



Eleonora Giunchi

Bright Heads:

Fire Imagery and
Intertextuality in
Odyssey 18

Κεφαλῆς: Head

Σέλας: Brightness



Bald Odysseus

“I have an intuition that this man has come into Odysseus’ house through some god’s will. His head is shining brightly under the lanterns’ light—perhaps because he is completely bald!”(Od. 18.354-6)



Bright Athena

“Athena stood by them with a golden lamp; she made majestic light. Telemachus said,

*my eyes have noticed something very strange.
The palace walls, the handsome fir-wood rafters
and crossbeams and the pillars high above
are visible, as if a fire were lit.
Some god from heaven must be in the house”
(Od. 19.33-40)*

‘Father,

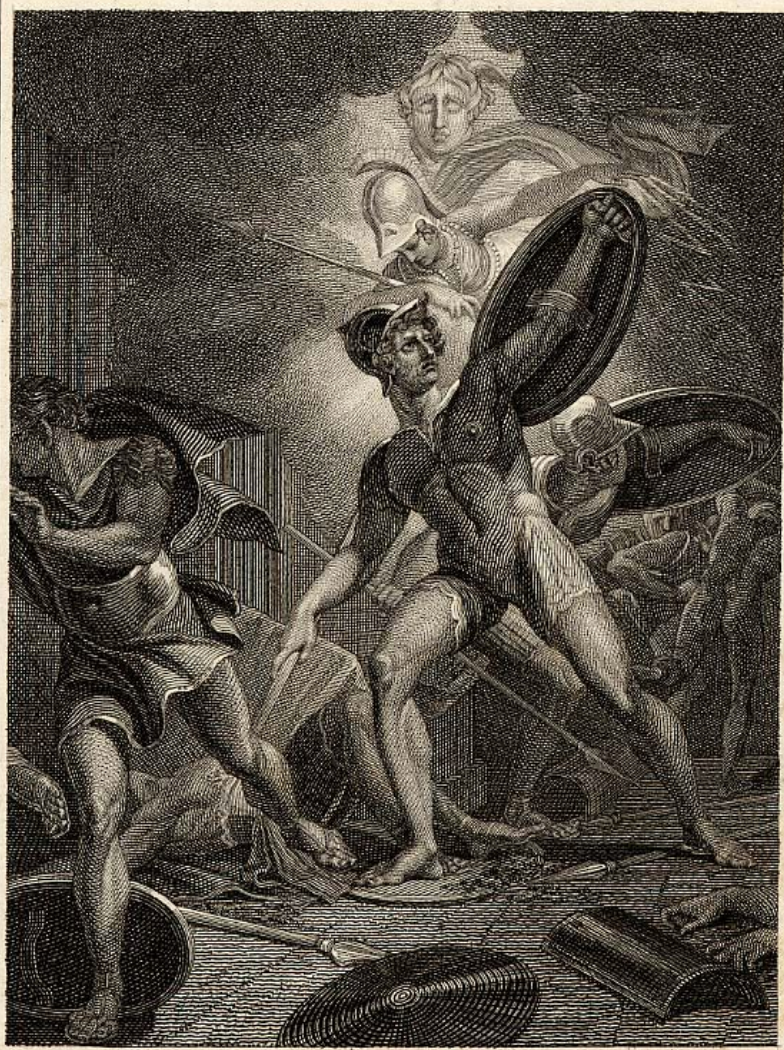


Flaming Achilles

*“And [Athena] crowned his head
with golden mist and made bright flame flash from him.
As when smoke rises up into the sky
from some far distant city on an island
besieged by enemies—the townsmen fight
all day beneath the hateful gaze of Ares—
at sunset, they keep lighting beacon fires,
to make the brightness visible on high
to neighbors who might sail to help their fight—
just, so the brightness on Achilles' head reached to the
sky.”*

(Il. 18.205-14)





Bibliography

1. Giunchi, Eleonora. "Bright Heads: Fire Imagery and Intertextuality in *Odyssey* 18." *Classical Journal* 118, no. 1 (2022): 31-49. <https://dx.doi.org/10.1353/tcj.2022.0022>.