

13th Conference of the FIEC (Fédération Internationale des Associations d'Études Classiques) 24th-29th, 2009 Berlin

a) Definite title: "Black humour and epic parody in Elpenor's episode (*Odyssey* 10.552-560, 11.51-83)"

b) Language: English

c) Address:

Marco-Antonio Santamaría

Universidad de Salamanca

Pl. Anaya, s/n, 37008. Salamanca. Spain.

masanta@usal.es

[marko\\_antonio75@yahoo.com](mailto:marko_antonio75@yahoo.com)

d) Final abstract

In this episode we can perceive an ironic treatment of some epic conventions. The first one appears in the *catabasis*-motif. Just before Odysseus' departure to Hades at the end of *Odyssey* 10, an unknown companion, Elpenor falls from the roof and dies. In this way the poet suggests with black humour that the easiest way to reach to the realm of dead is to die. Later, it is Elpenor's soul the first one that Odysseus meets on the threshold of Hades (11.51-83). He pleads with Odysseus that he will cremate his corpse with his arms and erect a huge burial mound in his memory. These words imply a parody of the heroic values (cf. *Il.* 23.69-92): in the post-heroic era pictured in the *Odyssey*, even an insignificant warrior can claim for great honours and imperishable glory.