

Interpretation

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Design in the *Iliad* Based on the Long Repeated Passages

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INTRODUCTION

And just as in the case of the lodestone, so also a mighty chain of choral dancers, masters, and under-teachers is hung down with side branches from the Muse. And some poets are hung from one Muse and some from another, but we name all of them as being possessed, for it resembles that because each is held. From the first of these rings, the poets, others are suspended, some from one, some from another, and they are inspired, some from Orpheus, some from Musaeus, but the majority are possessed by Homer and held by him. Of which you, Ion, are one and are possessed by Homer, and when someone might sing the works of another poet, you go to sleep and are at a loss what to say, but when somebody might utter the strain of this poet, straightaway you are awake, your soul dances, and you are able to contribute something, for you say what you say not by virtue of art nor by knowledge of Homer but through divine dispensation and by possession.

Ion, 536 A–C

In the short Platonic dialogue *Ion*, one of the earlier surviving bits of Homeric criticism, the rhapsode Ion is shown under Socratic questioning to have little direct knowledge of any of the arts in which Homer's poems engage us—not the art of chariot-driving, nor of medicine, nor of fishing, nor of seaman-ship, nor wool-spinning, nor even the leading of armies and military strategy. Ion's ability comes not through art (*techne*), whose touchstone is knowledge (*episteme*). Ion and other rhapsodes as well are the intermediate links in a mysterious chain of iron rings, so Socrates likens them, running from Muse to poet to listener and held together by the magnetic power of the Muses, whose marks are divine dispensation (*moira*), possession (*katokoche*), and inspiration (*enthusiasmos*).

Considerable effort among modern scholars has gone into reconstructing how the Muses' magnetic power operated in Greek antiquity, particularly in preliterate societies in which we may suppose that the poems of the Homeric Cycle were originally crafted and dispensed. It is arguable¹ that in the original oral or aeodic tradition of these epics the singers of the poems, although from

the standpoint of tradition imitators and thus liable to charges of thoughtless repetition by a reflective questioner, exercised considerable discretion in their poetic recitations by drawing upon and deploying an inherited treasury of metrically and semantically set phrases or “formulae.” By this means, recitation of the poem in its integrity was combined with a measure of flexibility in its recitation; the work was transmitted, yet imparted with the particular stamp, style, and distinction of its individual performer.

The received texts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are thus marked by numerous repeated phrases (e. g., epithets), half-lines, and lines as the traces of this original work of composition-recitation. But in both poems there are also longer repeated passages, passages of fourteen feet or more, repeated at least once, where the second passage is an exact duplicate of the first or differs at most in one or two metrically equivalent words.² In the *Iliad* there are 102 such repeats, ranging in length from 3 to 36 lines.³ The intrusion of long blocks of verse to be rerecited verbatim later obviously narrows the scope of interpretative virtuosity of the performer and suggests that the presence of such repeated longer passages might have an added significance beyond the technical requirements and artistic possibilities of performance. Such a significance might be traceable to the requirements of Homeric interpretation; as the tales sound in the ears of the listeners of the poems, aural associations may prompt associations in meaning.⁴ The present inquiry seeks to explore this question.

In 45 of these 102 repeated passages in the *Iliad* the poet is speaking to us directly, and they may be said, therefore, to comprise part of the narrative description of the poem. The remaining 57 parallels are portions of speeches, those either of gods or of men. Of these repeated dictions 41 are portions of messages: instructions or information given by one person (in two instances by the poet himself) which are repeated by another person to yet a third person, or (in three instances) are carried out verbatim by the second as a direct command.⁵ These message (and/or declaration) repeated passages are easily recognized by even the most casual listener or reader. They belong generally among the longest repeated passages in the *Iliad*; eight of ten and thirteen of the twenty longest repeats are messages. Secondly, the message is relayed within the space of a few verses of its origin; 37 of the 41 repeats are found within the same book of the poem.

When Thetis takes Achilles' complaint to Zeus and asks that he do honor to her son (I 493–516) and the cloud-gatherer agrees (I 517–530), the king of gods and men assumes direction of the events unfolding on the Trojan plain below. It is maintained in this paper that when studied in their consecutive order, the 41 repeated messages dictate successively those principal events in the plot of the *Iliad* whereby Thetis' son is accorded honor. Thus it is affirmed that the action of the *Iliad* turns about these messages, particularly about those originating with Zeus, and that within their context most of the other 61 long repeated passages in the poem also find their places. Accordingly, it is the message repeats that must be investigated and to which we must first turn if an

interpretative significance of Homer's iterative style is to be located. This significance, conversely, will primarily come to light in reflection upon Zeus' designs for Achilles as a whole when the plan is fulfilled.

A description of the message chronology follows. The 41 messages, originating in the first twelve books, books XIV through XVI, and books XVIII and XXIV of the *Iliad*, are grouped into 24 stages below. Forty-eight of the other repeated passages in the poem, both in diction and narrative, can be related to the plan established through the messages, and they are so related in each appropriate stage.

STAGES IN THE NARRATIVE AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

First Stage: Two significant passages in the poet's proem are repeated by Achilles later to Thetis: ". . . *to ransom his daughter bearing boundless ransom and having in his hands garlands from far-darting Apollo with the golden scepter, and he beseeches all the Achaeans, but especially the two sons of Atreus, the two commanders of the people . . . but it did not please Agamemnon, son of Atreus, and he badly dismissed him*" (I 13–16 = I 372–375; I 22–25 = I 376–379). This first stage establishes a basic theme of the poem, ransom for a hostage (*homeros*) and its refusal, and Agamemnon's refusal, originally sung in the prefatory declaration of the Muses, now emerges on the lips of Achilles himself—that is, within the drama and as an element within the action of the poem as a whole.

The continuance of this theme in the decisive, early stages of the tale is revealed by the fact that Chryses' invocation in his prayer to Apollo to call off the plague is repeated in part in Achilles' invocation to Zeus to give glory and might to Patroclus: "*Once then when I prayed you heard my word and you honored me and did greatly harm the Achaean people. Now also grant me this wish*" (I 453–455 = XVI 236–238). The connection between ransom and the rest of the poem is also revealed in that the sacrifice to Apollo and feasting of the Achaeans after Chryseis' return is described in the same words as the Achaean sacrifice to Zeus and feasting prior to the renewal of battle (I 458–461 = II 421–424; I 464–469 = II 427–432).⁶ A significant portion is also repeated in describing the Argive feast after the inconclusive single combat of Ajax and Hector (I 317–320 = I 428–431 = VII 317–320). The petitions of Chryses to Apollo and of Achilles to Zeus here are ironically unfulfilled: the plague on the Argives continues, now through battle rather than disease, in a lengthy ordeal, in which Achilles becomes, in effect, the "plague" upon the Argives and whose relief will commence when Achilles' petition to Zeus is not fulfilled.

Second Stage: Zeus gives a message to Oneiros, who then relays it to Agamemnon, who, in turn, tells it to the council of Achaean leaders (II 11–15

= II 28–32 = II 65–69): “. . . bid you arm with all speed the Achaeans, ones with flowing hair about the head, because now you may seize the broad-avenued city of the Trojans, since the immortals having Olympian abodes no longer are divided in counsel, for Hera in beseeching has inclined all, and doom hangs over the Trojans.” Oneiros adds a prologue to this exhortation, which Agamemnon also repeats to the council (II 23–27 = II 60–64): “You sleep, son of Atreus, horsetaming one of thoughtful mind, but a man bringing counsel must not sleep the night through, one to whom the people have given trust and whom so much care troubles, but let you now understand me promptly. I am a messenger of Zeus to you, Zeus who, though being far away from you yet cares greatly and takes pity on you.” And Oneiros will also add to Zeus’s message the short epilogue, which Agamemnon repeats to the assembled (II 33 [in part] = II 70 [in part]): “. . . from Zeus, but bear this in mind.” The three passages taken together comprise a message, an exhortation to renew the Argive offense on the Trojan citadel, and this comes at a most inopportune time, since a rupture has occurred between Achilles and Agamemnon. Not unexpectedly, Agamemnon puts this to an ironic test in the general assembly, expecting a ratification for the attack, the reverse of what he advocates.

Third Stage: “Zeus, son of Cronos,” Agamemnon laments to the assembled Argives, “has greatly bound me in oppressive delusion (ate), Zeus the merciless one, who before promised me and nodded me his assent that, having wasted well-walled Ilium, I return home again. But now he has counselled me an evil deceit, and he bids infamous me go to Argos after I have destroyed many people. Thus is it destined as dear to Zeus, the one with great might, who has unloosed the heads of many cities and will yet unloose them, for his rule is supreme.” To this lament, an ironic one here but which will later appear unironically and decisively in the ninth book (II 111–118 = IX 18–25), Agamemnon will also add in both assemblies: “But come, let us all be convinced of what I might say. Let us retreat in our ships to our dear fatherland, because we will not hereafter seize broad-avenued Troy” (II 139–141 = IX 26–28).

Fourth Stage: Hera will now utter a reproach to Athena concerning Agamemnon’s counsel for retreat, a retreat which the Argives in general have approved. Athena, in turn, will pass on this reproach to Odysseus (II 158–165 = II 174–181): “So the Argives will flee homeward to their dear fatherland over the broad back of the sea, and they will have abandoned Argive Helen for the boasting of Priam and the Trojans—Helen, for whose sake many of the Achaeans are lost at Troy far from their dear fatherland. But come now to the people of the bronze-clad Achaeans and with your kind words restrain each man and do not allow them to drag their versatile ships into the sea.” Odysseus will then turn the minds of the Argives back from thoughts of withdrawal to the offensive.

Fifth Stage: The original *causa belli* reasserts itself. At Hector's chiding Alexander declares: ". . . and put me in the middle with Menelaos, dear to Ares, to fight over Helen and all the goods, and whoever of the two might be victorious and the stronger, let him lead the woman to his home, he having seized the goods." Hector will then put this proposal verbatim to the Argives and Trojans drawn up along the battle line (III 69–72 = III 90–93). Alexander also continues: "And the rest, cutting friendships and credible treaties, let them all dwell in fertile Troy and those return to horse-grazing Argos and Achaia with its beautiful women." Idaios will be dispatched to deliver this proposal in so many words to Priam (III 73–75 = III 256–258).

There is a parallel between Menelaos' and Alexander's combat over Helen here in the third book and that between Menelaos and Euphorbos over Patroclus' corpse in book XVII (III 348–350 = XVII 44–46). In both cases Menelaos' adversary casts his spear first, "but the bronze did not break through but the point was bent back from him in the stout shield; and next Menelaos, son of Atreus, roused himself with the bronze, having prayed to Zeus the father." In the latter fray over the dead Patroclus we seem to be reminded, however briefly, of the original occasion for the battle: Menelaos and Alexander over Helen.

Sixth Stage: Agamemnon in his prayer to Zeus at the conclusion of the agreement above has a somewhat different notion of the terms of the single combat: if Menelaos might slay Alexander, "then the Trojans are to have given back Helen and all the goods to the Argives and to make requital to the Argives, whatever is seemly and might also turn out seemly for men yet to come." He will repeat these terms to the Trojans after the combat (III 285–287 = III 458–460), prefacing them, significantly, with "The victory of Menelaos, dear to Ares, is manifest . . ." (although nobody was killed) and changing the sense of the first sentence above to an imperative: "Give back Argive Helen and the goods with her. . . ." Agamemnon has here enlarged the private dispute, what had been conceived as a contest over the woman and goods to be settled by single combat, into a public matter, a war; Agamemnon wants reparations to all the Argives. The enlargement of the combat is reflected in two parallels between the Menelaos-Alexander encounter in book III and that of Ajax and Hector in the seventh book. In both cases the contests are announced when Hector proceeds openly to the middle of the ranks and stops the fighting with his spear held in the middle (III 76–78 = VII 54–56). In both contests the Argive combatants similarly pierce the shields of their Trojan antagonists and narrowly miss wounding them (III 356–360 = VII 250–254).

Seventh Stage: Athena breaks the truce. She counsels Pandaros, "Pray to Lycian-born Apollo, famed for the bow, to perform splendid public sacrifices of first-born sheep, having returned to the city of sacred Zelia." In the same

words (IV 101–103 = IV 119–121) Pandaros vows these things to Apollo, and then he launches the arrow at Menelaos.

Eighth Stage: Agamemnon commands the herald Talthybios to summon Machaon, the physician, “. . . *in order that he might see warlike Menelaos, son of Atreus, whom someone among the Trojans or Lycians, having shot an arrow and knowing well the bow, has hit: for him, on the one hand, fame (kleos); for us, on the other, sorrow.*” Talthybios relays this message to Machaon (IV 195–197 = IV 205–207), who comes to assist the stricken leader.

Ninth Stage: Athena counsels Diomedes: “*You are not to fight directly with the other immortal gods, yet if the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, might come to the war, you are to wound her with the sharp bronze*” Diomedes does, in fact, challenge Apollo thrice and is warned off. Diomedes’ threefold challenge of Apollo is reflected later in Patroclus’ threefold challenge of Troy (V 437–439 = XVI 703, 705–706) and Achilles’ threefold challenge of Hector (V 436–439 = XX 445–448). (See also the remarks about the twenty-third stage below.)

Diomedes then retreats before Ares. When Athena sees the latter and confronts Diomedes, Diomedes repeats her earlier counsel: “*You are not to fight directly with the other immortal gods, yet if the daughter of Zeus, Aphrodite, might come to the war, you are to wound her with the sharp bronze*” (V 130–132 = V 819–821). Athena will now rescind the earlier admonition and join Diomedes at the reins in the chariot, where he will wound both Ares and Aphrodite. In both cases where Ares and Aphrodite are wounded through Athena, Hera alerts and arouses Athena with winged words to go after the second victim (V 711, 713–714 = XXI 418–420). In book V Aphrodite has been and Ares is about to be wounded; in book XXI Ares has been and Aphrodite is about to be victimized by Athena.

Tenth Stage: As a result of Diomedes’ and Athena’s exploits, Helenos urges Hector (and Aeneas) to persuade Hecuba to gather the elder Trojan women at Athena’s temple and “. . . *to place a gown, one seeming to her the most delightful, the largest, and dearest, on the knees of the fairhaired Athena and to promise sacrifice to her of twelve, ungoaded, yearling heifers in the temple, if she might take pity on the city, wives, and infant children and restrain Tydeus’ son, wild spearman and bold deviser of rout, from sacred Ilium.*” Helenos’ message is delivered in these words by Hector to Hecuba (VI 90–97 = VI 271–278).

Hector’s foreboding to Andromache after Athena’s refusal: “. . . *because this I know well in my mind and in my breast: there will be a day when sacred Ilium might be destroyed and Priam and the people of Priam, good with the ashen spear . . .*” repeats Agamemnon’s oath of destruction in book IV (IV 163–165 = VI 447–449). Hera’s and Athena’s oath not to help the Trojans, not

even if Troy is laid waste, is forced from Scamander under duress by Hephaistos in book XXI (XX 315–318 = XXI 374–377). There is no longer any way out of the conflict, either for men or gods; one side, Trojan or Argive, will prevail, and the other, conversely, will be destroyed. This clearcut alternative comes to be represented by the scales which Zeus will hold up on Mount Ida (see twenty-fourth stage, below); the sinking of one pan is accompanied quite precisely by the rise of the other.

Eleventh Stage: Nestor counsels the Achaeans: "*Having brought earth from all parts of the plain, we should raise a single tomb upon the pyre and construct lofty ramparts, a protection for the ships and for ourselves. And in them we will make well-fitted gates so that through them there is a way fit to be traversed by chariots, and outside near it we will dig a deep ditch*" (VII 336–341). Meanwhile, Priam advises the Trojans to speak with the Achaeans to learn if they might wish ". . . *to cease from ill-sounding war so that we might burn our corpses. We will fight again later so that the divinity (daimon) should choose among us and grant victory to the one or to the other*" (VII 376–378). Priam's proposal is announced by the Trojan herald, Idaeos, to the Argives in as many words (VII 376–378 = VII 395–397), and the proposal is accepted. This allows Nestor's plan to be carried out, whose accomplishment is described in nearly the same words in which it is proposed (VII 336–341 = VII 435–440). The mutual agreement thus permits the Argives to fortify themselves so as to produce a mutually complementary situation: two fortified towns, one of ships and the other of houses, will now stand opposite one another on the Trojan plain.

Twelfth Stage: Zeus extracts the promise from Hera and Athena not to interfere in the war, but Athena adds ". . . *but on the whole we lament the Danaan spearmen who should perish, having had the full measure of an evil doom. But truly we will restrain ourselves from war as you bid, but we will suggest to the Argives whatever boule will benefit them, lest all of them might have perished at your grievance.*" Hera and Athena disobey, however, and Hera is later compelled to vow again to Zeus not to interfere in the war, using in large part the same words that Athena used earlier (VIII 33–37 = VIII 464–468). This disobedience and continued hostility to the Trojans is reflected in the fact that the evils and stratagems the two goddesses mutter against the Trojans before breaking the truce in book IV are found again later when they enter the battle against Zeus's command (IV 20–23 = VIII 457–460). The description of the initial clashes of the two armies before and after the abortive settlement by single combat is repeated (IV 446–451 = VIII 60–65). The preparation and mounting of the chariot by the two goddesses in book VIII repeat those in their previous entry into the battle in the fifth book (V 719–721 = VIII 381–383; V 733–737 = VIII 384–388; V 745–752 = VIII 389–396).

When Zeus discovers the two goddesses secretly about to enter the fray in their chariot, he sends them the following threat in a message relayed by Iris (VIII 402–408 = VIII 416–422): *“I will lame the two swift horses to their chariot and will strike them from their two-man car and shatter the chariot; and for ten years the two of them will not recover from their wounds which my thunderbolt might administer. The gleaming-eyed one ought to know better than to fight with her father. At Hera I am not vexed nor do I take anger as much, because she is always accustomed to interrupt what I might say.”*

Thirteenth Stage: With the gods prohibited by Zeus from taking an active part in the war, there is a resurgence of the Trojans under Hector. Having encouraged the Trojans with prospects of victory, Hector bids his troops retire for the night: *“Drive cattle and goodly flocks from the city, furnish wine for your spirits and food from your chambers and gather much wood.”* The poet describes the Trojans doing so in these words (VIII 505–507 = VIII 545–547) as they fulfill Hector’s command.

The Trojan resurgence here will be echoed later in the poem. Hector’s exhortation to his troops, *“Trojans and Lycians and close-fighting Dardanians, be men, dear friends, and call to mind furious valor,”* given here (VIII 172–174) after Diomedes has been brought to a stop by Zeus’s thundering, is repeated three more times, each time after a Zeus-assisted triumph: after Agamemnon is wounded (= XI 285–287), after Teucer’s bowstring is snapped (= XV 485–487), and after Patroclus is killed (= XVII 183–185). Furthermore, Diomedes’ invitation to Nestor in the eighth book to get in the chariot behind the captured horses of Aeneas repeats that of Aeneas himself to Pandaros earlier (V 221–223 = VIII 105–107), but with a significant inversion: the later invitation is not to attack but to flee. Similarly, nine Argive leaders are described as answering Agamemnon’s cry in the eighth book as they did Nestor’s earlier challenge in the seventh book (VII 164–167 = VIII 262–265), but it is not in answer to Nestor’s triumphant invitation to single combat with Hector but the cry to stem the tide of the Trojan onslaught.

Fourteenth Stage: Another council of the Argives is called. We note in passing that both this council and that in book VII (see eleventh stage) are presided over by Nestor and introduced in the same words (VII 323–326 = IX 92–95). Here Agamemnon proposes gifts to Achilles and sends an embassy to him, where Odysseus repeats the list of riches offered by the son of Atreus to the Myrmidon leader (IX 122–157 = IX 264–299):

. . . seven unfired tripods, ten talents of gold, twenty fiery cauldrons, twelve firm, prize-winning horses who have gained trophies with their feet. A man should not be poor, one to whom so much has come, nor should he be poor in gold, as much as these horses have won in prizes. And I shall give seven women knowing good works, Lesbian women whom I took from Lesbos and who have won over others

in contests of beauty. After them also she whom I seized, the maiden of Briseus, and I shall swear that I did not lie with her, which is just for human beings, both men and women. All these things I shall give, and moreover if the gods grant us to sap the city of Priam of its strength, let him heap up his ships with gold and bronze, and when we divide up the Trojan women, let him take the twenty most beautiful after Argive Helen. And if we should return to Achaean Argos, he will be my son-in-law. I shall honor him like Orestes, my only-begotten son, dwelling in opulence. There are three daughters of mine in my well-wrought chambers: Chrysothemis, Laodice, and Iphianassa, of whom he may choose whomever he wishes for the house of Peleus, offering no bride-price in return. And I shall endow her with such as no man has yet endowed his daughter: seven well-inhabited cities, Cadamyle, Enmope, and Hire, abounding in grass, holy Pherae, Anthaea with its deep meadows, beautiful Aepeia, and Pedasos, rich in vines. All these cities are near the sea, and in them dwell men with many sheep and cattle, men who will honor him like a god with gifts and who will fulfill the conformable rights under his sceptre. All these things are his, if he ceases his anger (*cholos*).

The impressiveness of the detail, the enumeration, and the order of the gifts, starting with the smallest and progressing to the most magnificent, are designed to magnify the splendor and size of Agamemnon's award to Achilles. Agamemnon had prefaced this offer by repeating the thought (see third stage above, II 111–118 = IX 18–25) that Zeus counselled “an evil deceit.” It has not been possible for the allied effort to succeed against Troy without Achilles. Agamemnon, who has held Achilles' Briseis captive, now finds that Achilles on his part holds the entire Achaean war effort hostage in return. Not only must the girl, over whom the original dispute arose, be restored, but much more must be given in addition in honor of Achilles' importance. All of these things Odysseus repeats to Achilles, changing only IX 134 to a more personal note: “*which is just, lord, either of men or of women*” (IX 276).⁷ But it is of still more importance what Odysseus does *not* repeat of Agamemnon for Achilles' benefit, namely, Agamemnon's words which immediately follow his offer (IX 158–161): “*Let him [Achilles] be subdued—Hades indeed is implacable and unsubduable, wherefore he is also the most hateful of all the gods to mortals—and let him submit to me, inasmuch as I am the more kingly and boast to be the older in years.*”

Fifteenth Stage: Achilles refuses Agamemnon's offer, saying to the ambassadors Odysseus, Ajax, Phoenix, Odios, and Eurybates that he (Achilles) should return to a long life without *kleos* rather than a short, glorious one. “*And I ought to exhort others to sail away homeward, since you won't learn of the end of lofty Ilium, because far-seeing Zeus much holds his protecting hand over it, and the people of Troy take heart.*” These sentiments are repeated to Agamemnon by Odysseus upon his return (IX 417–420 = IX 684–687). Achilles, concluding the embassy, also asks that Phoenix remain behind with him “. . . in order that he might follow me in ships tomorrow to his dear

fatherland if he so wishes. But I won't lead him by force (anangke).' Thus he spoke, and everybody became quiet, admiring his word in silence, for stoutly indeed did he speak out." These words of Achilles are also carried back to Agamemnon by Odysseus (IX 428–431 = IX 691–694), and they similarly put Agamemnon and his council into admiring silence as they did the ambassadors earlier.

These parallels point up the choices open to Achilles and the resolve to which his wrath, his *menis*, forces him. No worldly offer of goods and honors will now satisfy him; his wrath, provoked by the injustice of Agamemnon, is unbounded, not to be satisfied. In this he differs from other mortals. But does he now simply return home, unconcerned about either the fate of Troy or that of his former allies, and with the detachment of a god? Neither is this course of action open to him. *Menis*, wrath, is directed against somebody. Here it is directed against Agamemnon and in its unbounded extension against all the Argives who are now seen in complicity with him. Instead he follows a third course: he remains where he is, neither in the war but not apart from it either—an epitome of his half-divine, half-human nature, which finds its unique expression in his *menis*, rooted in the affairs of men and directed at them, yet boundless and of godlike proportions. Achilles, who will receive the undying *kleos* of a god, finds himself also dependent for that fame, that *kleos*, on the lives of men.⁸

Sixteenth Stage: Both sides now resort to trickery (*dolos*). Nestor asks the Argives if there is any man willing to venture forth as a spy to learn of the Trojans “. . . what counsel they might have, whether to remain far off by the ships or to withdraw to the city, since they have beaten the Achaeans.” Odysseus will repeat these words (X 208–210) later in questioning his captive. At the same time, in the Trojan camp Hector promises reward and honor to the man who is “. . . to go near the swift-faring ships and learn therefrom whether the swift ships are guarded as before, or are they, having now been beaten by our hands, counselling flight among themselves and, having had their fill of terrible weariness, do not wish to guard them.” Odysseus' captive will repeat these words (X 308–312) when questioned who he is. The two spy missions, which take place on the same night, are important; each side wants to learn whether the other will retreat, the Argives to learn whether the Trojans are intent on driving them into the sea, the Trojans to learn whether the Argives intend to battle it out at the ships. That both camps have sent spies indicates that both of the questions above can be answered in the affirmative.

Diomedes and Odysseus, as spies for the Argives, trap the Trojan spy, Dolon. With the deceptive promise of releasing him unharmed, the two get Dolon to declare to them his mission in the same words he heard it from Hector (X 208–210 = X 409–411) and to furnish them the answer to Nestor's question (above), which they put to Dolon in the same words Nestor put it to them

(X 308–312 = X 395–399). To put a Greek pun, Dolon is now a slave (*doulos*). The only way out for a slave is to be ransomed, bought out by an exchange of goods. The trapped Dolon promises much ransom to Odysseus and Diomedes in the same words that the ensnared Adrastos had earlier beseeched Menelaos and Agamemnon (VI 48–50 = X 379–381). Adrastos' supplication will be repeated later more extensively by the brothers Pisander and Hippolochos, trapped by Agamemnon (VI 46–50 = XI 131–135). In all three cases the Trojan captives fail to persuade their captors and are killed. The peculiar dynamic of this war is that ransom is denied: none of those captured on the battlefield are ransomed. Odysseus also tells Dolon that the horses of Achilles he had been promised respond to no mortal save Achilles himself; Apollo will remind Hector of this in the same words (X 402–404 = XVII 76–78). Thus Dolon has been caught in a trap (*dolos*) in a twofold sense: lured by the unattainable and then trapped by the enemy. Because of this stratagem (*dolos*), Dolon has indeed been made into a *doulos*: he will reveal, in fear for his life, the exact locations of the Trojan positions and thereby set the stage for further trouble at the hands of the two Argive warriors.

Seventeenth Stage: Zeus now sets in motion the next part of his design by sending the following message through Iris to Hector (XI 187–194 = XI 202–209): *“While he [Hector] might see Agamemnon, the shepherd of the people, rushing among the foremost fighters and killing ranks of men, so long then draw back and fight others and combat hostile men there in fierce battle. But when he [Agamemnon] might have leapt for his horses, having been struck by spear or arrow, then I will grant [Hector] the command to kill so that he might reach the well-oared ships and the sun sink and sacred darkness come.”* Zeus, then, wants Hector unscathed at the head of a victorious Trojan column to besiege the Argive ships defended by leaderless men.

As a result of Iris' message, Hector leaps from his chariot to the ground and, brandishing his spear, goes everywhere about the camp rousing his troops for battle. Earlier Sarpedon and then Helenos had roused Hector to do the same (V 494–497 = VI 103–106 = XI 211–214).

On the Argive side Eris now is sent to stand in the center of the Argive ships by that of Odysseus where Agamemnon had once stood (VIII 222–226 = XI 5–9) and exhorts the Achaeans in part with words once used by the now-absent Athena (II 452–454 = XI 12–14): *“. . . in their hearts unceasingly to make war and to fight. And to them straightaway war became sweeter than to return to their fatherland in their hollow ships.”* Nevertheless, the Argives are beaten back. Ajax's retreat and flight at the hands of Zeus are described in the simile of a lion driven off by men and hounds in the same words with which Menelaos' retreat is described later (XI 550–555 = XVII 659–664). Menelaos retreats at the behest of Ajax to find Antilochos, who will report Patroclus' death to Achilles. All actions here are thus traceable directly to the action of Zeus.

Eighteenth Stage: Achilles, who has withdrawn to his tent during the action, now sends forth his own "spy," Patroclus, to learn of the Argive wounded and of the progress of the battle. Like the night-spies Diomedes and Odysseus, who see without being seen, so here Achilles is able to see yet not be present. Nestor tells Patroclus ". . . for the best lie in the ships having been hit and wounded. Tydeus' son, stout Diomedes, has been hit, while Odysseus, famed for the spear, and Agamemnon have also been wounded, and Eurypolos has been hit in the thigh with an arrow." Patroclus will faithfully report these words to Achilles later (XI 659–662 = XVI 24–27). He will also report what Menoetios, Aktor's son, had suggested in the tent of the wounded Machaon: "If you would become a light to the Danaans, let him [Achilles] give you the beautiful armor to wear, so that the Trojans, supposing you to be him, might hold up from war, and the wornout Achaeans might recover their breath, so that there be a little respite from war. You untired ones should easily thrust men having toiled under the battle-shout from our ships and huts toward the city" (XI 797–803 = XVI 39–45). Menoetios' suggestion, then, carries Achilles' stratagem one step further: not only might Achilles see without being present, but he might also appear to others without actually being present. This development, as we shall see, will be carried to its end with the death, the disappearance, of Patroclus, as discussed in the twenty-third stage below.

Patroclus, arming for battle, is described in detail and in part in lines identical to Alexander's arming before combat with Menelaos in the third book (III 330–332, 334–338 = XVI 131–133, 135–139). Part of this arming description is also applied in brief to the arming of Agamemnon in book XI (III 330–332 = XI 17–19) and will later figure in the arming of Achilles in book XIX (III 330–332, 334–335 = XIX 369–373). The first three men are subsequently destined to be vanquished in widely varying ways—Alexander, rescued; Agamemnon, wounded; Patroclus, killed. Only Achilles has the particular distinction of being a victor, and this distinction is explored later in the penultimate stage of this discussion.

Nineteenth Stage: At the center of the poem is an apparition: "for a bird came upon them while they were yearning to traverse [the wall], a high-flying eagle enclosing the people on the left and bearing in its claws a monstrous blood-red serpent alive . . ." Polydamas reports this apparition in so many words to Hector (XII 200–202 = XII 218–220). The serpent strikes the eagle and gets off, but Hector discounts Polydamas' interpretation that the Argives will similarly get off from the Trojans.

Hector's denial of the interpretation, "Polydamas, no longer are you saying things dear to me, and you know how to have another, better word in mind (nous) than this. But if you are really saying this in earnestness, then the gods have destroyed your senses," repeats Alexander's earlier denial of Antenor's suggestion to return Helen to Menelaos (VII 357–360 = XII 231–234). Hector

will prosecute the attack and will later reflect, upon failing to recover Patroclus' body, "*But ever is the mind (nous) of aegis-bearing Zeus stronger, who easily puts to flight a man of valor and removes victory when he himself stirs to fight,*" in words identical to those with which the poet earlier describes Patroclus' disobedience of Achilles' instructions (XVI 688–690 = XVII 176–178). By the sign and its deliberate ignorance we are thus doubly reminded of the power of Zeus, and Hector's shame at having rejected Polydamas' interpretation will later lead him to stand outside the Trojan walls to face Achilles alone.

Twentieth Stage: Menestheus, the Argive lookout from the tower by the ships, sends a message to Ajax by way of Thootes (XII 344–350 = XII 357–363): summon Ajax, "*or rather both, for this would be best of all, since a great end will soon come here, because the Lycian leaders have so weighed down upon us, leaders who come forth furious in fierce battle. But if toil and strife are great over there also, then let Telemonian Ajax come alone, and let Teucer, knowing well the bow, follow him.*" This passage stands in similar relation as the eighteenth: the Trojans and their allies under Hector and Sarpedon continue to prosecute the attack, and the Argives are desperate for warriors to stem the tide. But Hector, now wounded by the summoned Ajax, has to be taken in a chariot to the city in a description that repeats, in part, Deiphobos' removal from battle after his wounding by Meriones (XIII 536–538 = XIV 430–432).

Twenty-first Stage: Hera, desperate but undaunted, resorts to another stratagem: since the gods cannot escape Zeus's notice on the battlefield, Zeus himself must be removed from the scene by a distraction—by a seduction. For this purpose she extracts a love potion from Aphrodite by telling her: "*. . . for I am going to the ends of the earth to see Oceanos and mother Tethys, genesis of the gods, who raised me well and brought me up [they having taken me from Rhea when far-seeing Zeus set Chronos beneath the earth and barren sea]. I am going to see them and will loose their indiscriminate strifes, for already now they have held back bed and affection from one another for a long time, because anger (cholos) has fallen into their breasts.*" Hera will repeat this tale (XIV 200–202, 205–207 = XIV 301–306) to Zeus (omitting the two lines, 203 and 204, which refer to the casting out of Chronos).

As a result of Hera's seduction of Zeus, Poseidon is able to get back into the battle temporarily on the Argive side. In a curious inversion, Poseidon's departure in his chariot for the lower depths (whence he will issue forth to help the Argives) is described in the same terms as Zeus's prior departure from Olympus to Ida to oversee the war (VIII 41–44 = XIII 23–26). With Poseidon back in on the Argive side, the flight of the Trojans across the ditch and stakes surrounding the ships repeats in part (and mirrors in reverse) the description of the earlier flight of the Argives in the other direction (VIII 343–345 = XV 1–3).

But the king of gods and men, awakening, sends Poseidon a message through Iris: "*Command him to cease from fighting and war and to go either among the tribes of the gods or into the divine sea. But if he will not obey my words and disregards them . . . to remain, since I claim to be much mightier than him in bria and by birth the first, then his dear etor (heart) has no concern to claim himself equal to me, whom even the other gods dread*" (XV 160–162 = XV 176–178; XV 165–167 = XV 181–183). With Zeus back in control, Hector reenters the battle in the same simile of a horse bursting its stall applied before to Alexander (VI 506–511 = XV 263–268).

Hera's trick succeeds because Aphrodite is glad to get rid of Zeus's consort, an ally of her opponents, and willingly gives her the love potion. Zeus, then, when he learns of Hera's impending long absence, grows amorous. These devices, furthermore, turn upon the fact that *eros* (love), on the one hand, is remote from and, indeed, secluded from *eris* (strife), which by nature is public. Thus, Zeus will cast a dense, golden cloud around their love-making so that none may see in, but conversely and by the same token, none may see out, and he becomes oblivious to the battle raging below, ultimately surrendering to sleep (*hypnos*). Hera's ruse, at best, can only be a temporary one, however; Zeus will eventually awaken, and *eros* will dissolve again to *eris*. On the other hand, the specter of another sort of absence, another sort of remoteness, hangs over these passages, and it comes to attention in the following stage. In the case of the gods, Chronos has been cast out and down into deep, faroff, black Tartarus by Zeus, and so also does Zeus's threat of this hang over the disobedient gods and goddesses. For mortals Hades, the realm of the unseen, similarly awaits.

Twenty-second Stage: The death and fall of Zeus's son Sarpedon is described by the simile of the tree felled by woodcutters earlier applied to Asios' fall before Idomeneus (XIII 389–393 = XVI 482–486), and a fierce battle erupts over the possession of his body. Zeus commands Apollo: "*Bearing him very far away from them, bathe him in the streams of a river, rub him with ambrosia, clothe him in immortal robes, and deliver him to be borne by the escorts, the twins, Hypnos and Thanatos, who will speedily set him in the rich land of broad Lycia.*" The poet will describe this as done in the same words with which Zeus commanded it (XVI 669–673 = XVI 679–683).

Thanatos (death), the twin of Hypnos, is also remote from Eris (strife), but unlike the relaxation in love and sleep, there is no return in the case of death, no reentry to the battle. It is notable in passing that the manner of slaying of Sarpedon, who is pierced through the midriff with a spear by Patroclus, may remind us briefly of the slaying of Phegeus at the hands of Diomedes in the fifth book (V 16–18 = XVI 478–480): both victims have privileged parentage (Zeus and Dares, respectively) and the bodies of both are abducted by gods (Apollo and Hephaistos, respectively) so that no despoliation, mutilation, or ransoming takes place.

Twenty-third Stage: Hera will now send a message by Iris to Achilles (XVI 41–43 = XVIII 199–201) that Achilles show himself to the Trojan forces to prevent the Trojan seizure of Patroclus' body. It is urged for the most part in the same words that Menoetios suggested to Patroclus and Patroclus to Achilles that Patroclus show himself (see the eighteenth stage above) with one significant change: *eikontes* in XI 799 and XVI 41 becomes *hypodeisantes* in XVIII 199. Thus: “. . . so that the Trojans, fearing you, might hold up from war and the wornout Achaeans might recover their breath . . .” The death of Patroclus has marked the disappearance of the appearance of Achilles, and Hera, through Iris, has now removed his actual presence.

Here we compare the presence with the appearance in the eighteenth stage above. The arming of Achilles is described in many of the same words used to describe the arming of Patroclus earlier (XVI 131–133, 135–136 = XIX 369–373) and also the arming of Agamemnon (= XI 17–19) and Alexander (= III 330–332, 334–335). Achilles wields the Pelian ash, whose description appears also in the arming of Patroclus (XVI 141–144 = XIX 388–391) with the specific point that, unlike Achilles, Patroclus is unable to wield the ashen spear. The Pelian ash thus sets Achilles apart from the other heroes.⁹

It is a dreadful presence. Dressed neither in his old armor (lost to Hector by Patroclus), nor yet in that which Thetis will request from Hephaistos, but with the borrowed aegis of Athena thrown about his shoulders and transfigured in fire and a golden cloud, Achilles shouts three times. The Trojan ranks are thrown into confusion by this man on fire. His cry penetrates the minds of the Trojan horses themselves, who throw their chariots. What do Achilles' shouts represent? A declaration of his wrath and vengeance against the enemy, obviously, but also finally a realization now of the end which Zeus has designed for him.

His presence is framed, so to speak, by the lament of Thetis, first to her Nereid companions, and later to Hephaistos (XVIII 56–62 = XVIII 437–443): “. . . outstanding among heroes and he shot up like a sapling; him I raised like a tree on the knoll of an orchard and sent him forth with the crooked-beaked ships to Ilium to fight the Trojans, but him I shall not welcome home again to the house of Peleus. And while he lives and sees the light of the sun, he troubles me, but in going I am not able to be of help to him.” The only help that Thetis can give her son, in fact, is to help accomplish the design that Zeus has set in motion for him.

As long as Hector continues to enjoy the favor of Zeus, Achilles' attacks are futile. When the two meet on the battlefield, Apollo covers and rescues the Trojan with mist, as Aphrodite rescued Alexander during the combat with Menelaos (III 379–381 = XX 442–444). Achilles rushes at this cloud three times and is upbraided by Apollo as Patroclus rushed at the walls of Troy in book XVI and as Diomedes did at Apollo himself in book V (V 436–439 = XVI 703, 705–706 = XX 445–448). Achilles' angry and vain boast at Hector's escape repeats that of Diomedes at Hector's escape in book XI (XI 362–367 =

XX 449–454). Nevertheless, it is now clear that Achilles has been granted the initiative and direction of the battle rather than Hector. The horrifying image of Achilles' horses trampling corpses and his gore-spattered chariot repeat the earlier description of Hector's horses and chariot in the eleventh book (XI 534–537 = XX 499–502).

Thetis' appeal to Hephaistos for armor, therefore, is of a most unusual sort, signalled perhaps by the greeting which both Charis and Hephaistos give her (XVIII 384–386 = XVIII 423–425): "*And she produced her hand to hers and spoke forth a word and addressed her: 'Why, long-robed Thetis, do you come to our house, you revered and dear? You do not frequent us before.'*"¹⁰

Twenty-fourth Stage: If Achilles' threefold cry expressed his new *menis* directed against Hector and the Trojans in vengeance of Patroclus' death and expressed also a deep awareness of his own destiny, then it is clear also that the former now obscures the latter, that his wrath is blinding him to the ultimately just plan of Zeus. Now Zeus is angry and commands him by message to Iris (XXIV 113–115 = XXIV 134–136) to release the mutilated body of Hector to be ransomed by Priam: "*Tell him the gods take anger at him and that I, outstanding above all the immortals, have been put in anger (cholos), because with raging senses (phrenes) he holds Hector by the crooked-beaked ships and has not released him.*" Achilles relents. Then to Priam on the other side Zeus issues instructions delivered by Iris (XXIV 147–158 = XXIV 176–187): "*. . . to bear gifts to Achilles, gifts which might warm his heart, you going alone, and let no other man among the Trojans go. An older herald should follow you, one who should guide the mules and well-wheeled cart and who should lead back again to the city the corpse which divine Achilles killed. Let not death nor fear be of concern to you in your mind, because an escort, even the slayer of Argus, will accompany you and will lead you until he might have drawn you near Achilles. And when he leads you into the hut of Achilles, Achilles himself will not kill you and will prevent all others from doing so, because Achilles is not without sense (phren), nor heedless, nor wicked but indeed will spare a suppliant heartily.*"

The justness of the outcome is indicated in three repeated passages surrounding the death of Hector in the twenty-second book. First, Zeus deliberates on whether or not to set Hector free from impending death, just as he had deliberated in book XVI whether or not to set Sarpedon free. Athena here, as did Hera there, responds against it (XVI 441–443 = XXII 179–181): it would be contrary to the *aisa* of the mortal and would not be approved by the other gods. Next, Zeus takes out the golden scales, weighing the *keres* of Achilles against Hector here as he weighed those of the Argives against the Trojans in the eighth book (VIII 69–72 = XXII 209–212); here Hector's side falls and Achilles' rises, contrary to the earlier weighing. Finally, the departure to Hades of Hector's *psyche*, lamenting its fate, is described in identical terms to that of Patroclus (XVI 855–858 = XXII 361–364).

But Hecuba is still unconvinced of Zeus' intentions: "Let him send an eagle, a swift messenger, one of the eagles who is to him the dearest and whose dominion (*kratos*) is the greatest, on the right so that you yourself, marking him in your mind (*nous*) and with your own eyes, might go trusting in him to the ships of the fast-horsed Danaans." Priam will put this request to Zeus (XXIV 292–295 = XXIV 310–313).

Only when Achilles realizes, as he slowly does, that his *kleos* has been bought at the price of his own life does he relent. The bargain with Zeus has been struck long ago, and there is no longer any further just cause for *menis*. Hector's body is ransomed, and Achilles' own debt to Zeus now comes into focus.

Achilles' *psyche* will enter Hades. In a far deeper and darker sense beyond Hades, Chronos is in Tartarus. Perhaps the significance of Zeus' victory over Chronos and his banishment there is that while almost all things inevitably flow into a misty, lost, dark vastness of time (*chronos*), some yet persist against the current, immortal and ageless. Such are the Olympian gods, and in a larger sense the entire work of the poet, preserved orally and in written characters from generation to generation, is the very celebration of Zeus's victory over Chronos and a memorial to all the Olympians. Our story gains significance when we recall that this is a tale in which Zeus confers a glorious and undying fame (*kleos*) on one who had been wronged, Achilles, by having Achilles in his wrath hold all the Argives hostage before the Trojans, resurgent under Hector. The Argives are released from this oppression only when a greater wrath against Hector seizes Achilles to avenge the death of Patroclus. But Achilles himself will now pay a price for this by meeting an early death, a just settlement which he realizes fully at the end when he surrenders Hector's body to ransoming Priam. The poem ends with this realization and with this expectation.

FINAL OBSERVATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

To execute his design, Zeus must intervene in the events at a number of decisive stages, first in moving Agamemnon to restart the war (second stage, above), next in allowing Hera and Athena to spur on the Argives and frustrate a negotiated peace (fourth, seventh, and ninth stages), then by prohibiting Hera, Athena, and Poseidon from aiding the Argives in battle (twelfth and twenty-first stages), next by advising Hector to allow the Achaean leaders to be wounded before starting his assault (seventeenth stage), by the sending of the omen of eagle and snake, ignored by Hector (nineteenth stage), followed by instructions to Apollo to remove the body of Zeus' son Sarpedon, slain by Patroclus (twenty-second stage). The interventions continue with Hera's urging of Achilles' presence before the Trojans at the wall (twenty-third stage) and conclude with Zeus's commandments and instructions regarding the ransoming

of Hector's body (twenty-fourth stage). All of these interventions take the form of messages primarily from Zeus in which the central portion of the command is reported by repeating verbatim the words of or sign of the divinity.

Zeus's instructions, by consequence,¹¹ lead to Agamemnon's doubts and testing of the success of the Argive mission (third stage), the attempted resolution of the conflict by single combat (fifth and sixth stages above), the treatment of the wounded Menelaos (eighth stage), the unsuccessful Trojan petition of Athena (tenth stage), and the burial of the dead on both sides (eleventh stage). After Zeus has prohibited the gods from battle, there is the Trojan resurgence (thirteenth and twentieth stages) and Agamemnon's proposal of gifts to Achilles and their rejection (fourteenth and fifteenth stages), followed by the resort to trickery, first at night with the spies (sixteenth stage) and then by day with the appearance of Patroclos in Achilles' armor (eighteenth stage). These consequences also largely take the form of messages repeated from one to another. Finally, we have noted how most of the other long repetitions, the majority of which belong to the poet's own narrative description rather than to portions of dialogue, are related to the principal stages as set forth above.

From a general standpoint, there is little latitude for relaying instructions from one party to another by an intermediary messenger except by repeating the instructions. Nor can the fulfillment of the commands of another be guaranteed except by carrying them out as issued, in effect repeating them. If the principal actions in the *Iliad* leading to Achilles' honor are dictated by Zeus through intermediaries, then such tandem repeats of his instructions are not to be unexpected. Here, however, we also see that this mode of dictation carries through in the story to the essential actions dictated by others and inspired by Zeus' initial directions and to the narrative of their ramifications. This suggests an interpretation: that where we find these repeats, a divine intention, and above all, the intention of Zeus, must be at work. In fact, it would seem that the manner by which Zeus specifically inserts his direction into the affairs of the tale is through messages and signs, whose emblem is a portion of verse repeated exactly and in tandem. Secondarily, Athena does so as well. These directions then motivate a chain of events and speeches whose thread in the divine plan of action is also signified through portions of repeated verses. The divine associations with such aural similes might not seem uncommon if it is recalled that the attentiveness with which the words in these passages are preserved intact, *en bloc*, and uncorrupted mirrors in human speech that immortality and agelessness which are the principal characteristics of the gods themselves. The Homeric style in the repetition of the longer passages is, then, the very imitation of the penetration of the divine into the mortal and corruptible world of nature and of human affairs. Repetitions understood in this sense are thus icons of the divine, where the icon is a sign which by its quality *qua* thing deserves to become a representamen; it shares a quality with that which it represents.¹²

But there is a dark side to these iconic repetitions as well. We come in the last book of the poem to realize, as has Achilles, that Zeus has guided the action of the events to its final denouement and that the design of the whole has formerly been revealed imperfectly and only piecemeal. Each message and its consequents, through which the action has advanced, has therefore concealed as much, if not more, than it has revealed. The emblem of divine origin also proves to be the mask of divine intention. That Homer's characters may have understood these repetitions in some such manner is illustrated by the treatment of many of the repeated passages in those instances where the actors in the poem are disinclined to accept the message at face value. A repeated passage by its very integrity has a certain artificial materiality about it, something that has been put together and has a history. It does not stand on its own in its own self-evidentiary nature and is, therefore, open to suspicion as such. There is a distance between artifice and artificer and hence the possibility for interpretation, reconsideration, and, indeed, deliberate deceit. Thus Agamemnon is surprised when the assembled Argives interpret his dream as a deceit (see third stage, above). Achilles, despite Odysseus' diplomatic editing of Agamemnon's offer (fourteenth stage), refuses to be bought off; however, his threat to leave Ilium entirely (see fifteenth stage) is never carried out. Hector rejects the omen in book twelve (nineteenth stage). Hecuba in the last book (see twenty-fourth stage) wants assurances from Zeus that the ransoming is not a trap, and this requires still a further sign. Hera and Athena (see twelfth stage) and Hera (twenty-first stage) produce set speeches which belie their real intention, to continue to aid the Argives directly in battle.

In the fight over Patroclus' body Menelaos warns Euphorbos: "*I bid you, drawing back, to go into the crowd and don't oppose me, lest you suffer evil. Even a fool [nepios] knows what has been done.*" Achilles will repeat this warning to Aeneas (XVII 30–32 = XX 196–198), and Aeneas will answer, in part: "*Son of Peleus, don't hope to alarm me with words like a foolish one [neputation], since I also know clearly how to utter cutting remarks and impious things.*" Hector will shortly give the same answer to Achilles (XX 200–202 = XX 431–433). Throughout the *Iliad* the term *nepios* and its cognates, aside from the specific and literal uses as applied to children, emerges metaphorically to denote a victim hapless and defenceless because of a lack of awareness of the circumstances in which he or she is situated.¹³ A *nepios* does not know the dangers in which he finds himself: he has ignored or has misread his circumstances and situation. He is, therefore, a potential victim, equivalent to a man unarmed in battle or inept in the use of his armor and weapons. As the threats and boasts on the battlefield cited above illustrate, there is a general hurling of words as well as of weapons on both sides throughout the encounters on the plain of Ilium. The frequently occurring (61 times in the *Iliad*) and well-known phrase "winged words," implying well-feathered arrows that find their marks, further brings to light the analogy between the exchange of missiles (*belea*), on

the one hand, and that of words (*epea*), on the other.¹⁴ The vulnerability of *nepioi* comes from their inability to handle the words and to understand the actions of war and their lack of discernment of the possibilities, intentions, and consequences that lie behind these utterances and actions.

More generally, the patterning of exchanges in the battle scenes, whose typicality has been noted and extensively studied, may imitate the patterning of exchanges in speech throughout the poem.¹⁵ In this connection thirteen short parallels of four lines or less, including the two of the Achilles-Aeneas-Hector encounters introduced above, have come to light. These repetitions have nothing to do directly with those which have illustrated the major themes, nor with their derivatives, but pertain directly to the battle. In addition to the two boasts already mentioned, there is one additional boast by Sarpedon repeated later on the Argive side by Odysseus,¹⁶ and one exhortation shouted on two different occasions by an Argive leader to his troops.¹⁷ The parentage and native land of men are introduced in three instances and will be repeated later when the respective men are killed in combat.¹⁸ All of the remaining six parallels pertain to repeated descriptions of various aspects of fighting: killing, evading missiles, falling upon the earth, the protection of stricken and fallen warriors.¹⁹

To return now to the topic with which we began, the poetics of the longer repeated passages in the *Iliad*, it is instructive to reconsider briefly the various principal stages of Zeus's design in light of some of the observations on the deceptive character of the exchanges made above. The demand for ransom (stage one) is never fulfilled; Achilles is not finally recompensed as he expected for his loss, and the attendant prayers, sacrifices, and other rites to call off the plague bring about instead a different plague of mortal dimensions. Zeus restarts the war (second stage) by deceiving Agamemnon, who, in turn (third stage), lies to his men, who, in their turn, react in a way opposite to Agamemnon's intentions. This brings about the intervention of Hera and Athena (fourth stage). Alexander's proposals (fifth stage) to resolve the conflict in single combat and Agamemnon's terms for its resolution are unfulfilled. The general battle is restarted by Pandarus' arrow, but Pandarus' counselled prayer to Apollo (seventh stage) goes amiss: Menelaus is wounded, not killed, and Machaon (eighth stage) is summoned to help heal the Spartan king. Athena's counsel to Diomedes (ninth stage) not to fight with the gods is disobeyed and finally rescinded by Athena, who joins the fight. Helenos' plan (tenth stage) that Athena be entreated to spare Troy is frustrated by the goddess herself, who refuses to grant the prayers, and, conversely, Hector's foreboding of destruction of the city and people turns out to be true. Nestor's plans for a truce, burial, and ramparts (eleventh stage) are brought to pass, but the repeated promises of Hera and Athena to Zeus not to interfere in the war (twelfth stage) are lies and lead to threats by Zeus. Hector's repeated exhortations to his troops (thirteenth stage), while in the short run triumphant, in the long run are in vain.

The repeated offer of gifts to Achilles in exchange for his help (fourteenth stage) is refused, and his advice (fifteenth stage) that they ought to return home because Zeus won't allow Troy to fall is false. But Achilles' request that Phoenix remain with him is duly reported to Agamemnon. In the spy mission or Doloneia (sixteenth stage) both spies, Odysseus and Dolon, repeat their orders to one another, but Odysseus (the captor) to Dolon (the captive) uses a question and Dolon uses an answer to Odysseus. In this subtle reversal Dolon, in effect, becomes the spy on his own comrades and allies.

Zeus now directs the battle (seventeenth stage) through his intermediaries Iris and Eris to further Trojan victories. Patroclus as scout and messenger to Achilles (eighteenth stage) repeats the account of the principal Argive wounded to Achilles and repeats also the fatal suggestion of Menoetius, namely that he (Patroclus) might appear in the action in Achilles' armor. Patroclus thus bears to Achilles the seeds of their own destruction. At the high-water mark of the Trojan surge, Hector (nineteenth stage) rejects the omen of the eagle and snake which Polydamas reports and interprets and continues the attack. Menestheus (twentieth stage) sends a hurried message to Ajax, who responds and eventually wounds Hector, temporarily halting the Trojan surge. Hera repeats a false story (twenty-first stage) to Aphrodite and to Zeus in her seduction of the latter, and Zeus later recovers and commands Poseidon to cease aiding the Argives. Sarpedon is killed by Patroclus, and the father of gods and men commands Apollo (twenty-second stage) to remove the body, bathe and anoint it, and have it buried in its native Lycia. Hera now moves (twenty-third stage) the actual appearance of Achilles in battle, framed by the laments of Thetis that her son will never return home alive. Finally (twenty-fourth stage) we have Zeus's orders to both Achilles and Priam and the attendant petitions and signs for the ransoming of Hector's body.

It is clear that the overall design of Zeus involves and, in fact, could only have been executed through a series of grand deceptions. A good number of the repeated statements above prove empty—lies, false promises, rejected offers, and so on—statements whose collective consequences climax in Achilles' short life and long-lived fame and glory. Repetition itself emerges as emblematic of the deceptive character of speech, for imitation, including the verbal imitation of repetition, may not only convince its witnesses of its facticity by the very mode of its re-presentation but also opens that ironic distance between imitator and imitated whereby misrepresentation and conscious deception may be put into play. These results, then, have a meaning for our interpretation of the *Iliad's* iterative style. The longer repeated passages, whose repetition seems most routine and whose performance seems most routinized to us, serve to set their authors at a remote distance. The attendant possibilities for deception suggest that these are precisely the passages whose familiarity must not lull us to sleep but to which we should be most attentive and of which we must be most

suspicious. For this is one of the ways in which a poetic tradition not only presents its action but also harbors its originality. The richness of the surprises revealed continues magnetically to attract us and fill us with awe.

NOTES

1. The shorter formulae (half-lines, lines, etc.) are reviewed in this respect in the seminal collection of papers by the late Milman Parry, *The Making of Homeric Verse*, ed. Adam Parry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), among other places. Whole scenes and their elements are examined as occurring "typically" (i.e., repeatedly) in the seminal study of Walter Arend, *Die typischen Szenen bei Homer* (Berlin: Weidmann, 1933). The role of both formula and typical theme in epic is surveyed by Albert Lord in *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1960).

2. One hundred two in the 15,689 lines of Allen and Monro's text of the *Iliad*, 3d edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1920) which has been used throughout and from which my literal translations are supplied here. Certain key Greek words (italicized) are transliterated. Another 113 repetitions of similar lengths are found in the 12,111 lines of Monro's 2d edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1917) of the *Odyssey*, whose books are cited here in lower-case Roman numerals to distinguish them from those of the *Iliad*. An index to all repeated passages six feet or greater in Bekker's editions of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* was compiled by Carl Eduard Schmidt in *Parallel-Homer oder Index aller homerischen Itēti in lexikalischer Anordnung* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1965), a reprint of the 1885 edition.

I appreciate conversations on this paper with Professors David Sweet and David Davies of the University of Dallas, when I was associated with the College of St. Thomas More, Fort Worth, Texas.

3. I have included in this collection five exceptions where the two parallel passages would match exactly save one interpolated line. These exceptions include III 330–332, 334–338 = XVI 131–133, 135–139; III 330–332, 334–335 = XIX 369–373; XVI 131–133, 135–136 = XIX 369–373; V 437–439 = XVI 703, 705–706; V 711, 713–714 = XXI 418–420.

The distribution of the 102 collected parallels by line length is as follows: thirty-six lines–1; twelve lines–1; eleven lines–1; eight lines–6; seven lines–4; six lines–7; five lines–13; four lines–25; three lines–45. In 97 cases of the above, the repetition is a "doublet" (repeated once). Of the remaining five cases, one five-line repeat is a "triplet" (II 11–15 = II 28–32 = II 65–69); two of the four-line repeats are "triplets" (I 465–468 = II 428–431 = VII 317–320 and V 494–497 = XI 211–214 = VI 103–106); one of the three-line repeats is a "triplet" (XI 799–801 = XVI 41–43 = XVIII 199–201) and one is a "quadruplet" (VIII 172–174 = XI 285–287 = XV 485–487 = XVII 183–185).

4. Some steps in an interpretative direction have recently been taken in Herbert Bannert's *Formen der Wiederholens bei Homer: Beispiele für eine Poetik des Epos* (Vienna: Verlag des Oesterreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1988), as well as by Laura Slatkin (*The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the Iliad* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1992] and Mabel Lang ("Reverberation and Mythology in the Iliad," in *Approaches to Homer*, ed. Carl Rubino and Cynthia Shelmerdine [Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983], pp. 140–164). The comparisons of Bannert, following Arend, concentrate primarily on repeated scenes and actions; those of Slatkin and Lang figure mythological allusions.

5. There are four instances among the 41 messages where the same utterance is repeated by the same person or by two individuals on separate occasions (II 111–118 = IX 18–25; III 139–141 = IX 26–28; XIV 200–202, 205–207 = XIV 301–306) and one instance where the same greeting is given by two different persons to the same person (XVIII 384–386 = XVIII 423–425). These five might best be characterized as proclamations or declarations rather than messages but have been included with the latter for the sake of simplicity of the presentation. The distinctions will become clear subsequently.

6. I note that part of the description of this sacrifice in the *Iliad* is repeated in describing the disastrous sacrifice of Helios' cattle in the *Odyssey* (I 459–461 = II 422–424 = xii 359–361). The description of feasting is also repeated in the *Odyssey* (I 467–469 = II 430–432 = xvi 478–480), where Eumaios, Telemachos, and the disguised Odysseus feast prior to their return to Ithaca.

7. The personal note may remind Achilles all the more directly that Agamemnon's abstinence from the maiden was admirable. See Seth Benardete, "Achilles and Hector: the Homeric Hero. Part I," *St. John's Review*, 36, No. 2 (1985): 36.

8. As C. H. Whitman remarks, this " . . . is probably the most central issue of the *Iliad*, namely, the problem of the individual hero, isolated by his own greatness and aspiration to the status of divinity, versus his need to remain a member of humanity so that his greatness may maintain relevance and understanding" (*The Heroic Paradox*, ed. Charles Segal. [Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1982], p. 75). Wherever men aspire to be best, whether in battle, games or other contests, the gods are manifestly present.

9. James Armstrong ("The Arming Motif in the *Iliad*," *American Journal of Philology*, 79 [1958]: 337–54) discusses the four arming scenes, in part, as follows: "Introduced in its simplest form in the arming of Paris, the formula is next expanded, thereby magnifying the arming of Agamemnon and at the same time suggesting the tone of anxiety and discouragement pervading the Achaean host. It returns to its basic form with Patroclus, now with the quasi-lulling effect of a repeated and familiar chorus from which there is a carefully designed transition to a reversal of mood. The arming of Achilles is the climactic appearance of the formula. It derives its tone and its meaning both from its context and from the inevitable association with previous armings."

10. In the *Odyssey* Calypso gives the same greeting to Hermes, come to set Odysseus free: "Why have you come to me, Hermes with the golden rod, you revered and dear? You do not frequent us before. Say what you have in mind. My heart bids me wrap it up if I am able to and if it is to be wrapped up" (XVIII 424–427 = v 87–90).

11. Stages three to eleven here, which relate primarily to books III to VII of the *Iliad*, comprise events which delay the main action of the poem, centering on Achilles. Books III through VII collectively exhibit a unitary, cyclic structure and chronologically narrate events which seem to belong primarily to year one rather than year nine of the Trojan War (see C. H. Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* [Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1958], pp. 264–270; *The Heroic Paradox*, p. 77). Dramatologically, however, these early books are not out of place where Homer has situated them. They thematize the motive of revenge (Helen) in the war; with the wounding of Ares (ninth stage, above) the principal motive for doing battle shifts to the winning of fame alone, and later back to revenge (Patroclus). See Seth Benardete, "The Aristeia of Diomedes and the Plot of the *Iliad*," *AGON*, No. 2 (1968), p. 38.

12. In the sense of C. S. Peirce, "Logic as Semiotic: The Theory of Signs," in *The Philosophical Writings of Peirce*, Justus Buchler, ed. (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1940; reprinted New York: Dover Publications, 1955), pp. 98–119.

13. See Susan Edmunds, *Homeric Nepios* (New York: Garland Publishing Co., 1990). Jasper Griffin ("Homeric Words and Speakers," *Classical Quarterly*, 106 [1986]: 36–57) finds the word used by the poet himself to comment unfavorably on his characters and in the vocative by the characters themselves referring to one another in an unfavorable manner.

14. See J. A. K. Thomson, "Winged Words," *Classical Quarterly* 30 (1936): 1–3.

15. See Bernard Fenik, *Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad: Studies in the Narrative Techniques of Homeric Battle Description*. Hermes. Zeitschrift für klassische Philologie. Einzelschriften Heft 21 (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1968).

16. V 652–654 = XI 443–445: Sarpedon boasts to Tlepolemos: "But I say that here murder and black doom (ker) will be for you from me on this day, and that you, subdued by my spear, will give me a triumph and will give Hades, renowned for foals, a psyche." Odysseus will later make this same boast to Socos. Both boasters make good on their promise.

17. V 530–532 = XV 562–564. Agamemnon shouts the same advice to his troops that Ajax will later: "And let you show reverence for one another in fierce battle. Of men showing reverence, more return safe than are slain, but of those fleeing, neither fame (kleos) nor valor (alke) is roused forth."

18. The first two cases show this pattern directly:

II 831–834 = XI 329–332. Adrastus and Amphius are introduced as the twin sons of Merops, who knew divination and tried, unsuccessfully, to dissuade his sons from battle, because the *keres* of black death drove them on. This identification, first made in the catalog, is repeated verbatim just before they are killed by Diomedes in book XI.

XIII 694–697 = XV 333–336. Medon's identity as the bastard son of Oileus and an exile for a homicide is given when we meet him in book XIII and repeated after he is slain by Aeneas in book XV.

In the third case the description is transferred from a victim to a second man who is not killed (nor do we learn of his fate thereafter).

XIII 174–176 = XV 549–551. Teucer slays Imbrios, who lived in Pedaeum. "*Yet when the versatile ships of the Danaans came, he went back to Troy and dwelt with Priam who esteemed him like a son.*" In book XV the same lines are said of Melanippos, an oxherd from Percote, whom Hector chides and urges on.

19. IV 459–461 = VI 9–11. Diomedes kills Acamas (book VI) in the same manner that Antilochos killed Echebolos (the first death described in the *Iliad*): "*Him he hit first in the ridge of his helmet with its bushy horsehair and stuck the spear in his forehead, and the bronze point traversed the bone within, and darkness covered his eyes.*"

VIII 122–125 = VIII 314–317. Hector loses first one chariot driver (Eniopeus) and later another (Archeptolemos) by Diomedes and Teucer, respectively. The fall of the two men and Hector's grief but abandonment of their bodies are described in identical terms.

XVI 412–414 = XVI 578–580. Patroclus kills Euryalos by cleaving his head in two with a stone, and he falls headlong in the dust. Later, in book XVI, Hector kills Epigeus in an identical description.

XVI 610–613 = XVII 526–529. Meriones ducks and escapes Aeneas' spear as Automedon will later and identically escape Hector's.

V 302–304 = XX 285–287. In book V Diomedes shouts and wields a stone at Aeneas, a stone that two ordinary mortals could not lift. In book XX Aeneas will also shout and wield a stone at Achilles in the same manner.

VIII 331–334 = XIII 420–423. Antilochos bestrides and protects with his shield the wounded Hypenor, and Mercisteus and Alastor then bear the groaning man away to the ships. The same description is applied to Ajax's protection of Teucer, whom Mercisteus and Alastor also bear away to the ships in book XIII.