us now to bring to mind . . .”). This passage was brought to my attention by inclusion in Nagy 1990a. For his discussion of the _Timaeus_ passage and its relationship to the opening of Herodotus, see page p. 226.²¹⁵ Thanks to Leonard Muellner for drawing my attention to the fact that ἐνίψι here is from ἐνέπω ‘tell, speak, tell tales, sing’, the same word used to invoke the Muses at _Odyssey_ 1.1.
The interconnected web of themes surrounding the creation and destruction of the Achaean wall is complex and includes issues such as antagonism between gods and men, the resolution of antagonism between gods, and the power of cultic honors vs. poetic glory.

The diction here not only makes explicit that Poseidon is concerned about the preservation of fame through song, but it also shows an association among the themes of kléos, memory, and perishable fame. Poseidon’s main argument is that the kléos associated with the Achaean wall will cause the Trojan wall to be forgotten. It is as if the two walls, both present in the vicinity of Troy and both worthy of kléos, compete for glory. Zeus responds to Poseidon’s fear by saying that a god with weaker hands and ménos might fear such things, but that the kléos of Poseidon will last “as long as dawn is scattered” (Iliad 7.456–458). In other words, Poseidon’s kléos will remain firm because his ménos and bíē remain firm.

With all this in mind, let us turn to the display of this bíē and ménos and Zeus’ solution to the problem of perishable fame: the destruction of the Achaean wall by flooding rivers at Iliad 12.8–33. It is my contention that this scene reveals a latent and traditional thematic association to the manner in which oral poetry is created.

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116 Gregory Nagy has shown that ménos is related to the idea of remembering as evidenced through its use in Homeric contexts. See Nagy 1974:266–269.
... It had been built against the will of the gods
and so for no long time was it to remain firm.

12.10 So long as Hector was living and Achilles raged
and the city of lord Priam remained unsacked
so long the great wall of the Achaeans remained firm.

However, when many of the best of the Trojans were killed
and many of the Greeks were killed, and others left,

12.15 and the city of Priam was sacked in the tenth year,
and the Argives departed for their own fatherland in ships,
then Poseidon and Apollo took counsel
to obscure all traces of the wall, leading in the might of the rivers, as many as pouring forth from Ida flow to the sea—

12.20 Rhesos¹¹⁷ and Heptaporos, Karesos and Rhodios, Grenikos and Aisepos, and immortal Skammandros, and Simeoeis—where many bull hide shields and helmets fell in the sand, and many of the race of demigods. Phoebus Apollo turned the mouths of all of these together

12.25 and for nine days he released the flow against the wall and Zeus rained continuously so he might more quickly place the embankments under the water. And the Earthshaker himself carrying in his hands the trident led them, and sent into the waves all the foundations of wood and stone, which the long-haired Achaeans suffered over,

12.30 and made it smooth along the strong-flowing Hellespont and once again covered the great shore with sand obscuring all traces of the wall.

_Iliad_ 12.8–32

As shown by Gregory Nagy, this passage shifts the timeframe of the narrative outside the boundaries of the _Iliad_ and provides a rare opportunity to view the epic tradition from an external point of view.¹¹⁸ In his discussion of the destruction of the wall, Nagy notes: “It is almost as if all the ‘props’ that mark an Achaean expedition against Troy are to be obliterated once the expedition is over and the attention of epic switches to other places, other stories.”¹¹⁹

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¹¹⁷ I follow Lattimore’s spelling for the names of the rivers.
¹¹⁸ For a discussion of the external viewpoint mentioned here, see Nagy 1979:159–160.
¹¹⁹ Nagy 1979:160.
Interestingly, Quintus Smyrnaeus also provides a description of the destruction of the Achaean wall and uses the scene to help close his epic. This placement at the end of his Posthomerica supports Nagy’s idea that this scene traditionally signals the end of the themes associated with the Trojan War and provides the closure necessary to redirect the attention of the singer and audience. Further, by describing the destruction of the wall at the end of his epic, Quintus Smyrnaeus in a sense inserts his entire epic within the boundaries of the Iliadic mytho-poetic framework. In doing so, the author legitimizes the appropriateness of his work and its connection to the Iliadic tradition which he seeks to complete.

If it is true that the foundation of epic kléos can appropriately be described by terms such as asphalés and émpedos, perhaps this passage actually describes, on a metaphoric level, the sweeping away of those themes and ornaments that are no longer “most appropriate.” As mentioned in the introduction, “truth,” ἀλήθεια is in some sense created not by remembering what is true, but rather by forgetting what is false.120 The creation of a new and appropriate poem works in a similar fashion. The poet must release the version that is no longer appropriate, just as Herodotus says in the opening quotation of this study. As the new multiform speeds towards the listener, it metaphorically sweeps away what is old.

This very idea is expressed by Demail Zogic, an oral poet of the former Yugoslavia, during a conversation with Milman Parry’s assistant:

Nikola: But if a good singer hears a bad singer who has attempted a good song, but isn’t capable of finishing it, of singing it as he should, . . . can this good singer make a good song out of it and sing it as it should be sung? . . .

Demail: He can make it good, by ornamenting it and adding to it, and improving it, by God, so that it would be as if you had never heard that first singer who was bad. ¹²¹

Such is the case with the destruction of the wall. For a time, while the frame of reference remains within that of the Iliad (Hector lives, Achilles rages), the wall will remain ἐμπέδος. But when the perspective shifts to an external viewpoint (the city is sacked and the Greeks return home), from that external perspective we see that the wall is not steadfast forever.

¹²¹ Parry and Lord 1954:241. Demail has earlier in this conversation expressed a preference for singers who leave out something over those who add to a song: “The man who adds something thinks it up himself and adds it to the song, and it can’t be true.” When asked why some singers make additions he responds: “That’s what people like, the ornamenting of a song, do you understand? There are some people who add and ornament a song and say: ‘This is the way it was,’ but it would be better, brother, if he were to sing it as he heard it and as things happen . . . You can find plenty of people in Novi Pazar who know these songs but don’t know how to sing them clearly, just as things happened, just as Bosnian heroes did their deeds . . . ” (239).

The concept here is that a good poet can ornament a song just as he learned it, thereby preserving and reproducing the truth of the heroic events of the past.
I would argue that the medium of epic is itself émpedos, both from an internal perspective—that is, the singer’s contention that he sings the song word for word (static)—and from an external, diachronic perspective—namely, the ability of epic diction to be flexible, ever changing and ever appropriate (kinetic). It is from this émpedos nature that the Homeric poet draws the power to sing a properly sequenced and appropriate song for every occasion. Like a god that can reornament a landscape and obscure all traces of what was once firm, the poet has the power to turn his attention and praise toward what is most appropriate at each occasion of performance. That one version of kléos might shine brightly enough to become émpedon and for a time bring its singer and subjects steadfast glory while obscuring the glory of others. Those versions that are never obscured become áphthiton. As the following lines show, the power of the Homeric poet could be described in just these terms.

ASCII:

"As the fiery sun whirling in respect to its axis dims the stars and the radiant circle of the moon, so Homer plunges into obscurity the mass of singers holding up the brightest light of the Muses."

Greek Anthology 9.24
Only during the destruction of the Achaean wall, a rare moment in which epic comments upon itself from an external point of view, can epic acknowledge its own perishable nature. That this moment also provides an alternate description of the creation of Achilles' tomb and the only Homeric attestation of the term ἕμιθεοι, a word more appropriate to the diction of cult than epic, seems highly relevant. We might say, then, that this passage allows the audience to witness one tradition (epic) presenting and acknowledging a view of poetic glory from the perspective of another tradition (cult), both of which are capable of conferring some form of remembrance and immortality upon their recipients. From the perspective of cult, the glory conveyed by epic might prove to be temporarily steadfast yet perishable and appropriately described as *ἐμπεδὸν κλέος.

In summation I propose that the word ἐμπεδὸς denotes a special form of stability that inherently acknowledges the potential for instability, whether in the establishment of human authority, fame, and fortune or the divine cosmic order. Perhaps the name Empedokles presents a similar view of poetic glory, one that acknowledges and accounts for the role of perishable fame and truth in the poetic

122 On the destruction of the wall in connection with Achilles’ tomb, see Nagy 1979:160, §16n1. For Nagy’s discussion of ἕμιθεοι see pp. 159–161.
tradition. Such a view of stability fits perfectly with the concept of poems created by an oral poetic system of composition in performance.

Imperishable fame, like truth, is created not by remembering what is forever \( \text{áfpthiton} \) but by forgetting all that was once steadfastly appropriate and true, yet ultimately proved perishable. Or, to state it in terms appropriate to this discussion, a song, theme, or formula becomes imperishable by remaining steadfastly appropriate and true for each singer, in each moment of performance. In short, imperishability is the outcome of the successful struggle to remain \( \text{émpedon aiei} \). The epithet \( \text{áfpthiton} \) is not a label granted once and then never contested: like Zeus’ divine authority it is predicated upon the idea of endless challenge and proven superiority. The potential of lost fame is always present so long as the singer of tales maintains the authority to choose what is most appropriate and true at each and every moment of performance.

In this light the study of steadfastness, as expressed through the traditional diction and themes of the \textit{Iliad} and \textit{Odyssey}, offers a glimpse of the Homeric tradition’s latent exploration of its own nature as \( *\text{émpedon aiei} \).

In the end, we might say that concepts of steadfastness help to define the place and experience of humans in the ancient Greek cosmos. The authority of Zeus is steadfast forever, but human happiness is secure only in its insecurity. Scepter-endowed kings,
poets, messengers and seers can exchange steadfastness and truth with the gods. The best we regular mortals can hope for is to occasionally emulate the heroes who remained steadfast in the face of fear and who managed to maintain appropriate thoughts and rituals. With steadfast minds, we can balance restraint and incitement, carefully and securely making our way around the dangerous turning points in our own lives. If we do this successfully we can hope to attain a glorious reputation and the kind of “return to light and life” which is both physical and spiritual. Then, though we are mortal and perishable, our graves will remain steadfast signs for future generations and the songs of our glory will prove imperishable because they will be steadfast in their diffusion and endurance. And just as our deeds of excellence were achieved through a careful balance of opposing and complementary forces, so our fame will be perfectly woven from the balanced themes and diction of steadfastness.
Appendix

Table 1: Subjects and Actions Described as Being *émpedos*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>might (μένος)</td>
<td>of Diomedes, <em>Iliad</em> 5.254</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>might (μένος)</td>
<td>of Odysseus’ nurse (self-stated), <em>Odyssey</em> 19.493</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>might (μένος)</td>
<td>of Odysseus (self-stated), <em>Odyssey</em> 21.426</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mind/mental energy (νόος)</td>
<td>of Eurypylus, <em>Iliad</em> 11.813</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mind/mental energy (νόος)</td>
<td>of each of the sailors transformed into a swine, <em>Odyssey</em> 10.240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>φρένες</td>
<td>of Teiresias, <em>Odyssey</em> 10.493</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>care</td>
<td>given to Odysseus on Calypso’s island (like as to a god), <em>Odyssey</em> 8.453</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transport</td>
<td>given to Odysseus by the Phaeacians, <em>Odyssey</em> 8.30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed</td>
<td>of Odysseus—the hero wonders whether it is <em>émpedos</em>, <em>Odyssey</em> 23.203</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wall</td>
<td>of the Achaeans, <em>Iliad</em> 12.12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honorific gifts</td>
<td>given to Greek kings (other than Achilles), <em>Iliad</em> 9.335</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Priam</td>
<td><em>Iliad</em> 20.183</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
flesh of Patroclus after Thetis infuses it with ambrosia (2x), *Iliad* 19.33, 19.39

night watch of the Trojans, *Iliad* 8.521

everything guarded in Odysseus’ household, *Odyssey* 2.227

everything guarded by Penelope (Odysseus’s question), *Odyssey* 11.178

everything guarded by Penelope (Penelope’s question), *Odyssey* 19.525

the signs (*σήματα*) identifying Odysseus to Penelope (story about the cloak),
*Odyssey* 19.250

the signs (*σήματα*) identifying Odysseus to Penelope (description of their bed),
*Odyssey* 23.206

the signs (*σήματα*) identifying Odysseus to his father (his scar and the story of
the orchard given by his father), *Odyssey* 24.346

the remaining of Greek forces against the Trojans like a crag against the sea,
*Iliad* 15.622

the remaining of horses like a pillar on a tomb, *Iliad* 17.434

the remaining of Poseidon’s fettered horses, *Iliad* 13.37

the remaining in place of Hephaestus’ shackles, *Odyssey* 8.275
the remaining of Greek heroes like mist on a mountain top on a still day, *Iliad* 5.527

the remaining of Greek forces when in a stalemate with Trojans, *Iliad* 15.406

the remaining of Odysseus on Calypso’s island for seven years, *Odyssey* 7.259

the remaining of Odysseus while waiting for more approaching shades, *Odyssey* 11.628

the remaining of Odysseus for his mother’s shade, *Odyssey* 11.152

the staying of Odysseus when tied to his mast, *Odyssey* 12.161

the running of a hound after a fawn (like Achilles chasing Hector), *Iliad* 22.192

the rushing of the Phaeacian ship transporting Odysseus to Ithaca (like the running of yoked stallions), *Odyssey* 13.86

the standing of Odysseus like a rock when hit with a stool, *Odyssey* 17.464

the holding of a shield by Ajax, *Iliad* 16.107

the jumping of Ajax from ship to ship like horseman jumping from horse to horse, *Iliad* 15.683

the falling of snow, *Iliad* 12.281
the flying of a rock rolling down a hill (like the pressing of Hector against the Greeks), Iliad 13.141

the trusting of Hector in his ἀλκή, Iliad 18.158

the driving of a chariot by twin sons of Actor (while defeating Nestor) (x2), Iliad 23.641, 23.642

the birthing of new flocks for a blameless king with kléos, Odyssey 19.113

Table 2: Subjects and Actions Described as or Implied to Be Not émpedos

μένος and ἀλκή of Odysseus (rebuke by Athena), Odyssey 22.226

φρένες and νόημα of Telemachus (rebuke by Penelope), Odyssey 18.215

φρένες of Paris (rebuke by Helen), Iliad 6.352

βίη of Odysseus (self-stated while in disguise, part of a wish) (x2), Odyssey 14.468 and 503

βίη of Nestor (self-stated, part of a wish), Iliad 7.157

βίη of Nestor (self-stated, part of a wish), Iliad 11.670

βίη of Nestor (self-stated, part of a wish), Iliad 23.629
βίη of Nestor (wish made by Agamemnon), *Iliad* 4.314

heart of Agamemnon, *Iliad* 10.94

limbs of Nestor, *Iliad* 23.627

wall which the Greeks built, *Iliad* 12.9

foot joints of tired warrior, *Iliad* 13.512

 ioctl of Agamemnon’s shade, *Odyssey* 11.393

the planting of Odysseus’ feet on a tree, *Odyssey* 12.434

the holding of a spear by Glaucos, *Iliad* 16.520

**Table 3: Partial Formulaic Analysis of émpedos (~~)***

émpedos in the fifth foot

All line-terminal–émpedos (~~) + form of “be”

Full-line formulas

Pattern A: εἴθ᾽ ὡς/ὡς νῶν + ἡβώοιμι βίη + δέ/τέ + μοι || ἔμπεδος εἴη

(contains the half-line of Pattern B below noun + δέ + τοι/μοι || ἔμπεδος + εἴη

εἴθ᾽ ὡς ἡβώοιμι βίη δέ μοι || ἔμπεδος εἴη (*Iliad* 7.157, 11.670)

ὣς νῦν ἠβώοιμι βίη τέ μοι || ἐμπέδος εἶη (Odyssey 14.503)

Half-line formulas

Pattern B: βίη (˘) + δέ(˘) + τοι/μοι(˘) || ἐμπέδος + εἶη

ὡς τοι γούναθ’ ἔποιτο βίη δέ τοι || ἐμπέδος εἶη (Iliad 4.314)

Formulaic lines

Pattern C: noun(˘) + γε(˘) + *(˘) || ἐμπέδος + form of “be”

αἶμα μέλαν κελάρυζε· νόος γε μὲν || ἐμπέδος ἢεν. (Iliad 11.813)

Pattern D: ἔτι μοι + μένος || ἐμπέδον + form of “be”

δὴν ἐκαμον τανύων· ἔτι μοι μένος || ἐμπεδόν ἐστίν, (Odyssey 21.426)

οὐδὲ καταπτώσσειν· ἔτι μοι μένος || ἐμπεδόν ἐστίν, (Iliad 5.254)

Pattern E: noun (˘ ˘) || ἐμπεδος/ἐμπεδον + form of “be”

Ἀχαιῶν || ἐμπεδον ἢεν. (Iliad 12.12)

ἔμπεδος in the fourth foot

Full-line formulas

Pattern F: (almost exact)

σήματ’ ἀναγνώση, τά οἱ ἐμπεδα || πέφραδ’ Ὄδυσσεύς (Odyssey 23.206)

σήματ’ ἀναγνόντος, τά οἱ ἐμπεδα || πέφραδ’ Ὄδυσσεύς (Odyssey 24.346)
Pattern G: (exact)

ἀρρήκτους ἀλύτους, ὡρφʾ ἔμπεδον || αὖθι μένοιεν (Iliad 13.37, Odyssey 8.275)

Pattern H: (almost exact, contains Pattern I)

ἡ ἐμὲνει παρὰ παιδὶ καὶ ἔμπεδα || πάντα φυλάσσει, (Odyssey 11.178)

ἡ ἐμὲνω παρὰ παιδὶ καὶ ἔμπεδα || πάντα φυλάσσει, (Odyssey 19.525)

Half-line, line-terminal formulas

Pattern I: καὶ ἔμπεδα || πάντα φυλάσσειν

πείθεσθαι τε γέροντι καὶ ἔμπεδα || πάντα φυλάσσειν (Odyssey 2.227)

Half-line, line-originating formulas

Pattern J: αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἔμπεδον || (contains Pattern M)

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἔμπεδον, || ὡρφʾ ἐπὶ μήτηρ (Odyssey 11.152)

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἔμπεδον, || εἴ τις ἐτ´ ἐλθοι (Odyssey 11.628)

Partial-line formulas

Pattern K: ἔμπεδον, || οὐδὲ

ἔγχος δ′ οὐ δύναμαι σχεῖν ἔμπεδον, || οὐδὲ μάχεσθαι (Iliad 16.520)

Pattern L: μένον/μένει/μένος(˘˘) + ἔμπεδον || + οὐδὲ (combines Patterns K and M)

ὡς Δαναοὶ Τρώας μένον ἔμπεδον || οὐδὲ φέβοντο (Iliad 5.527)
Τρώας ἑπερχομένους μένον ἔμπεδον, || οὐδ’ ἐδύναντο (Iliad 15.406)

οἴσθα μέν, οἰον ἐμὸν μένος ἔμπεδον || οὐδ’ ἐπιεικτόν· (Odyssey 19.493)

οὐκέτι σοὶ γ’, Ῥοδυσεῦ, μένος ἔμπεδον || οὐδέ τις ἀλκή, (Odyssey 22.226)

Pattern M: μένον/μένει/μένος(˘˘) + ἔμπεδον ||

ἀλλ’ ὡς τε στήλη μένει ἔμπεδον, || ἢ τ’ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ (Iliad 17.434)

ἔνθα μὲν ἑπτάετες μένον ἔμπεδον, || εἰμάτα δ’ αἰεί (Odyssey 7.259)

Pattern N: verb ending in -εει (˘˘) + ἔμπεδον || ὀφρα

κοιμήσας δ’ ἀνέμους χέει ἔμπεδον, || ὀφρα καλύψη (Iliad 12.281)

ἀλλά τε ἀνιχνεύων θέει ἔμπεδον || ὀφρᾶ κεν εὕρη (Iliad 22.192) (contains Pattern O)

Pattern O: θέει/θέεν + ἔμπεδον

ἄλη ὃ δ’ ἀσφαλέως θέει ἔμπεδον, || είος ἱκηταί (Iliad 13.141)

ἡ δὲ μάλ’ ἀσφαλέως θέεν ἔμπεδον· || οὐδέ κεν ἱρηξ (Odyssey 13.86)
Table 4: Comparison: Localization of Generic Dactylic Word vs. émpedos

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<thead>
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Summary

This table demonstrates two important facts about the localization of the term émpedos in the Homeric tradition. First, in comparison to the averages obtained by O’Neill and McDonough for words that scan as dactyls (column 4, O’Neill’s Avg.), émpedos shows a statistically significant trend toward localization in the fourth foot and away from localization in the first foot. (Column 5, émpedos Il. & Od., contains the results I obtained in my analysis of the localization of émpedos in all 58 Homeric occurrences.) Also, because émpedos localizes in the fourth or fifth foot 84% of the time,

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124 James T. McDonough, Jr., “The Structural Metrics of the iliad” (PhD diss., Columbia University, New York, 1966). In particular, see charts on pages 52–100. O’Neill used 1,000-line samples for his calculations, while McDonough based his numbers on the entire iliad. McDonough uses a slightly different system for describing position.
these lines show a statistically significant trend toward maintaining the bucolic dieresis.

Table 5: Localization of émpedos in Homeric Epic, by Case and Location

émpedos (14 times)

In the fifth foot

εἰθ᾽ ὡς ἠβώοιμι, βίη δὲ μοι éμπεδος εἶ (Iliad 7.157)

εἰθ᾽ ὡς ἠβώοιμι βίη δὲ μοι éμπεδος εἶ . . . . (Iliad 11.670)

εἰθ᾽ ὡς ἠβώοιμι βίη τέ μοι éμπεδος εἶ . . . . (Iliad 23.629)

εἰθ᾽ ὡς ἠβώοιμι βίη τέ μοι éμπεδος εἶ . . . . (Odyssey 14.468)

ὡς νῦν ἠβώοιμι βίη τέ μοι éμπεδος εἶ (Odyssey 14.503)

ὡς τοι γούναθ' ἐποίοτ, βίη δὲ τοι éμπεδος εἶ (Iliad 4.314)

στάξε κατὰ ρίνῶν, ἵνα οἱ χρῶς éμπεδος εἶ (Iliad 19.39)

πῦρ μέγα καιόντων φυλακὴ δὲ τίς éμπεδος ἔστω . . . . (Iliad 8.521)

αἷμα μέλαν κελάρυζε· νόος γε μὲν éμπεδος ἤνε, (Iliad 11.813)

tόφρα δὲ οἱ κομιδὴ γε θεῷ ὡς éμπεδος ἤνε. (Odyssey 8.453)

In the fourth foot
εἰσὶν γὰρ οἱ παῖδες, ὁ δὲ ἐμπεδὸς οὐδ᾽ ἀεσίφρων. (Iliad 20.183)

ἀλλ᾽ οὖ γάρ οἱ ἔτ᾽ ἦν ἵς ἐμπεδὸς οὐδ᾽ ἔτι κίκυς . . . . (Odyssey 11.393)

αἰεὶ τῷ γ’ ἔσται χρῶς ἐμπεδὸς, ἢ καὶ ἀρείων. (Iliad 19.33)

καὶ δέμας, αὐτὰρ νοῦς ἦν ἐμπεδὸς ὡς τὸ πάρος περ. (Odyssey 10.240)

ἐμπεδὸν (31 times)

In the fifth foot

οὐδὲ καταπτώσσειν· ἔτι μοι μένος ἐμπεδὸν ἔστιν· (Iliad 10.254)

δὴν ἔκαμον τανύων· ἔτι μοι μένος ἐμπεδὸν ἔστιν . . . . (Odyssey 21.426)

ἀθανάτων· τὸ καὶ οὐ τι πολὺν χρόνον ἐμπεδὸν ἦεν. (Iliad 12.9)

τόφρα δὲ καὶ μέγα τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν ἐμπεδὸν ἦεν. (Iliad 12.12)

πομπὴν δ’ ὀτρύνει καὶ λίσσεται ἐμπεδὸν εἶναι. (Odyssey 8.30)

In the fourth foot

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἐμπεδὸν, ὁφρ’ ἐπὶ μήτηρ (Odyssey 11.152)

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν αὐτοῦ μένον ἐμπεδὸν, εἴ τις ἔτ’ ἔλθοι . . . . (Odyssey 11.628)

ὡς Δαναοὶ Τρῶας μένον ἐμπεδὸν οὐδὲ φέβοντο. (Iliad 5.527)

ὡς Δαναοὶ Τρῶας μένον ἐμπεδὸν οὐδὲ φέβοντο. (Iliad 15.622)
Τρώας ἐπερχομένους μένον ἐμπεδοῦν, οὐδ᾿ ἐδύναντο . . . (Iliad 15.406)

ἐνθα μὲν ἐπτάετες μένον ἐμπεδοῦν, εἴματα δ᾿ αἰεὶ . . . (Odyssey 7.259)

κοιμήσας δ᾿ ἀνέμους χέει ἐμπεδοῦν, ὀφρα καλύψῃ . . . . (Iliad 12.281)

ἀρρήκτους ἀλύτους, ὀφρ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν αὐθὶ μένοιεν . . . . (Iliad 13.37)

ἀρρήκτους ἀλύτους, ὀφρ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν αὐθὶ μένοιεν. (Odyssey 8.275)

δήσατ᾿ ἐν ἀργαλέω, ὀφρ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν αὐτόθι μίμνω . . . . (Odyssey 12.161)

κοιμήσας δ᾿ ἀνέμους χέει ἐμπεδοῦν, οὐθα καλύψῃ . . . . (Iliad 12.281)

ἀρρήκτους ἀλύτους, ὀφρ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν αὖθι μένοιεν . . . . (Odyssey 8.275)

δήσατ᾿ ἐν ἀργαλέω, ὀφρ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν αὐτόθι μίμνω . . . . (Odyssey 12.161)

ἀλλά τ᾿ ἀνιχνεύων θεεὶ ἐμπεδοῦν ὀφρά κεν εὑρή (Iliad 22.192)

ὑλή δ᾿ δ᾿ ἀσφαλέως θεεὶ ἐμπεδοῦν, εἰος ἵκηται . . . . (Iliad 13.141)

ἡ δὲ μάλ᾿ ἀσφαλέως θεεὶν ἐμπεδοῦν· οὐδὲ κεν ἕρη . . . . (Odyssey 13.86)

ἀνέρες ἢδε γυναῖκες· δ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν ἀσφαλές αἰεί. . . . (Iliad 15.683)

νεκροῦ ἀπεστυφέλιξαν· δ᾿ ἐμπεδοῦν ἀλκὶ πεποιθὼς . . . . (Iliad 18.158)

οἳ δ᾿ ἄρ᾿ ἔσαν δίδυμοι· δ᾿ μὲν ἐμπεδοῦν ἔμπεδον· (Iliad 23.641)

οὔτε στηρίξαι ποσὶν ἐμπεδοῦν· οὔτ᾿ ἐπιβῆναι (Odyssey 12.434)

οἷσθα μὲν, οἷον ἔμὸν μένος ἐμπεδοῦν οὐδ᾿ ἐπιβηκτόν· (Odyssey 19.493)

"οὐκέτι σοι γ᾿, Ὅδυσεῦ, μένος ἐμπεδοῦν οὐδὲ τις ἄλκη . . . . (Odyssey 22.226)

ἔχοχος δ᾿ οὐ δύναμαι σχεῖν ἐμπεδοῦν, οὐδὲ μάχεσθαι . . . . (Iliad 16.520)
ἀλλ’ ὡς τε στήλη μένει ἐμπέδον, ἥ τ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ . . .. (Iliad 17.434)

In the second foot

ἡ μοι ἔτ' ἐμπεδόν ἐστι, γύναι, λέχος, ἥ τε τῆς ἡδή . . .. (Odyssey 23.203)

In the first foot

ἐμπεδον, ἀλλ’ ἀλαλύκτημαι, κραδίη δὲ μοι ἔξω . . .. (Iliad 10.94)

ἐμπεδον αἰἐν ἔχων σάκος αἰόλον· οὐδὲ δύναντο . . .. (Iliad 16.107)

ἐμπεδον ἦνιόχευ', ὦ δ' ἃρα μάστιγι κέλευν. (Iliad 23.642)

ἐμπεδον, οὐδ' ἃρα μιν σφήλεν βέλος Ἀντινόοι . . .. (Odyssey 17.464)

ἐμπεδοι (3 times)

In the fifth foot

μάντιος ἄλαο, τοῦ τε φρένες ἐμπεδοὶ εἶσι· (Odyssey 10.493)

In the fourth foot

τούτῳ δ' οὔτ' ἃρ νῦν φρένες ἐμπεδοὶ οὔτ' ἃρ' ὀπίσσω . . .. (Iliad 6.352)

"Τηλέμαχ', συκέτι τοι φρένες ἐμπεδοὶ οὐδὲ νόημα. (Odyssey 18.215)

ἐμπεδα (10 times)

In the fourth foot

σήματ' ἀναγνοῦση, τά οἱ ἐμπεδα πέφραδ' Ὀδυσσεύς. (Odyssey 19.250)
σήματ’ ἀναγνούση, τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ’ Ὄδυσσεύς (Odyssey 23.206)

σήματ’ ἀναγνόντος, τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ’ Ὄδυσσεύς (Odyssey 24.346)

ἡ ἡμέρα παρὰ παιδὶ καὶ ἔμπεδα πάντα φυλάσσει . . . (Odyssey 11.178)

ἡ ἡμέρα παρὰ παιδὶ καὶ ἔμπεδα πάντα φυλάσσω . . . (Odyssey 19.525)

πείθεσθαι τε γέροντι καὶ ἔμπεδα πάντα φυλάσσειν (Odyssey 2.227)

In the second foot

οὐ γὰρ ἔτ’ ἔμπεδα γυῖα ποδῶν ἦν ὁρμηθέντι . . . (Iliad 13.512)

οὐ γὰρ ἔτ’ ἔμπεδα γυῖα φίλος πόδες, οὐδὲ τι χεῖρες . . . (Iliad 23.627)

tοῖσι μὲν ἔμπεδα κεῖται, ἔμευ δ’ ἀπὸ μούνου Ἀχαιῶν . . . (Iliad 9.335)

τίκτῃ δ’ ἔμπεδα μῆλα, θάλασσα δὲ παρέχῃ ἱχθύς . . . (Odyssey 19.133)
Bibliography


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