Ἀχαιοί, Ἀργεῖοι, Δαναοί: Revisiting the system of denomination of the Greeks in the Homeric epics*

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This paper studies the issue of the denomination of the Greeks in the Homeric epics. The assumption that the names Achaioi, Danaoi, and Argeioi are used interchangeably throughout the Iliad and the Odyssey and that they stand as undifferentiated terms meaning the population of Greece in general needs to be put to the test. As early as 1858, Gladstone had already discussed this topic. However, recent archaeological and epigraphical finds along with new narratological approaches to the Homeric epics bring the issue back again. Miller discusses, though briefly, the use of the three names in their context examining the case of Achilles and concluding that the early epic tradition was aware of the technical distinction between these terms.¹ My aim is to examine the system of the denomination of the Greeks within the epic's plot from a contextual point of view and call into question the general assumption of a haphazard use of the three terms in the Homeric epics. After a brief examination of the historical background of these terms, I intend to discuss the use of the three names within the Homeric text taking into account the systematic statistical data and the function of these terms in relation to the poetics of the Iliad and the Odyssey. I cite here only the related to the discussion diagrams of my detailed and systematic recording of the three ethnic names in the Iliad and the Odyssey regarding the context, the epithets, the formulas, and the speeches of

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heroes. However, the examining of this statistical analysis could provide further information and shed more light on this topic.

The historical background

Even though these names pertain to certain ethnicities of common origin and language, their use by an epic tradition dealing with the Trojan War needs to be further explored. It is highly likely that, at least to our knowledge, there was no collective name for all the Greeks for centuries after Homer. Consequently, despite their historicity and their realistic background, the appearance and the systematic use of these names in the Homeric epics must have been conditioned by the epic tradition. To this end, statistics concerning occurrence and distribution of the three names for the Greeks must be the basis for exploring the contextualization of collective identity, which is partly, within the universe of epic diction, audience-determined. Therefore, and given the importance of the Homeric language, the study of the epithets, verbs, unique expressions and formulas related to these terms may outline the function of these “ethnic” names. Taking into consideration the historical, archaeological and epigraphic sources, this research project aims to illuminate the way in which the Homeric epics employ a certain name for a group of people. Given that the poet applies these three names to ethnic groups, either historical or fictional, namely constructed to serve the needs of the epic poems, a brief examination of the historical background is needed to shed more light on the way that they are contextually adapted to the poems. Firstly, the poet uses these names mostly as collective terms to denote the Greek warriors at Troy or the inhabitants of a specific city, or region of the Greek world, which means that these particular groups comprise people with common characteristics, usually origin and language. Latacz points out that there had been no collective general term for the Greeks for centuries and probably “none had ever existed, except in bardic poetry”
and finds no rational motive for inventing the names Achaioi, Danaoi, and Argeioi at this particular moment in this particular poem, seeking therefore the answer in historical reality. According to Snodgrass, the Homeric poems, which are definitely valuable for our knowledge of eighth-century Greece, undoubtedly preserve memories of an earlier age, even though the Homeric world does not represent the world of Dark Age Greece. The large ethnic groups known by Homer's time are the Ionians, the Aeolians, and the Dorians mainly distinguished by dialectic criteria, since at this period there is no collective name for the population of the Greek world. The Homeric epics are our earliest testimony for these names and, since no Linear B tablets preserve any of these names (although names of poleis are attested), these terms could be an epic invention, which can probably be explained as a part of the emergence of the Greek ethnicity and the upcoming formation of ethnic identity in the eighth century BCE. Nevertheless, the definition of ethnicity in this early period is rather precarious and it has to be noted that the very term **ethnos** in the Homeric epics does not clearly refer to a group of people with similar ethnic features, but it is applied generally to any collective group (from a group of people: ἔθνος ἐταίρων, *Iliad* VII 115, Λυκίων μέγα ἔθνος, *Iliad* XII 330, to a swarm of bees: ἔθνεα ἐἰοὶ μελισσάων, *Iliad* II 87 and even a fleet of ships: ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν, *Iliad* II 91). Within this “ethnogenesis process” terms as *Panhellênes* and *Panachaioi* were created possibly to describe the Greek-speaking population of the Hellenic world. The context of the *Iliad*, in which the Greek ethnic groups were participating in a war against Troy, was the ideal literary background for the formation of a common ethnic identity. Thus, the ethnic groups derived from different ancestors and classified in the same **ethnos** could be the first step to the establishment of the

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2 Latacz 2004:121.

3 Snodgrass 1971:392–393.
Greek identity, which actually took place long afterwards in the fifth century BCE. This ethnogenesis explains the necessity to create a collective name for the Greeks as the enemies of the Trojans, though it still remains obscure why the poet decided to invent three separate terms in order to describe a group of people with common features. It may be questioned whether the answer lies in the past or not.

McInerney suggests that in epic the Greek ethnic identity emerges mostly as a combination of tribal and local identities, along with specific regional ethnic groups, although at the beginning this identity does not constitute a coherent pattern, and mentions that the three names are related to Thessalian toponyms reflecting the origins of the Homeric heroic world in that region. This could explain the fact that there is not only a single term for the Greek contingents as the poet draws from the past and embeds different regional identities. These ethnonyms could trace back to the Late Bronze Age as relics of a much earlier heroic period, which the poet adapted to his imaginary heroic world. Gladstone has already discussed the topic of the ethnonyms in the Homeric epics, whether Homer had in mind any distinction between these names or uses them as mutually interchangeable terms.

Back to 1924 Forrer identified for the first time the Homeric Achaioi with the inhabitants of Ahhiyawa mentioned in the Hittite tablets. The identification of the Homeric Achaioi with the Ahhiyawans of the Hittite texts and the exact location of the kingdom of Ahhiyawa in the Greek world or in Anatolia remains a controversial issue. Many scholars, in an attempt to argue in favor of the historicity of the Homeric poems, associate the Ahhiyawans with Mycenaean Greeks, the city of

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5 Gladstone 1858:348.

Wilusa with Ilium, and even specific Homeric heroes with people mentioned in the inscriptions (for example Alexandros/Paris with Alaksandu). Recent studies may elucidate the Ahhiyawa hypothesis due to the new archaeological finds and the decipherment of the Hieroglyphic Luwian inscriptions. Generally it is agreed that Ahhiyawa is indeed Achaea in mainland Greece and that the Luwian toponym Hiyawa evokes the settlement of the Achaeans in the area.7 Bachvarova8 suggests that in the West Anatolian coast already in the Late Bronze Age local legendary stories based on a mythical ancestral Anatolian or Mycenaean past were being used in a process of the establishment of local identities. These stories, according to Bachvarova, may have survived in the social collective memory until the re-settlement of the coast (1050 BCE) by Greek-speakers. She finds more important the fact that the men of Ahhiyawa were closely connected with the Anatolian coast and the Hittites and that the ancestors of the Iron Age Greeks were interacting with Anatolians in the Late Bronze Age. In fact, the Achaeans in the Homeric epics may have different meanings. They may denote a tribe in Thessaly, the Greek army in Troy, and the inhabitants of Ithaca or other places in the Greek world. As for their homeland, the poet uses the term Ἀχαιΐδα γαῖα ascribing to it a general meaning, which corresponds to the homeland of all the Greeks (ὦ πόποι ἧ μέγα πένθος Ἀχαιΐδα γαῖαν ἰκάνει, Iliad I 254, VII124; Ἄργος ἐς ἱππόβοτον καὶ Ἀχαιΐδα καλλιγύναικα, Iliad III 75, III258; λαὸν ἀγείροντες κατ’ Ἀχαιΐδα πουλυβότειραν, Iliad XI 770; οὔ γάρ πω σχεδὸν ἡλθον Ἀχαιῶν ὁὐδὲ πω ἁμῆς ἔπεβην, Odyssey xi 166, xi 481; τὴν περ τηλοῦ φασίν Ἀχαιῶν ἔξιν δια σίτεα βίας, Odyssey xiii 249; ὃλεσε τηλοῦ νόστον Ἀχαιῶν, ὥλεσε δ’ αὐτός, Odyssey xxiii 68). In the Odyssey the poet makes clear what he means with the above expression by naming the regions, which

belong to this Achaean land (οἵη νῦν οὐκ ἔστι γυνὴ κατ᾽ Ἀχαιΐδα γαῖαν, | οὗτε Πόλου ἱερῆς οὔτ᾽ Ἀργεως οὔτε Μυκήνης | [οὔτ' αὐτῆς Ἡθάκης οὔτ' ἥπειροιο μελαίνης, Odyssey xxi.107–109). Besides the above general meaning, the poet uses also the expression Ἄργος Ἀχαιϊκὸν (Iliad, IX 141, IX 283, XIX 115, Odyssey iii 251), which could denote the whole of Greece (note that Agamemnon is referred at a later time, as a lord of Argos) or sometimes a specific Greek region.  

The name Argeioi, derived from Argos, is the only term in the Homeric epics that refers to a specific toponym, i.e. the city of Argos or the wider region of the Argive plain. However, there are many different areas corresponding to the name Argos in the Homeric epics. Thus, Argos, as Page\textsuperscript{10} states, may denote the city of Argos, the region of Argos that is the Argive plain as the homeland of Agamemnon, and finally southern Greece and especially Peloponnese as the place from which the Greek warriors came from. Page points out that later on the name Argos acquired a wider meaning and became a name for the whole of Greece due to the importance of the district of Argos as the kingdom of Agamemnon. But in the Iliad, in the Catalogue of Ships, Diomedes is the king of the broader region of Argos (Iliad II 559–567), while Agamemnon is the king of Mycenae. According to Drews,\textsuperscript{11} the meaning of Argos in the Catalogue reveals the evolution of this term, since the composer of the Catalogue does not use the names Argeioi and Argos with their Panhellenic connotations as the homeland of all the Greek heroes. In his elaborate description of the Greek contingents in the Catalogue the poet starts with Boeotia and continues with a geographically arranged presentation of the Greek cities and regions with

\textsuperscript{9} Drews 1979:128–129.

\textsuperscript{10} Page 1976:164.

\textsuperscript{11} Drews 1979:116–117. See also Kirk 1985:166 ff.
two deviations, firstly the leap from western Greece to the eastern Aegean and secondly form eastern Aegean to Thessaly. Sammons interprets the placement of Thessaly near the end of the Catalogue as a poet’s intentional decision and as a “sensitivity to the dramatic needs of the Iliadic context” given the significance of this area to the poem.\(^{12}\) The Pelasgic Argos\(^{13}\) (νῦν αὗ τοὺς ὄσσοι τὸ Πελασγικὸν Ἀργὸς ἦναιον, | οἵ τ’ Ἀλον οἳ τ’ Ἀλσην οἳ τ’ Τρηξίνα νέμοντο, | οἵ τ’ εἰχον Φθίνην ήδ’ Ἐλλάδα καλλιγύναια, | Μυρμιδόνες δὲ καλεύντο καὶ Ἑλληνες καὶ Ἀχαιοί, Iliad II 681–684) corresponds to the entire area from the Spercheus river to the Peneus and from the sea to the Pindus range and probably reflects poems earlier than the Catalogue celebrating the expedition of Pelasgic Argos against Troy. The Pelasgoi were considered to be the prehistoric inhabitants of Greece and the poet also mentions them as inhabitants of Crete (Δωριέες τε τριχάϊκες δῖοι τε Πελασγοί, Odyssey ix177) and Asia Minor (Ἰππόθοος δ’ ἀγε φῦλα Πελασγῶν ἐγχεσιμώρων | τῶν οἳ Λάρισαν ἐριβώλακα ναιετάασκο, Odyssey ii 840–841; πρὸς μὲν ἀλὸς Κᾶρες καὶ Παῖόνες ἀγκυλότοξοι | καὶ Λέλεγες καὶ Ἀκύκωνες δῖοι τε Πελασγοί, Odyssey x 429). Drews suggests that it is the Pelasgic Argos and not the city of Argos, of which the Homeric term Argeioi is derived.\(^{14}\) Later, when Mycenaean Greeks incorporated their ancestors in the Trojan War, Argos became synonymous with the homeland of the Mycenaean and finally started to signify Greece of the heroic age, having now lost all of its Thessalian connotations.\(^{15}\) But, mostly, as Drews suggests, the Iliadic Argos must be taken as a term for the ‘heroic Greece’, the place of origin of the


\(^{13}\) Kirk 1985:228–229.

\(^{14}\) Drews 1979:125.

\(^{15}\) Drews 1979:119–120.
warriors who participated in the Trojan War. Sammons rejects the theory that the Catalogue’s geographical aspect was older than the *Iliad* and that it constituted a map of Mycenaean Greece. Instead, he argues that the Catalogue’s geography reflects a later perspective of Greece, which encompasses places of mythological significance giving thus an archaic allure to the poem or omit other places to avoid anachronism. According to Sammons, the only historical period of the Catalogue is the imaginary heroic age. In the unique expression Ἀργος Ἀχαιϊκὸν (*Iliad* IX 141), when Agamemnon lists the gifts for Achilles and refers to their future return (ἰκοίμεθ’) in their homeland, Argos probably signifies the whole of Greece. Likewise, in the *Odyssey* the expression Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἀργος is attested two times (ἄνδρος, τοῦ κλέος εὑρίς καθ’ Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἀργος, 1 344; εἰ δ’ ἐθέλεις τραφῆναι ἀν’ Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἀργος, x 80) with the meaning ‘throughout the whole of Greece’ and probably reinforces the idea that Odysseus was known in every part of the Greek world.

Danaoi, the most puzzling term of the three, does not correlate with any specific city or region in the Greek world, as Achaioi does with Achaia Phthiotis or Argeioi with Argos. The term has never adjectival use, but it occurs only as a noun in the plural and it refers always to the Greeks in general. In fact there is no homeland for the Danaans in the Homeric epics. However, a monumental hieroglyphic inscription of c. 1390–1352 BCE found in the Egyptian Thebes mentions the word Danaja or Tanaja (tnjw) along with Kafta (kftw) as a region of political significance for Egypt. Under the names of these regions are listed a number of cities probably starting

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16 Sammons 2010:139–140.

17 Heubeck et al. (1988:119) comment that Aristarchus rejected the line, because of this particular meaning of Ἑλλάς and Ἀργος is un-Homeric. They also note that in Hesiod (Op. 653) the term Ἑλλάς corresponds to Greece.
with the capital. Thus, for Kafta the names listed correspond to historically known Cretan poleis, as Knossos, Phaistos, Kydonia, and Lyktos and under the region of Danaja are inscribed the cities of Mycenae, Thebes (later Thebais, the land of Thebans), Messene, Nauplion, Kythera, Elis, and Amyclai. Latacz suggests that for Egypt the land of Danaja includes Peloponnese and Boeotia with its capital Thebes. Based on these epigraphic and archaeological finds Latacz suggests that the origin place of the Homeric Danaoi is this Danajan Empire in the plain of Argos. Bachvarova argues that the Egyptian term Tanaya, which is applied to parts of mainland Greece is clearly associated with the Homeric Danaoi, but we should distinguish the Adana/Adaniya in Cilicia from T/Dan- region in Greece, even though the terms Adana and Danuna could be also connected with the ethnonym Danaoi. Finally, based on the similarities between the terms Danuna/Danaoi and Adana, she notes the connection between the Ahhiyawans in Greece or west Anatolia and the Ahhiyawans in Cilicia, and thus explains the movements of the mythical king Danaos with the Argive origin (as a descendant of Io) from Egypt to Argos. The legend of Danaos supports the interconnections among Greece, Egypt, and Anatolia (note that Cilix, Phoenix, and Kadmos, the brothers of Europa—who was Io’s descendant—were settled in Cilicia and Phoenicia and Boeotia respectively) and

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18 Latacz 2004:129–133 and 140–141 (where Latacz concludes that Thebes around 1200 BCE ruled along with Boeotia the island of Euboea, since the Euboean cities Amarynthos and Karystos are mentioned in the Linear B tablets from the palace archive of Thebes discovered in the 1990s.)

19 Bachvarova 2016:317. For relevant bibliography:317n78.

20 The poet is aware of the legendary founder of Thebes (τὸν δὲ Ἰδεν Κάδμου θυγάτηρ, καλλίσφυρος Ἰνώ, Iliad V 333) and mentions Kadmeioi as the inhabitants of Thebes (ἀγγελος ἐς Θήβας πολέας μετὰ Καδμείωνας, Iliad V 804).
links Greece with the eastern Mediterranean underlining the relationship between Greeks on the Greek mainland and in diaspora.\textsuperscript{21}

**The terms in the Homeric epics**

Having discussed the historical background and perspective of the terms Achaioi, Argeioi, and Danaoi, let us now explore their literary aspect as used in the Homeric epics (figure 1 and 2).

The poet uses these names as alternative collective terms for all the Greeks along with other regional ethnic labels, which are related to the notions of descent, origin, and shared history. It would be expected that a single ethnic term it would be sufficient to label the Greek contingents, however the poet applies to the Greeks three separate names. The detailed recording of these names in regard to the context, namely the use of the epithets ascribed to each term, the formulas and similes related to the three names, the classification of all the speakers (poet, god, name of the hero, man or woman), who address the specific term and in what particular context, helps to form a more complete idea of which is the role of each term and their interconnection. (figures 3−7). Although it is not always easy to discern their different use and function within the text and sometimes overlap each other, it seems that Achaioi, Danaoi, and Argeioi are not identical terms and the poet sometimes intentionally applies them to different group of peoples in different context in order to produce meaning. The discussion of specific paradigms may elucidate this obscure and unexpected use of three names for the same ethnic group.

In the *Iliad* the Greeks are presented as a coherent group of warriors with common language, who share a heroic past and show their heroic virtue following a

\textsuperscript{21} Bachvarova 2016:318.
code of decision making and acting according to specific heroic deeds. We could say that their ethnic territory consists of the camp and ships, a “makeshift city” on the Trojan shore, fortified by a wall and protected by the sea, which remains throughout the Iliad a passage to their homeland. When the Trojans attack to burn the ships of the Achaeans, the whole operation is presented as besiege of a walled city. Moreover, this formation imitates a city in the Greek homeland with its king, hierarchy, assembly, rules that should be followed, punishments, even a duplicate of the life in the time of peace with women, feasts, and athletic contests, even though these are not but a fake copy of their life in the homeland, since the women are slaves, symposia are taking place in the break of the war and athletic contests are organized to honor dead warriors. Thus, the Greek warriors, who constitute the population of this carefully constructed city, need a collective ethnic name.

Nevertheless, poet’s decision to use three different ethnic names for the Greek warriors, whom tried to present as a consistent group, remains puzzling. Their local ethnic origin still exists, but it is far away back to the homeland. In the Trojan shore they all are Achaeans, Danaans, and Argives.

Interestingly, there is not a similar ethnic name to encompass all the enemies, even though all the non-Greek fighting allies of the Trojans (Lycians, Dardanians, Pelasgians, Thracians, Ciconians, Paionians, Paflagonians, Phrygians, Mysians) are represented by the term ἐπίκουροι, with the meaning “fighters alongside.” Lavelle suggests that the term in the Iliad does not denote the mercenaries, since the poet ascribes to the epithet possible positive value, as he uses it often to describe the favorably treated Lycians.\(^\text{23}\) In the Iliad sometimes Trojans and Dardanians appear to be synonymous terms, and the Trojans are referred to as the descendants of

\(^{22}\) Mackie 1996:2.

Dardanus, but Trojans and Dardanians are also listed consecutively a number of times in the *Iliad*, implying that they are separately identifiable. Dardanoi are attested along with the Trojans in formulaic expressions (Τρώες καὶ Λύκιοι καὶ Δάρδανοι ἀγχιμαχηταί, *Iliad* VIII 183; Τρώες καὶ Δάρδανοι ἦδ’ ἐπίκουροι, *Iliad* VIII 497), as a different ethnic group, the inhabitants of Dardania, and they have their own leader, Aeneas. Subsequently, the use of these two ethnic names for the Trojans is not similar with the use of the three ethnic names of the Greeks, which have more collective meaning.

In the Catalogue of Ships the poet gives to the Greek leaders and their contingents an ethnic regional name corresponding to their poleis or broader region, but when he turns to the war they are all called with the same collective ethnic names, which at first glance seem to be used haphazardly. The poet refers to the specific origin of the heroes only when he tries to create a heroic identity by presenting their family lineage and place of origin in order to place them firmly among the heroes. This deliberate differentiation between Greeks and Trojans probably is a sign of a more coherent way in which the poet deals with ethnicity and identity issues and it could also be taken as an early attempt to create a common ethnic identity by encompassing local identities of his time along with relics of a heroic past. The problem, however, is if the poet purposely distinguishes these identities and contextually adjusts them.

At this point we may ask about the features that constitute the ethnic identity in the Homeric epics. Place of origin, language, and ancestral genealogy are probably some of them. The formulaic phrase used in the *Odyssey* (τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν; πόθι τοι πόλις ἦδὲ τοκής, *Odyssey* i 170, x 325, xiv 187, xv 264, xix 105, xxiv 298), when someone has to declare his personal and accordingly ethnic identity, includes

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information for his name, his family (particularly his father) in order to link someone with his ancestors, and his polis for the purpose of determining his tribal and ethnic characteristics.

The ethnic identity sometimes is defined through the description of the identity of the other, the opponent, that is, for the *Iliad*, the Trojans. Does the poet have an intention to construct ideologically “Greekness, in terms of common blood, language, religion, and mores”25 and in contrast with the ‘otherness’? Mackie argues that the Greeks and the Trojans of the *Iliad* do not resemble the fifth-century opposition of Greek to barbarian, but suggests that we should not reject any idea of ethnic difference in the *Iliad*. Mackie focuses on the different use of “language” by Trojans, since they cannot function as an articulated group and accomplish social order (kosmos), partly because of their ethnic variety and their different languages. Moreover, this dissimilarity is only the external characteristic of two different cultures, the Trojan praise culture with its private and poetic speech, which focuses especially on oikos and the Greek blame culture with public and political speech, in which the city is predominant. Consequently, the Trojan culture is characterized by a language and a style of presenting their self-identity, which is unfamiliar to the Achaeans.26 But which are the elements that constitute the ethnic identity of the Greeks, who the poet insists on presenting as a coherent group, despite their different dialect, city of origin, and kings? They definitely speak the same language and worship the same gods, but Trojans also have the same Olympian gods and, despite their different languages, understand each other by poetic convention; however, the poet seems to have in mind that language is a criterion of alteration.

The motif of differently speaking allies of the Trojans occurs in the *Iliad* (πολλοὶ γὰρ

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25 Cartledge 1993:3.

κατὰ ἄστυ μέγα Πριάμου ἐπίκουροι, | ἄλλη δ’ ἄλλων γλώσσα πολυπερέων ἀνθρώπων, II 803–804; οὐ γὰρ πάντων ἦν ὁμός θρόος οὐδ’ ἦν γῆρυς, | ἄλλα γλώσσα μέμικτο, πολύκλητοι δ’ ἦσαν ἄνδρες, IV 437–438). Possibly, the poet emphasizes this language differentiation of the Trojans by using three different terms (θρόος, γῆρυς, γλώσσα27) to describe probably differences on language and dialect, or simply to emphasize this heterogeneity of the Trojans in compare with the Greeks.28 Also, in the catalogue of the Trojan contingents, which follows the Catalogue of Ships, the Trojan allies are distinguished by their tribal names and among them Κάρες are presented as βαρβαρόφωνοι (Νάστης αὖ Καρῶν ἡγήσατο βαρβαροφώνων, Iliad II 867), that is to say speakers of a non-Greek language. This is the only occurrence of this word in the Homeric epics and, according to Kirk, it is quite surprising, for Miletos was inhabited by Greek speakers since the end of the Bronze Age and the reference to non-Greek-speaking Carian must be ‘deliberately archaizing’.29 Subsequently, in the Iliad the Trojans are the significant other in order to create the common identity of the Greeks.

With regard to otherness, if Trojans are the others in the Iliad, who plays the role of the other in the Odyssey, where Trojans are not present all the time? Goddesses (Calypso, Circe), animals (Laestrygonians, Cyclopes), and humans (Phaeacians) constitute the world of the others in the Odyssey. Thus, according to Dougherty,30 creating a collective identity in the ethnographic imaginary world of

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27 The word γλώσσα occurs in the Iliad with the meaning of spoken language (οὐδ’ εἶ μοι δέκα μὲν γλώσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ’ εἶεν, Iliad II 489) and it is distinguished from φωνή (see for instance: ’ék δ’ ὁνομακλήδην ἄνανων ὄνομαξες ἄριστους, | πάντων Ἀργείων φωνήν ἵκουσα’ ἄλοχοισι, Odyssey iv 279, where Helen imitates the voice of the Achaeans’ women).


29 Kirk 1985:260–263.

30 Dougherty 2001:711.
the *Odyssey* offers an understanding of “what it means to be Greek by means of accounts of far-off worlds, both temporal and spatial” and of what we could call “ethnographic imagination” of the early Archaic period. But in the *Odyssey*, the poet explores the otherness in terms of non-human, since the others are not ethnically differentiated but rather uncivilized (like Cyclopes), divine and magicians (like Helios and Circe), or shadows of the dead in the Underworld. Odysseus’ 1-narrative is a poetic choice to depict the total otherness of the old world of fairy tales far away from the heroic age.\(^3\)

Given the purposive differentiation between Trojans and Greeks, which could be partly related to “ethnic” criteria, we can observe separate functions of the three ethnic names. Firstly, in the *Odyssey*, the Greeks are related to the past as the Greek warriors of the Trojan War, but they are also the population of the Greek world now that the war is over. In the ‘peaceful’ world of *Odyssey* the Danaoi and Argeioi signify the besiegers of Troy, while Achaioi are not only the warriors of the past but also the inhabitants of various Greek places, as if it were a general name for the Greeks. As Pucci points out, the Danaans are never acting characters in the *Odyssey* and the term Danaoi is the name of the people of a distant past.\(^3\)

Hence, Achaioi is the more general term and signifies both the Greek population and the Greek warriors at Troy. The Achaean warriors are present in the world of *Odyssey* through the narrative of the heroes and usually they are described as in the *Iliadic* context (for example: εἷος ἐνὶ Τροΐῃ πολεμίζομεν νίες Ἀχαιῶν, *Odyssey* iii 315; πρὶν μὲν γὰρ Τροίης ἐπιβήμεναι νίες Ἀχαιῶν, *Odyssey* xiv 229; ὦ Ἀχιλεῦ, Πηλής νιέ, \(^{31}\)

\(^{31}\) For the other in Odysseus’ story of the Cyclopes see Pucci 1998:113–130.

\(^{32}\) Pucci 1998:142.

μέγα φέρτατ’ Ἀχαιῶν, Odyssey xi 478). However, the inhabitants of Ithaca are called by their regional name Ἰθακήσιοι, but they are also named Achaioi (ἀλλ’ ἦ τοι βασιλῆς Ἀχαιῶν εἰσὶ καὶ ἄλλοι | πολλοὶ ἐν ἀμφιάλῳ Ἑθάκη, νέοι ἢ δεὶ παλαιοὶ, | τῶν κέν τις τόδ’ ἔχεσιν, ἐπεὶ θάνε δῶς Ὀδυσσεὺς, i 394; Ἀστερίς, οὐ μεγάλη, λιμένες δ’ ἐνι ναύλοχοι αὐτῇ | ἀμφίδυμοι τῇ τῶν γε μένον λοχώντες Ἀχαιοῖ, ἂν 846–847; οὕη ἀπαγγειλάς τῶν δ’ ἄλλων μή τις Ἀχαιῶν | πευθέσθω πολλοὶ γάρ ἐμοὶ κακὰ μηχανόωνται, xvi 133–134; ὁ φίλοι, ἣ μέγα ἔργον ἄνθρωπος δέ μήσατ’ Ἀχαιοὺς, xxiv 426; ὡς φάτο δάκρυ χέων, οἶκτος δ’ ἐλε πάντας Ἀχαιοὺς, xxiv 438.) The poet names also Achaioi the inhabitants of other Greek regions as Argos (ἐμφυλὸν πολλοὶ δὲ κασίγνητο τε ἐται τε | Ἀργοὺς ἄν’ ἵπποβοτον, μέγα δὲ κρατέουσιν Ἀχαιῶν, xv 274), Iason Argos34 (κούρη Ἰκαρίοιστε, περίφρων Πηνελόπεια, | εἰ πάντες σὲ ἰδοιεν ἄν | Ἰασον Ἀργοὺς Ἀχαιοῖ, xviii 245–246), Zakynthos, the neighboring island of Ithaca (ἐκ δὲ Ζακύνθου ἔασιν ἑκίσκοι κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν, xvi 250), and Crete (ἀλλή δ’ ἄλλων γλώσσα μεμιγμένη ἐν μὲν Ἀχαιοί, | ἐν δ’ Ἑτεόκρητες μεγαλήτορες, ἐν δὲ Κύδωνες | Δωριέες τε τριχαῖκες διότι τε Πελασγοί, xix 175–177). In the last paradigm, Odysseus in his speech to Penelope describes his supposed place of origin, Crete, as a society of mixed languages and ethnē. The first ethnos is the Achaeans meaning probably the Mycenaeans, who were dominating the central part of the island under the leadership of Idomeneus. In this case, language is taken as a criterion of ethnic identity, which seems to distinguish Achaeans from other ethnic groups. Consequently, in the Odyssey the term Achaioi is the unmarked,35 more general term and it is used to denote not only the warriors at the Trojan War, but also the

34 For the hapax Iason Argos, deriving possibly from the legendary King Iasos, the son of Io, which probably corresponds to the Peloponnese and the Ionian Argos, see Russo et al. 1992:64.

35 For the linguistic terminology of marked and unmarked words and speech see Martin 1989:x, 29–30.
population of specific Greek regions, as it is applied not only to the *Iliadic* past but also to the present of the *Odyssey*. (figure 8)

In the *Odyssey* Achaioi, Danaoi, and Argeioi are the epic heroes of the Trojan War, who keep appearing in the narration of the past as paradigms of a heroic world. However, this heroic past is not completely disengaged from the peaceful Odyssean world, since they—dead or alive—are the fathers of sons, like Telemachus, and they are responsible for the lineage of *genos* and accordingly of *ethnos*. Pucci underlines that Odysseus is a survivor of his generation and a link between two ages.36 Telemachus is frustrated because his father never came back nor died in the battlefield and so he did not gain the heroic *kleos*, which would give his son the necessary power to rule his own kingdom. *Kleos* is the link, which connects the heroic world of war with the world of peace and allows the second generation to continue the family and the communal story. Neverthelles, in the final book of the *Odyssey*, before the final fighting scene, the order is re-established, since Odysseus calls Telemachus not to shame the paternal *genos* (μή τι κατασχύνειν πατέρων γένος, xxiv 508) and Telemachus (οὔ τι κατασχύνοντα τεὸν γένος, ώς ἀγορεῦεις, xxiv 512) assures his father that he will follow his advice. Finally, his grandfather Laertes expresses his satisfaction for the braveness of his descendants (τίς νῦ μοι ἡμέρῃ ἢδε, θεοὶ φίλοι; ἢ μάλα χαίρω | υἱὸς θ’ υἱωνός τ’ ἀρετῆς πέρι δήριν ἔχουσι, xxiv 514–515).

When Phemius sings in the palace of Odysseus the return of the Achaeans (*Odyssey* i 326), Penelope asks him to stop the painful song (ἀοιδῆς | λυγρῆς, Odyssey i 341–342) and speaks of her husband’s fame (ἀνδρός, τοῦ κλέος εὐρύ καθ’ Ἑλλάδα καὶ μέσον Ἀργος, Odyssey i 344). Telemachus advises his mother to let Phemius sing this

particular song, but he does not speak anymore for the Achaeans, but for the cruel fate of the Danaans (τούτῳ δ’ οὐ νέμεσις Δαναῶν κακὸν οἶτον ἀείδειν, Odyssey i 350). Similarly, in the eighth book of the Odyssey, Odysseus compliments Demodocus for singing appropriately the Achaeans’ fate at Troy (λίην γὰρ κατὰ κόσμον Ἀχαιῶν οἶτον ἀείδεις, Odyssey viii 489), but later on Alcinoos asks Odysseus the reason he cries when listening the fate of the Danaans (Ἀργείων Δαναῶν ἠδ’ Ἰλίου οἶτον ἀκούων, Odyssey viii 578). In this verse the poet uses a hapax in which Argeioi and Danaoi are closely connected as one term. We could say that Odysseus speaks for Achaeans because he is one of them, a former warrior, and he still tries to return to his homeland as the story is not ended for him. But for Alcinoos these heroes belong to the past and they are part of story and songs, so they are the legendary Danaans. In fact the Odyssey conjoins Argeioi and Danaoi, attributes to them the role of the warriors of a heroic past and, finally, incorporates them in the stories about the Trojan War as part of the narration, of the speeches of heroes, and of songs.

Formulas: noun-epithet and formulaic expressions (figure 9)

Our investigation could not overlook the significance of the formulaic diction of the Homeric epics. The concept of the formula in the Homeric epics remains problematic and accordingly quantities and statistics of the formulaic percentage should be treated with caution. From Parry’s definition of the formula as ‘an expression regularly used, under the same metrical conditions, to express an essential idea’ to more flexible and elaborated theories including metrical position, generative formulas, adaptability in context, diachronic perspectives of forming the hexameter, key words followed by explanatory words, and intonation units, the

37 De Jong (2001:38) suggests that Telemachus; statement that the audience prefer the ‘newest song’ has metanarrative relevance and that new song is the Odyssey, which presents a newer nostos story than that of Phemius.
description of the formula becomes an intriguing issue. Bakker suggests, instead of Parry’s more structural context-independent definition of formula, a more functional approach and distinguishes two types of formulas, those whose meaning is distinct of its form and those whose meaning and form are closely connected. According to Bakker, the description of formulas as “group of words used under the same metrical conditions” can be redefined, since meter is not a principal and determining element of structure and the poet often adjusts words and phrases to pattern of the hexameter. Additionally, scholars tend to believe that the use of the formulaic language is clearly greater than Parry and Lord had imagined. Finkelberg draws attention to the difficulties for identifying non-formulaic or categorizing unique expressions for which it is not certain if they are underrepresented formulas or actually non-formulaic. Finkelberg suggests to ‘count as formulaic any expression that occurs at least twice in Homer or any unique expression that presents a modification of a recognizable formulaic pattern’ and also proposes comparing expressions with the accepted formulaic patterns in order to determine if it is formulaic or not. Given all the above, a thorough examination of the use of Achaioi, Danaoi, and Argeioi in terms of formulaic analysis is beyond the scope of this paper, but we should keep in mind that a detailed study would shed more light on this topic. In our discussion we focus mainly on the two basic types of formula, the noun-epithet formula and the repetitions of expressions and phrases in order to investigate the similarities and dissimilarities among the three terms.

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38 See Russo (2011:296–298) for a brief presentation of theories regarding the Homeric formula.


The first visible result of the statistical data shows a stable and similar way of using ethnic names. As the frequency of the terms in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* reveals, Achaioi is definitely the predominant term no matter who the speaker is. The ethnic names are often combined with specific epithets usually in the noun-epithet type of Homeric formula. Interestingly, the term Argeioi is almost never accompanied by epithets.\(^1\) Only two times in the *Iliad* the poet attributes to Argeioi the epithet χαλκοχίτωνες, a common epithet for the Achaeans. Once, when Agamemnon admires the dark embattled phalanxes of the Ajaxes and names them leaders of the Argives (Αἴαντ᾽ Ἀργείων ἡγήτορε χαλκοχιτώνων, IV 285). Secondly, the same formulaic verse is repeated by the herald Thootes (*Iliad* XII 354), who was sent by Menestheus with a message to Ajaxes.

Additionally, the rare epithet ιόμωροι appears only two times in the Homeric epics (Ἀργεῖοι ιόμωροι ἑλενγέες οὐ νυ σέβεσθε, *Iliad* IV.242; Ἀργεῖοι ιόμωροι ἀπειλάων ἀκόρητοι, *Iliad* XIV.479) as an exclusive epithet of the Argives. In the Homeric Scholia we read for the meaning of the epithet in IV.242: ‘ιόμωροι δὲ νῦν ἀπὸ μέρους οἱ ἀπλῶς πολεμισταί, κυρίως δὲ οἱ περὶ βέλη μεμορημένοι, ἃ εὔστο κακοπαθούντες, ἐκ τοῦ μόρος, δ δηλοὶ τὴν κακοπάθειαν’\(^2\) and XIV.479 ‘ιόμωροι δὲ, ἦτοι τοξόται, βαρβαρικῶς ὀνειδίζονται οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ τῷ Ἀκάμαντι, ὡς ἐπερ οὐκ ἦσαν τοιοῦτοι καὶ παρὰ Τρωσίν. Εἰσὶ δὲ καὶ νῦν, ὡς καὶ Ἀλαχοῦ, ιόμωροι οἱ μόρον ἐμποιοῦντες ἐν ιοῖς, ἐκτάσει τοῦ ο εἰς ω, ἦ περὶ ιοὺς μεμορημένοι καὶ κακοπαθῶς ἔχοντες, ἦ δὲ ιοὺς κεκτημένοι—μόρον γάρ, φασί, παρὰ Κυπρίοις τὸ ὀξὺ—, ἦ πλεονασμῷ τοῦ μι, ἴνα εἰν ιόωροι οἱ τῶν ιῶν ὠφαν, ἦτοι φροντίδα, ἔχοντες. ἄπειλάων δὲ καὶ νῦν ἀκόρητοι οὐ μόνον οἱ ἀλαξόνες ἐν τῷ ἀπειλεῖσθαι δεινά, ἀλλὰ

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\(^1\) Page (1976:282) finds surprising the deficiency of the Argeioi in epithets.

\(^2\) Van der Valk 1971: Δ 242. See also Erbse 1969: Δ 242, ἐπονείδιστον δὲ τὸ μόνον τοξεύειν (b T).
καὶ οἱ καυχηταῖ.

43 Both occurrences are examples of the ‘blame-culture’, in which the Greek heroes “constantly contend for excellence by insulting one another and competing for the title ‘best of the Achaeans’.”

44 Kirk maintains that the epithets are clearly abusive but their exact meaning is debatable. He parallels ἵομοροι with ἐγχεσίμωροι, if the first word is ἴος (=arrow), although he comments that ἐγχεσίμωροι is laudatory and ἴ- has a short iota. He proposes the meaning ‘glorying in voice’ (亹- from ἴα or ἴη meaning ‘voice’ and -μωροι with the possible meaning ‘glorying in’).

45 Agamemnon in his blaming speech provokes his comrades with insulting words characterizing them as miserable, coward, and infamous in order to exhort them to fight.

Interestingly, the formulaic expression αἰδώς Ἀργεῖοι, used to motivate the warriors, belongs to a similar context relative to the heroic blame (for example: Iliad V.787, VIII.228, XIII.95, XV.502; note that the same exhortation is used for the Lycians too, XVI.422). The Trojan Acamas uses the same expression, Ἀργεῖοι ἵομοροι, but as a real insult against the enemy calling them not only coward and miserable but also boasters, full of futile threats and reminding them that death is their common fate and giving, thus, negative connotations to an expression usually coupled with the word μάχη to indicate the greed for war, the braveness (e.g. Iliad XII.335 for Ajaxes, XIII.639 for Trojans, XX.2 for Achilles). So, these blaming epithets underline the role of the Argives as warriors and their close relation to the heroic deeds of the Iliadic world.

43 Van der Valk 1979: Ξ 479.

44 Mackie 1996:137.

45 Kirk 1985:356.
Moreover, the very few epithets of the Danaans in the *Iliad* emphasize their warlike character. Gladstone\(^\text{46}\) suggests that the appellation Danaoi never means the Greek nation in general, but it always refers to the Greek armament or soldiery and in the *Odyssey* the Danaans are always the brave warriors of the Trojan War. This use is corroborated by the military epithets of the Danaoi. The most common, exclusively used for the Danaans, epithet is ταχύπωλοι (only once Achilles addresses to the Myrmidons in a similar way: Μυρμιδόνες ταχύπωλοι ἐμοὶ ἐρίηρες ἑταῖροι, *Iliad* XXIII 6), in the expression Δαναῶν ταχυπώλων placed at the end of the verse for metric reasons (once in nominative in the *Iliad* VIII.161). Danaoi are portrayed as ταχύπωλοι mostly by Trojans (Hector, Hecuba, and Priam: 10 times), whereas only once by Menelaus and three times by the poet. Ilion, also, is characterized as εὔπωλον (*Iliad* V 551, 16.576, *Odyssey* ii 18, xi 169, xiv 71) and ἱππόδαμοι is a common epithet for the Trojans and particularly for Hector (noticeably in his last appearance at the last verse of the *Iliad*).

Danaoi are also characterized with the honorific epithet αἰχμηταί by Athena (*Iliad* VIII 33), by Hera (*Iliad* VIII 464), and by the poet (*Iliad* XII 419). In the *Odyssey* the same epithet is ascribed to the Danaans by Agamemnon (xxiv 81) and Odysseus (xi 559), when referring to the Danaans as the warriors at Troy. At this point, we should mention a prominent paradigm of the way that heroes use the ethnic names in their speeches in the context of the ‘language of polarization’, which takes the ethnic contrast to an illogical extreme’.\(^\text{47}\) Miller in his discussion on *Iliad* I 87–91 remarks that Agamemnon is presented by Achilles, the best of the Achaeans, as a Danaan, who boasts to be the best of the Achaeans (συμπάντων Δαναῶν, οὔδ’ ἐν Ἁγαμέμνονα ἐπὶς, | δός νῦν πολλὸν ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὐχεταὶ εἶναι, *Iliad* I 90–91). As

\(^46\) Gladstone 1858:355–358 ff.

\(^47\) Miller 2014:109–114 for the conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles regarding the ethnic names.
the poem unfolds, Achilles again addresses Agamemnon in a very insulting way calling him a ‘king over nothings’ (δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς ἐπεὶ οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις, *Iliad* I 231), which Miller assumes evokes the word Danaan and Agammenon is the king of the Dan-Nothings. Nestor (*Iliad* I 258) will call them both Danaans in an effort to correct Achilles’ abuse to Agamemnon.

*Aἴχμηται* is a proper feature for the Homeric warriors who are experts in close-fighting with spears. Danaoi are also referred to as ἀσπιστὰί (ῥηξάμενος Δαναῶν πυκινὰς στίχας ἀσπιστῶν, *Iliad* XIII 680), an epithet usually referred to the Trojans and Lycians, and as θεράποντες Ἀρης (*Iliad* VII 382, XIX 78) and φιλοπτόλεμοι (*Iliad* XX 351 by Achilles). The excellence of the Danaans is also expressed with the epithet ἰφθίμος, which characterizes many heroes in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (ἰφθίμων Δαναῶν, ἵν᾽ ὑπέτερον εὐχὸς ἄρησθε, *Iliad* XI 290) and it is also attributed to women. Moreover, in the war context of the *Iliad* Danaoi are also ἡρωες gaining their heroic identity in the battlefield as the repeated formulaic verse ὦ φίλοι ἡρωες Δαναιὸι θεράποντες Ἀρης reveals (*Iliad* II 110, VI 67, VII 382, XIX 78). Hence, Danaoi are the close-fighting brave warriors in the *Iliadic* context.

In the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus experiences once again the wrath of Poseidon, wishes, in his soliloquy, he had died in a very specific way, namely protecting the dead body of Achilles, as the μάκαρες Danaoi died in the battlefield (τρὶς μάκαρες Δαναοὶ καὶ τετράκις, οἳ τότ᾽ ὀλοντο, *Odyssey* v 306) and, thus, gained their immortal fame, the Homeric kleos. *Kleos* for Odysseus (τῷ κ᾽ ἔλαχον κτερέων, καὶ μεν κλέος

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48 Simonides in his short account of the Trojan War ascribes to the Danaans the hapax ἀγέμαχοι, which must probably be read as ἀγχέμαχοι (τοι δὲ πόλιν πέραντες οἴδιμον [οἶκαδ᾽ ἵ]κοντο | ἐξοχοὶ ἥρ]ὼν ἀγέμαχοι Δαναοὶ[ , fr. 11.13–4 W). The epithet ἀγχέμαχοι is referred also to the Myrmidons (*Iliad* XVI 272, XVI 248, XVII 165) and Rawles (2008:459–466) suggests that the Simonidean passage has an “Achillean flavor” taking into account the phrase ἐξοχοὶ ἥρ]ὼν, which is associated with Achilles.
ἦγον Ἀχαιοί, Odyssey v 311) ‘is not visible but audible’,⁴⁹ as it presupposes a heroic death and burial, but it is something that had to be heard, transmitted, recycled, and spread beyond space and time. By the time of transmission and narration heroes are already dead and they could be compared to the gods, for whom the term μάκαρες is a consistent characteristic. The question arises then, whether Odysseus has kleos in the Odyssey? “In the Iliad, kleos is gained primarily on the basis of martial feats, while in the Odyssey the range is broadened to encompass not only martial feats, but also adventurous trips, marital loyalty, hospitality, wiliness, beauty, athletic prowess, and song. Kleos is typically preserved by grave mounds and heroic song.”⁵⁰ Nagy’s answer to the former question is that Odysseus, who generously calls in the Iliad Achilles and Ajax the best of the Achaeans, will gain in the Odyssey his own title as the most heroic Achaean.⁵¹ The mortal Homeric hero who attains his heroic identity after his glorious death obtaining a ‘semi divine status’ reflects, according to van Wees, an early tomb cult, which started to spread at the end of the eighth century and formed the conception of the epic heroes.⁵² Thus, this tag comes for the Danaoi in the context of Odyssey, where the Trojan War, the field of their glory, is already part of the epic narration and the epic songs. Danaoi keep the role of the warriors and they are the epic heroes.

If the names Danaoi and Argeioi have warlike connotations, the name Achaioi acquires a more general meaning. The term Achaioi is used to denominate the Greeks at the beginning and at the end of the Iliad. In the first book the poet

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⁵⁰ De Jong 2001:228.
presents the central theme, which is the personified cursed wrath of Achilles, cause of much pain for the Achaioi (οὐλομένην, ἦ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἀλγεῖ ἔθηκε, Iliad I 2). The name Achaioi should be situated within the semantic field of Homeric akhos (loss of comrades and of timē) of which algos is just a formulaic complement. The Achaeans, at least within the Homeric poetic language, are etymologically derived from akhos and, therefore, Nagy connects akhos and mēnis with the Achaeans, as “the akhos of Achilles leads to the mēnis of Achilles leads to the akhos of the Achaeans.” Hence, the term Achaioi, from the very beginning of the poem is connected with the main topic and the central hero of the Iliad. Accordingly, Achilles, the only human who inflicts ἄλγεα upon humans, will later ascribe to himself the title of the best of the Achaeans. Moreover, in the penultimate scene of the Iliad, before Hector’s funeral, the poet clearly indicates that the Trojans had earned just a twelve days break given as present by Achilles (δείσῃ τ’ Ἀργείων πυκινὸν λόχον· ἦ γὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς μ’ ὀδ’ ἐπέτελλε μελαινάων ἀπὸ νῆσον | μὴ πρὶν πημανέειν πρὶν δωδεκάτη μόλη ἡμῶς, Iliad XXIV 779–781). Immediately after a brief description of Hector’s funeral and burial (Iliad XXIV 782–799) the poet comes back to the reality of the war, where the Greeks, named again as Achaioi, have the principal role of the attackers (μὴ πρὶν ἔφορμηθεὶν ἑυκνήμιδες Ἀχαῖοι, Iliad XXIV 800). Hence, the Achaeans as a ‘quasi-generic term’ open the epic poem as the people devastated by Achilles’ anger and close it as epic warriors, accompanied by their typical warlike epithet ἑυκνήμιδες. The ethnus of the Achaeans who suffers

and the Achaean army who fights against Troy and wins represent the two faces of the war.

The Achaeans in the Homeric epics get also warlike epithets focusing on parts of their armor, especially the garters and the tunic, which are made of bronze (χαλκοχίτωνες and χαλκοκνήμιδες) or simply referred to as wearing fine leggings (ἐὐκνήμιδες), which distinguish them from the Trojans. Also, they get other martial epithets as ἀρηΐφιλοι, ἀρηϊοι, and φιλοπτόλεμοι like the Danaans, but they are the only who are described as κάρη κομόωντες and ἐλίκωπες. The epithet ἐλίκωπες occurs six times in the Iliad (I 389, III 190, III 234, XVI 569, XVII 274, XXIV 402) regarding the Achaeans. The epithet is explained as ‘black or dark-eyed’, ‘with rolling eyes’, ‘swiveling’ and probably it does not have any ethnic connotations, but it signifies only an external characteristic denoting beauty or, according to Kirk, dignity. Similarly, the formulaic expression κάρη κομόωντες focuses also in an external characteristic, but this time with possible ethnic connotations, for the hair are used as diacritic mark of ethnic groups; Abantes are described as ὀπιθεν κομόωντες in the Catalogue of Ships (τῷ δ’ ἀμ’ Ἀβαντες ἐποντο θοοὶ ὀπιθεν κομόωντες, Iliad II 542) and Thracians also have a distinctive hair-style slightly different of the Achaean one (Θρήϊκες ἀκρόκομοι δολίχ’ ἔγχεα χερσὶν ἔχοντες, Iliad IV 533). Nagy considers the long hair as a custom of the pre-adult Greek males and he finds the ancient aetiology for the change of this practice in the post-heroic age


59 Chryseis also gets this epithet once in the first book of the Iliad (πρίν γ’ ἀπὸ πατρὶ φίλω δόμεναι ἐλίκωπα κούρην, Iliad I.98), when Calchas says to Achilles that they should propitiate Apollo by setting free Chryses’ daughter.

60 Kirk 1985:271–272 and 204–205: for epithets regarding long hair as distinguished mark of ethnic groups.
in Philostratus (Heroicus 51.13). The poet does not ascribe similar epithets to the Argives or the Danaans, probably because he is intended to lay emphasis on these ethnic characteristics of the Achaeans, as they are the more general term which encompasses the Greeks as an ethnos or groups of ethnê, keeping for the Argives and the Danaans the role of the warriors. It should be noted that in the Odyssey too Argeioi and Danaoi are the warriors of the Trojan War, while Achaioi get also the role of the population of certain Greek regions.

Along with the epithet-noun formulas other formulaic repetitions, phrases or shorter expressions, are related to the names of the Greek warriors in the Homeric epics. Only the Achaeans are named κούρητες in the formulaic expression κούρητες Ἀχαιῶν (κρινάμενος κούρητας ἀριστῆας Παναχαιῶν, Iliad XIX.193; ἠρχ’, ἵμα δ’ ἄλλοι δῶρα φέρον κούρητες Ἀχαιῶν, Iliad XIX.248), which is quite distinct from the expressions κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν and υἷες Ἀχαιῶν. The word κοῦροι is used to denote the young warriors and υἷες could be related to the deeds of the epic hero to continue the paternal glory, while κούρητες has tribal or ritual connotations. It is interesting that the Κουρήτες are mentioned by Phoenix in the ninth book of the Iliad, in the story of Meleager, as a tribe of earlier generation of Achaean warriors. It is well known that Phoenix’s tale of the Kalydonian hero in this embedded narrative functions as a comparison between Achilles and Meleager and there is an essential analogy of the Homeric theme between the story of Achilles and the story of

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61 Nagy 2015:5. The language of Homeric poetry insists on equating the identity of the hero with the body of the hero, even if this body belongs to a hero who is already dead. See also comparison of Achilles cutting his hair along while the Achaeans are lamenting.

62 There are not similar expressions for the Argives or the Danaans. Other ethnic groups are sometimes referred to as κοῦροι (for example: κοῦροι Ἀθηναίων, Iliad II 551; κοῦροι Βοιωτῶν, Iliad II 510).

Meleager, which reflects the poetics of the *Iliad.* Burgess points out that the Kalydonian boar hunt is ‘a pan-Hellenic heroic enterprise’, which can be compared with the Trojan War of which Achaioi are the protagonists.\(^{64}\)

These broader connotations of Achaioi are corroborated by the term Panachaioi, an extended synonymous of Achaioi, which has no parallel for the other two ethnic names. Panachaioi is the un-marked, more generally applicable term and Argeioi and Danaoi are probably subsets with specific meaning and function. The earliest occurrence of this term is in the Homeric epics probably as a poetic invention. The term Panachaioi occurs three times in the *Odyssey* in an extended formulaic repetition (τῶ κέν οἱ τύμβον μὲν ἐποίησαν Παναχαιοί | ἠδὲ κε καὶ ὃ παιδὶ μέγα κλέος ἦρατ’ ὀπίσσω, *Odyssey* i 239, xiv 369, xxiv 32). Panachaioi are responsible for the construction of the hypothetical tomb of Odysseus to ensure the hero’s honor and leave his κλέος as heritage to his son, Telemachus. Once again Achaioi are entrusted with the duty of the establishment and continuity of the most important characteristic of the heroic identity, which is not only the personal private glory, but it also passes to the next generations through the communal stories and poems. Telemachus in his speech to Athena, who is disguised as Mendes, expresses his fear that his father did not gain the heroic *kleos* and remained ἁιστός and ἄπυστος (Odyssey i 242), since Achaioi were not able to prepare for him the funeral, and build the proper tomb, which will remind those to come of his glory. As a result, Telemachus has lost his valuable paternal heritage, the *kleos* of Odysseus, which he would have gained through his father heroic death in the battlefield. Once again Eumaeus repeats the same verses to Odysseus itself, when he meets him disguised as an old man, former warrior at Troy. Finally, in the Underworld (*Odyssey*, xxiv 32–33) Achilles conveys to Agamemnon his pity for his inglorious death far away from

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\(^{64}\) Burgess 2017:54.
Troy. In the three above occurrences the term Panachaioi appears in a similar context. Telemachus, Eumaeus, and Achilles describe the ideal burial of a warrior in the battlefield as inseparable element of his heroism and his tomb as tangible proof of his kleos at the war. This imaginary description of the never-constructed tomb and the subsequent kleos is associated with the ethnos, emphatically named as Panachaioi. Hence, the poet with this broader term denotes the unity and the continuity of the Greek ethnos, which comprises not only the warriors, who were supposed to be buried in the tomb, but also the warriors presented here as fathers, and their sons as their successors and inheritors of the patrimonial glory. Accordingly, Panachaioi are linked with the heroic identity and the transmission of the ancestral kleos from one generation to the other.

In the Iliad the term Panachaioi is attested nine times, of which eight are in the formulaic expression at the end of the verse ἄριστης Παναχαιῶν (ἄριστης in the nominative: Iliad II 404, VII 73, VII 159, VII 327, VII 385, X 1, XXIII 236 or in the accusative ἄριστης XIX 193) with the epithet in the type ἄριστεύς instead of ἄριστος. The formulaic expression occurs also in the Ilias Parva65 (‘Εκτορος, ἢν τε οἱ αὐτῶι ἄριστης Παναχαιῶν, fr. 21.7).66 Again these passages indicate a close connection of Panachaioi with the heroic deeds and the aristeia of the best of the Achaeans, the best of their kind, ‘either bravest or best in warfare or some other physical activity’.67 Finally, in the ninth occurrence (αὐτὸς καὶ τοῦ δῶρα, σὺ δ’ ἄλλους περ Παναχαιοὺς | τειρομένους ἐλέαιρε κατὰ στρατόν, οἱ σε θεόν ὡς | τίσουσ’ · ἦ γάρ κε αφι μάλα μέγα κῦδος ἄροιο, Iliad IX 301–303) Odysseus presents his


66 See also FGrH 21c 4.

argument for Achilles’ returning to the battle and tries to convince him to select the ‘social obligation’ instead of his ‘personal integrity’.\footnote{Hainsworth 1993:99.} This time Panachaioi are linked with kudos,\footnote{For a definition of kudos see Martin 2011:315–317. Also for kudos in comparison with kleos, see Pucci 1998:208–214.} the immediate and visible glory resulting from divine bestowal. The poet links the Panachaioi in the Iliad, where the warriors are about to gain their glory by fighting, with kudos, while in the Odyssey, where the war is over and kudos must have been already gained, associates them with kleos, the commemoration of their glory through the speeches of the heroes and the epic songs. Warriors who prove their heroism in the battlefield gain their eternal glory, their kleos, namely reputation and fame.

Similarly, Panhellênes, another collective term, appears only once (ἐγχείῃ δ᾿ ἐκέκαστο Πανέλληνας καὶ Ἀχαιούς, Iliad II.530), where the poet describes the skill of Ajax Oileus with the spear. Aristarchus had athetized the verses 529–530, because of the misapplication of Πανέλληνας, since the term is hapax and Hellênes is a tribal name referring to Achilles’ contingent. Eustathius accepts an earlier interpretation of the expression Πανέλληνας καὶ Ἀχαιούς as an equivalent to Θεσσαλούς καὶ Ἀργείους.\footnote{For the Scholia of Aristarch and Eustathius see Van Thiel 2014:235–236.} Kirk argues that this extended term is a late, even post-Homeric development, and that probably is due to a rhapsode.\footnote{Kirk 1985:202.} The term Panhellênes, either Homeric or not, is derived from the name Hellênes, which also is a hapax in the Homeric epics (Μυριμόνες δὲ καλεῦντο καὶ Ἑλληνες καὶ Ἀχαιοί, Iliad II 684) and it specifies the inhabitants of Phthia, who followed Achilles to Troy, and not the Greeks in general (note also the close association of the Achaeans with Hellas and

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\footnote{Hainsworth 1993:99.}
\footnote{For a definition of kudos see Martin 2011:315–317. Also for kudos in comparison with kleos, see Pucci 1998:208–214.}
\footnote{For the Scholia of Aristarch and Eustathius see Van Thiel 2014:235–236.}
\footnote{Kirk 1985:202.}
Phthia in *Iliad* IX.395, πολλαὶ Ἀχαιίδες εἰσὶν ἀν’ Ἑλλάδα τε Φθίην τε). The connection of the Myrmidon with the Hellènes can be explained as use of the tribal names of the regions of Phthia and Hellas, the homeland of Achilles. However, the name Achaioi, which follows immediately after, is unexpected, because is a term that the poet uses with a more general meaning. Kirk points out that “the addition of καὶ Ἀχαιοὶ is surprising” and that “it may be based on misunderstanding of the above mentioned expression Πανέλληνας καὶ Ἀχαιοῦς.” However, the earliest certain attestation of the term Panhellènes with the meaning ‘all-Greeks’ is in Hesiod (οὐ γάρ οἱ ἥλιος δείκνυ νομὸν ὁρμηθῆναι, | ἀλλ´ ἐπὶ κυναέων ἀνδρῶν δήμον τε πόλιν τε | στρωφᾶται, βράδιον δὲ Πανελλήνεσσι φαείνει, ὂπ. 528), while in Homer its meaning remains unclear.

The three ethnic names occur usually in the plural as nouns. However, Argeioi and Achaioi have sometimes a secondary adjectival function, while the term Danaoi is the only of the three terms that it is always used as a noun. The epithet Ἀργείη is ascribed to Hera only in the *Iliad* (for example, *Iliad* IV 8, V 908) and it is also a typical epithet for Helen, who is never referred to as Achais (see for instance: *Iliad* II 161, XI 323, *Odyssey* iv184, iv 296). The term Achaioi has also an adjectival use in the singular in the expression Ἀχαιός ἀνήρ (*Iliad* III 167, III 226). Lastly, the term Ἀχαιῆς is used as an epithet in combination with γαῖαν (for example: *Iliad* I 154, VII 124, XXI 107), while the term Ἀχαιίδες corresponds to the Achaean women, the women of Greece, in a formulaic insulting phrase addressed to the Achaeans (ὦ πέπονες κάκ´ ἐλέγχε` Ἀχαιίδες οὐκέτ` Ἀχαιοί, *Iliad* II 235; ὦ μοι ἀπειλητήρες Ἀχαιίδες οὐκέτ` Ἀχαιοί, *Iliad* VII 96).

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72 Kirk 1985:229.

Although the abovementioned terms keep their general meaning within the Homeric poems, they function differently in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. *Odyssey* is a world in motion, Odysseus travels to the boundaries of the human and non-human world and he offers a way of living and surviving through adversities, while *Iliad* is in a way a static world, since none goes beyond any boundaries; heroes are moving in a delimited space from their ships to the Trojan walls and they do not offer a model for living but rather a way of dying. While Odysseus fights for his family, his people, and his property, the *Iliad*ic heroes fight for a proper funeral and for their glorious tomb to prove their kudos and ensure their eternal kleos. Even the ships in the *Iliad* are not travelling, they are anchored and no matter how many times are presented as about to sail, they actually never do it in the *Iliad*. Consequently, in the *Iliad* Achaioi, Argeioi, and Danaoi are active mostly in the battlefield, fighting for their kleos and characterized with proper epithets, features of their heroic identity. In the *Odyssey*, even though we are in a sufficient distance from the Trojan War, this war is the cause of the existence of the *Odyssey* itself and its consequences are present in the poem in many various levels starting from the warriors who are trying to return in their homes families, property, and kingdoms to the kingship contenders and usurpers of the throne (in the case of Aegisthus and the suitors). Thus, Odysseus is far from Troy, but Troy is always following him and the speeches and songs of the bards in the *Odyssey* bring back the war to our memory as it must not be forgotten. The language of the *Odyssey*, when it comes to war, evokes the language of the *Iliad* and the references to the name of the Greek warriors are used in the same, often formulaic, style. Subsequently, Achaioi are described with their warlike epithets, as χαλκοχίτωνες (*Odyssey* i 286, iv 496), δίοι (iii 116), ἐυκνήμιδες (iii 149, xi 509), ἥρωες (xxiv 68), μεγάθυμοι (xxiv 57). Also, the poet uses formulaic expressions when referring to the Achaean warriors, who are named as in the *Iliad*,

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The label Ἀχαιός ἀνήρ used by the Trojan king is appropriate for both

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74 The expression is also attested in Pindar, *Nemean* 7.64 and the question arises, who is the Achaean man who will not blame Pindar if he is near? The poet says that he lives Ἰονίας ὑπὲρ ἅλλος ὀἰκέων and Glenn Most (1985:315–321) interprets the phrase as ‘dwelling above the Ionian Sea’ referring to an Achaean who lives on the hills overlooking the Ionian Sea and specifically to ‘any Molossian for whom the donor of Neoptolemus was so important that he could be regarded, or could regard himself, as an Achaean’ and probably means ‘anyone from the land where Neoptolemus lived after the Trojan War (Ephyra on Epirus, 37–38).’
the heroes, who both are representatives of the Achaeans after Achilles, Agamemnon as he is the ruler of all the Greeks and asserts the title of the best of the Achaeans from Achilles and Ajax as he surpasses everyone else in strength and he is far the best after Achilles. In this last example Ajax is an Achaios, which probably shows that this term is the primary identifier and simultaneously he is the rule of the Argives, which could possibly denote a regional subset.

When Antinoos threatens Telemachus because of his mother’s ploy and orders him to carry the message in Penelope (ἵν’ εἰδῶσι δὲ πάντες Ἀχαιοί, Odyssey ii.112) he refers to the suitors as the sons of the Achaeans (εἰ δ’ ἔτ’ ἀνήσει γε πολύν χρόνον νίας Ἀχαιῶν, Odyssey ii.115), an address which is repeated by Eurymachus (οὐ γὰρ πρὶν παύσεσθαι οἴομαι νίας Ἀχαιῶν, Odyssey ii.198). Also, the population of Ithaca and of neighboring islands (ἐκ δὲ Ζακύνθου ἔασιν ἕείκοσι κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν, Odyssey xvi.250) is called Achaioi. The name Danaoi occurs 13 times in the Odyssey (i.350, iv.278, iv.725, iv.815, v.306, viii.82, viii.578, xi.470, xi.526, xi.551, xi.559, xxiv.18, xxiv.46) and it is always related to the Greek warriors at Troy. Once they are characterized as αἰχμηταί (αἴτως, ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς Δαναῶν στρατὸν αἰχμητάων, Odyssey xi.559), which is a common epithet of them in the Iliad and Odysseus in his narration to Alcinoos refers to the Danaoi with a typical Iliadic formula (ἐνθ᾽ ἄλλοι Δαναῶν ἠγήτορες ἢδὲ μέδοντες, Odyssey xi.526). Among these occurrences the expression Ἀργείων Δαναῶν ἡς Ἡλίου οἴτον ἄκουων (Ἀργείων Δαναῶν ἡς Ἡλίου οἴτον ἄκουων, Odyssey viii 578) is extremely interesting, as it is unique in the Homeric epics, not because of the coexistence of the names Argeioi and Danaoi in the same verse, which is not unfamiliar, but for the reason that the name Argeioi has an adjectival use. Heubeck comments the uniqueness of this expression and suggests that in the Iliad the combination would probably be impossible, since the three terms Ἀργεῖοι, Ἀχαιοί, Δαναοί are treated as nouns and points out that the poet of the Odyssey does not have ‘Iliadic diction at the surface of
his mind: if he had, he would not need to create an anomalous phrase’.\(^{75}\) Alcinoos’ in
his speech asks Odysseus the reason that makes him cry, when Demodocus sings the
fate of the Argive Danaans. Odysseus himself had asked Demodocus to sing Ἀχαιῶν
οἶτον (Odyssey viii 489), maybe because he wanted to hear the heroic achievements
of the Achaeans, but the song reminds him actually of the sad fate of the Danaans.
The word οἶτος is mainly connected with the Danaans (see for example: Iliad III 147,
VIII 34, VIII 465 and Odyssey i 350) and in this particular expression the poet
emphatically conjoins the two ethnic names to signify initially the heroic past of the
warriors and then their subsequent sad fate. Thus, in the Odyssey the world of war is
dissociated from the world of peace as the revealed by the distinctive use of ethnic
names.

In the Odyssey the term Argeioi is never followed by an epithet except once
(χεύαμεν Ἀργείων ἱερὸς στρατὸς αἰχμητάων, xxiv 81), when Agamemnon
elaborately describes the death and the burial of Achilles, immediately after Achilles
has reminded him his own inglorious death. “The poet’s intention here is to provide
a particularly vivid contrast between the ὀλβος of Achilles, described at length by
Agamemnon, and the tragic end of the career of Agamemnon, which has been well
known to his audience, and which therefore needs only to be briefly indicated by
Achilles.”\(^{76}\) Here, at the end of Odyssey it is actually revealed who is the best of the
Achaeans, title which was asserted by the two heroes in the Iliad. In Achilles’ funeral
scene the toponyms and ethnonyms are important in a quasi-epitome of the Iliad
and the Trojan War. Agamemnon starts with Achilles, the central hero of the Iliad
and continues by setting the toponyms and the ethnonyms of the Iliad: Troy and
Argos (XXIV 37), and Trojans and Achaeans (XXI 38). Argos here probably refers

\(^{75}\) Heubeck et al. 1988:384.

\(^{76}\) Russo et al. 1992:362.
generally to the Greece as the homeland of the Greeks. Danaoi are presented mourning and cutting off their hair in a funerary ritual (XXIV 46) evoking the καρη κομώντες Achaeans. Nestor’s call to Argeioi to remain in their positions is no longer an exhortation for fighting as the αἰδώς Ἀργεῖοι, but simply a fatherly advice to the sons of the Achaeans not to be afraid of Thetis. The crying Argeioi (XXIV 61–62) become ἥρωες Achaioi (XXIV 68–69) as soon as they stand armed around the pyre. These brave warriors armed with spears and “filled with unusual inner strength” construct the enormous impressive tomb for Achilles (ἄμφοι αὐτοῖσι δ’ ἐπείτα μέγαν καὶ ἀμύμονα τύμβον | χεύαμεν Ἀργείων ἱερὸς στρατός αἰχμητάων, XXIV 80–81) and accordingly establish his immortal kleos. Notice the epithet ἱερός, which is hapax in connection with στρατός and although it has lost some of its original, religious meaning, still carries religious connotations.

The name Argeioi occurs thirty times in the Odyssey usually to describe the Greek warriors at the Trojan War. Penelope addresses to Eurymachus (ὅτε Ἰλιον εἰσανέβαινον | Ἀργεῖοι, μετὰ τοῖσι δ’ ἐμὸς πόσις ἦν Ὄδυσσεος, xviii 253) and later uses the same verse, when she refers to the Trojan War (xix 126) speaking to her husband, whom she has not yet recognized. Also, heroes that had participated in the Trojan War, as Nestor, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Menelaus, Helen, or people that have heard the labors of the Achaeans, such as Telemachus, Alcinoos, the seer Alitherses are refer to the Argeioi as the besiegers of Troy. Only once, when Nestor narrates to Telemachus the feast that Orestes offers to the Argeioi after he had killed his mother and Aegisthus, the name acquires the meaning of the local people, of the inhabitants of Mycenae and Argos (ὁ τοῦ ὁ τὸν κτείνας δαίνῃ τάφον Ἀργείοισιν, Odyssey iii 309).


Conclusions

To sum up, this more contextual and functional analysis of the denomination of the Greeks in the Homeric epics enhances our understanding of the way that ethnic names are used in the Iliad and the Odyssey, even though cannot provide all the answers to all the problems that have emerged. The names Achaioi, Argeioi, and Danaoi certainly have a historical and/or mythological background of which the poet is fully or partly aware. Their place of origin, their legendary ancestors, and their wars, travels, poleis, and settlements not only within the borders of the Greek world but also out of them, in Anatolia and eastern Mediterranean, have survived as communal memory and probably many elements within the poems are preserved as relics of this history and myths.

These memories partly explain why he poet uses three separate terms as ethnic collective names for the Greeks in an early period of identity construction, in which the existence of different local identities and legendary ancestors are combined with the emerging ethnogenesis process. Nevertheless, the poet could avoid this confusion by applying one collective name to the Greeks, but the use of different ethnic names seems to be a deliberate decision. Sometimes the poet ascribes different meaning to each term in the Iliad and the Odyssey as the statistical data and the above contextual analysis has already shown. Achaioi is statistically the predominant term in the Homeric epics and seems to be the most general unmarked term as it corresponds to many different categories, for example the warriors in the Trojan War and the inhabitants of specific regions of the Greek world. Argeioi and Danaoi symbolize mostly the warriors of Troy and in the Odyssey are linked with the heroic past of the Odyssean heroes. Even though sometimes these terms are mutually interchangeable, as they cannot be distinguished from one another, I hope to have shown that the poet often intends to apply them in a distinctive manner in
particular contexts to produce meaning and that the criterion of their
differentiation is not mainly their ethnic determined characteristics, for he
probably does not have in his mind a coherent perception of the historical
background. Many times in the Iliad and the Odyssey the epic poet ascribes to every
ethnic group different qualities, which are contextually determined, in order to
draw attention and produce meaning. Even though sometimes each term overlaps
the other, they are not always used haphazardly, but they have a functional role in
the poems, sometimes distinct in the Iliad and the Odyssey. In this textual world
carefully constructed by the epic poet these names are associated with certain
characteristics of the heroic world and, finally, shed light on a character, a fact, or
an action. This conclusion reassesses the significance of the three names, but of
course more remain to be explored in the light of contextual and metrical analysis.

**Figures 1–9**

![Graph showing frequency of ethnic names in Iliad]

- **Argeioi** 19%
- **Danaoi** 16%
- **Achaioi** 65%

Figure 1. Frequency of ethnic names in reference to the Greeks in the Iliad.
Figure 2. Frequency of ethnic names in reference to the Greeks in the *Odyssey*.

Figure 3. Times each speaker class refers to the Greeks and by what ethnic name in the *Iliad*. 
Figure 4. Frequency of ethnic names in references to the Greeks in the Odyssey.

Figure 5. By what ethnic name the *Iliadic* heroes call the Greeks.
Figure 6. Times each speaker class refers to the Greeks and by what ethnic name in the *Odyssey*.

Figure 7. By what ethnic name the Odyssean heroes call the Greeks.
<table>
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<th>inhabitants of Argos</th>
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Figure 8. Meaning of the ethnic names in the *Odyssey*.

![Graph showing formulaic expressions](image)

Figure 9. Formulaic expressions (noun-epithet and repetition formulas) applied to the Achaeans, Argives, and Danaans in the Homeric epics.
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