

Φίλτατος in the *Iliad*

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The word φίλτατος is the superlative degree of φίλος. Wiktionary defines φίλος as the following:

★ φίλος • (phīlos) (masculine φίλος, feminine φίλη, neuter φίλον); first/second declension

1. That which is loved or important: beloved, dear, of or from a friend
2. (less commonly): loving, friendly

Since it is the superlative form of this word, φίλτατος often translates to dearest or most beloved.

My goal within this project was to identify whether there were specific implications in the use of φίλτατος within the *Iliad*, in regards to the type of relationship or emotions carried within it. In my research, I tracked the usage of φίλτατος through the *Iliad* and compared the situations in which it was used. These are the lines used:

- ★ Book 17, line 411. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, the narrator refers to Patroclus as far the dearest comrade to Achilles. In Wilson's translation, the narrator refers to Patroclus as the man Achilles loved the most of all by far.
- ★ Book 17, line 584. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, the narrator refers to Phaenops as the dearest of guest-friends to Hector. In Wilson's translation, the narrator refers to Phaenops as the guest friend whom Hector loved most of all.

- ★ Book 17, line 655. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, Aias refers to Patroclus as the dearest of comrades to Achilles. In Wilson's translation, Aias refers to Patroclus as Achilles' dearest friend in all the world.
- ★ Book 18, line 118. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, Achilles refers to Hercules as most dear to Zeus. In Wilson's translation, Achilles refers to Hercules as the son whom Zeus loved most of all.
- ★ Book 20, line 410. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, the narrator refers to Polydorus as dearest to his father Priam. In Wilson's translation, the narrator refers to Polydorus as Priam's favourite son.
- ★ Book 22, line 233. The Greek word is nominative, masculine, and singular in this line. In Murray's translation, Hector refers to Deïphobus as his dearest brother. In Wilson's translation, Hector refers to Deïphobus as the brother that he loved most of all.

I selected the lines according to this criteria: Examples must be refer to a human or demigod – this eliminates examples of clothing, animals, or cities. Example phrases will only be counted once if a character is repeating an exact phrase or quoting someone. All cases of the word were included in this search, but the word must be superlative, φίλτατος -η -ον. Examples had to be either spoken by a human, demigod, or used by the narrator – this eliminates repetitive scenes in which a god declares a mortal

to be dearest to them, which happen pretty frequently, and didn't give me much information. Examples must be singular, referring only to one person.

Even though I did not filter by case or gender, the only examples of φίλατος in the *Iliad* that fit my criteria wound up being nominative and masculine. Within this text, the word was only used to refer to humans or demigods, never deities. Since some words tend to be used in specific parts of a line to assist the bard's memory and fit into meter, I looked to see if that was the case with φίλατος. This formula did not apply here. The word is broken up across dactylic feet, scanning as u | - u, which is short, long, short, so it starts on the last syllable of a dactyl. Which dactyl within the line, though, varies.

Most frequently within the lines I picked, φίλατος was used to refer to Patroclus as the dearest to or most loved by Achilles. I thought this was interesting, especially when comparing the Murray and Wilson translations. Murray translates the Greek in an almost identical way between Book 17, line 411, and Book 17, line 655, as the Greek text was quite similar. Wilson, on the other hand, translated them in completely different ways. Wilson also attached a stronger sense of affection within her translation.

The non-superlative form, φίλος -η -ον, is used hundreds of times in the *Iliad*, much more frequently than the superlative. It is used 251 times in its singular form, and 91 times that are either dual or plural. When not superlative, it shows up in different genders and cases, which it doesn't in its superlative form. Φίλος is used in its feminine form, φίλη, along with its neuter form, φίλον.

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