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Listening for the Plot  
The Role of Desire in the *Iliad*'s Narrative

By  
Rachel Hart Lesser

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree of  
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in  
Classics  
and the Designated Emphasis  
in  
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of the  
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## ABSTRACT

Listening for the Plot: The Role of Desire in the *Iliad*'s Narrative

by

Rachel Hart Lesser

Doctor of Philosophy in Classics

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University of California, Berkeley

Professor Mark Griffith, Chair

This dissertation is the first study to identify desire as a fundamental dynamic in the *Iliad* that structures its narrative and audience reception. Building on Peter Brooks' concept of "narrative erotics," I show how the desires of Akhilleus and his counterpart Helen drive and shape the *Iliad*'s plot and how Homer captures and maintains the audience's attention by activating its parallel "narrative desire" to plot out the *Iliad*'s unique treatment of the Trojan War story. I argue that Homer encodes the characters' desires in repeated triangles of subject, object, and rival, and that Akhilleus' aggressive desires to dominate his rivals Agamemnon and Hektor cause the heroism and suffering at the poem's heart. I approach desire and its narrative function from an interdisciplinary perspective informed by gender and sexuality studies, narrative theory, novel studies, and psychoanalysis as well as Homeric scholarship.

The introductory chapter lays out and justifies my argument for the *Iliad*'s "narrative erotics." I posit that traditional knowledge and incomplete predictions arouse the implied audience's desire to engage with the narrative, and that repetitions guide its interpretation of the plot. I also introduce the generative desires of the poem's characters, which include "queer" desires that violate established norms of gender and sexuality. I define desire as an experience of wanting characterized by lack and explore the semantics of the epic's language of desire, including *eros*, *himeros*, and *pothē*.

In the first chapter, I demonstrate how the *Iliad*'s programmatic first book introduces Akhilleus' desires as the engine of the main plot and provides a template for their satisfaction. When Agamemnon removes Briseis from Akhilleus' tent, Akhilleus' desire for this lost female object is paired with an aggressive desire to best the Greek leader, whose action has diminished his status. Akhilleus expresses these desires through his grief and wrath, withdrawing from battle and asking Zeus to grant the Trojans success in his absence so that the Akhaians recognize his worth. Akhilleus' desires thus produce the plot, causing the answering "desire" (*pothē*) and suffering of his own men. Homer emphasizes Akhilleus' creative role by associating him with the narrator and Zeus, the plot's divine architect. At the same time, the resolution of the opening conflict between

Khryses and Agamemnon establishes a paradigm that guides the audience in plotting out the fulfillment of Akhilleus' desires as the narrative progresses.

The second chapter identifies books 3-7 of the *Iliad* as a "superplot" that contextualizes Akhilleus' main plot within the larger Trojan War tradition. While Akhilleus disappears from the narrative, Homer introduces the erotic triangle of Menelaos, Helen, and Paris as the basis of the war. Helen and Paris are portrayed as "queer" subjects whose transgressive desires cause conflict and the heroic epic that commemorates it, calling into question the narrative's ethics. Helen's tapestry of the war highlights her generative role, which parallels Akhilleus'. In book 5, Diomedes' *aristeia* prefigures the main plot's martial heroism and the involvement of Aphrodite and Ares elucidate the imbrication of sexual and aggressive desires. Andromakhe's anguished response to the fighting in book 6, however, foreshadows the human cost of satisfying Helen's and Akhilleus' desires, problematizing the war's morality.

In the third chapter, I show how Homer, in the middle books of the *Iliad*, delays satisfaction of the audience's and hero's desires and explores the dire consequences of Akhilleus' plot. In book 9, the poet stimulates the audience's desire for a reconciliation between Akhilleus and Agamemnon, but instead the famous embassy inadvertently repeats the original insult and reignites Akhilleus' desires, with devastating result. Homer positions these desires as the cause of the Great Day of Battle (books 11-18) and, especially, Patroklos' death, which reveals the limits of Akhilleus' vision and control. This pivotal event initiates a second movement of the main plot, making Akhilleus redirect his desire for intimacy toward Patroklos and his aggressive desire toward Patroklos' killer, Hektor. For this reason, his reconciliation with Agamemnon in book 19 fails to provide narrative resolution. Akhilleus' lack of interest in Briseis' return and refusal to partake of food help to signify his continued dissatisfaction as new desires consume him.

The fourth and last chapter argues that Akhilleus' longing for his dead comrade and concomitant desire to destroy Hektor propel the plot forward to the poem's conclusion. I show how Homer focuses the narrative on Akhilleus during his devastating *aristeia* and uses a language of desire to describe his motivation for fighting. Drawing on psychoanalytic theories of mourning, I argue that Akhilleus' aggressive fixation on Hektor is an expression of his ambivalent desire (*pothē*) for Patroklos. I also identify the "queerness" of Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos and demonstrate how it engenders the *Iliad*'s heroic climax, confirming the importance of "queer" desires for the production of the epic's narrative. Priam's embassy in book 24 finally dissolves Akhilleus' aggressive desire and allows him to satisfy his "desire for lamentation" (*himeros gooio*). The two men's completion of the reconciliation paradigm established in book 1 marks this resolution. But the *Iliad* ends only once the Trojans too are able to work through their desire for Hektor by reuniting with his body and giving him a proper funeral. I end by considering how fully the poem's conclusion satisfies the audience's narrative desire, given the continuation of the Trojan War story beyond the bounds of the epic.

*For my parents, Priscilla Hunt and Victor Lesser*

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## INTRODUCTION

### The *Iliad*'s Narrative Erotics

Agamemnon arouses Akhilleus' wrath by taking away his favorite concubine. Aphrodite demands that Helen have sex with Paris in a reaffirmation of the adulterous liaison that started the Trojan War. Andromakhe pleads with her beloved husband Hektor not to risk his life in combat. Akhilleus cannot stop mourning the loss of his dearest companion Patroklos. These stories of desire are some of the most memorable episodes of the *Iliad*, and constitute many of the "purple passages" that are excerpted for study in the university classroom. Few scholars, however, have examined the structural importance of these erotically charged episodes within the *Iliad*'s narrative as a whole. The theme of Akhilleus' wrath and the battle *mêlée* that dominates much of the poem—wrought with great descriptive force and posing powerful questions about the morality of war—have tended to distract critical focus from the *Iliad*'s erotic content.

The aim of this dissertation is to explain the significance of the *Iliad*'s erotic events within the larger narrative, and to explore the role of desire in the poem more broadly. In the last twenty-five years or so, the field of Homeric studies has seen a renewal of interest in the narrative structure of the *Iliad*. This interest has been marked by several important critical studies that consider the *Iliad*'s narrative in a detailed, sustained, and comprehensive way, with new narratological perspectives, attention to circularity and repetition, and appreciation for Homer's complex artistry and his relation to an intended audience.<sup>1</sup> During this same period Classicists in general, influenced by the new field of gender studies, have recognized the power of "desire" (often associated with the Greek *eros*, *himeros*, and *pothos*)<sup>2</sup> as a key theme of Ancient Greek literature, and in fact an important theme in the *Iliad* itself.<sup>3</sup> This dissertation brings together these two areas of study and offers new insight into the form, mechanism, and appeal of the *Iliad*'s narrative. I argue that desire—both internal characters' and external audience's—is a key force that structures and drives the *Iliad*'s narrative and that keeps listeners and readers interested in the poem.

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<sup>1</sup> Important examples include De Jong 1987, Richardson 1990, Lowenstam 1993, Stanley 1993, Rabel 1997, Loudon 2006, and Heiden 2008.

<sup>2</sup> Plato links together these three terms in *Crat.* 419e-420b. See below, sec. 4.

<sup>3</sup> Examples of this general trend include Halperin et al. 1990, Winkler 1990, Carson 1998 (new edition), Calame 1999, Ormand 2009, Sanders et al. 2013. Examples of recent scholarship on desire in Homer include Luca 2001, Pironti 2007, Breitenberger 2007, Fantuzzi 2012, Blondell 2013.

## 1. Narrative Theories and Narrative Desire

My analysis of the *Iliad*'s narrative is informed by insights concerning narrative form and technique introduced by scholars of narrative over the course of the twentieth century.<sup>4</sup> I have found it useful to employ a narratological terminology to distinguish the different layers of narrative and the actors responsible for producing and receiving narrative. I would therefore like to begin by defining key terms that I shall use throughout this study. I make the now classic distinction between “story” (the events, real or fictional, that occur) and “discourse” (the narrating which contains and expresses the story). Following Genette’s practice in his seminal work on narratology, I refer to the “discourse” as the “narrative.”<sup>5</sup> As I use the term, “narrative” signifies the entire text of the poem, which includes elements such as character speeches, narratorial comments, and similes as well as the story. “Primary fabula” refers to the parts of the story that occur within the poem’s narrative time, which, in the case of the *Iliad*, spans the story time from Khryses’ embassy to the funeral of Hektor. I call the extradiegetic speaker of the poem’s narrative the “external narrator” or simply, the “narrator.” This fictional figure should be differentiated from the poet, or author, who is the real-life creator of the poem. I refer to intradiegetic speaking characters as “internal narrators.” I also use the term “focalization” to describe the perspective inherent in a narration.

Roland Barthes’ analysis of narrative form in *S/Z* is an important conceptual basis for my approach to narrative. Barthes identifies several codes that work simultaneously in a narrative, two of which are significant for my line of inquiry. The first is the “proairetic code,” which constitutes the recognizable sequence of “actions and behaviors” that make up the story and operate according to the logic of cause and effect.<sup>6</sup> The second is the “hermeneutic code,” which denotes “all those units whose function it is to articulate in various ways a question, its response, and the variety of chance events which can either formulate the question or delay its response.”<sup>7</sup> Barthes calls these questions “enigmas,” and they represent the narrative’s delay or sidestepping of the full revelation of the story. Therefore, readers must work out a series of puzzles as they progress through the narrative in order to understand the complete story. This process of discovery constitutes the decipherment of Barthes’ “hermeneutic code.”

Peter Brooks builds on Barthes’ insights in *Reading for the Plot*, a book that provides a key theoretical model for my own study of the *Iliad*. Brooks identifies narrative’s arrangement of the story as “plot” and calls it “an ‘overcoding’ of the proairetic by the hermeneutic.”<sup>8</sup> Brooks focuses on how the hermeneutic code, until

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<sup>4</sup> For an excellent technical summary of the diverse developments of narrative theory, see Lowe 2000: 3-35.

<sup>5</sup> Genette 1980: 29.

<sup>6</sup> Barthes 1974: 18, 29-30.

<sup>7</sup> Barthes 1974: 17.

<sup>8</sup> Brooks 1984: 18.

resolved, creates “a space of suspense.”<sup>9</sup> He is interested in how this suspense engages readers and makes them hungry for more. Brooks argues that the non-linear plot engenders in readers a “desire” to solve narrative riddles. This “narrative desire” thus motivates the reader’s engagement with the text until its end.

But Brooks argues that the plot is not something that exists independently of the reader. He describes plot as “a structuring operation elicited in the reader trying to make sense of those meanings that develop only through textual and temporal succession.”<sup>10</sup> For Brooks, plot is the reader’s intellectual act of following the path of the story as the narrative unfolds. The enigmas the narrative poses elicit desire for a solution, and this desire induces the audience to do the work of plotting. Brooks contends that plotting *is* desire, and he asks us to “conceive of the reading of plot as a form of desire that carries us forward, onward, through the text.”<sup>11</sup> Following Brooks, throughout this study I use “plot” as both a noun and a verb to describe the formulation of the story within narrative and the audience’s apprehension of this structure.

This relation, however, between reader and narrative is only one half of what Brooks calls “narrative erotics.” Brooks has observed that novels’ typical stories are themselves about desire. Within a novel, the protagonist’s desire for movement—to reach someone, to become someone, to get married, to achieve something—creates and sustains the story. Thus these desires are what produce the narrative and what give energy and purpose to the reader’s plotting. As Brooks explains, “Narratives both tell of desire—typically present some story of desire—and arouse and make use of desire as a dynamic of signification.”<sup>12</sup> The obstacles and delays to the attainment of characters’ desires, either in the story itself or in the narrative’s presentation of the story (through digressions, etc.), in fact represent the twists and turns of plot. The desires of internal characters and external reader therefore move in parallel courses, with the reader’s desire mirroring the desire of the protagonist or, at times, of another character. They progress together through the narrative longing to achieve satisfaction, which is only realized when the protagonist’s desires are fulfilled to the greatest degree possible, the story is fully plotted out, and the narrative is ended.

Brooks’ notion of desire, as a force operative for both readers and characters, is polyvalent. At one point, Brooks invokes Freud’s conception of Eros as “a force including sexual desire but larger and more polymorphous, which...seeks ‘to combine organic substances into ever greater unities.’”<sup>13</sup> Later, he defines desire as “a perpetual want for (of) satisfaction that cannot be offered in reality.”<sup>14</sup> For Brooks, desire seems to be an impulse to make good a lack, to achieve a sought-after oneness. This project builds

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Brooks 1984: 37.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Brooks 1984: 37, quoting Freud, *Beyond the Pleasure Principle* (1920) in *The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, ed. James Strachey (London: Hogarth Press, 1953-74), vol. 18, p. 50.

<sup>14</sup> Brooks 1984: 55.

on Brooks' conception of desire and "narrative erotics" to show how the audience's desire shapes its reception of the *Iliad* and how internal characters' desires determine the poem's plot.

## 2. The Desire of the *Iliad*'s Audience

Barthes' idea of narrative codes emerges from his close reading of Balzac's novella *Sarrasine*. Brooks' theory of narrative desire comes out of his study of the nineteenth-century novel. Before I bring any of their ideas to bear upon the *Iliad*, it is incumbent upon me to address to what extent their theories are applicable or relevant to a Greek poem thousands of years old, a poem that came out of an oral-formulaic tradition and was originally received aurally by a live audience.

The "detection story" or "whodunit?" is the kind of narrative where Barthes' hermeneutic code is most thematized and most obvious as a core feature of narrative structure. In a "whodunit?", the story is deliberately jumbled and presented piecemeal, often out of chronological order. The readers are explicitly challenged to plot out the true course of the story, to solve the mystery that is posed in the narrative. As John J. Winkler has observed, the author is actually in an antagonistic relation vis-à-vis the reader. The author tries to keep the reader from figuring out the story until the end of the narrative by offering some relevant and some irrelevant information, in deliberate attempts at misdirection; meanwhile, the reader tries to discriminate among the pieces of information and arrive at the events of the story before they are fully revealed at the end of the narrative.<sup>15</sup>

The *Iliad* is patently *not* a "detection story," but rather a relatively straightforward narrative of what happened over a few weeks in the ninth year of the Trojan War. The poet gives the appearance of providing his audience with as full and transparent a picture of the story as possible, with an impressive amount of exposition,<sup>16</sup> and insight into events and motivations beyond what is available to mortal characters (e.g. the deceptiveness of Agamemnon's dream in book 2 or the activities and intentions of the gods). The poet even sketches out the basic events of the story in the *Iliad*'s proem and at several points includes predictions and prophecies of what is to come. The external narrator, with invocations to the Muse(s), takes pains to establish his credibility, and Egbert Bakker convincingly argues that, in the context of oral performance, the figures of external narrator and poet blur together from the perspective of the audience.<sup>17</sup> If the poet is trying in good faith to make the story manifest to the audience, are there really enigmas in the *Iliad* that need to be solved and that serve to arouse the audience's desire?

The same question is posed by the basic difference between the *Iliad*'s story and the stories recounted in the novels that Brooks studied. Modern novels almost always tell

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<sup>15</sup> Winkler 1985: 59-65.

<sup>16</sup> See Scodel 2002: 99-114 for the extent of the poet's exposition. Scodel argues, however, that the poet's total transparency is an illusion created by the disjunction between implied "narrative" and "authorial" audiences (see n. 24 below).

<sup>17</sup> Bakker 2009: 122-128.

a new story. That story may follow time-honored patterns, or contain characters of a familiar type, but their specificity is “novel.” Homeric poetry, by contrast, tells stories that are traditional, with traditional characters. If the audience of the *Iliad* is already familiar with its story, how can suspense be operative? What kinds of narrative desire are possible?

To answer these questions, I must first clarify what audience we are talking about and how much it really is expected to know about the poem and its story. A distinction needs to be made between a real historical audience or reader of the *Iliad*, and the audiences that are implied by the poem. It is impossible for the critic to assert who a real individual listener or reader will be or how he or she will react to a work of literature. But the critic can suggest the ways in which a narrative assumes certain audiences or readers and constructs or invites their responses. And a real audience’s response may conform at times to the intended response(s) of these “implied” audiences.

Since the *Iliad* was composed to be performed orally (the Muse is invited to “sing” in the first-line invocation), we must assume an implied audience receiving the poem aurally, rather than implied readers receiving it textually. An audience’s desire to persist in listening to an oral narrative corresponds to a reader’s desire to continue reading a book. Listening and reading are both active, and the participation of audience or reader defines the success of a narrative.

But readers and audiences have somewhat different relationships to narratives. A reader can choose when, where, for how long, and at what pace to consume a narrative, and has the freedom to take a break and reflect on what has been read, or reverse course, and reread a section of the narrative.<sup>18</sup> An audience’s experience, on the other hand, is dependent on the performer, who decides the time and location of performance, as well as the pace, duration, and inflection of the narrative. The narrative delivered orally moves inexorably in a linear progression from beginning to end; this is the way the *Iliad* was meant to be received.<sup>19</sup> If the audience’s attention lapses, it will miss something, and so continued focus is important for full appreciation of the poem. For this reason, one might argue that stimulating and maintaining an audience’s desire is even more important in a narrative meant to be performed than in a book meant to be read. The onus is on both the performer and the poet to encourage and retain the audience’s interest, but my study focuses exclusively on the way that Homer has fashioned his text to accomplish this goal.

It is important to note that an implied audience is not necessarily a homogeneous audience. The poet may imply a composite audience made up of people of different ages, genders, and backgrounds, who, as Ruth Scodel observes, approach the narrative with different levels of knowledge and competency.<sup>20</sup> This means that an implied audience might be expected to have a variety of emotional and intellectual responses to the *Iliad*.

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<sup>18</sup> A real audience also has the power to influence the experience of a narrative by directly interacting with the performer, but the *Iliad*’s written text does not provide space for an authentic or spontaneous audience response. The narrator does at times explicitly acknowledge the possibility of audience interaction, but in so doing he also constructs and regulates the nature of that reaction, as when he addresses the audience with the phrase “you would have said/thought X” (De Jong 1987: 54-60, cf. 60-81).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 10.

<sup>20</sup> Scodel 2002: 64.

Nevertheless, there are some things that the entire implied audience knows or does not know, and this commonality allows us to speak of *an* implied audience, rather than audiences, for the purpose of considering the manipulation of the audience's narrative desire.

While the implied audience is not itself historical, it is intimately connected to the poem's own socio-cultural context. The implied audience is able to comprehend the terms of the narrative. This means the audience is at home in the cultural conventions and reference points of its fictional world<sup>21</sup> and, in the case of Homeric poetry, has "familiarity with the epic language and style, the basic outlines of the most important stories, and narrative conventions."<sup>22</sup> Scodel has shown how the *Iliad* assumes an audience with traditional knowledge, at the very least, of the Olympian gods and the Trojan War story, including its major actors (Agamemnon, Menelaos, Helen, Paris, and Priam).<sup>23</sup> All of this cultural competence is necessary to make sense of the story as the narrative presents it.<sup>24</sup>

So how informed is the *Iliad*'s implied audience? James Morrison's arguments for "Homeric misdirection" rely on the conclusion that the implied audience possesses only partial knowledge of the course of the *Iliad*'s narrative. Morrison identifies epic tradition as well as predictions within the *Iliad*—events foretold by the external narrator or internal characters—as the two sources of expectation for the poem's implied audience.<sup>25</sup> He then shows how the poet, at various moments, disappoints both types of expectations by gesturing toward one outcome, but making the story unfold in an unanticipated way.<sup>26</sup> This dynamic of misdirection requires an audience that has never heard the *Iliad* before, and an *Iliad* that is in fact an innovative narrative, which reinvents and repackages a

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<sup>21</sup> De Jong 1987: 60-64, 93-96.

<sup>22</sup> Scodel 2002: 64.

<sup>23</sup> Scodel 2002: 99-112. Cf. Mueller 1984: 28.

<sup>24</sup> Scodel differentiates between two kinds of implied audiences in the Homeric poems, the "narrative audience" and the "authorial audience" (2002: 62). The "narrative audience" exists entirely in the fictional world and does not realize it is fictional. The "authorial audience," on the other hand, is external to the world of the poem and understands that the narrative is an artistic creation (Scully 1986: 139-40 makes a similar distinction between the "narrator's audience" and "authorial audience"). As Scodel argues, the *Iliad*'s poet implies a "narrative audience" with a higher level of knowledge than its "authorial audience." For example, the narrator refers to many characters without immediately explaining who they are, which implies a "narrative audience" that is already familiar with these characters. However, the poet then goes on to reveal the necessary attributes and background of these same characters, which suggests an "authorial audience" that is not expected to have prior knowledge of this salient information. The implication of a knowledgeable "narrative audience" has the rhetorical effect of making the *Iliad* seem completely traditional, and constructs an intimacy of shared culture between narrator and audience, which Scodel calls the "rhetoric of inclusion" (2002: 92). Thus the implied "narrative audience" helps to give a first impression that the *Iliad*'s narrative is completely familiar. Therefore, if we are to posit narrative desire as a dynamic in the *Iliad*'s reception, we must look beyond the "narrative audience" to the "authorial audience." From now on, in my discussion of the implied audience, I will be referring to the implied "authorial" audience.

<sup>25</sup> Morrison 1992: 13. Duckworth 1933: 5-26 catalogues the many varieties of predictions found in the *Iliad* and other ancient epics, from direct forecasts to ambiguous foreshadowing.

<sup>26</sup> Morrison 1992. Also see Duckworth 1933: 21-24 on "false foreshadowing."

traditional story. The mythological tradition is vast, detailed, and contains nearly infinite variants, leaving the *Iliad*'s selection of story undetermined ahead of time. The basic idea is that the *Iliad*'s implied audience—similarly, in many ways, to the implied reader of a novel—does not really know what is going to happen, at least not in any detail.

Already in 1933, George Duckworth defended the idea of suspense in the *Iliad*, but on the grounds of plot, not story. He sees the narrative's many predictions as a giveaway for the story, but argues that an audience nevertheless looks forward to seeing how the narrative will unfold. Duckworth describes how the listener "is anxious now to know, not *what* will happen (for that he already knows), but *how* and *when* it will happen."<sup>27</sup> According to his account, what is in question is the narrative's ordering, pace, and presentation of the story, not the story itself. Duckworth argues that foreknowledge creates a "suspense of anticipation." He explains that the listener, because he knows what to expect, "remains in a state of emotional tension and is on the lookout for something which he either wishes or dreads to see happen."<sup>28</sup>

I agree that the narrative's plotting of the story is unique, and that this must be a source of suspense and narrative desire. But, building on Morrison's observations, it is clear that Duckworth exaggerates both the accuracy of the foreshadowing and the extent to which it offers a full disclosure of the story. As Morrison says, "All predictions are partial or incomplete in some way, for the narrative's fullest presentation of an event naturally comes at the moment of enactment."<sup>29</sup> Unless the audience has heard the *Iliad*'s unique narrative, the audience cannot know exactly "what" will happen, anymore than it knows "how" and "when" it will happen. Ultimately, we must conclude that the implied audience knows *neither* the *Iliad*'s complete story, *nor* how it is plotted in the poem.

The *Iliad*'s proem is a useful case in point of a prediction's limitations and its power to inspire the audience's narrative desire. The proem says that Akhilleus' wrath "laid myriad pains on the Akhaians," "sent many strong souls of heroes to Hades," and "made them a prey for dogs and a feast for birds" (1.2-5).<sup>30</sup> Line 5 ends with the statement that "the will of Zeus was being accomplished," thereby introducing another character, Zeus, and presenting his design as an apparent source and determinant for the events of the story. The last two lines of the proem announce Agamemnon as a third named character and identify his quarrel with Akhilleus as the temporal beginning of the realization of Zeus' will.<sup>31</sup> First of all, this account of the poem's story is extremely

<sup>27</sup> Duckworth 1933: 60, see also 100 and 116-17 for summaries of Duckworth's view.

<sup>28</sup> Duckworth 1933: 37. Cf. Thornton 1984: 59-63 and also Richardson 1990: 136, who, in agreement with Duckworth, remarks that "Suspense is heightened by full disclosure of the facts."

<sup>29</sup> Morrison 1992: 19. Owen 1946: 13 writes that the poet "does not reveal [his main design] fully but gives just enough to face the expectation in the right direction."

<sup>30</sup> I accept Zenodotus' reading of δαῖτα in line 5, following the arguments of Redfield 1979: 96.

<sup>31</sup> With Redfield 1979: 96, I read ἐξ οὗ of line 6, as "from the time when," referring back to the will of Zeus in the preceding line, *contra* Kullmann 1955: 167 and Kirk 1985: 53 *inter alios*, who prefer "from the point at which," referring back to the first line imperative for the Muse to sing Akhilleus' wrath. Besides Redfield's linguistic argument, I offer the following justifications for this choice: 1) the syntactic juxtaposition of Zeus' will and ἐξ οὗ suggest, especially to a listening audience, that they are meant to be understood together; 2) the narrative proper actually begins with Khryses' embassy, not with the quarrel; 3) if, following Kullmann 1955, we accept the Διὸς βουλή as the diminishment of humankind through

minimalist, acknowledging only three out of the *Iliad*'s many characters and sketching out the events and their causality in the vaguest form. Second, even its bare outlines are incomplete, since it ignores many episodes that do not advance the main plot, like the duel of Paris and Menelaos, and Hektor's brief return to Troy,<sup>32</sup> and it gives almost no hint of the death of Hektor—a key event—and the suffering of the Trojan civilians.<sup>33</sup> In addition, the proem gives us no guidance on how the narrative will lead us from point A (the quarrel) to point B (the deaths of heroes), nor does it explain how or when we will learn more about this enigmatic “will of Zeus.”<sup>34</sup>

As we see from this example, predictions in the *Iliad* (and traditional knowledge works in the same way) provide a basic summary of the story, but omit details and sometimes key events. On top of this, they provide little clue as to how the story will be arranged and expressed—the direction of the plot. This tantalizing, but incomplete prevision of the narrative is key to the mechanics of audience desire within the *Iliad*. The proem, by posing unanswered questions (Barthes' “enigmas”), arouses the audience's appetite to know the details of the *Iliad*'s story and to perceive its contours. Essentially, prediction makes the audience hungry for more; it invites the audience to engage with the narrative to plot out the story more fully.<sup>35</sup> It provides the twin motivations of learning the totality of the story and enjoying its presentation in the narrative.

At this point it is important to acknowledge that an implied audience may have other desires besides the desire to find out what happens and to see predictions realized in the *Iliad*'s narrative. For example, the audience may desire the wellbeing of a sympathetic character, like Hektor, or identify with Andromakhe's own desire for the safe return of her husband from battle. And these desires can conflict and compete with the audience's concurrent desire—generated by Zeus' prophecies and its identification with Akhilleus<sup>36</sup>—to observe Hektor's death actualized in the narrative. When I discuss the audience's desire, I mean (unless otherwise specified) the audience's “narrative desire,” in this case the desire for Hektor's death. The competing desire for Hektor's safety and those like it, however, are vital to the audience's emotional investment in the narrative. They color and, I believe, heighten the audience's narrative desire by producing pity for the doomed character and his intimates, making that narrative desire into what Duckworth calls “dreadful anticipation.” Throughout this study I will mark when and how the audience's narrative desire is emotionally affected in this way by an opposing wish.

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fighting in the Trojan War (see Chapter 1, sec. 7), that plan within the *Iliad*'s narrative only comes to fruition after the quarrel. Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 38-39, who sees ἐξ οὗ as deliberately ambiguous.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Morrison 1992: 51-71.

<sup>33</sup> Duckworth 1933: 6. Cf. Bassett 1938: 179 and Rutherford 2001: 128.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Duckworth 1933: 54-55 on the gradual exposition of Zeus' plan.

<sup>35</sup> Owen 1946: 13 expresses the same basic observation about how prediction helps the audience to plot the *Iliad*: “The shape which the poet is imposing on his diverse material he thus makes us progressively impose for ourselves; we place the incidents as they occur in relation to a known end, and follow the poet's plan by knowing in advance what it is.”

<sup>36</sup> See below, sec. 3 for the audience's identification with Akhilleus and other characters.



To return to the mechanism of narrative desire, a 2011 experiment in psychology provides hard evidence that foreknowledge actually increases a reader's appreciation of a story.<sup>37</sup> Inspired by the observation that people enjoy re-reading stories, although they know the outcome, and by other psychological studies (cited by the authors) that link "perceptual fluency" with "aesthetic pleasure, positive affect, and story engagement," the authors' aim was to find out whether spoilers really spoil stories. They discovered that research subjects at the University of California, San Diego rated their enjoyment of stories more highly when they were provided with initial summary paragraphs that exposed the stories' denouements. The authors concluded that "spoilers may allow readers to organize developments, anticipate the implications of events, and resolve ambiguities that occur in the course of reading."

Besides forecasting, Homer also employs other techniques to arouse the audience's desire for the *Iliad's* narrative. Delayed exposition—the introduction of a character or event without full explanation, which comes later—functions in much the same way as predictions to engage the audience. It asks the implied audience to piece together the necessary background information as it is slowly revealed. Delayed exposition therefore poses for the audience an enigma that begs to be resolved. For example, the *Iliad's* first line announces the "wrath" of "Akhilleus, son of Peleus," and a little later the poet says that Akhilleus and Agamemnon quarreled (1.6-7). The proem's scant introduction leaves the audience wondering who exactly this "Akhilleus" is and why he is angry. Who is his father Peleus, where does Akhilleus come from, what is his position, and what is his beef with Agamemnon? The proem invites the audience to plot the answers to these questions in book 1.

Repetition is another key feature of the *Iliad* that directs the implied audience's desire. For example, as discussed above, the *Iliad's* proem summarizes in seven lines some of the main events of the poem's story, and then the narrative continues with a few more lines that summarize in reverse order the very beginning of the primary fabula (Khryses' embassy and Apollo's anger).<sup>38</sup> After these introductory summaries, the poet begins to tell the story again, but this time in greater detail and in correct temporal order, as part of the poem's main narrative. The implied audience is thus hearing the story for the second time and this invites it to compare the second account to the first. The opening preview ensures that the audience has a point of reference for the main narrative, an existing stake in the story. When in its repetition the story is expanded, the familiar elements function as signposts that keep the audience engaged along the way and that help the audience to successfully plot the complete story. This same dynamic is at work in all the *Iliad's* predictions.

But we can also extend this observation beyond the narrative's straightforward prolepses to any repeated element. In Chapter 1, I argue that the *Iliad's* first book tells three successive and interrelated stories of quarrels that are homologous variations of each other, manifesting repetitions on the levels of narrative structure, theme, and diction.

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<sup>37</sup> Leavitt and Christenfeld 2011.

<sup>38</sup> This retrospective narrative was termed "epic regression" by Krischer 1971: 136-40 and also analyzed by Genette 1972: 36-37. It is worth noting that the narrative does not take a straight line backwards, but oscillates in forward and backward movement within a larger path of retrospection.

The first and last quarrels are told from beginning to end, while the central quarrel—between Akhilleus and Agamemnon—remains unresolved in book 1. I suggest that the two other quarrels function like predictions to provide a template for the *Iliad*'s main story of Akhilleus' withdrawal and return. They incite and enable the audience's desire to plot out Akhilleus' wrath along a familiar course, but they delay the audience's gratification until his story completes the narrative repetition, which does not fully happen until he breaks bread with Priam in book 24.

In his overview of approaches to the *Iliad*'s narrative structure, Seth Schein has remarked on two different ways of conceptualizing the poem's narrative.<sup>39</sup> Some scholars are interested in the static circularity of the poem's structure, which shows structural and thematic repetition on a large scale. Cedric Whitman, building on the observations of his predecessors, famously described the symmetrical shape of the *Iliad* as a whole, and also of smaller pieces within the poem. Sections of narrative mirror each other either through similarity or antithesis, and often appear in chiasmic (ABBA) shape.<sup>40</sup> Other scholars focus on the linear and dynamic forward motion of plot, and consider how the story is played out in successive movements. Most often, scholars identify three movements, which Oliver Taplin has suggested correspond to three consecutive nights of performances.<sup>41</sup>

Both of these interpretive models bear on the issue of narrative erotics. Audience desire, like a poem narrated orally, moves in a linear direction toward the narrative's ending. According to Brooks, audience desire is what constitutes the plot. But the plot, while progressive, can also be conceptualized as a deviation from a point, a disturbance from stasis, a problematization. The goal or end of a plot is return to the point of origin, to a state of quiescence, wherein the problem is resolved.<sup>42</sup> After alienations, withdrawals, rage, and suffering, Akhilleus finally returns to a state of relative tranquility, and the *Iliad*'s narrative expresses this resolution—"the movement from disorder to order"—through its structural circularity on the grand scale.<sup>43</sup> Satisfaction of audience desire is related to (varied) repetition, to the recognition of the narrative's beginnings in its end.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Schein 1984: 30-36.

<sup>40</sup> Whitman 1958: 249-84. Bowra 1930: 15-16, 105-106 notes some of these patterns as important evidence for the poem's unity. Stanley 1993: 29-32 and N. Richardson 1993: 4-14 give excellent overviews and critiques of past scholarship on the *Iliad*'s geometrical structure. Stanley 1993 offers an extensive study of the pervasive ring composition in the *Iliad*, on both large and small scales.

<sup>41</sup> Taplin 1992: 11-41. Cf. Stanley 1993: 249-68 on division of the *Iliad* and its performance in parts. Most recently, Loudon 2006 and Heiden 2008 have also identified three movements based on different types of structural analyses.

<sup>42</sup> Brooks 1984: 102-111.

<sup>43</sup> Mueller 1984: 72.

<sup>44</sup> Tzvetan Todorov has perhaps most fully explored the idea of a "grammar of narrative" as another theoretical model for understanding the tension between forward movement and repetition in narrative structure (Todorov 1977: 108-19, 218-33). A narrative can be imagined as a sentence with a subject (noun = character) and a series of predicates (adjectives = attributes, verbs = actions). The predicates follow each other in a sequential, syntagmatic chain, but they also stand in a paradigmatic relation as a series of repetitions with variation. Throughout the narrative, the original predicate is transformed into similar, but

Repetition is endemic to the *Iliad* on both macrocosmic and microcosmic levels. As Bruce Louden writes, “Any analysis of structure in the *Iliad* is, at least in part, a study of repetition, since the epic exists almost entirely as a series of repetitive elements.”<sup>45</sup> Since the discovery of the *Iliad*’s oral-formulaic style, scholars have struggled to differentiate between significant repetition and repetition that is merely a requirement of meter or an accident of the oral style, with its limited repertoire of expression. In the spirit of recent scholarship, I regard the *Iliad*’s poet as a master craftsman who knew how to use traditional diction in the service of his narrative. Thus I will tend to search for meaning in repetitions, looking for the ways that repetitions encourage and guide an implied audience in its work of plotting.<sup>46</sup> Repeated elements accumulate shades of meaning in each new context where they are found, but they also serve to tie together the larger narrative structures and to enunciate the way that these narrative structures are variations of one another.

In conclusion, this erotics of listening that I have proposed for the *Iliad* has a basis and a model in Homeric epic itself. In book 12 of the *Odyssey*, Odysseus recounts to the Phaiakians his encounter with the Sirens. Their “song” (ᾠοιδίην 12.183, 198) to him appears as a parallel to the *Iliad* itself. The Sirens’ address to Odysseus as “great glory of the Akhaians” and with the epithet “much-storied” (πολύαιν’) “evokes his Iliadic persona,”<sup>47</sup> and they say specifically that they know the Trojan War story: “all the things which the Argives and the Trojans suffered in wide Troy by the gods’ will” (πάνθ’ ὅσ’ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ/ Ἀργεῖοι Τρῶές τε θεῶν ἰότητι μόγησαν 12.189-90).<sup>48</sup> Importantly, the Sirens claim that their heroic song imparts knowledge (implicitly of the Trojan War) to their audience: the listener “will return having enjoyed himself and knowing more” (ὄ γε τερψάμενος νεῖται καὶ πλείονα εἰδῶς 12.188).<sup>49</sup> This description of the epistemological potential of an Iliadic song accords with my argument that the *Iliad*’s implied audience is enticed by the promise of greater knowledge to engage with the poem’s narrative.

And indeed Odysseus presents himself as a desirer of the Sirens’ song. First, the Sirens’ location in a flowery meadow (12.159) positions them as erotic objects.<sup>50</sup> Second,

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different predicates until the final variation that ends the sentence and completes the plot. Cf. Brooks 1984: 91-101. See Peradotto 1974 for application of these concepts to Homeric epic. He considers how the poet uses paradigmatic substitution in repetitive type scenes as well as varied syntagmatic contexts to convey different meanings.

<sup>45</sup> Louden 2006: 1. See Edwards 1980 for analysis of how almost every scene in *Iliad* book 1 is formulaic.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Segal 1971, Martin 1989: 171-179 (on Akhilleus’ speech), Stanley 1993, Lowenstam 1993, and Louden 2006 as models for treating the repetition of diction and narrative patterns as significant to the interpretation of Homeric poetry. Stanley 1993: 36, for example, argues that “The poet selects and adapts elements at hand according to his thematic purpose; ring-composition provides the syntax of combination and thus of communicating this purpose.” For further explanation of this approach’s methodology, see Segal 1971: 1-8, Lowenstam 1993: 13-57, 59-60 and Louden 2006: 1-5.

<sup>47</sup> Peponi 2012: 79.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Pucci 1979.

<sup>49</sup> Peponi 2012: 81-82.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid. 90-92.

Odysseus explicitly describes his experience of desire after first hearing the Sirens' words: "my heart wished to listen" (ἐμὸν κῆρ/ ἤθελ' ἀκουέμεναι 12.193-94).<sup>51</sup> Odysseus' desire is so strong that he asks his fellow sailors to untie him so that he can remain while his ship sails away (12.193-94). This Odyssean episode clearly shows narrative erotics at work in the reception of a song that resembles the *Iliad*, and it provides evidence for the legitimacy and relevance of my approach.<sup>52</sup>

### 3. The Desires of the *Iliad*'s Characters

The Trojan War story famously has its roots in desire. The sexual desires of Paris and Helen for one another result in Helen's removal from her home and husband at Sparta, either through abduction or elopement. This arouses Menelaos' desire to reclaim Helen, and he and his brother Agamemnon raise an army against Troy. For this reason, Helen is commonly called the *casus belli*. The *Iliad* explores this erotic origin of the war most explicitly in book 3, when Paris and Menelaos face off against each other in a duel over Helen that reenacts their desires and resultant conflict in microcosm. The duel, like the war, remains undecided, but Paris returns to sexual possession of Helen, as the two reconstitute their union under the constraint of Aphrodite.

This episode, however, is not integral to the *Iliad*'s main plot. It is instead part of a lengthy narrative deviation (books 3-7), which I call the "superplot" because it includes incidents—like the duel discussed above—that represent story material properly belonging either before or after the *Iliad*'s main plot.<sup>53</sup> The superplot delays the movement of the main plot, and with it the satisfaction of the audience's primary desire, thus allowing for narrative expansion. But even more importantly, the superplot contextualizes Akhilleus' withdrawal and return within the larger Trojan War story, offering poetic reflection on the war's cause and consequences, and thus on the mechanics and morality of the *Iliad*'s main plot. In Chapter 2, I focus on the meaning of Helen, the superplot's central character, as well as examining her opposite, Andromakhe. I argue that Helen's desires—in analogy to Akhilleus' own desires—function, albeit problematically, to create and sustain narrative.

This leads me to the *Iliad*'s main plot, ostensibly the story of Akhilleus' wrath and its results. This dissertation contends that Akhilleus becomes angry at Agamemnon because of frustrated desires, and that these desires are the true engine of the poem's narrative. In addition, I argue that the *Iliad* repeatedly presents desire in the triangular arrangement of desiring subject, desired object, and rival, and that the aggressive desire for dominance between desiring subject and rival is just as significant as the subject's

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<sup>51</sup> Ibid. 70-75.

<sup>52</sup> The erotic appeal of theogonic epic is even more explicit, as Peponi 2012: 102-114 has shown. The voices and dancing of the Muses who inspire Hesiod's *Theogony* are called "desirable" (ἐρατῆν 65; ἐπήρατον 67; ἐρατὸς 70), and in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*, Apollo experiences desire (ἕμερος 421; ἔρος 433) while listening to Hermes' "desirable" (ἐρατὴ 420 and 425; ἐρατὸν 422) theogonic song and kithara music.

<sup>53</sup> Whitman 1958: 264-70. See Chapter 2, sec. 1.

desire for the erotic object.<sup>54</sup> In Chapter 1, I trace how Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis arouses in Akhilleus twin desires for homosocial prestige (directed at Agamemnon) and for the return of his erstwhile concubine Briseis, in the main plot's first movement. Akhilleus' consequent decision to withdraw from the battle initiates in turn the Akhaian army's desire for the absent hero.<sup>55</sup> In Chapter 3, I examine how the failure to satisfy Akhilleus' and the army's desires in the book 9 embassy extends the main plot's first movement until Akhilleus accepts restitution in book 19. However, book 19 is not the end of the *Iliad*. I argue that the loss of Patroklos in book 16 initiates the main plot's second movement and a second set of desires for Akhilleus, once again structured in a triangle.<sup>56</sup> In Chapter 4, I use a psychoanalytic approach, based primarily in Freud's and Melanie Klein's work on mourning, to explore how Akhilleus' desire for an unattainable reunion with his dead friend and his concomitant desire for revenge against Hektor drive the last quarter of the *Iliad*. Thus Akhilleus emerges as the poem's prime desirer, and the satisfaction of his desires can be recognized as the goal of the main plot.<sup>57</sup> The delay in satisfying these desires constitutes the *Iliad*'s narrative.

The *Iliad*'s identification of Akhilleus in the main plot and Helen in the superplot with the external narrator or with the poet himself supports this reading.<sup>58</sup> In book 1, Akhilleus echoes and elaborates upon the external narrator's account of the action, and establishes the future direction of the plot. In book 9, he appears as a bardic figure, playing the lyre and singing *klea andrōn*. Helen is connected with the *Iliad*'s poet when she weaves a tapestry in book 3 that depicts the Trojan War. Just like the poet and narrator, these desiring characters are productive of narrative.

In the previous section I examined how the *Iliad* arouses a desire in the implied audience to plot the complete story as the narrative unfolds. I suggest that the audience's desire can also be understood as an external counterpart to or extension of the desires of internal characters, and especially of Akhilleus. Just as Akhilleus wants to achieve his desired objects, the audience—in identification with Akhilleus—is interested in plotting out how those desires will be satisfied. But at various moments Homer leads the audience to identify with other characters' desires as well, like the Akhaian army's desire for Akhilleus' return or Andromakhe's desire for her husband Hektor.

I am also interested in how the poet sets up gendered norms for desire and then

<sup>54</sup> Girard 1965 and Sedgwick 1992. See Chapter 1, sec. 1.

<sup>55</sup> Nagler 1974: 131. Cf. Lord 2000: 186-93.

<sup>56</sup> While I accept the ample evidence for performance of the *Iliad* in three parts (cf. sec. 2 above), I argue that the poem's main plot consists of two major movements. My conception of the plot accords with Aristotle's comment that "only one tragedy can be made out the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*, or at most two" in contrast to the chronicle narrative structure of the other Cyclic epics (*Poetics* 59b, my emphasis).

<sup>57</sup> Heiden 2008: 26 describes this same mechanism structuring the *Iliad*'s narrative, although he does not use the language of desire: "When characters take action to address problems, events have an intrinsic trajectory of movement furnished by a character's intention to move from a state in which he confronts a problem to a goal-state in which the problem has been resolved or obviated." Fantuzzi 2012 takes as his subject Akhilleus' desires in the *Iliad* and their afterlife, but does not consider their implications for the poem's narrative structure.

<sup>58</sup> Austin 1994: 28. See Suzuki 1989: 40-42 and Blondell 2013: 46-54 on the similarities between Akhilleus and Helen.

“queers” them as the poem progresses. I use the term “queer” here along the same lines as recent queer theorists to denote “an oppositional site...to...normalizing discourses.”<sup>59</sup> Queer does not necessarily indicate gay sexuality or transgenderism, but rather deviance from established norms of gender roles and expressions of sexuality, whatever they may be. In book 1, the poet establishes a triangle of two men contending for a female object as a normative structure of desire in the mortal realm.<sup>60</sup> This norm is confirmed in the beginning of book 3 with the duel over Helen. But then the poet gives Helen a voice and resituates her as desiring subject, first in relation to Menelaos, and subsequently in a new erotic triangle with Aphrodite and Paris. When she has sex with Paris, Helen affirms her “queer” identity as adulteress, and it is in this aspect that she is most generative of plot; by remaining in Troy, she provides continued impetus for the war and allows the *Iliad*’s narrative to move forward. In book 6, the poet develops this portrait of Helen and also introduces Andromakhe as a speaking subject. She, in contrast to Helen, represents the anguished experience of women as chief victims and most desired prizes of war. As an articulate analogue to the mute Khryseis and Briseis of book 1, she also morally problematizes the poem’s normative erotic structure.

All of this sets the stage, I contend, for Akhilleus’ dismissal of Briseis as an object of desire in book 19. Akhilleus’ disavowal of Briseis amounts to a rejection of normative desire, and thus a refusal to fulfill the narrative pattern established in book 1, which should have been concluded with her return to his tent. Instead, Akhilleus insists that his desire to have Patroklos back is primary, thus elevating desire for a male object above the normative desire for a female object.<sup>61</sup> By doing so, Akhilleus forces the narrative to continue and provides a new narrative impetus that in fact pushes the main plot to its climax in book 22 and final resolution in book 24; thus the “queering” of Akhilleus is instrumental for the construction of the *Iliad*’s full narrative. Akhilleus’ *aristeia*, and especially his killing of Hektor, represent the central expression of his heroism but also of Trojan death and suffering. In this way, Homer presents queer desire’s deviance and societal disruption as powerfully ambivalent: it has a devastating human cost but is vital to heroic epic.

#### 4. Identifying the *Iliad*’s Language of Desire

The thesis that I have sketched out in the preceding paragraphs begs for further explanation of what I really mean by “desire” in the context of both my critical approach

<sup>59</sup> Bacchetta 1999: 144. Cf. Eng et al. 2005.

<sup>60</sup> Sedgwick 1985 notes the same gendering of triangular eroticism in English literature. Even in book 1, however, it is clear that this norm does not apply to the gods, since Hera takes the role of a human male in her erotic triangle with Zeus and Thetis/Akhilleus (cf. Chapter 1, sec. 6).

<sup>61</sup> As I discuss in Chapter 4, sec. 3, the deviance of Akhilleus’ powerful mourning is reflected in other characters’ concern that he is not eating, drinking, or having sex (*Il.* 19.225-33, 19.340-48, 24.129-131). MacCary 1982 explains Akhilleus’ non-normative object-choice as representative of developmental pathology: Akhilleus is a hero who has not advanced beyond the pre-Oedipal stage of narcissistic libidinal investment. Halperin 1990 sees parallels between Akhilleus and Patroklos’ special bond and the relationships of Gilgamesh and Enkidu in the *Epic of Gilgamesh* and David and Jonathan in the Bible.

and Homer's own language. I conceptualize desire, on the most basic level, as wanting what one does not have. The desired object might be a person (in a sexual or nonsexual connection), a material object (wealth), or something more immaterial, like a certain social position or identity (being boss, enjoying freedom). Eve K. Sedgwick uses the term "desire"

not for a particular affective state or emotion, but for the affective or social force, the glue, even when its manifestation is hostility or hatred or something less emotively charged, that shapes an important relationship.<sup>62</sup>

As Sedgwick herself acknowledges, this idea of desire is similar to the psychoanalytic concept of "libido," a psychic energy or drive (sometimes sexual) emanating from a person's unconscious, which can be directed onto an external object.<sup>63</sup> I draw on both of these models to characterize desire and analyze its workings, but differ from them in conceiving of the space between subject and object as the key element that inspires and defines desire. As I understand it, desire is a function of the distance between the desirer and desired, and the satisfaction of desire is the closing of that space.<sup>64</sup> That is, desire ceases to exist (or should be called something else, such as "love" or "communion") when subject and object are united.

In the *Iliad*, *eros*<sup>65</sup> and *himeros* are words used for sexual desire, but they can also be applied to nonsexual types of desire. Although Heinz Müller and Michael Weiss attempt to draw a fine distinction between the two terms, their meaning seems to be very similar.<sup>66</sup> They describe an intense desire, sometimes with the implication of accompanying physical arousal. When they signify sexual desire, both terms are associated with the presence or accoutrement of Aphrodite. The objects of *eros* (in its substantive or verbal forms) can be a person (3.446, 14.315, 14.317, 14.328, 16.182), mares (20.223), food and drink,<sup>67</sup> sleep, sex, celebration, dancing, and war (13.636-39),<sup>68</sup> and lamentation (24.227). The objects of *himeros* can be sex by implication (3.446, 14.198, 14.216, 14.328), people and a city (3.139), food (11.89), and lamentation (23.14, 23.108, 23.153, 24.507, 24.514). *Eros* is almost always inspired by visual perception of

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<sup>62</sup> Sedgwick 1985: 2.

<sup>63</sup> Cf. Freud 1960: 67-71.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Plato, *Symp.* 203b-212b on the penury of Eros (Diotima's speech), and Halperin 1992: 101-106 for analysis of Diotima's *eros* and the *Symposium*'s "erotics of narrativity."

<sup>65</sup> As Weiss 1998: 35-38 explains, the thematic noun ἔρος appears in the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and Hesiod instead of the *t*-stem noun ἔρωσ, which is first used in the *Homeric Hymn to Hermes*. For the sake of consistency, I will use the transliteration *eros* (instead of *erōs*) throughout, even when referencing treatments of the concept in later authors.

<sup>66</sup> Müller 1980: 14 and Weiss 1998: 49-50. Many of my observations about *eros* and *himeros* are drawn from Müller's careful analysis. Cf. Plato, *Crat.* 420a2-b3.

<sup>67</sup> The formula αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο appears repeatedly.

<sup>68</sup> See also 9.64 and 16.208 for desire (ἔραμαι) for war or battle.

the desired object,<sup>69</sup> and therefore requires the desirer and desired to be in close physical proximity. It is about nearness and imminent satisfaction, when there is only the smallest space between desirer and desired. Its goal is the unity of subject and object.<sup>70</sup> Sexual *himeros* occurs under the same conditions and in conjunction with *eros* (the terms appear together in 3.446 = 14.328), but nonsexual *himeros* can also be inspired by a god or by someone's words, when the desired object(s) are physically absent or immaterial (3.139-140, 23.14, 23.108, 23.152-53, 24.507). For both terms there is a tension between these desires as internal drives emanating from their subject and as outside forces subjugating the desirer (cf. 3.442, 14.198-99, 14.216-17, 14.315-16).<sup>71</sup> The adjectival form of *himeros*, ἡμερόεις, is used to describe an object that causes the experience of desire (3.397, 5.429, 14.170, 18.603, cf. 18.570).

Another important word for desire in the *Iliad* is *pothē*.<sup>72</sup> This describes a subject's desire for an object that is elsewhere, often a person who is far away or even dead. In the *Cratylus*, Plato's Socrates notes this quality of *pothos* (the post-Iliadic version of *pothē*) and argues that *pothos* and *himeros* describe the same experience, except that the object of *pothos* is absent while the object of *himeros* is present.<sup>73</sup> Plato's evaluation testifies to the semantic similarity of the terms, but in the *Iliad*, as we have seen, this object dichotomy does not yet exist since *himeros* can also refer to an absent object. *Pothē* can imply a sexual dynamic, in the case of a wife longing for her dead husband (5.414-15), but generally it is used of nonsexual relationships.<sup>74</sup> The object of *pothē* is almost always a person or the attributes of a person—voice (5.234), or vigor and might (24.6)—but the narrator also uses it once to describe Akhilleus' desire for battle-cry and war when he has withdrawn from the fighting (1.492). It appears most commonly in homosocial contexts to designate an army's or hero's desire for an absent leader (1.240, 2.703, 2.709, 2.726, 2.778, 6.362, 11.471, 14.368, 15.219)<sup>75</sup> or comrade (7.690, 17.704, 19.321, 23.16). Memory plays an important role in the experience of *pothē*, because one cannot desire someone who is not there unless one remembers him or her.<sup>76</sup> In that respect it differs from *eros* and *himeros*, which are responses to sensory or mental

<sup>69</sup> Plato, in his discussions of *eros*, asserts repeatedly that it flows in through the desirer's eyes (*Crat.* 420b1; *Phaedr.* 250d4-252b3, 253e6-254c3, 255b3-256a7).

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Plato, *Symp.* 189d-194e (Aristophanes' speech) and Vernant 1989: 157-163 on *eros* as a desire for physical union.

<sup>71</sup> Weiss 1998: 50 also observes that *himeros* can be inspired by someone's words or thrown into one's heart by a god, and on that basis finds a distinction between *eros* and *himeros*: “ἔρος is conceived of as subject-internal in its origin and its end. ἡμερος, on the other hand, is a compulsive desire of external origin.” Against this definite difference in meaning (which Weiss justifies etymologically in pp. 51-56), it should be noted that *eros* (in the passages cited above) is also described as a force that “veils” (ἀμφεκάλυψεν) or “dominates” (ἐδάμασσεν) the mind or heart.

<sup>72</sup> It appears as a noun, but even more frequently in verbal form (ποθέω).

<sup>73</sup> *Crat.* 420a4-8. Cf. Vernant 1989: 140-41.

<sup>74</sup> Cf. Weiss 1998: 32.

<sup>75</sup> Once it is used analogously of horses' desire for their absent charioteers (11.61).

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Penelope's *pothē* in the *Odyssey*; by remembering Odysseus, she keeps alive and exclusive her desire for him. See also Lynn-George 1988: 35-37 for the relationship between Helen's memory and desire.



stimulation.

This survey of the deployment of *eros*, *himeros*, and *pothē* in the *Iliad* bears witness to the range of possible objects of desire, and also to different kinds of desire. Homer acknowledges the existence not only of sexual and nonsexual desires for a loved one, but also of aggressive desire, as evidenced by the appearance of war and battle as erotic objects. Indeed, their shared vocabulary shows that these two kinds of desire are more similar than different: although their desired objects and physical contexts seem worlds apart, they actually have much in common.<sup>77</sup> As Emily Vermeule first observed with reference to the Homeric poems,<sup>78</sup> both sex and fighting bring bodies together physically and are described in terms of *mixis*, the combining of previously separate entities; in addition, both are depicted as experiences that subdue or harm the self. Thus sexual desire and aggressive desire (in its most extreme form) similarly aim for overpowering physical union. This connection helps to justify my identification of the triangle that simultaneously encodes desires between subject and object and between subject and rival as a key structure for expressing desire in the *Iliad*.

I understand *eros*, *himeros*, and *pothē* as the most marked words for desire in the *Iliad*, but besides these terms (that appear in both substantive and verbal forms), there are many other verbs in the *Iliad* that fall within the semantic sphere of desire. This includes verbs of wishing and wanting (ἐθέλω, βούλομαι, and ἔλδομαι) and of passionate eagerness and craving (ἴεμαι, λιλαίομαι, μέμαα, μενοινάω). I will at times point to these words as indicators of desire in the *Iliad*.

I do not, however, consider the complex of words built around the *phil-* root signifiers of desire, although they do in many cases represent the goal of desire.<sup>79</sup> The terms φίλος, φιλέω, and φιλότης are used in early Greek poetry to describe a range of interpersonal relations: sexual intercourse, kinship by blood or marriage, military fellowship, alliance, guest-friendship, the concord guaranteed by a peace treaty or agreement.<sup>80</sup> The common factor in all of these relations is the oneness, togetherness, or shared identity of the parties involved; I understand this unity or intimacy as the primary meaning of the *phil-* root in the *Iliad*, from which emotional implications of friendliness and love have been derived as secondary meanings.<sup>81</sup> This oneness is in contrast to the

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<sup>77</sup> Thus *eris* (strife) is just one variety of *eros*. Cf. Weiss 1998: 46-47, who theorizes an etymological connection between the two terms, and also Pironti 2007: 30-32 and *passim*.

<sup>78</sup> Vermeule 1979: 97-103. See also MacCary 1982: 137-48; Monsacré 1984: 63-77; Vernant 1989: 131-52; Pironti 2007: 225-230.

<sup>79</sup> *Contra* Konstan 2013, who would like to assimilate *eros* to *philia*.

<sup>80</sup> *LfgrE*.

<sup>81</sup> The fact that φιλότης can represent non-consensual sexual intercourse in epic diction (Pironti 2007: 46-53) obviates recent arguments for the priority, or even exclusivity of the the *phil-*root's affective meaning (Hooker 1987; Robinson 1990; Konstan 1997: 28-31). My own understanding of the *phil-* root is closely related to, but distinct from, the view of those who think *philos* refers to a specific social connection (such as guest-friendship), with attendant duties and benefits (Glottz 1904: 139; Adkins 1963: 30-37; Benveniste 1973: 273-282; Sinos 1980: 41-42; Taillardat 1982). I see the core meaning of *philos* as more relational than social, i.e. it defines a relation between people, and between people and things, but neither is it tied to a particular cultural institution nor does it necessarily require interpersonal acts or obligations. My

lack signified by desire; in fact, in the *Iliad*, φιλότης as sexual intercourse appears as the object of *eros* and *himeros* (13.636-39, 14.163).<sup>82</sup> Similarly, after Akhilleus is permanently separated from his his most *philos* companion Patroklos by death,<sup>83</sup> Akhilleus' *pothē* is for their life together as powerful warriors (24.6-8), i.e. their lost φιλότης.<sup>84</sup> Thus the *phil-* root appears in conjunction with desire, but represents its aim rather than desire itself.

Homer also finds other ways to signify desire besides explicitly erotic vocabulary. For example, Akhilleus' desires for honor from Agamemnon and for sexual possession of Briseis are never enunciated with words of desire, but that does not mean Akhilleus' desires are unacknowledged in the text. One way that Homer indicates his desire is with a repeated expression of loss and separation, which focuses on the lack that is the essence of desire. When Akhilleus explains to his mother Thetis how Agamemnon had dishonored him, he concludes with the summing complaint, "having seized my prize, he has it, after he took it away himself" (ἐλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας 1.356). This declaration employs two participles to describe Agamemnon's act of appropriating Briseis, and a main verb to describe his current possession of the concubine. These verbs of deprivation all express Akhilleus' resultant desires. Akhilleus also emphasizes Agamemnon's agency with the intensive pronoun αὐτὸς, thus pinpointing Agamemnon as the object of his aggressive desire.<sup>85</sup> This important enunciation of Akhilleus' desires is repeated once by Thetis to Zeus (1.507) and again by Thersites in his recapitulation of Akhilleus' grievances (2.240).<sup>86</sup>

Another way to indicate desire is through its emotional symptoms. Desire can be expressed by a range of emotions, as Sedgwick's description above suggests. In Ancient Greek literature, sexual desire's satisfaction has a pleasurable quality, but unattained sexual desire, that is the pure experience of sexual *eros*, seems to be linked to pain and domination. Anne Carson—working from Sappho's adjective *glukupikron*—has illustrated this paradox in relation to *eros*, particularly as it appears in Greek lyric.<sup>87</sup> In the *Iliad*, sexual *himeros* is characterized as "sweet" (*glukus*),<sup>88</sup> but Pironti has recently explored how the poem associates *eros* and Aphrodite with madness, sleep, death, and

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definition overlaps with the recent (2010) entries in the *Lfgre* and derives from the same methodology. Aristotle comes to a similar conclusion about the meaning of *philia* in *Nic. Eth.* 1161b11-1166a30.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. *Il.* 3.441-446, 14.314-51 and Pironti 2007: 46.

<sup>83</sup> The narrative emphasizes the breakage of their *philotēs* by juxtaposing *philos* with the verb "to perish" (ἄλλυμι): οἱ πολὺ φίλτατος ὤλεθ' ἑταῖρος (16.655); οἱ φίλος ὤλεθ' ἑταῖρος (17.642); φίλος ὤλεθ' ἑταῖρος (18.80).

<sup>84</sup> Cf. *Il.* 19.319-27, 23.16-18 and Fantuzzi 2013: 211-214.

<sup>85</sup> Akhilleus' insistence that Agamemnon took away Briseis "himself," although Agamemnon in fact sent heralds to do the deed, aroused the suspicion of the Analysts (Kirk 1985: 71-72). I, however, regard Akhilleus' words as an expression of his focalization of the event, rather than as a textual problem.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1.430, 9.107, 9.131, 9.273, 19.89 for variations on this formula with regards to Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis.

<sup>87</sup> Carson 1998.

<sup>88</sup> *Il.* 3.139, 3.446, 14.328.

violence and depicts them subduing and undoing the desiring subject.<sup>89</sup> I augment Pironti's observations by arguing that other kinds of desire are connected mainly to the emotions of anger and grief. Akhilleus is famously defined by his wrath (*mēnis*, *kholos*, and *kotos*)<sup>90</sup> and by his anguish (*akhos*).<sup>91</sup> I will point to the ways that Akhilleus' as well as other characters' anger and grief are associated consistently with desire. For example, Akhilleus warns Agamemnon that his withdrawal from battle will bring *pothē* for the Akhaians and *akhos* for Agamemnon (1.240-41), and Patroklos later describes the Akhaians' own *akhos* because of Akhilleus' absence (16.22).<sup>92</sup> When Patroklos has been killed, Akhilleus' resultant desires are accompanied by *akhos* so powerful that he will not eat or drink (19.306-7). Similarly, Helen, after Iris has put *himeros* for her former husband and home in her heart, wishes that she had died before coming to Troy and claims that she is melting in her mourning (3.173-76).<sup>93</sup>

In the final books of the *Iliad*, *himeros* is even more directly associated with suffering. It appears repeatedly in a nonsexual context, to express a "desire for lamentation" (*himeros gooio*). This desire, as I argue in Chapter 4, represents the experience of mourning, which weeping expresses; the satisfaction of the desire for lamentation indicates the resolution of mourning. The last books of the *Iliad* treat the fulfillment of this desire, as the Akhaians celebrate Patroklos' funeral in book 23, and the Trojans complete Hektor's funeral at the end of book 24. Despite Patroklos' funeral, the poet delays the satisfaction of Akhilleus' desire for lamentation until his meeting with Priam in book 24. Then Akhilleus is finally able to come to terms with Patroklos' death; he lets go of his desires for Patroklos and Hektor, completing the mourning process. The end of Akhilleus' driving desires marks the end of the poem's narrative.

This brings me back finally to the audience of the *Iliad*, with whom this chapter began. The suffering that accompanies the characters' desires seems to be transformed in the audience's parallel experience into a kind of pleasure. The audience's desire could not be especially painful or else it would not endure listening to the poem. Once again, the *Odyssey* provides a model for understanding an implied audience's response to epic poetry. Bards in the *Odyssey* "give pleasure" (τέρπειν 1.347; cf. τέρποντ' 8.91) with their "enchantments" (θελκκτήρια 1.337, cf. θέλγουσιν 12.40, 44) to internal audiences who have the appropriate "psychical distance" or "aesthetic distance" from the story being sung.<sup>94</sup> These internal audiences, who are not personally touched by the story being narrated, are an appropriate parallel for the implied external audience, who is hearing a (fictional) epic of the heroic age. Odysseus similarly takes pleasure (τέρπετ' 8.368) when

<sup>89</sup> Pironti 2007: 209-231.

<sup>90</sup> Thus what many critics have identified as the central theme of Akhilleus' wrath, which is indicated by the first word of the poem, can be understood as a cipher for Akhilleus' desire. Cf. Redfield 1994: 11-19, Muellner 1996, and Walsh 2005 on Akhilleus' wrath.

<sup>91</sup> Nagy 1979: 69-83 offers poetic evidence for Leonard Palmer's suggestion that Akhilleus' name derives from *akhos* + *laos*: "whose men have grief," tracking how Akhilleus is associated with grief and pains (*akhos*, *pēma*, *algea*, *penthos*) and with bringing them on his community.

<sup>92</sup> According to Nagy 1979: 83-93, *akhos* is also the root of "Akhaians."

<sup>93</sup> Helen repeats the wish that she had died before marrying Paris in 6.435-51.

<sup>94</sup> Peponi 2012: 29-44. Cf. Macleod 1982: 6-8.

he hears Demodokos sing about his own Iliadic exploits, although he also weeps, perhaps in an expression of desire for lost friends, which is simultaneously generated by the narrative.<sup>95</sup> I believe that he is able to enjoy Demodokos' song, despite its personal story of painful incidents and lost comrades, because he has survived and lived to hear the tale.<sup>96</sup> Similarly, it seems that Odysseus enjoys the Sirens' song, as both Kirke and the Sirens themselves have promised that he will (12.52; 12.188), since he desires to keep listening. But staying with the Sirens and satisfying his desire for their epic narrative would mean the end of Odysseus' pleasure: premature death (12.41-46).<sup>97</sup> Odysseus avoids this fate by not listening to the end of the Sirens' song; his ship sails onward as he remains tied to the mast. Although the audience, of course, survives the experience of listening to the *Iliad* in full, reaching the conclusion of the *Iliad*'s narrative similarly marks the end of the audience's pleasure as well as the (at least partial) satisfaction of its desire.

The audience's pleasure in unfulfilled desire helps to explain the enduring appeal of the *Iliad*. That pleasure brings many real audience members and readers to revisit the narrative or to recommend it to others. While I believe that the *Iliad*'s narrative form continues to inspire and manipulate the audience's desire in repeated encounters with the poem, my reading assumes an implied audience hearing the *Iliad* for the first time. This dissertation will track the implied listener's evolving experience as he or she receives the narrative in a sequential, linear progression from beginning to end. This means that I will consider at each discrete point how the narrative refers or relates to what has come before, but I will not (generally) discuss relevant incidents that occur later in the narrative until I reach them in my analysis of the audience's developing experience. This dissertation, then, represents a largely diachronic, rather than synchronic or synoptic, approach to the poem.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>95</sup> Cf. Peponi 2012: 44-51.

<sup>96</sup> Nagy 1979: 101 sees the *kleos* of epic song as an antidote to grief.

<sup>97</sup> Cf. Pucci 1987: 210 and Doherty 1995: 60-62.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Purves 2010: 1-63 for a discussion of these different analytical perspectives.

## CHAPTER 1

### Plotting Desire in *Iliad* 1

In this chapter, I contend that Homer presents three conflicts in *Iliad* 1 that comprehensively parallel one another in structure, theme, and diction, and that are meant to be understood in relation to one another. Scholars have long recognized the opening dispute between Khryses and Agamemnon over possession of Khryseis as a miniature paradigm for the narratively larger and more impactful subsequent conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon over Briseis.<sup>1</sup> Scholars have also appreciated how the quarrel between Hera and Zeus over Thetis' supplication echoes the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon and how its resolution represents a divine variation on the sacrificial feast that celebrates the reconciliation between Khryses-Apollo and Agamemnon-the Akhaians.<sup>2</sup> Expanding upon these earlier observations, I will show in detail how all three conflicts are homologous.

Moreover, I will argue that this homology establishes for the audience the form and direction of the *Iliad*'s main plot. Peter Brooks comments on the importance of threefold repetition in enabling the audience's recognition of a plot:

If we think of the trebling characteristic of the folktale, and of all formulaic literature, we may consider that the repetition by three constitutes the minimal repetition to the perception of series, which would make it the minimal intentional structure of action, the minimum plot.<sup>3</sup>

Throughout book 1, the development and resolution of the first conflict guide the audience in plotting its successive variations until the paradigmatic form is fully established and confirmed at the end of the book.<sup>4</sup> At the same time, the parallel resolutions of the first and third conflicts initiate the audience's desire to track along the same lines in the rest of the *Iliad* the development and resolution of the central narrative problem—the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon—that is introduced in book 1 but left unresolved until book 19.

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<sup>1</sup> Schadewalt 1966 [1943]: 144-48; Lord 2000 [1960]: 188-89; Segal 1971b: 102-103; Scully 1986: 142-48; Stanley 1993: 39-50; Rabel 1997: 38-42; Wilson 2002: 43, 64-67.

<sup>2</sup> Wilamowitz 1916: 257-58; Sheppard 1922: 22-23; Owen 1946: 15; Lang 1983: 162; Stanley 1993: 46-50; Wilson 2002: 67-68.

<sup>3</sup> Brooks 1984: 99.

<sup>4</sup> Regarding Agamemnon's two successive conflicts (with Khryses and Akhilleus), Scully 1986: 147-48 writes of the reader's "realization that there is an implicit structured interaction between the juxtaposed quarrels...the reader becomes aware that the previously inscribed model of action bears upon his interpretation of the present scene."

The interconnectedness of the three conflicts in book 1 is indicated not only by their repetition of one another, but also by the way they intertwine causally and narratively. Donna Wilson observes the sequential chain of cause and effect as the three quarrels “interlock in such a way that the resolution of one...constitutes the loss in the next.”<sup>5</sup> The necessity of Khryseis’s return instigates Agamemnon’s seizure of Briseis. Akhilleus’ loss of Briseis provides the impetus for his appeal to Thetis. Thetis’ extraction of a promise from Zeus causes Hera’s displeasure. Thus the three conflicts generate each other in a linear movement in which the context of discord grows from the mundane to the cosmic, and the action literally moves upwards, from the Akhaian camp by the sea to the peak of Mount Olympos.

Roland Barthes employs the metaphor of the fugue to illustrate the shape of narrative enigmas and the way that these hermeneutic puzzles relate to each other, and this metaphor is useful for understanding the progression of conflicts—themselves narrative problems asking to be solved—in *Iliad* 1. Barthes writes:

What sings, what flows smoothly, what moves by accidentals, arabesques, and controlled ritardandos through an intelligible progression (like the melody often given to woodwinds) is the series of enigmas, their suspended disclosure, their delayed resolution: the development of an enigma is really like that of a fugue; both contain a *subject*, subject to an *exposition*, a *development* (embodied in the retards, ambiguities, and diversions by which the discourse prolongs the mystery), a *stretto* (a tightened section where scraps of answers rapidly come and go), and a *conclusion*.<sup>6</sup>

A fugue starts with the exposition of a single theme (or subject). A second voice and then a third voice join in sequence to repeat the theme from the beginning in a different pitch, even as the other voices continue onwards. When all the voices have entered, the exposition is complete and the development can begin.<sup>7</sup>

In this same way, book 1’s narrative form gradually introduces the conflicts (repeated with variation) in interconnected series; it functions as an exposition to the *Iliad* as a whole.<sup>8</sup> It starts with a description of Khryseis’ embassy, Agamemnon’s rejection, and the subsequent retributory plague. Then the restitution of Khryseis is proposed, agreed upon, and ordered, but it is not immediately narrated. Instead, the conflict of Agamemnon and Akhilleus is introduced and played out, including Agamemnon’s removal of Briseis and Akhilleus’ supplication of Thetis. Thetis promises to approach Zeus for help, which is the first narrative foreshadowing of the coming conflict between Zeus and Hera. But then the narrative returns to Odysseus and the Akhaian youths on

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<sup>5</sup> Wilson 2002: 40-41. See also the early observations on this narrative structure by Sheppard 1922: 16-23 as well as the detailed diagrams of the interlocking progression of the book 1 conflicts in Stanley 1993: 39-49 and Heiden 2008: 40.

<sup>6</sup> Barthes 1974: 29.

<sup>7</sup> Cf. “Fugue” on Wikipedia, and Barthes 1975: 155 for comparison of interlocking narrative sequences with the fugue.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Lowenstam 1993: 11, 60, who also compares the *Iliad* to a fugue.

their voyage to Khryse, and it describes at length the reunion of Khryses and Khryseis and the sacrificial feast, thus ending the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon. Next the narrative, along with the Akhaian ship, sails back in a circle to Akhilleus sorrowing alone on the beach. The audience is prepared for a resolution to the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon that resembles the first resolution, but its desire remains unsatisfied in book 1. In the last section of the book, the narrative rejoins Thetis and recounts her meeting with Zeus and the subsequent quarrel and partial reconciliation of Zeus and Hera, which follows the outline of the first conflict and confirms the theme's pattern. This interlocking narrative structure invites the audience to compare the conflicts to one another and, at the same time, delays complete disclosure of the story, thus arousing the audience's desire to finish plotting out the conflicts.

### 1. Triangular Desire

But what is the character and meaning of these repeated patterns? All three conflicts in Book 1 display a similar triadic structure, that is, they occur on account of disagreement between two players regarding a female third party. I argue that these interpersonal triangles encode desires that underly and produce the conflicts. They are resolved only when these desires are satisfied. Homer introduces these dynamics of desire and the havoc that they wreak through the initial example of Khryses' conflict with Agamemnon over control of Khryseis. Then each of the following variations in book 1 clarifies for the audience the mechanism of desire and its harmful effects.

The triangle is a shape that Anne Carson identifies as a literary emblem of desire. Desire's lack, or the separation that defines desire<sup>9</sup> can be effected or conceptualized by a third person, who competes with the subject for possession of the object. Thus Carson reads Sappho's Fragment 31 as a meditation on the triangularity of desire: the poetic speaker watches a girl, her beloved, talking and laughing with an unnamed (rival) man, who materializes the lover's lack, her experience of desire.<sup>10</sup>

René Girard sees the desire enunciated by this triangular positioning directed as much at the rival as at the ostensible object. Like Carson, Girard identifies a third party (real or imaginary) standing in the way as necessary to inspire the subject's desire for the object; he calls that third party the "mediator," since he or she mediates the subject's desire. In fact, as Girard argues, the subject's desire for the object is secondary, and the subject's primary desire is to have what the mediator has, to emulate the mediator. The subject's desire for the object is only an imitation of the mediator's desire, and does not originate from the subject. Girard identifies this triangular desire as a key dynamic in the nineteenth-century bourgeois novel, where the ambitious and snobbish hero often desires to become a member of the aristocracy, to acquire wealth and status (commonly by marriage into the nobility).<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> See Introduction, sec. 4.

<sup>10</sup> Carson 1998: 12-17. Cf. D'Angour 2013, who posits a restored ending to Fr. 31 that explicitly situates the poem within an Iliadic erotic scenario.

<sup>11</sup> Girard 1965, esp. 1-47.

Eve K. Sedgwick builds on Girard's insights from a feminist perspective that acknowledges the structural power imbalances between men and women in a patriarchal society. While Girard largely ignores the genders of subject, mediator, and object, Sedgwick observes that the standard literary erotic triangle positions two men as rivals for a female object. Sedgwick reads triangular desire as a negotiation of male relationships and masculine identity in terms of sexual ownership of the female. As such, it is a literary representation of the male "traffic in women," a system that Gayle Rubin identified in her landmark 1975 essay as the basis of our sex/gender system and as a product of patriarchy and compulsory heterosexuality.<sup>12</sup> For Sedgwick, the most important connection in triangular configurations is "between men" as they define their roles in the male homosocial ruling class. Both Girard and Sedgwick observe that the male subject's desire for the male rival often takes the form of aggression or hostility, a will to dominate the other.<sup>13</sup> The triangle, then, can conceal competitive animus between men—what I will term "aggressive desire"—behind sexual desire for a woman.

Sedgwick's model is highly relevant for the male homosocial world of the Homeric poems. Hans van Wees calls Homeric men "status warriors." A man's status is dependent upon his "honor" (*timē*), which can be accumulated in many ways, including through circumstance of birth, political or military power, material wealth, physical strength or beauty, intelligence, and speaking skills.<sup>14</sup> Others acknowledge one's honor by deference, which can come in the immaterial form of gestures of respect or the material form of favors, privileges, gifts, or a "prize of honor" (*geras*).<sup>15</sup> A female slave is an important example of a *geras*. Recently Ruth Scodel has helpfully applied the concept of "face" to describe the Homeric characters' stake in the "economy of honor."<sup>16</sup> As Scodel observes, Homeric men have a powerful concern to save face, that is, to receive respect and sustain prestige, sometimes at the expense of others' *timē*. This can lead to a competition for status in which the social rules are "ambiguous."<sup>17</sup> Van Wees has observed the double standard in which aggressive maintenance of honor is approved, yet excessive anger and *hybris* are censured.<sup>18</sup> As Cairns has explained, others, as well as oneself, have a legitimate claim to honor, and there is a point at which injuring another's honor becomes an object of *nemesis*, an injustice.<sup>19</sup> But that point is difficult to locate. Scodel reads the central conflict of Book 1 as arising out of and representing the attempts

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<sup>12</sup> Reprinted in Rubin 2012, 33-65. It has become standard critical practice to think of the *Iliad*'s conflicts (over Khryseis, Briseis, Helen, etc.) in terms of "traffic in women," e.g. Felson and Slatkin 2004 and Lyons 2012.

<sup>13</sup> See Girard 1965: 10-15, 40-42, 96-107 and *passim*; Sedgwick 1992: 66 and *passim*.

<sup>14</sup> Van Wees 1992: 71-75; Allan and Cairns 2011: 118 emphasize that the Homeric society recognizes "a pluralism of values" that can be the basis for an individual's claim to *timē*.

<sup>15</sup> Van Wees 1992: 69-70.

<sup>16</sup> Scodel 2008, esp. 1-30.

<sup>17</sup> Scodel 2008: 14 and *passim*.

<sup>18</sup> Van Wees 1992: 110-138. Cairns 2001: 215 defines *hybris* as "illegitimate dishonouring of another person."

<sup>19</sup> Cairns 2001: 212-217.



of Agamemnon and Akhilleus to maintain face, with no completely innocent party.<sup>20</sup>

I argue that each conflict in book 1 is caused first by threatened or actual separation from an intimate, which initiates a subject's desire to reassert or regain ownership of, control over, and intimacy with that person. In one case that intimacy is sexual, in the two others it is not. The subject's desire for the lost object is paired with an aggressive desire to dominate the third party who is responsible for threatening or removing the desired object. By claiming the desired object, this third party (or "rival") has already asserted or demonstrated his superiority. Thus the subject and rival become locked in a contest to achieve higher status or power relative to one another, as they direct aggressive desires toward each other. In the first two mortal conflicts, the portion of honor attained marks the antagonists' statuses, while in the divine conflict real authority is at stake. In my reading of these triangles of desire, Carson's vision of an erotic subject's true desire for the object, initiated by the obstacle of a third party, exists simultaneously with Sedgwick's understanding of desire as a contest for superiority between two men;<sup>21</sup> I argue that the subject directs desires at both object and rival.<sup>22</sup> While recent scholarship has focused almost exclusively on the masculine competitive dynamic, I contend that the *Iliad* explores both these faces of desire, and indeed poses this exploration as an interpretative question. The poet asks the audience to plot out the desires of Khryses, Agamemnon, Akhilleus, Hera, and Zeus as they shift between object and rival.<sup>23</sup>

The conflicts of book 1 bring suffering not only to the persons implicated in the triangles, but also to their wider communities. The first and third conflicts, which are played out in their entirety, demonstrate how desire causes pain and, for mortals, death within the economy of the *Iliad* until it is satisfied. Book 1 establishes desire and its devastating consequences as the themes of the entire poem and entices the audience to plot out the realization of these themes in the continuing narrative of the unresolved quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon.

If desires cause conflict, and conflict constitutes the story of the *Iliad*, then desires

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<sup>20</sup> Scodel 2008: 127-150.

<sup>21</sup> Aggressive desires move back and forth "between men" in the mortal world of the *Iliad*, but the rivalry of Hera and Zeus indicates that this competitive dynamic is not homosocial on the divine level. Cf. sec. 7 below.

<sup>22</sup> Fantuzzi 2012: 99-116 observes in Akhilleus' relation with Briseis the tension between whether he "really" loves her or whether she is just a marker of his status vis-à-vis Agamemnon, but he does not make reference to erotic theorists or connect it with triangular desire. He also does not explore it as a wider theme in the *Iliad* or in relation to the poem's narrative erotics. Dué 2002: 44-47 uses the narrative pairing of Briseis with *timē* to argue that poetic immortality and hero cult are the real issues at stake in Akhilleus' relation to Briseis.

<sup>23</sup> Evidence that the *Iliad*'s audiences have sought to understand the nature of Akhilleus' desire for Briseis (and Agamemnon's desire for Khryseis) is found in the scholia and in Roman receptions of the *Iliad* (explored by Fantuzzi 2013: 99-185); Fantuzzi's book itself as well as this project demonstrate that the *Iliad*'s erotics remain an important interpretive puzzle. An ancient misreading of the *Iliad*'s proem points to the audience's perception of the triangulation inherent in quarrel of Agamemnon and Akhilleus. According to Eustathius 21.43-45, some critics (DT scholia give this reading) construed διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε (1.6) as διὰ στήτην ἐρίσαντο, "they fought on account of a woman," with στήτην parsed as a Doric form of γυναιῖκα based on a usage of Theokritos.

are the engine of the poem's narrative. Akhilleus' desires for his concubine Briseis and for honor among the Akhaians are located literally and figuratively at the center of book 1, and it is his desires that spill out beyond the first book to engender the rest of the *Iliad*. Homer indicates to the audience that Akhilleus is the primary desiring subject of the poem and thus the chief internal creator of plot by identifying him strongly with the external narrator in book 1.

## 2. Agamemnon, Khryseis, and Khryses: The First Triangle

The opening conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon establishes the importance of desire in the *Iliad*'s plot and also serves as the model for the two subsequent conflicts. Khryses arrives at the Akhaian camp and asks the whole army, but especially the Atreidai, to free his daughter in return for ransom, which he presents as an act of respect for Apollo (20-21).<sup>24</sup> Khryses himself is motivated by desire for Khryseis, who has been taken away from him to become another man's concubine. From Khryses' perspective, Agamemnon is his rival for possession of Khryseis. At the same time, Khryses' effort to lay claim to his daughter positions him as rival from Agamemnon's point of view. Khryses' offer is an obstacle to Agamemnon's enjoyment of Khryseis, an obstacle made more powerful by its connection with religious piety. When the Akhaian troops express their approval for the arrangement (22-23),<sup>25</sup> the whole army joins Khryses and his surrogate Apollo in standing in the way of Agamemnon retaining Khryseis.<sup>26</sup>

This proposed separation from his concubine activates Agamemnon's desire for Khryseis and an aggressive impulse toward his rival. Agamemnon threatens to injure Khryses if he does not leave the camp, and he refuses to give up Khryseis (25-29). He does not explicitly explain why he will not return the girl, but he paints a picture of her future as his slave in Argos, working at the loom and sleeping with him (29-31). Agamemnon thus indicates that he values her as a source of economic productivity and as a sexual partner. Her capacity to perform both of these activities is contingent on her identity as a highly-skilled and attractive woman, if not on her individuality. By refusing to exchange Khryseis for material wealth, Agamemnon actually rejects her commodization.<sup>27</sup> He asserts his desire for her as a useful and appealing person, not

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<sup>24</sup> Khryses' specific address to Agamemnon and Menelaos together points to the roles of both brothers in creating the circumstance for his supplication. While Agamemnon is the one with Khryseis in his possession, Menelaos' attempt to reclaim his stolen wife from Paris has brought the Akhaians to the Troad and thus led to Khryseis' captivity. Menelaos' desire functions as a first cause of this opening conflict, as well as of the *Iliad*'s narrative as a whole, although he does not emerge as an important character in the primary fabula until book 3. I will examine his appearance there in Chapter 2.

<sup>25</sup> Elmer 2013: 63-74 argues that the army's collective will is prescriptive, and that Agamemnon violates the political norm in subsequently asserting his personal will.

<sup>26</sup> Scodel 2008: 127-128 interprets Khryses' veiled threat of Apollo's retribution and the army's attempt to dictate Agamemnon's response as a face-threat to Agamemnon.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 26, who argues that by offering ransom (*apoina*), family members are trying to preserve the "person" status of a female captive, keeping her from becoming prestige wealth equivalent to

simply as a measure of his capital. Then in a concluding line, Agamemnon again orders Khryses to go away “or else” (32). Agamemnon’s image of Khryseis in Argos is encircled narratively by his threats to Khryses’ bodily wellbeing and his injunctions to Khryses to leave. This narrative shape accentuates the idea of desire for Khryseis being at the heart of a dispute between men. Agamemnon’s libidinal energy seems to be focused equally toward Khryses and Khryseis.

Yet father and daughter are not equal objects in this erotic triangle. As De Jong has noted, Khryseis is one of the *Iliad*’s silent characters, and this reflects her lowly social position as a foreign female captive, even if she comes originally from a relatively high-status priestly family. We never get any insight into her psychology.<sup>28</sup> In opposition, Khryses is both object of Agamemnon’s anger and a speaking subject who is powerful by proxy.<sup>29</sup> From the very beginning, his language as well as his actions set him up as a competitor with Agamemnon for Khryseis. Khryses emphasizes his bond with Khryseis—a bond which has been broken by her enslavement—by using the kinship term “child” (παῖδα) coupled with the adjective *philē* when he supplicates Agamemnon (20). The language of *philotēs*, which asserts the intimate relation of father and daughter, serves to forward Khryses’ claim to ownership of his daughter. Agamemnon in turn negates Khryses’ prerogative by referring to Khryseis with pronouns and middle and active participles that position her responding to his own needs (29-31).

Khryses’ powerful desire to reclaim his daughter is evident in the language of his prayer to Apollo for retribution against the Greek army. He prays to the god, “may the Danaans pay back my tears with your arrows” (τείσειαν Δαναοὶ ἐμὰ δάκρυα σοῖσι βέλεσσιν 42).<sup>30</sup> I would like to suggest that Khryses’ tears are external manifestations, or symptoms, of his desire for his enslaved child, which is characterized by painful loss.<sup>31</sup> Thus Khryses’ language draws attention to his own desire as the reason for Apollo to exact vengeance on the Akhaians. In direct response to Khryses’ prayer, Apollo sends a plague against the Greeks, which rages for nine days (43-53). When Apollo is initiating the plague, the narrator twice describes him as “angry” (χωόμενος, χωομένοιο 44, 46). This anger, as I also suggest, is a symptom of Apollo’s aggressive desire toward the Akhaian army. Apollo is Khryses’ surrogate as a subject of aggressive homosocial desire in this triangle: Khryses-Apollo, Khryseis, and Agamemnon. Apollo takes on and enacts Khryses’ desire to dominate Agamemnon and the army that he leads.

On the tenth day, Akhilleus, as a representative of the ravaged Akhaian army, calls an assembly to address the problem. He asks a soothsayer to explain the origin of the plague and suggest a means of reversal. The seer Kalkhas claims to have an answer,

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cattle or luxury goods. This may be so from the family’s perspective, but by accepting their offer, the captor accepts the equivalency of the captive with those prestige goods. Cf. Scodel 2008: 80 and 128.

<sup>28</sup> De Jong 1987b: 110.

<sup>29</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 43-45 for Apollo as champion of Khryses.

<sup>30</sup> All translations are my own. Morrison 1991: 149-50 explains, with particular reference to this example, how prayers “prepare the audience for later episodes in the epic,” i.e. incite narrative desire, especially when the narrator reports that a god has heard and accepted the prayer, which “leads the audience confidently to expect fulfillment.”

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Stanley 1993: 45 on Khryses’ tears.

but seeks Akhilleus' protection in order to freely speak the truth, expressing fear of Agamemnon's anger. Although he does not name Agamemnon, he describes him fairly explicitly as the man "who rules greatly over all the Argives and the Akhaians obey him" (78-79). Akhilleus in turn, when he promises safeguard, specifies Agamemnon as the potential adversary, and describes him as the one "who now boasts to be much the best of the Akhaians" (ὅς νῦν πολλὸν ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὔχεται εἶναι 91). Whereas Kalkhas' description of Agamemnon is a factual statement of his power, Akhilleus identifies Agamemnon by his own self-aggrandizing discourse. Akhilleus thereby studiously avoids acknowledging Agamemnon's real-world status, and suggests the possibility that Agamemnon's claim to preeminence may be no more than a "dubious boast."<sup>32</sup> Moreover, this implicit belittlement of Agamemnon reinforces the efficacy of Akhilleus' own vow to shield Kalkhas.<sup>33</sup> While this is not a direct challenge to Agamemnon, Akhilleus situates himself in a potentially antagonistic and competitive position vis-à-vis the Akhaian commander. Akhilleus in some sense initiates his upcoming conflict with Agamemnon by making himself the representative of the renewed pressure for Agamemnon to return Khryseis.<sup>34</sup> For this puts Akhilleus in a position analogous to that of Khryses himself, who first approached Agamemnon and asked for his daughter back. With this repetition, the narrative asks the audience to understand the coming escalation between Akhilleus and Agamemnon in relation to the preceding confrontation.

Although Kalkhas' involvement sows further bad blood between the two Akhaian leaders, it functions as a successful intervention in the first conflict between Khryses-Apollo and Agamemnon. Keith Dickson has identified Kalkhas' role as that of the typical Mediator, who offers counsel or insight at a moment of crisis, and whose intervention marks a juncture in the story.<sup>35</sup> Kalkhas announces that Apollo is the god who sent the plague, "on account of his priest, whom Agamemnon dishonored (ἠτίμησ'), and he did not release his daughter and he did not accept the ransom" (94-95). This is a neat summary of the triangular eroticism that is behind the plague: two men locked in a homosocial contest for dominance related to possession of a female object; their conflict has been played out between Khryses' surrogate Apollo and the Akhaian army whom Agamemnon leads. Kalkhas' words constitute a repetition of the external narrator's account of the plague and its motivation in lines 33-52, as Dickson has observed.<sup>36</sup> This mirroring has the function of guaranteeing the authenticity of Kalkhas' vision and his subsequent prescription for reversing the plague, but also situates Kalkhas as a

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<sup>32</sup> Kirk 1985: 62. Cf. Griffin 1980: 52.

<sup>33</sup> This is especially true if we accept an ancient audience familiar with heroic characters and an epic diction that primarily named Akhilleus, or perhaps Odysseus, but certainly not Agamemnon, "the best of the Akhaians." Cf. Nagy 1979: 26-58.

<sup>34</sup> Scodel 2008: 129 interprets Kalkhas' and Akhilleus' interchange as an ill-advised and inappropriate face-threat to Agamemnon. *Contra* Taplin 1990: 79-81, who argues that Akhilleus' stance toward Agamemnon is justified, since Agamemnon acts improperly toward both Khryses (refusing the ransom and disrespecting him) and the Akhaians (not taking responsibility for the harm inflicted and demanding a new prize).

<sup>35</sup> Dickson 1990.

<sup>36</sup> Dickson 1992: 331-333.

counterpart to the external narrator.<sup>37</sup> This means that, for the audience, Kalkhas' utterance takes on the authoritative force of the external narrator.

As a second narrator, Kalkhas is also in the position to create narrative. This is the function that his concluding prophecy serves. He foretells that Apollo will not end the plague until Khryseis is returned to Khryse unransomed, along with a hecatomb to propitiate the angry god (97-100). When Agamemnon indicates that he plans to respect Kalkhas' vision and return Khryseis (116-17), the audience has a template on which to plot the subsequent narrative. Kalkhas in a sense emerges temporarily as the primary narrator who offers the bare bones of the plot, and the external narrator's succeeding account of what unfolds is actually a repetition of Kalkhas' internal prolepsis. Thus Kalkhas both offers a solution to the conflict and entices the audience to finish plotting out the realization of this resolution.

Kalkhas' pronouncement that Agamemnon will have to give up Khryseis reignites Agamemnon's desire for his concubine as well as his aggressive desire toward those who threaten his ownership of the girl. The narrator's characterization of Agamemnon as "anguished" (ἀχνύμενος 103) reflects his grief regarding the prospective loss of Khryseis. But along with grief, the narrator also describes what appears to be anger: Agamemnon's mind is filled with *menos* and his eyes glitter like fire (103-104).<sup>38</sup> The victim of Agamemnon's anger becomes obvious when he verbally abuses Kalkhas (106-08). Agamemnon's wrath is directed at the seer because Kalkhas has spoken words advocating the satisfaction of Khryses' desires and the consequent capitulation of Agamemnon.

After insulting Kalkhas, Agamemnon publicly reasserts his desire for Khryseis, confirming the fact that homosocial aggression is dependent on desire for a female object. Here Agamemnon finally introduces Khryseis' proper name (111), a speech-act that validates her individual personhood, but also acknowledges her relation to her father, as both are named after their hometown (her name means either "daughter of Khryses" or "girl from Khryse").<sup>39</sup> By naming Khryseis, Agamemnon admits Khryses' claim to his daughter and prepares the way for his own submission to the priest, even as he asserts Khryseis as his special erotic object.<sup>40</sup> Agamemnon then goes on to articulate more clearly his reasons for not initially releasing Khryseis, using verbs of desire. He says, "I was not willing (ἔθελον) to take [the ransom], since I very much want (βούλομαι) to have her in my house" (112-13). He then explains that he "prefers" (προβέβουλα) Khryseis to his "wedded wife" (κουριδῆς ἀλόχου) Klytaimnestra, "since she is not worse than her, neither in form nor in stature, nor in wits, nor in skill at all" (ἐπεὶ οὐ ἐθέεν ἐστι χερείων, / οὐ δέμας οὐδὲ φυήν, οὐτ' ἄρ φρένας οὐτέ τι ἔργα 114-115).

This comparison to his wife is a strong statement of the worth that he imputes to

<sup>37</sup> Ibid. 329-338.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Segal 1971b: 100, who also connects *menos* with anger, and compares this image to "the nightlike darkness of Apollo's deadly approach and the burning of the pyres in the night," thus lending Agamemnon's anger an ominous significance.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Reinhardt 1961: 50-51.

<sup>40</sup> Perhaps this act of naming is also Agamemnon's (subconscious?) acknowledgment of the role Khryses himself has placed in initiating or strengthening his desire for Khryseis.

Khryseis. Muellner suggests that “a hero’s wife in the Homeric hierarchy of value is the most costly and valuable of all exchangeable goods” and that she therefore functions as a living embodiment of the hero’s own status. Agamemnon appraises Khryseis equally or more highly than Klytaimnestra.<sup>41</sup> He positions her as an integral member of his household, cherished for her beauty, intelligence, and economic value in producing prestige textiles. Agamemnon’s words point to the magnitude of his loss, should he give up Khryseis, and the force of his desire. In this way, the narrative emphasizes the key importance of Khryseis as an object of desire who defines the competitive relation between Agamemnon and Khryses.

Scodel, however, argues that Agamemnon’s high praise of Khryseis—and especially the comparison of her to his wife—is a rhetorical tactic by which he saves face in front of the army. In Scodel’s formation, Agamemnon acknowledges that his actions have caused the plague, but mitigates his face-loss by arguing that he was motivated by true desire rather than by selfishness or status-concerns.<sup>42</sup> I counter with the view that Agamemnon’s desire for Khryseis and his desire to preserve face are inseparable—two connected corners of the erotic triangle. This description of Khryseis’ appeal is a repetition with elaboration in chiasmic order of Agamemnon’s previous image of Khryseis “going back and forth at the loom and encountering my bed” (ἴστρον ἐποιχομένην καὶ ἔμὸν λέχος ἀντιόωσαν 31). Agamemnon first invoked this image in his earlier refusal of Khryses’ ransom, and this variation evidences the consistency of Agamemnon’s desire as well as the narrative pairing of that desire with male homosocial status competition.<sup>43</sup>

Yet Agamemnon’s comparison of Khryseis to Klytaimnestra is a double-edged sword. It affirms his high esteem for Khryseis, but also situates her as a substitute for his wife. Instead of pointing to Khryseis’ absolute value as an individual, Agamemnon suggests that she is exchangeable with Klytaimnestra, even if it is an unequal exchange.<sup>44</sup> It could also be argued that Agamemnon’s comparison of the two women in the negative using the device of litotes (Khryseis is “not worse” than Klytaimnestra) is more than merely a rhetorical affect. This diction may suggest a misogynistic attitude—a mitigation of the worth of both women—that is consistent with Agamemnon’s traditional psychology.<sup>45</sup> In any case, Agamemnon’s assertion of female substitutability prepares for

<sup>41</sup> Muellner 1996: 98-99 argues that Agamemnon’s words make Khryseis’ value “incommensurable.” Cf. Dué 2002: 42 and Wilson 2002: 50.

<sup>42</sup> Scodel 2008: 130-31. Cf. Wilson 2002: 50-51, who argues that Agamemnon presents himself as the injured party when he compares Khryseis—whom he must give up—with his own wife.

<sup>43</sup> Cf. Muellner 1996: 98-99, who reads Agamemnon’s desire as very real and the basis for his destructive lapse of leadership and for the betrayal of his obligations to the army.

<sup>44</sup> Lyons 2012: 55. *Pace* Muellner 1996: 98-99. Unequal gift-exchange of material prestige goods between guest-friends is standard practice in Homeric society, and a culturally legible indication of the unequal status of the exchangers, according to Donlan 1989: 6-15. The paradigmatic example is *Il.* 6.230-36, when Glaukos’ exchanges his golden armor for Diomedes’ bronze armor, thus cementing Diomedes’ superiority. Given this model, Agamemnon’s quixotic idea of replacing his wife with his concubine is misguided, and not only because he “owns” both of them. Despite his high opinion of Khryseis, in the eyes of society Agamemnon loses status of his own by exchanging an elite Greek woman for a spear-won captive.

<sup>45</sup> Cf. the posthumous character of Agamemnon in the *Odyssey*, who is constantly maligning women and especially his murderous wife Klytaimnestra.

the way that he will try to negate his desire for Khryseis, when faced with the necessity of relinquishing her, and to reinterpret their relationship solely as a replaceable marker of his social status in a patriarchal world.

### 3. From the First to the Second Triangle

Immediately after validating his desire for Khryseis, Agamemnon indicates that he is going to nullify that desire in favor of desire directed toward the other point in the triangle. That is, Agamemnon accepts (albeit grudgingly) Kalkhas' mediation,<sup>46</sup> but not without a price. Instead of focusing on the foreign Khryses as his homosocial object and rival, he centers his desire on his own people, the Akhaian army, who, we might remember, had already indicated that they were on the side of Khryses in the ransom dispute. Using the very same verbs with which he described his desire for Khryseis, he asserts that his desire to protect the army is greater still: "but even so I am willing (ἐθέλω) to give her back, if this is better; I want (βουλόμαι) the men to be safe rather than to perish" (116-17). Here, sequentially, Agamemnon asserts that his will to preserve his fighting force trumps his attachment to his concubine.

But by going on to demand recompense for Khryseis, Agamemnon makes very clear the competitive nature of his desire toward the army, positioning the Akhaians in a place analogous to Khryses'. He orders the army to furnish him with a substitute "prize of honor" (*geras*). He emphasizes the forcefulness of his position by repeating *geras* in three successive lines (γέρας, ἀγέραςτος, γέρας 118-120). This is the first description of Khryseis as a *geras* in the narrative. With a sudden change in language, Agamemnon removes the individual personhood of Khryseis and thus her status as his legitimate erotic object, and instead commodifies her as a war-prize that can be exchanged for any other of equal value. By disavowing his erotic interest in Khryseis, he saves face. In eliding Khryseis' identity, he also dismisses his triangle with Khryses and thereby lessens Khryses' triumph. More importantly, this dehumanization of Khryseis goes along with a substitution of the Akhaians for Khryses in Agamemnon's discourse and thus creates an avenue whereby he can win a new status-conflict with the army, negotiated over a generic *geras* instead of over a specific girl whom he must give up.

By employing the term *geras*, Agamemnon introduces into the mix a vocabulary that is formally associated with the male homosocial system of honor, and thus status. A *geras* is a material form of deference that gives a hero more *timē*.<sup>47</sup> Agamemnon's words initiate Akhilleus' meditation on male heroic relations, which evolves into a quarrel over status defined by *gera* and *timē*.<sup>48</sup> Thus with his invocation of *gera*, the Akhaian

<sup>46</sup> *Contra* Dickson 1990: 62, who suggests that Kalkhas' mediation is a failure, focusing on Agamemnon's abusive response to the seer.

<sup>47</sup> See sec. 1 above. The implied audience need not know the meaning of *geras*, since the narrative itself makes clear the connection between *geras* and *timē* as it progresses.

<sup>48</sup> I would like to emphasize that by "status," I am referring to symbolic power rather than actual power. Nowhere does the narrative suggest that Akhilleus is trying to usurp Agamemnon's political authority and establish himself as the leader of the campaign (Lowenstam 1993: 61; *pace* Muellner 1996: 106, 112-113; Wilson 2002: 54-64; Allan and Cairns 2011: 116-120). The two men's competing claim to be the "best of

commander explicitly redirects the force of triangular desire toward the male competition for *timē* in an effort to win a second contest after he has lost in the first.

This speech of Agamemnon thus anticipates the resolution of the first conflict, but also introduces the second and central conflict of book 1, and of the first two thirds of the *Iliad*. His promise to give back Khryseis marks his intention to make good with Khryses and Apollo, although the actual narrative of her return to her father is delayed. But his demand for an equivalent *geras* creates a second and parallel problem concerning the relations between men in the Akhaian camp. At the time of the plague, the Akhaians do not have a raiding mission in progress that will yield new booty, nor do they have a stockpile of undivided spoils, as Akhilleus notes (124-25). For Agamemnon to receive another *geras*, someone else will have to give up his *geras*, in a zero-sum scenario. Thus Agamemnon's ultimatum creates the problem of recouping his own loss at the expense of another man's material wealth as well as his honor, which is related to his possession of *gera*.

Akhilleus recognizes these implications when he addresses Agamemnon as "most acquisitive of all" (φιλοκτεανώτατε πάντων 122), an Homeric *hapax* that has an insulting tone.<sup>49</sup> As we have seen, Akhilleus has already positioned himself opposite Agamemnon as a mouthpiece for the army's interests.<sup>50</sup> Akhilleus continues in this role when he responds to Agamemnon's demand by denying that it is viable in the moment, but promising three or four-fold recompense, should the army sack Troy (121-129). By answering Agamemnon's speech, Akhilleus makes himself, rather than the army as a whole, the target of Agamemnon's aggressive desire, the third point in the triangle. The status competition quickly becomes a conflict between Agamemnon and Akhilleus, rather than between Agamemnon and the army. Agamemnon rejects Akhilleus' solution, just as he has rejected Khryses' offer of ransom. As Scodel notes, he wants "face," not wealth, and so Akhilleus' promise of future compensation misses the point.<sup>51</sup> Agamemnon warns that if the Akhaians do not give him an appropriate *geras*, he will go ahead and take the *geras* of Akhilleus, Ajax, or Odysseus, causing anger to whomever he targets (135-39). With this threat, Agamemnon explicitly posits the situation as one in which his honor depends on another's dishonor, and in which his own upset is displaced upon another.<sup>52</sup>

Akhilleus responds within the male homosocial terms of status concern set out by Agamemnon (149-171). He claims that he has come to Troy not on his own account, but as a favor to the Atreidai, to win *timē* for them. That is, Akhilleus explains that he does not independently feel aggressive desire motivating him to fight the Trojans; rather, he

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the Akhaians" is about prestige, and what Akhilleus wants from Agamemnon is the deference that affirms his *timē*. Agamemnon's angry complaint that Akhilleus wants "to rule over everyone" (πάντεσσι δ' ἀνάσσειν 1.288) is a manufactured grievance, brought forward as an excuse to justify his own violation of Akhilleus' honor.

<sup>49</sup> Kirk 1985: 66 calls it "gratuitous" but perhaps "less insulting in an acquisitive heroic society than we should profess to find it." For the view that this is indeed a serious insult, see Pomeroy et al. 1999: 57.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. sec. 2 above and Elmer 2013: 70.

<sup>51</sup> Scodel 2008: 132. Similarly, Agamemnon's book 9 embassy to Akhilleus offers wealth, but not honor, as I explore in Chapter 3, sec. 1.

<sup>52</sup> Scodel 2008: 133-34.



does battle out of solidarity (*philotēs*) with the Atreidai, to satisfy *their* aggressive desire to destroy the Trojans. He verbally abuses Agamemnon for not appreciating this favor, for not giving him due deference.<sup>53</sup> Akhilleus connects Agamemnon's present insult of threatening to take away his prize of honor (*geras*) with the fact that Agamemnon always receives a greater *geras* despite Akhilleus' leading role in the fighting. He threatens to go home rather than to remain "dishonored" (ἄτιμος) while contributing to Agamemnon's material and symbolic benefit.

Agamemnon's reaction escalates and cements the honor dispute by reintroducing the female object as the third point in the erotic triangle. At first he just tells Akhilleus to go home, that he does not need him to win honor, that others, and especially Zeus will honor (τιμήσουσι) him (174-75). He says he hates Akhilleus and his interest in warfare. With these statements Agamemnon belittles Akhilleus and his accomplishments, denying his contributions to the war effort and thus his claim to prestige. But then Agamemnon goes a step further by repeating and specifying his earlier threat to take away someone else's *geras*:

Since Phoibos Apollo is taking Khryseis away from me,  
her I shall send with my ship and my companions,  
but I shall lead away Briseis the fair-cheeked,  
myself going to your tent, your prize of honor, so that you may know  
how much superior I am to you, and so that another man also may shun  
to speak equally to me and assert oppositionally that we have the same status.

ὥς ἔμ' ἀφαιρεῖται Χρυσηίδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,  
τὴν μὲν ἐγὼ σὺν νηΐ τ' ἐμῇ καὶ ἐμοῖς ἐτάροισι  
πέμψω, ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηίδα καλλιπάρηον  
αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίην δὲ τὸ σὸν γέρας ὄφρ' εὐ εἰδῆς  
ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέη δὲ καὶ ἄλλος  
ἴσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην (182-187).

When he mentions Khryseis by name, and his forced separation from her, Agamemnon re-acknowledges his desire for her and reanimates the triangle that he has tried to render dormant. But the momentary admission of his loss of face in the Khryses conflict has a greater utility.<sup>54</sup> For Agamemnon invokes the earlier triangle only to lay claim to a different position in the new triangle that he shares with Akhilleus. Agamemnon places himself in the spot that, from his perspective, Khryses shares with Apollo: the role of rival, the initiator of a desire caused by loss. His choice to invoke Apollo rather than

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 58-59. See Taplin 1990: 67-70 for the argument that Akhilleus is wholly in the right, and that Agamemnon is under an obligation to him and to the other Akhaian leaders. Segal 1971b: 93-105 also regards Agamemnon to be in violation of the heroic code and argues that Akhilleus is completely justified in his response.

<sup>54</sup> Pulleyn 2000: 173 notes that by mentioning Apollo, rather than Khryses, Agamemnon mitigates his disgrace; in his account he was defeated by a god, not "worsted by an old man."

Khryses constitutes a statement of his power to inflict pain as well as an assertion of his significantly higher status relative to Akhilleus, as scholars have noted.<sup>55</sup>

Agamemnon's diction focuses on the likeness of Khryseis and Briseis, thereby emphasizing the way that Akhilleus' desire will replace his own desire. He uses a μὲν...δέ construction, with its implicit parallel opposition, to cite Apollo's appropriation of Khryseis as justification for his own confiscation of Briseis. Khryseis' and Briseis' names are both derived from the names of their fathers and cities of origin, and they thus share the same rhyming feminine ending, in a neat homophony; Agamemnon names them only a line apart (182 and 184).<sup>56</sup> Agamemnon pairs Briseis' name with the adjective "beautiful-cheeked" (Βρισηίδα καλλιπάρηον), a noun-epithet grouping that almost exactly reproduces, in the same line-end metrical position, his mention of "Khryseis the beautiful-cheeked" (Χρυσήίδα καλλιπάρηον) in an earlier speech (143). All of this paints a picture of Agamemnon's psychology in which he intends his seizure of Briseis to hurt Akhilleus just as much as the removal of Khryseis hurts him.

The end of Agamemnon's speech asserts his own aggressive desire to recoup his honor by diminishing Akhilleus' as the motivation for creating this second triangle. Agamemnon says he is going to take Briseis away so that Akhilleus realizes his superiority, and as an example to others who consider claiming equal status. Up to this point, the argument has been about each hero receiving his due *timē*, without the explicit avowal that *timē* itself is a zero-sum commodity.<sup>57</sup> Although Akhilleus explains that *gera* come in limited quantities and complains that he never gets a prize "equal" (ἴσον) to Agamemnon's (163), the possibility remained open for men to be accorded honor through other means, and thus for everyone to end up with his appropriate *timē* in a win-win situation. Agamemnon's use of the comparative "superior" (φέρτερός) here denies that possibility and frames Akhilleus' and his own desire for *timē* as a contest in which one will emerge with definitively higher status at the expense of the other. Agamemnon takes Akhilleus' language about *gera* and applies it to *timē*, warning that others do not have rights "equal" (ἴσον) to himself. This changes the terms of the debate and establishes the quarrel as a hierarchical struggle for supremacy within a newly scarce economy of honor.<sup>58</sup>

Agamemnon's tactic of provoking Akhilleus' desire is successful. The narrator describes the "anguish" (ἄχος) afflicting Akhilleus (188), just as Agamemnon himself was "anguished" (ἄχνύμενος) when Kalkhas told him that his refusal to ransom Khryseis had caused the plague (103). In both cases, I suggest that this grief marks the princes'

<sup>55</sup> Pulleyn 2000: 173; Scodel 2008: 137.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Dué 2002: 42-44, 49-57 on the connections between Khryseis and Briseis and their origins; she argues that "Briseis is a paradigmatic figure" (43) for mortal women in the *Iliad*. Pulleyn 2000: 157 observes that the two concubines' "parallelism neatly points up how alike and, in a sense, interchangeable the two girls are. Agamemnon will take Briseis if he loses Chryseis because one foreign concubine is much like another." On the contrary, Agamemnon's actions and words up to this point have revealed that he imputes special value to Khryseis. His comparison of the girls signals that Akhilleus will come to feel the same pain he did.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Cairns 2001: 215-16 and Scodel 2008: 16-22.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Scodel 2008: 19.

acute desire to retain their concubines when faced with the possibility of having to relinquish them. With his speech, Agamemnon wants to transfer his own painful desire for the female object to Akhilleus, but he does not fully anticipate how he will also transfer to his adversary the full force of his desire to save face, to receive respect from his peers, as well as the anger that represents it.<sup>59</sup>

This is not to say that Akhilleus was not already concerned with *timē* and the status it confers, but Agamemnon's activation of triangular desire clearly initiates a whole new level of aggression directed at himself. Akhilleus considers drawing his sword and killing him, and seems about to do so, when Athene intervenes. She commands him to restrain himself, and he complies "although very angry in his heart" (μάλα περ θυμῶ κεχολωμένον 217), as he says.<sup>60</sup> Anger appears here again as a symptom of male homosocial aggressive desire. In addition, this admission of anger fulfills Agamemnon's prophecy that the prince whose prize he takes "will be angry" (κεχολώσεται 139). But it also guides the audience in more fully plotting out the "wrath" (μῆνιν) of Akhilleus that is stated in the prologue as the key element of the poem's story. For the only other character in the narrative up to this point who has been described as "angry" or felt "wrath" is the god Apollo (χολωθεῖς 9, χωόμενος 44, ἐχώσατο 64, μῆνιν 75). This indicates that despite Agamemnon's efforts to position Akhilleus in the same weak position in which he found himself during the Khryses conflict, Akhilleus will instead act in the powerful position inhabited earlier by the god. Agamemnon has tried to figure himself as Apollo vis-à-vis Akhilleus, but this repetition helps the audience to plot Akhilleus as the new Apollo, and to anticipate that he will similarly injure Agamemnon's honor and cause loss of life for the Akhaian army, as was narrated in the proem.<sup>61</sup>

Instead of killing Agamemnon on the spot, Akhilleus abuses him verbally and then swears an oath that he will indeed wreak havoc like Apollo, but through different means, in a variation on the earlier conflict. He promises,

at some point longing for Akhilleus will come to the sons of the Akhaians,  
all of them; and then you will not be able in any way, although anguished,  
to help, when many men, by the hand of man-slaying Hektor,  
fall dying; and you will lacerate your heart within,  
because when you were angry you did no honor to the best of the Akhaians.

ἦ ποτ' Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ ἴξεται υἱας Ἀχαιῶν  
σύμπαντας· τότε δ' οὔ τι δυνήσεαι ἀχνύμενός περ  
χραιομεῖν, εὔτ' ἂν πολλοὶ ὑφ' Ἐκτορος ἀνδροφόνιο  
θνήσκοντες πίπτωσι· σὺ δ' ἔνδοθι θυμὸν ἀμύξεις

<sup>59</sup> Nagy 1979: 80 observes how Akhilleus' *akhos* leads to his *mēnis* and then to the *akhos* of the Akhaians, as I will track below.

<sup>60</sup> Athene's mediation in this second conflict is in certain ways parallel to Kalkhas' mediation in the first conflict. Both achieve an intervention and derive their success from connection to the divine world. But Athene's mediation is only a partial solution; she prevents homicide, but does not actually resolve the conflict. In fact, she encourages Akhilleus to remain angry. Athene shares the role of mediator in this second conflict with the mortal Nestor, whose role will be discussed below.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Muellner 1996: 96-102, 128-129; Rabel 1997: 39-53; Wilson 2002: 64.

χωόμενος ὁ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτεισας (241-244).<sup>62</sup>

Achilleus rejects Agamemnon's attempt to transfer desire away from himself and asserts that he will make everyone else share in his own feelings of desire and the accompanying pain. Since the army has refused to stand up to Agamemnon's unilateral redistribution of *gera*, Achilleus will figuratively and then literally move away from the Akhaians and group the army in the same camp as Agamemnon.<sup>63</sup> He will no longer fight beside the Akhaians, but by virtue of his separation he will initiate a male homosocial desire with himself as the object—a “longing for Achilleus” (Ἀχιλλῆος ποθῆ). *Pothē* here is the first marked word for desire to appear in the *Iliad* and in this capacity it draws attention to the theme of desire at a key moment in the narrative. *Pothē* indicates specifically a desire for someone who is absent.<sup>64</sup> The Akhaians' prospective desire for Achilleus is not an aggressive desire; rather it is parallel to Agamemnon's desire for Khryseis or Achilleus' desire for Briseis, the desire for a precious person who is gone or whose removal is threatened. After Agamemnon has aroused Achilleus' desire for a woman as a weapon against him, Achilleus uses this same weapon, but in an unconventional way. Since Achilleus is not in the position to deprive all the Akhaians of a concubine, he replaces the female object with a male object and so withholds himself. Instead of directly injuring the army as Apollo had done, Achilleus displaces his retribution onto an enemy combatant. Hektor will inflict the pain associated with the loss of and thus desire for Achilleus.<sup>65</sup> Achilleus predicts that Agamemnon will be “anguished” just as Achilleus is now; the army's pain, however, will be even worse, reaching beyond the emotional to the physical: death in battle.<sup>66</sup> Achilleus' oath therefore represents a rupture of his solidarity (*philotēs*) with the Akhaian army on many levels: he separates from the Akhaians, he refuses to fight with the them, and he actually wants their enemy to defeat and kill them.<sup>67</sup>

<sup>62</sup> Schadewalt 1966: 145 notes that this predictive oath is the first intradiegetic specification of what course the narrative will take as Achilleus' wrath is plotted out. The fact that this information comes from the mouth of Achilleus points to his likeness to the external narrator, a characteristic that comes to the fore in his later meeting with Thetis, which is discussed in sec. 4 below.

<sup>63</sup> See Allan and Cairns 2011 for a nuanced discussion of the community's role in the distribution of prizes, and of Achilleus' reaction to Agamemnon freely usurping the army's prerogatives. Bassett 1938: 198 finds the army at fault for not speaking up against Agamemnon and considers Achilleus' anger toward the Akhaians to be justified. Muellner 1996: 114-116 notes that while Achilleus “divorces himself” from the Akhaian (mortal) community, he brings himself closer to the immortal community of the gods by obeying Athene's edict. This prepares for Achilleus' supplication of Zeus through his mother Thetis.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Introduction, sec. 4, and the use of *pothē* and derivatives later to describe desire for male commanders who are absent (2.703 and 709 [Protesilaos]; 2.726 [Philoktetes]; 6.362 [Hektor]).

<sup>65</sup> Muellner 1996:123 remarks on the extraordinary nature of Achilleus' *mēnis*, in that it is passive and characterized by a negation rather than a demonstration of *biē*. Muellner (123-132) focuses on the role of Zeus (who empowers Hektor against the Akhaians) as the true actor on Achilleus' behalf. Cf. Wilson 2002: 60-61 on Achilleus' choosing *mētis* instead of *biē* as a tactic to defeat Agamemnon.

<sup>66</sup> See Nagy 1979: 69-83 on how Achilleus takes power (*kratos*) away from the Akhaians, gives it instead to the Trojans, and replaces that *kratos* with *akhos*. Cf. Introduction, sec. 4 for Nagy's connection of Achilleus' and the Akhaians' names with *akhos*.

<sup>67</sup> See Chapter 3 for my analysis of the development of this theme in books 9-16.

Again and again, then, characters in this opening narrative inflict desire in return for desire. When Khryses incites Agamemnon's desire for Khryseis with his offer of ransom, Agamemnon causes Khryses renewed desire by withholding her; in retaliation, Khryses eventually reignites Agamemnon's desire by forcing the commander to give up Khryseis by means of the plague; Agamemnon then causes Akhilleus' desire by taking away Briseis, and Akhilleus vows that, by withholding himself, Agamemnon and the Akhaians will themselves in turn be afflicted by desire. Akhilleus does to the Akhaians what they have done to him. The narrator consistently represents desire as the means of causality of the *Iliad's* story in a symmetrical series that is at once a progression and a repetition, or (vicious) circle. The geometric rigor of bloodshed that Simone Weil famously observed in the *Iliad's* battle scenes, during which warriors kill and are in turn killed, is both anticipated and caused by a parallel reciprocity of desire.<sup>68</sup> Thus, as we are beginning to track, the repetition of desire is the means by which the poet creates and sustains a compelling plot.

Akhilleus makes clear that the goal of his promised withdrawal is to be acknowledged again as vitally important—of highest status—after Agamemnon's denigration of his worth (173-87). Akhilleus counters Agamemnon's earlier contention of self-sufficiency (Akhilleus can go home for all he cares) and of superiority with his own hierarchical language, promising that Agamemnon will suffer for not honoring "the best of the Akhaians." His use of the superlative leaves no space for Agamemnon to possess the highest *timē*, either unilaterally or simultaneously. Akhilleus' oath, therefore, is an expression of his aggressive desire for symbolic dominance over Agamemnon and all the Akhaians, for them to recognize him as the *most* valuable member of their group.

This is the point at which Nestor intervenes. He occupies a position structurally parallel to Kalkhas' in the earlier dispute, and the narrator expresses their homology by characterizing their speech and intention with an identical formulaic line: "with kindly thoughts he spoke out and addressed them" (ὄσφις ἐὺφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπεν 73 = 253).<sup>69</sup> Yet this narrative repetition contains significant variations that encourage the audience to expect a different outcome from Nestor's mediation. As we have seen, Kalkhas' prophetic speech identifies him as a close counterpart to the *Iliad's* external narrator, and his injunction to free Khryseis proves effective in directing the course of the narrative. As Dickson has shown, Nestor's characterization as a honeyed speaker and his ability to recite epic material figure him as a quasi-epic singer, and suggests his affinity with the *Iliad's* poet.<sup>70</sup> Yet Nestor's language situates him closer to his social peers than to the authoritative and generative stance of the external narrator.<sup>71</sup>

Nestor's tactic to defuse the conflict is to disrupt what René Girard would term the "internal double mediation" occurring between Agamemnon and Akhilleus. Internal

<sup>68</sup> Weil 2005: 195-99.

<sup>69</sup> Dickson 1990 identifies this formula as one associated with the figure of the mediator in Homer.

<sup>70</sup> Dickson 1992: 339-49. Cf. Martin 1989: 101-109 on Nestor's superlative speaking skill, command of multiple speech-genres, and resemblance to the epic poet.

<sup>71</sup> Dickson 1992: 341-42 notes differences between the narrator's discourse and Nestor's: unlike the narrator, Nestor tells stories in the first person, and rarely incorporates mimesis of direct speech. Dickson (346) also observes how Nestor is a storehouse of traditional wisdom and a representative of heroic mores.

mediation describes the situation in which the desiring subject's rival—whom Girard calls the “mediator”—is part of the same social universe as the subject himself. This allows the subject to be in direct competition with his rival for possession of the desired object in their erotic triangle. Double mediation occurs when both men fall prey to imitative desire directed at one another, rather than aggressive desire moving only from the subject to the rival he wishes to emulate.<sup>72</sup> This is clearly the state of affairs that has developed over the course of the quarrel: Akhilleus wants a level of prestige similar to Agamemnon's, and Agamemnon desires to be accorded even greater respect than Akhilleus. In his speech asserting his intention to confiscate Briseis, Agamemnon expresses his envy of Akhilleus' physical capacity, acknowledging that Akhilleus is “strong” (καρτερός 178), while insisting that he himself is “superior” (φέρτερός 186).<sup>73</sup>

Nestor's approach to reestablishing harmony is to interrupt these symmetrical competitive desires by introducing a wider context to the conflict. First he reminds the two leaders that their quarrel will be a delight to their real enemies, the Trojans, thereby attempting to redirect their aggressive impulses toward the goal of the expedition (255-57).<sup>74</sup> Then he tries to counteract their internal mediation by offering alternative “external mediators” instead. Girard defines “external mediation” as the circumstance in which the mediator—the object of the subject's imitative desire—is in fact outside of the subject's immediate universe and thus can never be construed as a direct rival for the object of affection.<sup>75</sup> This “external mediator” can be an historical person, an object of legend, or even a fictional character. In this passage, Nestor invokes Greek heroes from an earlier generation as other and better models for Agamemnon and Akhilleus to emulate than each other. In order to do so effectively, Nestor coopts and one-ups Agamemnon's own competitive diction, but changes its referent away from Akhilleus. In a punchy line-opening anaphora, Nestor twice asserts that Perithoos, Theseus, and their companions were “the strongest” (κάρτιστοι 266 and 267), and even adds for good measure that they also fought against “the strongest” (καρτίστοις 267), the monstrous centaurs.<sup>76</sup> He also twice claims that they were superior to the men of the present generation (262-264; 271-72), which implicitly includes both Akhilleus and Agamemnon. These paradigmatic substitute mediators, as Nestor claims, acted deferentially to Nestor himself and took his advice (260-261; 273).

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<sup>72</sup> Girard 1965: *passim*, esp. 9 for “internal mediation”; 99-102 for “double mediation.” Double mediation also characterizes the conflict between Khryses/Apollo and Agamemnon.

<sup>73</sup> The assonance in the endings of these two adjectives create an initial illusion of equality between the two men, but then the auditor realizes that καρτερός is positive while φέρτερός is comparative and functions to assert Agamemnon's dominance.

<sup>74</sup> Segal 1971b: 92 argues that Nestor's following heroic *exemplum* is also meant to serve this purpose by recalling “the image of a unified heroic society undividedly directing its energies against an external aggressor.”

<sup>75</sup> Girard 1965: 9-10 and *passim*.

<sup>76</sup> Segal 1971b: 92 notes Nestor's variation here on the adjective used to describe Akhilleus, but interprets it as a reminder of Akhilleus' greatness rather than a diminution of that greatness in comparison to heroes of old.

This behavioral model of reverence for his own judgment is what Nestor hopes to instill in the minds of the two Akhaian princes. Just as the heroes of old “obeyed” (πείθοντό 273) Nestor’s speech, Agamemnon and Akhilleus should also “obey” (πίθεσθ’ 259 and 274) his injunctions, since it is better “to obey” (πείθεσθαί 274).<sup>77</sup> Nestor’s direct and practical advice is for Agamemnon to refrain from taking Briseis, and for Akhilleus to give up his expectation to achieve the same *timē* as Agamemnon (275-79).<sup>78</sup> But at a more ideological level Nestor tries to deny the idea of an absolute “best” among the Akhaian leaders, while at the same time acknowledging the claims of each to excellence.<sup>79</sup> The only people that Nestor describes with a superlative are the earlier heroes from his *exemplum*. But he designates Agamemnon as preeminent in council, and Akhilleus as preeminent in fighting (258). Nestor tries to suggest that both statuses are worthy of respect and honor, and are not in fact ordered hierarchically. To drive home his point, Nestor once again appropriates Agamemnon’s earlier words to assert that Akhilleus is “strong” (καρτερός) because of his divine heritage, but that Agamemnon is “superior” (φέρτερός) in political power (280-81).<sup>80</sup>

But Agamemnon refuses Nestor’s endeavor at redefinition of terms by claiming that Akhilleus’ desire is aimed at besting his own political authority. Although Agamemnon graciously acknowledges Nestor’s speech and proclaims it to be “proportionate” (κατὰ μοῖραν 286), he totally dismisses its content. Using the language of desire and emphatic polyptoton, he says that Akhilleus “wants to be supreme over everyone else, that is, he wants to have power over everyone, and to rule over everyone, and to dictate to everyone, which I think someone will not obey” (ἔθέλει περὶ πάντων ἔμμεναι ἄλλων, / πάντων μὲν κρατέειν ἔθέλει, πάντεσσι δ’ ἀνάσσειν, / πᾶσι δὲ σημάινειν, ἅ τιν’ οὐ πείσεσθαι οἴω 287-89). Agamemnon picks up on the key idea of Nestor’s speech—his own obedience—and explicitly negates it, while also redirecting his lack of obedience back in the direction of his antagonist, Akhilleus. This verbal play marks the ultimate failure of Nestor’s attempted mediation, as the two princes resume their status rivalry.<sup>81</sup> But it is also evidence of the seamless imbrication between Nestor’s

<sup>77</sup> Nestor’s two identical imperatives for obedience are in the same metrical position between the second and third foot. They frame his mythical exemplum, which itself follows an almost perfect chiasmic ring composition.

<sup>78</sup> Nestor confirms that Zeus gives *kudos* to the “scepter-bearing prince” (279) echoing Agamemnon’s earlier assertion that Zeus will honor him (175). This is a prime example of how Nestor seeks to mollify Agamemnon by confirming Agamemnon’s own sense of self-worth. Nestor subtly implies that Agamemnon does not have to prove himself by demeaning Akhilleus. Cf. Wilson 2002: 63.

<sup>79</sup> Segal 1971b: 93-98 thinks that Nestor singles out Agamemnon as in the wrong, but he acknowledges that Nestor’s deference to Agamemnon’s authority makes him an ineffectual advocate for Akhilleus.

<sup>80</sup> Cairns 2001: 211 writes that Nestor “urges each to consider the legitimate claim to *timē* of the other.” Cf. Lowenstam 1993: 61-65, who also includes a bibliography of earlier scholarship on the issue of the two leaders’ different sources of *timai* (62, n. 4). For more recent perspectives, see also Wilson 2002: 63; Scodel 2008: 139; Allan and Cairns 2011: 118.

<sup>81</sup> Pace Segal 1971b: 90, who argues that Nestor’s intervention brings no resolution but “calms the rising passions” (in parallel to Athene’s intercession) and Martin 1989: 101, who sees Nestor’s intervention as successful since it “renews the dialogue of the contending speakers long enough for them to reach a rough agreement.”

discourse and Agamemnon's discourse that functions as a textual indication of Nestor's difference from his earlier analogue, Kalkhas. While Kalkhas spoke with the visionary and productive voice of the external narrator, Nestor's speech is trapped within the intradiegetic domain. This space has already been defined by its two most powerful actors, and Nestor's attempt to substitute an external focus while still employing their same language seems narratively to be already and always doomed to disappointment.

Akhilleus interrupts Agamemnon to have the last word. He does not confirm Agamemnon's characterization of his ambitions, but he does assert that he will not continue as Agamemnon's subordinate. He turns back Agamemnon's words on himself, declaring, "do not dictate to me, at least; for I think that I will no longer obey you" (μη γὰρ ἔμοιγε/ σήμαιν'· οὐ γὰρ ἔγωγ' ἔτι σοὶ πείσασθαι οἶω 295-96). Akhilleus will not recognize Agamemnon's authority, but he will recognize the authority of the army to distribute war booty, and so he says that he will not fight the confiscation of his concubine "since you men, having given her to me, have taken her away" (ἐπεὶ μ' ἀφέλεσθέ γε δόντες 299). Elsewhere during the assembly, Akhilleus addresses Agamemnon specifically, but at this moment he switches to the second person plural and addresses the army as a whole. Here Akhilleus definitively implicates the army in Agamemnon's act of taking Briseis.<sup>82</sup> All of the Akhaians have thus dishonored him and his aggressive desire is directed toward them as well as Agamemnon. And Akhilleus has promised that the Akhaians will pay with their lives.

The assembly breaks up and Akhilleus returns to his tent with his companions, while Agamemnon sends off the expedition to Khryse to return Khryseis and supervises the absolution of the army from defilement (305-317). Then Agamemnon makes good on his threat to Akhilleus, directing heralds to take away Briseis and thus to cement Akhilleus' loss and its concomitant desires. Akhilleus receives the heralds and does not obstruct their mission, but he calls upon them to witness Agamemnon's action as justification for his own non-participation should the Akhaians need his help; he also asserts Agamemnon's blindness to the consequences of his action and his lack of foresight for the needs of the army (338-44). This speech is a confirmation of his earlier oath and expresses his aggressive desire for honor directed at Agamemnon and the army. After the heralds leave with Briseis, the narrator describes Akhilleus "crying" (δακρύσας 1.349).<sup>83</sup> I think that this painful emotional response is similar to *akhos* and indicates his desire for Briseis. The scholia (bT) to this line offer this erotic interpretation as well as the alternative explanation that Akhilleus' tears express his distress over the injury to his honor, i.e. are a manifestation of his aggressive desire.<sup>84</sup> This exegetical double-mindedness reflects the narrative's insistence on the triangulation of desire.

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<sup>82</sup> Wilson 2002: 64.

<sup>83</sup> Briseis is described going with the heralds "unwillingly" (ἀέκουσ' 1.348). This is the first indication in the narrative that the female object can also be subject of her own desires. This narrative revelation suggests the potential for female will to destabilize the male traffic in women, although in this case Briseis is obedient. It sets the stage for the introduction of Helen as a desiring subject in Book 3, and prepares us for Briseis' speech in Book 19.

<sup>84</sup> Cf. Fantuzzi 2013: 102-104.



#### 4. The Hero as Narrator

After Agamemnon's heralds have taken Briseis away, Akhilleus, distraught, retreats to seek the help of his mother Thetis, in a variation on Khryses' prayer to Apollo. Commentators have noted the structural parallelism and verbal similarity of the two episodes.<sup>85</sup> Both Khryses and Akhilleus, having been deprived of a girl, isolate themselves from other people (35; 349), go to the "shore" (θῆνα/θῆν') of the sea (34; 350), and "pray a lot" (πολλά...ἤρᾱθ' / ἠρήσατο) to a god (35; 351). The same formula marks the divinity's attentiveness in both cases: ὥς φᾱτο...τοῦ δ' ἔκλυε (43; 357). This repetition confirms the large-scale parallelism between Khryses' conflict with Agamemnon and Akhilleus', and leads the audience to anticipate a similarly devastating result for the Akhaian army.<sup>86</sup> In the Khryses' narrative, the narrator goes on in summary form to chronicle Apollo's pestilent retribution immediately after Khryses' prayer. Given the close verbal echoes, we expect this second narrative to follow the path of the first, but instead we encounter a significant variation: a scene of dialogue between Akhilleus and Thetis. This indicates how Thetis is different from Apollo; she does not have the ability to avenge Akhilleus' suffering independently, but must act as an intermediary to a higher power. This delay heightens suspense by postponing the realization of the narrative pattern and also by introducing uncertainty as to how the gods will respond to Akhilleus' desires. It thus activates the audience's desire to pursue the plotting of the story as the narrative moves in a slightly new direction.

This variation also begins to show us how Akhilleus is different from Khryses. As the son of a goddess, Akhilleus has a closer relation to divinity than even the favored priest and he is privy to direct epiphany, as Athena's intervention has already demonstrated.<sup>87</sup> In fact, when he prays to Thetis he emphasizes their kinship relation, calling her "mother" and mentioning the fact that she bore him (352). Khryses, on the other hand, addresses Apollo formally, with epithets and cult titles, and appeals to him on a *quid pro quo* basis (37-41). Thetis acknowledges Akhilleus special claim by "swiftly" (καρπαλίμως) arriving at Akhilleus' side, stroking him with her hand, addressing him as "child" (τέκνον), and sympathetically asking him what is wrong (359-63).

Yet Akhilleus' special role in the narrative extends beyond his close tie with his goddess mother, as his answering speech reveals. This significant speech (365-412) recaps the preceding narrative and articulates a request for Thetis to procure Zeus' help. Irene de Jong, in her article on this passage, calls the first part of this speech a "mirror

<sup>85</sup> Kirk 1985: 88; Rabel 1997: 48-49; Pulleyn 2000: 213-14; Wilson 2002: 65.

<sup>86</sup> Rabel 1988 and 1997: 48-49 argues that Akhilleus deliberately imitates Khryses because he regards Khryses as a paradigm of how to deal successfully with Agamemnon. But we have no evidence that Akhilleus knows exactly what Khryses did after Agamemnon's rebuff; in his later narrative of the event, Akhilleus says only that Khryses "went back" (πάλιν ἔρχετο 1.380). Robbins 1990: 7 claims that Akhilleus makes the "logical inference" that Khryses' prayed to Apollo. Whatever Akhilleus may guess, I see the repetitive diction as a narratorial device to key in the external audience to the large-scale repetition that the poet utilizes to structure the development of plot.

<sup>87</sup> See Segal 1971b: 98-99 for discussion of Akhilleus' special connection to the gods.

story” as it (mainly) repeats in summary the external narrator’s second and extended account of the primary fabula (14-348).<sup>88</sup> Akhilleus tells the story of Khryses’ embassy, Agamemnon’s rejection, Apollo’s plague, and his own conflict with Agamemnon, ending in the seizure of Briseis. Parts of his speech are a verbatim repetition of the earlier narrative (372-79 = 12-16 + 22-25) and other bits echo or carefully adapt the narrator’s version, reflecting Akhilleus’ own focalization, all the while omitting direct speeches.<sup>89</sup> Scholars have struggled to explain another repetition of the primary fabula right after the external narrator has told it at length.<sup>90</sup> De Jong focuses on the “argument function” of Akhilleus’ speech to justify the repetition—she notes how recalling the past events has persuasive force, providing the motivation for his appeal to Thetis.<sup>91</sup>

While acknowledging the “argument function” of this repetition, I am more interested in its “key function,” the message it sends to the external audience of the poem.<sup>92</sup> De Jong has noted that with verbatim repetition of the main narrative and statements about characters’ motives Akhilleus takes on an “authorial” position.<sup>93</sup> I prefer to say that Akhilleus’ speech puts him in a position analogous to the external narrator (rather than to the author, or poet). This affinity between external and internal narrator is underlined by the fact that their narratives are basically consistent, although Akhilleus elides his own instigations (support of Kalkhas, abusive language, anger) and Nestor’s unsuccessful intervention, thus positing Agamemnon as sole offender.<sup>94</sup> I suggest that part of the “key function” of this speech is to show how Akhilleus, as a desiring subject, is a producer of narrative, just like the external narrator.<sup>95</sup> By putting the external narrator’s words into Akhilleus’ mouth, the poet emphasizes how Akhilleus’ desires (to

<sup>88</sup> The first account is in the proem (1.1-7) and the following introductory lines. Cf. the mirroring effect of Kalkhas’ prophecy discussed in sec. 2 above.

<sup>89</sup> See analyses of de Jong 1985: 13-16 and Kirk 1985: 91-92.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. the confusion of Kirk 1985: 92-93. For more recent treatments, see Robbins 1990; Rabel 1997: 45-54; Wilson 2002: 68-69. De Jong 1985: 11-12 summarizes the earlier scholarly approaches to the question.

<sup>91</sup> De Jong 1985: 12. De Jong does not use the term “argument function” in this article, but develops it later to describe the same idea; for definition of “argument function” see de Jong 2001: xii.

<sup>92</sup> See de Jong 1987: 85 for distinction between “argument function” and “key function,” and de Jong 2001: xv for definition of “key function.”

<sup>93</sup> De Jong 1985: 15-17.

<sup>94</sup> Scully 1986: 145, n.14 and Pulleyn 2000: 219. Rabel 1997: 45-57 argues that Akhilleus’ version is substantially different, particularly in his focus on Khryses’ subjectivity rather than on Apollo’s agency. According to Rabel, the poet makes Akhilleus’ point of view “work against” the narrator’s, destabilizing the authority of both characters. I do not believe that the external narrator’s authority is undermined here. I do believe that the differences in Akhilleus’ account serve to emphasize the limits of his mortal perspective, as well as his lack of objectivity, in contrast to the omniscience of the external narrator. This does not, however, take away from Akhilleus’ presentation as a powerful producer of narrative, who is perhaps even more effective than the external narrator (see the following discussion). Cf. Bakker 2009: 128-136 on the competitive, yet codependent relationship between the external narrator and Odysseus (as internal narrator) in the *Odyssey*.

<sup>95</sup> For similarity of Akhilleus to the external narrator, see Martin 1989: 206-238; Redfield 1994: 221. Akhilleus’ affinity to the external narrator of the *Iliad* is comparable to Odysseus’ affinity to the external narrator of the *Odyssey*. Cf. Doherty 1995, esp. 164-69.

be accorded his rightful *timē* and for Briseis) generate the story of his continued conflict with Agamemnon and thus the poem's main plot.<sup>96</sup>

This (third) narrative repetition of the conflicts over Khryseis and Briseis also serves the related “key function” of emphasizing the central importance of these episodes. The greater the frequency (number of repetitions) of a given story event in the narrative, the greater its significance.<sup>97</sup> Through these repetitions, and especially because of their close succession, the implied audience is led to consider again and again the meaning of these conflicts for the plot.

But Akhilleus' speech does not just mirror the preceding narrative, reiterating the primary fabula thus far; it also contains an external analepsis (a flashback to events before the opening of the main narrative), and an internal prolepsis (a look into the future of the primary fabula). Akhilleus goes right to the origin of Agamemnon's conflict with Khryseis: he recounts the sack of Thebe, the acquisition of Khryseis, and her allotment to Agamemnon.<sup>98</sup> And it turns out that Akhilleus was part of that campaign—he narrates it in the first person plural (ὄχόμεθ', διεπράθομέν, ἤγομεν 366-67)—so that Akhilleus is at least partially responsible for the enslavement of Khryseis. With this extra back-story, Akhilleus makes the audience re-evaluate narrative agency. Akhilleus demonstrates that he can create a fuller narrative of events than even the external narrator and that he himself is the character who is generating the story. Akhilleus, and the practice of war, are located at the root of things.<sup>99</sup> Akhilleus' narrative posits a circle in which war (a raid on Thebe) leads to traffic in women (the enslavement of Khryseis), which leads to more conflict (the refusal of ransom, the plague, and strife over a new prize), which leads to more traffic in women (the seizure of Briseis), which leads to more conflict (a quarrel with Agamemnon). This spiraling chain of events accompanies, and works in tandem

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<sup>96</sup> Akhilleus' narratorial positioning is both like and unlike Kalkhas' narratorial role earlier in Book 1. Both characters provide an immediate repetition of the external narrator's account of the story and also look forward to what will follow. Kalkhas, however, is more similar to the external narrator than Akhilleus, while at the same time ultimately less significant. As Dickson 1990: 330-34 has observed, the description of Kalkhas' knowledge resembles reports of the Muses' insight, and Kalkhas' viewpoint has the same external, unbiased, and synoptic quality as the main narrator's. Akhilleus, on the other hand, speaks from inside the story's boundaries, subjectively, and with limited vision. Kalkhas, as Akhilleus' narratorial precursor, provides a model for effective intradiegetic narration, but also shows up the merely human scope of Akhilleus' discourse in comparison to his own. And yet Akhilleus has more to say than Kalkhas, with further-reaching consequences. After serving his purpose in both story and plot, Kalkhas all but disappears from the poem. The contrast of these two figures suggests the *Iliad's* core interest in the human experience above all else, as I will discuss in sec. 7 below.

<sup>97</sup> S. Richardson 1990: 85. Cf. Genette 1972: 113-117.

<sup>98</sup> Cf. Muellner 1996: 118.

<sup>99</sup> This conclusion becomes more insistent as the *Iliad's* narrative progresses. We discover that in the same raiding expedition that led to Khryseis' capture, Akhilleus also took Briseis prisoner and killed her former husband and brothers (cf. Reinhardt 1961: 52-56), as well as killing all of Andromache's male relatives. In addition, the narrative's most explicit image of Akhilleus as an epic bard (9.186-89) depicts him playing a phorminx that he took from the attack on Thebe. This connects Akhilleus' narrating and the production of the poem as a whole with this all-important originary raid, which emerges as a pervasive cipher for the collocation of loss and desire. *Contra* Rabel 1997: 33-34, who understands the fact that Akhilleus begins at the sack of Thebe as an indication of what Akhilleus sees as the origin of his wrath; thus Rabel distinguishes the narrator's point of view from Akhilleus'.

with, the symmetrical causality of desire analyzed above. How this escalation might end is not clear.

Then, in the second part of his speech, Akhilleus' request anticipates and creates the future narrative, in a kind of wish-fulfilling prophecy.<sup>100</sup> He asks Thetis to supplicate Zeus to aid the Trojans until they hem in and kill the Akhaians at their ships.<sup>101</sup> All this so that the Greeks "may enjoy their king" and so that Agamemnon may recognize his folly in not honoring "the best of the Akhaians" (407-412). The question of whether Zeus will indeed accomplish Akhilleus' aggressive desire activates the audience's own desire to continue plotting out the story. This question is answered in the last part of book 1 when Zeus promises to honor Akhilleus' request. Akhilleus thus produces his own story along the lines of his own desire, and his proleptic narrative reaches even a bit further (to Agamemnon's remorse) and contains more detail than that of the external narrator in the prologue, who stops his foreshadowing at the wrath of Akhilleus and the deaths of heroes. While the prologue moves from the end backwards, Akhilleus' narrative moves forwards, in a reversal. Both accounts follow the story until roughly the same point—the immediate consequences of Akhilleus' wrath—and thus Akhilleus' wish accomplishes a kind of proleptic ring composition. In a sense, Akhilleus' speech actually completes the external narrator's narrative and reveals the complicity of the internal character (the desiring hero) and the external narrator in generating the story and plotting it into the narrative.<sup>102</sup>

Thetis' response caps this narrative ring, as she promises to visit Zeus when he returns from a sojourn with the Ethiopians, but tells Akhilleus in the meantime to "be wroth" (μήνι) at the Akhaians and stop fighting (419-422).<sup>103</sup> Her injunction employs a verb that has the same root as the first word of the *Iliad*, "wrath" (μήνιν). In fact, the imperative she uses is almost identical with the poem's first word, and shares the same

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<sup>100</sup> Cf. Duckworth 1933: 87-89 on Akhilleus' predictive utterances.

<sup>101</sup> Akhilleus tells Thetis to ask Zeus for assistance in return for the time when she freed Zeus from bonds imposed by Hera, Poseidon, and Athena, and brought the hundred-handed Titan to protect him (1.396-406). This story constitutes another external analepsis that speaks to the range of Akhilleus' narrational capacity—his knowledge not just of epic material, but also of divine mythology, to which he has access through his goddess mother, who "often" told this story to him (396-97). Moreover, this story, as the introduction of Akhilleus' wish for the future, symbolically begins the proleptic part of Akhilleus' narrative. For the tale of a divine revolt spear-headed by Hera against Zeus anticipates the structurally parallel quarrel between Hera and Zeus that is sparked by Thetis' supplication (cf. sections 6 and 7 below). Akhilleus' reference to this myth before the articulation of his request to Zeus is even sequentially accurate, as the narrative of the divine conflict precedes the fulfillment of Zeus' promise to Thetis and Akhilleus.

<sup>102</sup> Connecting the hero with the figure of the narrator also helps to emphasize the ways in which the hero is integral to the construction of a coherent narrative. As Barthes 1975: 255-56 has noted, distinct narrative sequences are linked together not only by their interlocking structure, but also by the consistent presence of key characters. He calls the unity achieved in this way "the epic pattern" as it is characteristic of epic narrative. Boris Tomashevsky (Lemon and Reis 1965: 90) has pinpointed the protagonist especially as "the means of stringing the motifs together...he embodies the motivation that connects the motifs." Akhilleus' narration of what has come and what will come illustrates how he and his desires tie together not only all three conflicts of book 1, but also the entire narrative of the *Iliad*.

<sup>103</sup> By connecting wrath and withdrawal, Thetis here endorses Akhilleus' withdrawal as a tactic to satisfy his aggressive desire toward the Akhaians, which is symptomized by his wrath.

metrical position at the beginning of the line. Thetis' command constitutes both a repetition of the prologue's summary of the story and a production of the story, and it also prepares the audience for Thetis' important role in moving the story forward through her audience with Zeus (where she also briefly takes on a narratorial role as she recounts Agamemnon's conflict with Akhilleus in a fourth repetition).

When Thetis departs, the narrator reports that she leaves Akhilleus "angered in his heart on account of the well-belted woman, whom they took away by force against his will" (χωόμενον κατὰ θυμὸν ἐϋζώνοιο γυναικὸς/ τήν ῥα βίη ἄεκοντος ἀπηύρων· 429-30). This, in the principle of ring composition, corresponds to the narrator's earlier description of Akhilleus crying and groaning when he calls out to his mother on the seashore. In that case he complains of the way he has been dishonored, but here the narrator tells us that he is angry, i.e. experiences aggressive desire, because of the loss of Briseis. This confirms, I argue, that Akhilleus does indeed feel desire in two directions, but that they are inextricably connected, as the figure of the triangle denotes.

## 5. The Return of Khryseis and the Resolution of the First Conflict

This last image of Akhilleus angry over the seizure of Briseis is reminiscent once again of Khryses' tears for his daughter; this is a parallelism that operates narratively on the paradigmatic level—Khryses is a narrative model for Akhilleus—but also syntagmatically, since the narration of the first conflict with Agamemnon leads directly to the second. Here these paradigmatic and syntagmatic correspondences work in the opposite direction, with Akhilleus' appearance recalling Khryses' and initiating a move back to Khryses' story. Once Akhilleus has formally asked Thetis to arrange destruction for the Akhaian army—a repetition of the destruction that Khryses invokes—the poet returns in a ring composition to resolve the first conflict. Thus the vision of Akhilleus' wrath actually prepares for a seemingly abrupt mid-line narrative transition from the dramatic scene of Akhilleus' interview with Thetis to the narrator's account of the return of Khryseis to her father and the Akhaian propitiation of Apollo.

Agamemnon first announced his intention to send back Khryseis during his public response to Kalkhas' oracle (116), and then elaborated on his plan for an Akhaian leader to convey her home together with a hecatomb (141-47). At the conclusion of the strife-filled assembly, the narrator describes him preparing the expedition, designating Odysseus as its leader, and sending them off (308-312). All this has served to arouse the audience's expectation of and desire for a conclusion to the Khryses episode, which finally comes to fruition in lines 430-487.

The narrative juxtaposes the earlier preparations and the army's propitiatory ablutions and sacrifices with the following account of Agamemnon sending heralds to Akhilleus' tent to take away Briseis. The poet thus contrasts the end of Agamemnon's quarrel with Khryses with the definitive insult that he delivers to Akhilleus, which cements this second quarrel. The second narrative transition, this time from Akhilleus back to the Khryses story, repeats the first in chiasmic order. Both emphasize the close ties between Khryses' and Akhilleus' conflicts with Agamemnon, but underline also how

Agamemnon resolves the first while only fanning the flames of the second.<sup>104</sup> This narrative structure, in which the Khryses story literally surrounds the genesis of Akhilleus' anger, stresses the causal relationship as well as the likeness of the two events. But while the expedition to Khryse demonstrates (by its happy conclusion) that Apollo's anger is only temporary, and that the Khryses episode is relatively minor in the larger course of the poem and of the war, the narrative at its heart—the wrath of Akhilleus—is central to the *Iliad* and distinctly unresolved.

But the narrative of Khryseis' return is worth examining more closely because it shapes the desire that motivates the audience's engagement with the rest of the poem. It establishes a powerful pattern for the resolution of the other two parallel conflicts, most especially the central quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon. Its length, detail, and dramatic features emphasize its programmatic importance. The solution of Khryses' conflict with Agamemnon is thus a potent tool for generating the audience's desire to fully plot out the solution to Akhilleus' parallel conflict with Agamemnon.

The external narrator begins by describing the expedition's arrival at Khryse. There is a detailed and technical account of the crew bringing the ship into the harbor, which establishes a vivid picture as well as emphasizing the significance of the journey (432-35). Then the narrator employs a storytelling flourish of a quadruple line-opening anaphora (ἐκ δ') to recount the de-embarkation. In a rising crescendo, the anchor-stones are thrown out, the men themselves get out, they drive out the hecatomb, and finally Khryseis herself steps out of the ship (436-39). Kirk observes that the last line "provides a certain contrast and climax through its heavily spondaic rhythm."<sup>105</sup> After the speed evoked by the anaphoric line-beginnings,<sup>106</sup> we are meant to pause and feel the weight of Khryseis' arrival. This gradual mounting of narrative interest and tension engages the audience and builds expectation for the reunion of father and daughter that follows.

When Odysseus formally presents Khryseis to Khryses, he addresses Khryses and explains the propitiatory nature of their embassy. Odysseus' direct discourse establishes the reunion as a dramatic scene, set off from the external narrator's preceding summary of the ship's arrival, and following summary of the sacrificial feast and the return home.<sup>107</sup> The scene concludes with Khryses' answering speech, in which he prays to Apollo to stop the destruction being inflicted upon the Akhaians (451-56). His speech-act is truly a reversal of his earlier prayer for Apollo's aid, and his repetition of his opening invocation of Apollo (37-38 = 451-52) marks this negation narratively.<sup>108</sup> This scene represents the heart of the conflict's resolution, and draws attention to its emotional and functional cores.

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<sup>104</sup> Cf. Segal 1971b: 102-103.

<sup>105</sup> Kirk 1985: 100.

<sup>106</sup> Kirk 1985: 100 and Pulleyn 2000: 233-34.

<sup>107</sup> I am using the terms "scene" and "summary" in the specific sense set out by Genette 1972: 97-110. A "scene" is a moment in the narrative when there is a conventional equality between the narrative time (time it takes to read/speak the text) and the story time, and is usually made up of dialogue. In a "summary," a shorter duration of third-person narrative covers a longer period of story time.

<sup>108</sup> Kirk 1985: 101-102.

The external narrator's framing of Odysseus' speech highlights the emotionally-powerful reunion of Khryses and Khryseis. First the narrator describes how Odysseus "put [Khryseis] into the hands of her dear father" (πατρὶ φίλω ἐν χερσὶ τίθει 441). Then, after Odysseus' address to Khryses, the narrator repeats the account with a slight variation, in a ring composition: "having spoke thus, he put [her] into his hands, and he [Khryses] received his dear child, rejoicing" (ὥς εἰπὼν ἐν χερσὶ τίθει, ὁ δὲ δέξατο χαίρων/ παῖδα φίλην 446-47). The phrase ἐν χερσὶ τίθει occupies the same metrical position in both instances, as does the adjective *philos*. However, the referent of "dear" the first time is Khryses, and the focalization must be Khryseis'. In the second case, "dear" modifies Khryseis herself, and the focalization has changed to represent Khryses' perspective. The use of this adjective indicates the renewed unity of father and daughter, and its attending mutual and reciprocal affection.<sup>109</sup>

But the major focus of the passage is on Khryses' feelings, as he "rejoices" in his recovery of his daughter. The narrative description of Khryseis as *philē* actually echoes Khryses' own earlier characterization of his daughter when he first came to Agamemnon to offer him ransom (20). This reverberation serves to contextualize and contrast this moment of reunification with Agamemnon' earlier refusal to give up Khryseis. It brings to mind the dynamics of desire that shaped the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon. Here Khryses' joy at his daughter's return replaces the earlier tears that he shed (42), and marks the dissolution of painful desire as his separation from Khryseis finally comes to an end.

On a functional level, this scene also serves to show how the end of Khryses' desire is tied to the end of Apollo's anger. Odysseus is described leading Khryseis up to the altar as he delivers her to her father (440-41). In this way, Khryseis is at the same time figured as Khryses' long-lost daughter and as the Akhaians' most important sacrifice to Apollo to avert his wrath. Odysseus' speech to Khryses (442-45) connects the return of Khryseis and the sacrifice of the hecatomb by enunciating them in parallel clauses in the same line (443).<sup>110</sup> The narrator confirms the semantic equivalence of Khryseis and the hecatomb by again juxtaposing Khryses' reception of his daughter with the presentation of the hecatomb at the altar (446-48). In fact line 447 begins with the word "child," representing Khryseis, and ends with the word "hecatomb." With this insistent syntagmatic relationship between Khryseis' return and the ritual sacrifice, the narrative establishes a pattern that inextricably links the satisfaction of desire for the lost intimate with dissolution of the corresponding aggressive desire, achieved through a deferential propitiation that affirms the angered party's honor and authority.

After the conclusion of this pivotal scene, the narrator indicates the success of the Akhaian embassy by explaining that Apollo "heard" Khryses' prayer (457). The narrator underlines the efficacy of the Akhaians' following propitiatory sacrifice by describing its

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<sup>109</sup> Pulleyn 2000: 234-35.

<sup>110</sup> The identification of Khryseis with the Akhaians' sacrifice to Apollo is further underlined by the annular symmetry observed by Stanley 1993: 45 between Odysseus' address to Khryses (and presentation of Khryseis) and the following narrative of the Greeks' sacrifice, which surround the central event of Khryses' prayer to Apollo to stop the plague.

ritual stages in minute detail.<sup>111</sup> In fact, the poet utilizes here eighteen of the twenty-one possible elements available in the traditional type scene of sacrifice and feast, according to Edwards' analysis. In the Homeric *opera*, only the description of Nestor's sacrifice at Pylos in *Odyssey* 3 is more complete.<sup>112</sup> After the meal and the drinking of wine, the Akhaian young men supplicate Apollo all day with song and dance, including the singing of a paian (472-74). According to the narrator, the god "took pleasure in his heart while listening" (ὁ δὲ φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων 475).<sup>113</sup> Thus the narrative of the festive day is framed by twin accounts of Apollo's aural attendance, the last attesting to his pleasure. When the sun sets, the men sleep beside the ship.

This narrative of resolution ends with an account of the Akhaian embassy's voyage back to the encampment at Troy the next day (477-87). At this point, the narrative, along with the Akhaian ship, has sailed back horizontally in a circle to Akhilleus sorrowing alone on the beach. Before the narrative moves vertically to Olympos and the doings of the gods, the narrator returns briefly to a vision of Akhilleus' anger and his desire (488-492). Akhilleus is described as "wrathful, sitting beside the swift-moving ships" (μήνιε νηυσὶ παρήμενος ὠκυπόροισι 488) and avoiding war (as well as the assembly) in an expression of his aggressive desire and in a narrative fulfillment of his mother's earlier imperative (421-22).<sup>114</sup> On account of this self-enforced absence, he is pictured "withering away his dear heart" (φθινύθεσκε φίλον κῆρ 491) and "longing for the battle-cry and war" (ποθέεσκε δ' αὐτήν τε πτόλεμόν τε 492). Because of his withdrawal, Akhilleus himself experiences *pothē* (and the suffering that accompanies it), the same kind of desire that he had promised would afflict the Akhaian host for want of him (240-43). But Akhilleus does not desire reunion with the army in an anticipated reciprocation of their future desire for him; rather, the object of his desire is war itself. That is, while he does not care about his broken *philotēs* with the Akhaians, he misses the activity that defined him: fighting. During the quarrel, Agamemnon asserted Akhilleus' identification with "strife and wars and battles" (ἔρις τε...πόλεμοί τε μάχα τε 177). Akhilleus' martial prowess should be the source of his status among the Akhaians and his glory in the eyes of the Trojans. Akhilleus' *pothē* for warfare is therefore a corollary to his aggressive desire for honor, for a recognition of his place and role in Akhaian society. It is also a reminder to the audience of the corresponding desire and pain that is to come for the Akhaians because of their part in initiating Akhilleus' desires.

The juxtaposition of this image with the successful resolution of the conflict between Khryses-Apollo and Agamemnon-the Akhaians effects a strong contrast between the parallel episodes. Although it had earlier appeared that the Khryses conflict encircled and contained the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon, here the narrative structure shows how Akhilleus' wrath spills out beyond the delimited arc of

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Seaford 1994:42-43 for the structural importance of sacrifice in Homeric epic as a ritual to open, conclude, or "frame" a significant period of time. Here the sacrifice concludes the Khryses conflict, as Seaford notes.

<sup>112</sup> Edwards 1980: 20-21. The twenty-one elements are catalogued by Arend 1933: 64-78.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Apollo's delight when the Ionians celebrate him on Delos in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* 146-150.

<sup>114</sup> Kirk 1985: 105.



Khryses' grievance. It stubbornly persists to engender the rest of the poem, including a much, much greater disaster.

This view of Akhilleus—so reminiscent of his interview with Thetis—also serves as a narrative bridge between the affairs of mortals occupying the first two thirds of book 1, and the world of the gods, with which the book ends. Akhilleus himself is not only connected to both domains, but he is also the *raison d'être* for the narrative movement from the Akhaian camp to Olympos, where Thetis will supplicate Zeus on his behalf.

## 6. Akhilleus' Conflict Sparks A Divine One

After briefly returning to Akhilleus, the narrative progresses in both time and space as Thetis fulfills her son's request. The gods come back from their stay among the Ethiopians, and the narrator follows Thetis as she rises from the sea and ascends to Mount Olympos, where she finds Zeus (493-98). Thetis' emergence from the sea here recalls her earlier appearance from the ocean's depths in response to Akhilleus' lamentation (358-59); both passages employ the same verb to describe her movement (ἀνέδω 359; ἀνεδύσετο 496).<sup>115</sup> Thetis comes across Zeus "sitting apart from the others" (ἄτερ ἤμενον ἄλλων 498), just as she encountered Akhilleus "sitting away from his companions" (ἐτάρων ἄφαρ ἔζετο 349).<sup>116</sup> It is striking how the narrative is at pains to identify Zeus with Akhilleus, and to position Thetis as a bridge between the two.<sup>117</sup>

Thetis is in the unique position of having the potential to actualize Akhilleus' desires through the agency of Zeus. Khryses prays directly to Apollo for help in return for past favors in the form of a temple and sacrifices (39-41). But Akhilleus has no direct personal claim on Zeus, and his demand is more weighty than Khryses'. Akhilleus requires a powerful intercessor to have a hope of realization, and Zeus owes Thetis a favor, as Akhilleus himself recounts at length (394-406).<sup>118</sup> The narrator makes Thetis into a link binding the parallel (but unequal) figures of Akhilleus and Zeus, but also into Akhilleus' surrogate. Following Akhilleus' imperative to "grasp his knees" in the posture of supplication (καὶ λαβὲ γούνων 407), she does just that (καὶ λαβὲ γούνων 500). Then Thetis speaks: "if indeed I ever helped you among the immortals, either in word or deed, accomplish this wish for me" (εἴ ποτε δὴ σε μετ' ἀθανάτοισιν ὄνησα/ ἢ ἔπει ἢ ἔργω, τόδε μοι κρήνον ἐέλδωρ 503-504). Here Thetis invokes a *quid pro quo* relationship with Zeus, as Khryses had done with Apollo.

And her word-choice is significant for understanding her structural place in the narrative repetition. Her assertion of the circumstances under which Zeus should heed her is a direct echo of Akhilleus' earlier speech to her on the same subject. Akhilleus tells her to supplicate Zeus, "if indeed you ever in some way helped the heart of Zeus, either in word or again in deed" (εἴ ποτε δὴ τι/ ἢ ἔπει ὦνησας κραδίην Διὸς ἢ καὶ ἔργω 394-

<sup>115</sup> Stanley 1993: 45.

<sup>116</sup> Whitman 1958: 227.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Whitman 1958: 225-27; Segal 1971b: 105; Nimis 1987: 75.

<sup>118</sup> Cf. Redfield 1994: 236.

95). With this reverberation the narrative makes Akhilleus, as it were, speak through the mouth of his mother. The second half of Thetis' appeal, "accomplish this wish for me," is in fact a repetition of Khryses' entreaty of Apollo (41), in the same metrical position.<sup>119</sup> Thetis is thus positioned in analogy to Khryses in the earlier conflict, while acting for Akhilleus in his own conflict with Agamemnon. The narrative accomplishes a splitting of the character of Khryses into both Akhilleus and his mother in this repetition, which increases the reach and heft of Akhilleus' prayer. It also establishes an anticipation in the audience that Thetis' supplication will be as effective as Khryses'. The difference within the similarity, however, encourages the audience to look for how Akhilleus' plot is unlike Khryses'.<sup>120</sup>

The rest of Thetis' address to Zeus continues to draw heavily on Akhilleus' own previous language. In his final words to Thetis, Akhilleus focuses on his desire for Agamemnon to realize the mistake he committed when he did not "honor" (ἔτεισεν) him. "Honor" is the word with which Akhilleus ends his speech, and it is also the last thing he says in the *Iliad* until his reception of the embassy in book 9. As we have seen, Akhilleus' homosocial desire for honor is in book 1 the more prominent correlative to his desire for his concubine. Akhilleus' desires lie behind Thetis' visit to Zeus. Thus it is appropriate that, as Akhilleus' surrogate, Thetis should speak of Akhilleus' honor five times in six lines during her appeal to Zeus (τίμησόν, ἠτίμησεν, τεῖσον, τεῖσωσιν, τιμῆ 505-510). She entreats Zeus to honor Akhilleus himself three times, asks that he make the Akhaians honor Akhilleus, and speaks of Agamemnon's dishonor of Akhilleus. Her account of Agamemnon dishonoring Akhilleus is yet another repetition of this episode that serves to emphasize again its role as a pivotal moment in the poem's story. But it is also an almost verbatim repetition from Akhilleus' own initial outcry to his mother, when, alone on the beach, he laments what Agamemnon has done and wishes for honor from Zeus (352-56; 355-56 ~ 506-07). In general, Thetis' speech, in both content and diction, is very reminiscent of this passage. Thetis here is nearly the dummy for Akhilleus' ventriloquism.

When Zeus does not immediately respond, Thetis goes on to assert her own independent subjectivity in order to encourage Zeus' compliance. While Thetis may be working for her son, she is the one who has claims on Zeus' loyalty. She applies pressure to the situation by demanding that Zeus reply, "in order that I may know to what extent I am the most dishonored god among all" (ὄφρα ἐν εἰδέω / ὅσσον ἐγὼ μετὰ πᾶσιν ἀτιμοτάτη θεὸς εἰμι 516). With these words Thetis inextricably connects her own honor among the gods with her son's honor among mortals. Even if Zeus cares nothing for Akhilleus' honor, he has a reason to care about Thetis' honor. The narrative gestures toward the implicitly aggressive power play of this tactic by employing in Thetis' diction a formula used earlier by Agamemnon. When Agamemnon promises to appropriate Briseis from Akhilleus, he tells Akhilleus that he is doing it "in order that you may know to what an extent I am superior to you" (ὄφρ' ἐν εἰδῆς / ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν 185-86). This is a hostile boast meant to further demean Akhilleus. Here, ironically, Thetis

<sup>119</sup> Pulleyn 2000: 250.

<sup>120</sup> Stanley 1993: 45-46 detects a significant contrast between Thetis' appeal to Zeus to punish the Akhaians and Khryses' *second* appeal to Apollo to *reverse* the Akhaians' punishment.

employs Agamemnon's technique of inciting his interlocutor, but in order to achieve the opposite result, in order to increase rather than decrease Akhilleus' honor.

Thetis' strategy successfully elicits a response from Zeus. But before Zeus indicates what sort of action he will take, he ruminates aloud about how fulfilling Thetis' wish might impact his already troubled relationship with Hera (518-523). He strongly terms the actions requested by Thetis "destructive deeds" (λοίγια ἔργα)<sup>121</sup> and claims that Thetis is asking him "to incur the enmity" (ἐχθοδοπήσαι) of Hera.<sup>122</sup> Zeus worries that Hera will "provoke" (ἐρέθησιν) him with "words of reproach" (ὀνειδείους ἐπέεσσιν). He comments that, even as it is, Hera is always "quarreling" (νεικεῖ) with him. Thetis is to go away at once, so that Hera does not notice her. Zeus' own speech evokes an image of a hen-pecked husband that contrasts comically with the narrator's introduction of him as the majestically isolated leader of the gods. But on another register, Zeus' words take on a sinister quality, as they recall Akhilleus' own narrative of Hera's rebellious attempt, along with Poseidon and Athena, to bind Zeus (399-406). It should be noted that Hera is named first among the conspirators (400). The conjunction of this story and Zeus' expectations serve to foreshadow the coming conflict between Zeus and Hera.

According to Zeus, Hera's complaint is that he is helping the Trojans in battle (521). This view of Hera's loyalties is consistent with her two earlier actions in book 1's main narrative. Hera is the one who inspires Akhilleus to call the assembly during the plague, and the narrator says that she does it because she "cared for the Danaans, because she saw them dying" (κήδετο γὰρ Δαναῶν, ὅτι ῥα θνήσκοντας ὄρατο 56). Then again it is Hera who sends Athene down to keep Akhilleus from killing Agamemnon, "since she regards as intimate and cares for both equally in her heart" (ἄμφω ὁμῶς θυμῷ φιλέουσά τε κηδομένη τε 196). Thus from her first appearance, Hera is explicitly said to have an emotional stake in the wellbeing of all the Akhaians. Akhilleus' desire for retribution against his own men is clearly contrary to Hera's sensibilities, and bound to provoke her against any actor working in Akhilleus' interests to this end. By this characterization of Hera, the narrative carefully indicates how Akhilleus' conflict will spark a third conflict in a syntagmatic chain of causality. Just as Agamemnon's decision to satisfy Khryses' desire led him to provoke Akhilleus' desire, Zeus' decision to satisfy Akhilleus' desire will lead him to provoke Hera's desire.

Nevertheless, Zeus does assent to do as Akhilleus and Thetis wish, and the narrative marks that assent in an extremely dramatic way. First Zeus himself agrees, saying that he will make these affairs his concern and accomplish them (523). Then he proclaims that he will also denote his promise with a nod, and explains that his nod is the ultimate indication of his will (524-26). He says that his nod marks a pledge as "neither revocable, nor deceitful, nor to be unaccomplished" (οὐ γὰρ ἐμὸν παλινάγρετον οὐδ' ἀπατηλὸν/ οὐδ' ἀτελεύτητον 526-27). Thus Zeus himself testifies to the effective power of his nod.

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<sup>121</sup> Cf. n. 146 below.

<sup>122</sup> This word for enmity derives from the concept of externality, or being an outsider. Thetis' physical closeness to Zeus here, her enactment and claim of *philotēs* (she touches him in supplication), contrasts with Hera's putative separation or alienation from Zeus.

The narrative then couples word with deed. The narrator goes on to describe the actualization of the nod in vivid terms. Zeus nods “with blue-green brows” (κυανέησιν ἐπ’ ὄφρῦσι 528) and “the ambrosial locks of the lord rushed forward from his immortal head” (ἀμβρόσια δ’ ἄρα χαῖται ἐπερρώσαντο ἄνακτος/ κρατὸς ἀπ’ ἀθανάτοιο 529-30). The nod shakes Mount Olympos (530). The scholia report that this striking image of the king of the gods was the fifth-century BCE sculptor Pheidias’ inspiration for a bronze sculpture of Zeus at Olympia.<sup>123</sup> This narrative emphasis on the nod draws special attention to its importance. It is the defining moment that assures that Akhilleus’ designs will come to fruition.<sup>124</sup> But it is also actualizes in a powerfully scenic and symbolic way the proem’s description of the “will of Zeus” (Διὸς βουλή 5).<sup>125</sup> It indicates to the audience that “the will of Zeus” will indeed be accomplished, as the narrative moves forward past the beginning of Akhilleus’ wrath to continue elaborating on the proem’s outlines. The nod represents a fulfillment of the proem’s undertakings, and it completes the main narrative’s introduction of all of the named characters in the proem (Akhilleus, the Akhaians, Agamemnon, Zeus). It is a significant milestone as the audience works to plot the story.

## 7. A Theomachy Averted and a Narrative Pattern Confirmed

Zeus’ nod is also a turning point, at which the narrative moves away from the working through of Akhilleus’ conflict with Agamemnon and introduces the third and final conflict of book 1. Thetis and Zeus separate, and Zeus returns to his Olympian throne (531-36). Building on the preceding narrative of the efficacy and force of Zeus’ nod, the narrator emphasizes Zeus’ divine supremacy by focusing on the other gods’ deference, as they rise respectfully on his arrival. The narrator then introduces Hera as the sole outlier—οὐδέ μιν Ἥρα (536)—who not only audaciously initiates conversation with the king of the gods, but also addresses Zeus “with rebukes” (κερτομίοισι 539). With this introduction, the narrator offers a structural positioning for the dialogue between Hera and Zeus that appears very familiar to the astute listener. A person of implicitly lower status approaches a kingly superior, just as Khryses and Akhilleus—a foreign priest and a warrior prince—had both initiated their interaction with Agamemnon, the leader of the Akhaian expedition against Troy.

Hera’s words to Zeus are preceded by the narratorial comment that Hera was aware “that silver-footed Thetis conspired with him” (ὅτι οἱ συμφράσσατο βουλᾶς/

<sup>123</sup> “From these two lines it is said that the sculptor Pheidias made the bronze male image at Elis that is bent and bowed in this way” (ἀπὸ τούτων λέγεται τῶν δύο στίχων Φειδίαν τὸν ἀγαλματοποιὸν ποιῆσαι τὸν ἐν Ἠλίδι χαλκοῦν ἀνδριάντα οὕτως καμπτόμενον καὶ συνωθούμενον A scholia *ad* 528-29).

<sup>124</sup> Schadewalt 1966: 146 calls it “the biggest moment of the book” (der größte Augenblick des Gesanges) and understands Zeus’ vow and nod to be a divine parallel to Akhilleus’ oath and his throwing down of the scepter in 1.239-245.

<sup>125</sup> Schadewalt 1966: 146. This is true even if, as Kullmann 1955: 167-170 argues, Zeus’ promise to Thetis represents only a step in the fulfillment of the Διὸς βουλή, rather than the will itself in its entirety (cf. Kullman 1955: 189). The “will of Zeus” could also be translated as the “desire of Zeus”; Zeus’ desire determines the course of the plot along with Akhilleus’ desire, as I discuss below in sec. 7.

ἀργυρόπεζα Θέτις 537-38). The narrator thus implies at the outset that Thetis' relationship with Zeus is the reason for Hera's scolding address, just as Zeus himself had predicted. This further establishes the parallelism of this episode to Khryseis' attempt to reclaim Khryseis from Agamemnon, and once again suggests a triangular arrangement, this time between Hera, Thetis, and Zeus.

Hera's words then confirm that triangular desire is animating the dynamic among these divinities. She disingenuously asks Zeus who is conspiring with him (540). She calls him a "plotter of trickery" (δολομηῆτα 540), and then accuses him of the practice of making decisions "secretly" (κρυπτάδια) while he is "apart" (ἀπονόσφιιν ἐόντα) from her, and hiding his thoughts from her in a cowardly manner (541-43). The core of Hera's complaint is her distance from Zeus and from his intentions, and she connects her own exclusion with the intervention of a (here unspecified) third party. Hera's speech perfectly represents desire as a function of lack or separation. Closeness to Zeus seems to be the object of Hera's desire, an object that she understands to be thwarted at this instance by his confidential meeting with Thetis.

Zeus' response to Hera only confirms her desire by denying her the access for which she hopes. He affirms his prerogative to keep secrets from her even though she is his wife, and orders her to stop being so nosy (545-550). Zeus' stance performs the same function as Agamemnon's refusal to give up Khryseis to Khryses, and securely establishes Zeus' parallelism to Agamemnon in this third repetition.<sup>126</sup> However, while Hera is structurally parallel to Khryses, as we have seen, their desires initially seem to be directed toward different points of their respective triangles; Hera's erotic object appears to be Zeus, whereas Khryses desires to repossess his daughter. Hera's intimacy with Zeus is disrupted by Thetis as a rival, while Khryses' intimacy with his daughter is disrupted by Agamemnon as his rival.

The narrative suggests, for a moment, that it is conforming to the mythological tradition of Hera as the jealous wife who resents her husband's infidelities. Zeus was well-known in early Greek hexameter for his extra-marital sexual dalliances (he himself boasts of them to Hera in 14.317-27).<sup>127</sup> Hera, in turn, was famous for persecuting Zeus' female beloveds and their children.<sup>128</sup> Here, I suggest, the narrative alludes to the extra-Iliadic myth of Zeus' courtship of Thetis.<sup>129</sup> But while the poet gestures at this narrative path, he does not take it. The courtship of Thetis myth may be familiar to the implied audience and a rivalry between Hera and Thetis conforms with normative gender roles,

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<sup>126</sup> It should be noted that Zeus, unlike Agamemnon, tries initially to mollify his interlocuter despite rejecting her complaint. Zeus acknowledges Hera's special status by asserting that she will be his first confidant, if he does choose to share his mind (547-48). This bit of diplomacy has absolutely no effect in terms of reducing Hera's desire.

<sup>127</sup> Cf. the fragments of Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* (ed. Most 2007).

<sup>128</sup> Cf. *Hymn to Apollo* 92-106 and Agamemnon's story of how Hera tricked Zeus into making Eurystheus stronger than his son by Alkmene, Herakles (*Il.* 19.95-125).

<sup>129</sup> In that tradition, Zeus vies with his brother Poseidon to achieve sexual congress with Thetis until they receive the prophecy that Thetis' son will be stronger than his father. To avoid being the victim of the same theogonic struggle by which he gained power, Zeus ultimately arranges Thetis' marriage to a mortal, Peleus. Cf. Pindar, *Isthmian* 8.27-48; Slatkin 1991: 70-76; Redfield 1994: 241.

but Homer takes pains to establish and maintain a parallelism between the Hera's conflict with Zeus and the Khryses' conflict with Agamemnon. Thetis cannot be Hera's primary rival, since Hera quarrels not with Thetis, but with Zeus himself.

Hera goes on to reveal her conception that Zeus stands as rival between her and the Akhaian army, which is the true object of her desire for intimacy. Hera names Thetis as Zeus' co-conspirator and says that she "fears terribly" (αἰνῶς δειδοῖκα) lest Thetis has "persuaded" (παρείπη) Zeus (555-56). Becoming even more specific, she asserts, "I think that you nodded to her faithfully that you would honor Akhilleus, and destroy many beside the ships of the Akhaians" (τῆ σ' οἶω κατανεῦσαι ἐτήτυμον ὡς Ἀχιλλῆα/ τιμῆς, ὀλέσης δὲ πολέας ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν 558-59). With these words, Hera discloses that her desire to have a say in the fate of the Akhaians is at the root of her desire to be close to Zeus. Hera identifies with the Akhaian army and wants to protect it from harm, as she has demonstrated repeatedly in book 1. The Akhaian welfare is the third point in her triangle with Zeus.<sup>130</sup> Thetis, as a surrogate for Akhilleus, who himself determines triumph or defeat for the Akhaian army (through his participation in battle as much as through his angry petition to Zeus), is a metonymic representative of the Akhaians' vulnerability.<sup>131</sup> Hera cannot protect the Akhaians because Zeus wills otherwise, thus creating her frustrated desire. Zeus has the authority to decide what will happen to the Akhaians, and Hera's desire for Zeus is really a desire to challenge this very authority. The narrative thus subverts expectations for a restructured desire based on Hera's female gender, and sets her up as a potential power broker within the divine ruling hierarchy.<sup>132</sup>

Hera's desire to control Zeus bears a strong resemblance to Khryses' and Akhilleus' desires to be honored by Agamemnon and by the homosocial warrior society that he leads.<sup>133</sup> All three relationships amount to status conflicts inextricably related to

<sup>130</sup> Zeus' own desire to control the Akhaians' fate is activated by Hera's interference, as is evidenced by his self-assertive vocabulary of desire—"I want" (ἐθέλωμι 549). Agamemnon uses the same verb in relation to his desire for Khryseis (112). Hera mocks Zeus' desire by repeating his language (ἐθέλησθα 554; cf. Kirk 1985: 111).

<sup>131</sup> Thus Thetis herself is not a true erotic rival or object in this triangle. Her erotic role is displaced by her role as mother to the mortal Akhilleus, just as the narrative moves from evoking her divine courtship to focusing on her connection to Akhilleus. According to Slatkin 1991: 100-122, Thetis in the *Iliad* represents how divine harmony is bought at the price of human mortality. Thetis' marriage to the mortal Peleus and bearing of a mortal son Akhilleus allows for the maintenance of Zeus' hegemony by voiding the possibility of a truly threatening divine rival.

<sup>132</sup> This communicates two things about the society of the gods. First of all, it seems that power and status among the gods is not dependent on gender in the same way that it is in the strictly patriarchal mortal society. Second, it shows that the closest divine relationship—in this case a kinship and a marital relationship—is no impediment to the existence of a fiercely competitive desire between the involved parties. There is a sense, particularly after the narrative ruse of Hera's erotic rivalry with Thetis, that sexual desire here runs parallel with desire for supremacy. This combination is restricted to the divine realm as the only arena in which females compete for status on the same ground as males.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Lang 1983: 162 for general observations of how Hera's conflict with Zeus parallels Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon. Lang *passim* argues that there is "reverberation" between divine and mortal spheres, and between past times represented in *exempla* and the present time of the *Iliad*'s story. See also Nimis 1987: 75 for the identification between Akhilleus' *timē* and Zeus' *timē*.

the desire for a third party. But while Khryses and Akhilleus are concerned with symbolic prestige along with the practical recovery of the desired female, the quarrel between Hera and Zeus seems to have something more important at stake. Hera does not want what was once hers, she wants control over Zeus' prerogatives, that is, absolute determination of human affairs. She does not fuss about honor, but she does want to have the last word when Zeus is making decisions. Unlike her mortal analogues, Hera is engaged in Realpolitik: her desires are for concrete power and true supremacy, that is, what properly belongs to Zeus.<sup>134</sup>

Zeus' response maintains this episode's structural repetition, but also serves to indicate the escalated stakes of this divine conflict. He tells Hera that she will not be able to do anything even though she knows about his promise to Thetis (561-62). He warns that her defiance will only increase her distance "away from his heart" (ἀπὸ θυμοῦ 562-63). And then he delivers a series of threats that are very familiar to the audience. First, Zeus cautions Hera that, if she tries to subvert his will, "this will be even chillier for you" (τὸ δέ τοι καὶ ρίγιον ἔσται 563). This is almost an exact repetition of Agamemnon's words to his heralds, when he tells them that if Akhilleus does not give up Briseis, then he himself will force the matter, and "this will be even chillier for him [Akhilleus]" (τὸ οἱ καὶ ρίγιον ἔσται 325). Zeus' warning, then, suggests that Hera occupies the position of Akhilleus, who, as we know, complies with Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis, despite his distress. It helps the audience to anticipate Hera's coming submission to Zeus' will. It also asks the audience to evaluate Agamemnon in comparison to Zeus.<sup>135</sup> Zeus' display of authority is appropriate to his station as universal king, while Agamemnon's words are hubristic. The difference between their respective power is evidenced by the fact that Zeus is confident enough to threaten Hera to her face, while Agamemnon only threatens Akhilleus behind his back.

Zeus rounds off his speech by menacing Hera with physical harm. He orders her to obey, "lest now the Olympian gods not help you, whenever I, coming near, lay my untouchable hands upon you" (μὴ νύ τοι οὐ χραίσμωσιν ὄσοι θεοὶ εἰς' ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ/ ἄσσοι ἰόνθ', ὅτε κέν τοι ἀάπτους χεῖρας ἐφείω 566-67). This time Zeus' words are strongly reminiscent of Agamemnon's earlier threats to Khryses. Agamemnon twice warns Khryses to leave the Akhaian camp immediately if he wants to remain safe from his own wrath (26-28, 32). He specifically tells Khryses to flee, "lest now the scepter and fillet of the god not help you" (μὴ νύ τοι οὐ χραίσμη σκῆπτρον καὶ στέμμα θεοῖο 28). Zeus employs the same line-opening formula as Agamemnon to express a clause of threat. Both Agamemnon and Zeus dismiss their antagonists' divine allies as ineffectual hindrances to the execution of their threats. While Agamemnon's words betray his impiety toward Apollo and flout the normal social rules, Zeus' speech enunciates an even

<sup>134</sup> The logic of Hera's conflict with Zeus within the context of *Iliad* 1 suggests that the closer the relation of the contenders, the more grievous or momentous the conflict. The book 1 conflicts escalate as they succeed one another. The conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon, who are strangers to one another, has only temporary and local significance within the narrative. The quarrel between Agamemnon and Akhilleus, who are allies, is set up to pervade the entire mortal world of the poem and to generate the whole narrative. Finally, the dispute of Zeus and Hera, siblings and spouses, has the potential to move heaven and earth.

<sup>135</sup> See Stanley 1993: 50 and Wilson 2002: 67 for the homology of Zeus and Agamemnon.

greater potential for disorder. Zeus evokes a scenario of internecine warfare between himself and the other gods: a theomachy. The seriousness and nature of Zeus' reaction to Hera confirms that her competitive desires do indeed symbolize a real challenge to Zeus' supremacy.

The narrator describes Hera's immediate response to Zeus in terms almost identical to the account of Khryses' response to Agamemnon. The narrator uses the same formula to express both reacting with fear to their interlocutor's words (ὥς ἔφατ', ἔδεισεν 33 = 568). Both directly obey the commands of their superior: Hera "sat down silently" (καί ῥ' ἀκέουσα καθῆστο 569),<sup>136</sup> while Khryses "went away silently" (βῆ δ' ἀκέων 34). The word "silently" is, in each case, in the same metrical position.<sup>137</sup> This obvious linguistic echo suggests Khryses as the most pertinent model for Hera as her own conflict continues to play out. It hints to the audience that it may expect the quarrel between Hera and Zeus to follow the path of Khryses' quarrel with Agamemnon. And yet the differences between Hera and Khryses also require some variation within this repetition. After leaving the Akhaian camp, Khryses goes to the shore of the sea to pray to Apollo for help (34-36). But Hera, unlike Khryses and Akhilleus, has no more powerful ally to whom she can appeal, since she herself is the queen of the gods contending with the king of the gods. Therefore, she can only simmer, "twisting her own heart" (ἐπιγνάμψασα φίλον κῆρ 569). Hera's lack of resource indicates that her conflict with Zeus is destined to develop in a somewhat different direction than Khryses' and Akhilleus' conflicts with Agamemnon.

After recounting this back-and-forth between Hera and Zeus, the narrator records that the "heavenly gods throughout the house of Zeus were troubled" (ἄχθησαν δ' ἀνὰ δῶμα Διὸς θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες 570). This agitation in the divine community at large stands in structural parallel for the Akhaians' suffering from the plague as a result of the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon. At the same time, Hera has not, like Khryses, caused this distress, or, like Akhilleus, threatened future pain: she is passive. Nevertheless, the divine reaction provides the narrative logic for the repetitive intervention of a mediator. Hephaistos addresses first the divine assembly, and then especially his mother Hera with words of conciliation. In so doing, he recapitulates the mediations of Kalkhas and Nestor, but with variations that reflect the special nature of this third quarrel and of the persons involved.<sup>138</sup>

Like his predecessors, Hephaistos speaks out before the community (571) on an issue that affects it in its entirety. Kalkhas and Nestor are described with the same formulaic line (73 = 253) as speaking "well-intentioned" (εὐφρονέων) toward an

<sup>136</sup> The narrator uses the same line-opening formula to describe Hera's silent sitting here and Zeus' silent sitting about sixty lines earlier (ἀλλ' ἀκέων δὴν ἦστο 512) after Thetis' asks him the first time to honor Akhilleus. In both cases it seems to signify a moment when a god is at a loss for how to proceed.

<sup>137</sup> In the case of Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon, the narrator transfers this formula of silent obedience to Briseis when he describes her departure from Akhilleus' tent: "and the woman went silently with them [the heralds]" (ἡ δ' ἀέκουσ' ἄμα τοῖσι γυνὴ κίεν 348). Yet the formula occupies the same semantic and structural position, marking the moment of submission, as in the other two conflicts. And it is immediately followed by Akhilleus retreating to the shore of the sea, like Khryses.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Segal 1971b: 91 for comparison of Nestor's and Hephaistos' mediations.



unspecified “them” (σφιν), but the narrator says that Hephaistos spoke “showing himself well-disposed to his dear mother” (μητρὶ φίλῃ ἐπὶ ἧρα φέρειν 572). This difference highlights how Hephaistos’ speech is designed particularly to persuade Hera to concede. This represents a contrast from Kalkhas’ speech, which is directed at all the Akhaians, but with a message that demands for Agamemnon to give way, and from Nestor’s speech, which is addressed to both Agamemnon and Akhilleus, but is also perhaps more focused on preventing Agamemnon’s hubristic behavior.<sup>139</sup> Hephaistos does begin by asking both Zeus and Hera to reconsider the terms and consequences of their conflict, but the bulk of his speech is directed at Hera. While Zeus here is in a position structurally parallel to that of Agamemnon in the earlier conflicts, Hephaistos does not appeal to him to appease Hera, but rather reverses the pattern. Hephaistos’ approach acknowledges the practical fact that he will explore in his remarks, that is, that Zeus is simply mightier than anyone else and cannot be successfully challenged.

Before we examine this major discursive theme, it is worth saying a few words about Hephaistos’ initial argumentative strategy. He begins, very much like Nestor, by attempting to draw both Zeus’ and Hera’s attention to the damaging consequences of the conflict from a broader perspective. Hephaistos speaks to both parties in the dual to emphasize how disruptive their continued quarrel would be to divine peace and pleasure in feasting (573-76). This parallels how Nestor calls the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon “a great grief” to the Akhaian land and claims that it will make their enemies rejoice (254-58). In addition, Hephaistos laments that Zeus and Hera should be at odds “for the sake of mortals” (ἔνεκα θνητῶν 574). This points to the incongruity of divine disturbance over the doings of short-lived humans. But on a narrative level, it also confirms the situation of the Akhaians—the mortals referenced here—at the third point of the triangle connecting Hera and Zeus. This phrasing verifies as well the parallelism of conflict between Hera and Zeus with the two preceding human conflicts that were “for the sake of a girl.”<sup>140</sup>

At this point Hephaistos turns his attention directly to his mother Hera, first speaking of her in the third person and then addressing her in the second person. He says that he is advising his mother to “show herself well-disposed to his dear father Zeus” (πατρὶ φίλῳ ἐπὶ ἧρα φέρειν Διὶ) to avoid further conflict and disturbance (577-79). Then he specifically bids her to address Zeus with gentle words to make him “gracious” again (582-83). Hephaistos tells Hera to reintroduce herself into Zeus’ good graces by employing the same formula that the narrator used a few lines earlier to describe Hephaistos’ own friendly intentions toward Hera. This repetitive diction indicates that Hephaistos is about to use one of Nestor’s tactics again, which was to enjoin his addressees to imitate his own behavior and that of his heroic contemporaries, rather than

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Leaf 1971: 24; Muellner 1996: 111-113.

<sup>140</sup> While the narrative never uses this specific phrase to describe Khryses’ conflict with Agamemnon, Agamemnon does say that Apollo sent the plague, “because I was not willing to receive the splendid ransom for the girl Khryseis” (οὐνεκ’ ἐγὼ κούρης Χρυσηίδος ἀγλά’ ἄποινα/ οὐκ ἔθελον δέξασθαι 111-112). Akhilleus says that he will not fight (physically) with Agamemnon “for the sake of a girl” (εἶνεκα κούρης 298), and later he remarks that Agamemnon sent the heralds “for the sake of the girl Briseis” (Βρισηίδος εἶνεκα κούρης 336). Cf. Aias’ speech during the embassy of book 9, when he complains of how Akhilleus’ heart is implacable “for the sake of a girl” (εἶνεκα κούρης 9.637).

to competitively emulate their antagonists. This repeated formula signifies to the audience that Hephaistos is attempting to set himself up as a kind of “external mediator” (in Girard’s terms) for Hera.

But instead of offering his past behavior as a positive model, like Nestor, Hephaistos presents his previous conduct as a negative *exemplum*. First he testifies to the power of Zeus, saying that “the lightning-hurling Olympian” (Ὀλύμπιος ἀστεροπητής 580) has the ability to smite them from their seats, “for he is much the most superior” (ὁ γὰρ πολὺ φέρτατός ἐστιν 581). With this last phrase, the narrative once again connects Zeus with Agamemnon, but also asserts his difference. While Agamemnon himself and Nestor both call Agamemnon “superior” (φέρτερός 186 and 281), using the comparative adjective, Zeus is designated by the superlative.<sup>141</sup> Zeus is no mere mortal commander, but the absolute ruler of creation. This contrast points again to the different footings of the human and divine structural analogues, and of the persons who dare to challenge Agamemnon’s and Zeus’ respective wills. Hephaistos worries that Hera will indeed be physically harmed if she continues to stand up to Zeus, and he testifies that he will not be able to aid her because of Zeus’ might (587-89).

This is where Hephaistos brings himself forward as an example of what can go wrong when Zeus is defied. Like Nestor, Hephaistos tells an autobiographical story of the past. But while Nestor’s *exemplum* is the stuff of heroic epic, and appropriate to a human storyteller, Hephaistos’ *exemplum* belongs to the world of the gods and the theme of theomachy. Hephaistos recounts how, when he had tried to help his mother once before against Zeus, Zeus had hurled him by the foot off Mount Olympos. After descending for an entire day, Hephaistos landed on the earth sorely injured (590-94). This narrative evokes an earlier rebellion of Hera and her partisans against Zeus, and calls to mind Akhilleus’ story of how Thetis freed Zeus from an insurrection of Hera, Poseidon, and Athene (399-406). Hephaistos may in fact be referencing the same episode. In any case, Zeus emerges triumphant when his power is tested. Hephaistos’ own experience offers sinister evidence of how rebels do not come out unscathed.

Zeus’ punishment of Hephaistos and Akhilleus’ earlier story of Thetis’ salvation of Zeus, as well as Hera’s challenge to Zeus’ power in this episode, all express the first instantiations of an underlying (or perhaps overlying) theme in the *Iliad*. That theme is the maintenance of Zeus’ cosmic regime in opposition to desirous contenders.<sup>142</sup> Both Slatkin and Muellner read the *Iliad* in these terms, as an exploration of Zeus’ strategies for stabilizing his power after the cycles of inter-generational divine violence that led to his ascendancy; the poem thus represents a sequel to Hesiod’s *Theogony*.<sup>143</sup> To keep his hegemony, Zeus controls the unrest of his peers, and also ensures that humankind

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<sup>141</sup> Stanley 1993: 47.

<sup>142</sup> This is a theme worked out in the *Iliad*’s main story (with Hera and Poseidon as the chief opponents of Zeus’ will), but also present in analepses to past events before the primary fabula. Lang 1983: 147-163 catalogues the tales of earlier divine conflict alluded to in the *Iliad* and shows how they make up a coherent story that is also interconnected with heroic stories of the earlier generation, namely Herakles’ mythology and the first sack of Troy. Cf. Nimis 1987: 74-84 on how Zeus’ battle with Typhoeus (Typhonomachy) as well as with the other Titans functions as an “intertext” here and elsewhere in the *Iliad*.

<sup>143</sup> Slatkin 1991 and Muellner 1996 *passim*.

represents no threat by enforcing and speeding their mortality.<sup>144</sup> In the *Iliad*'s narrative, which is ultimately a heroic rather than a theogonic poem, the expression of this theme is subordinated (or “superordinated”) to the exploration of Akhilleus’ desires and his resultant wrath, just as Akhilleus’ conflict with Agamemnon occupies the center of book 1. Nevertheless, the narrator introduces the contestation of Zeus’ supremacy as the capstone of the *Iliad*'s first book, and explicitly associates it causally, thematically, and structurally with the poem’s human conflicts.<sup>145</sup>

Not only does Hephaistos’ story demonstrate the danger of opposing Zeus, but his very language also expresses his loyalty to him. Nestor echoes some of Agamemnon’s discourse in order to gain more influence with the king, but ultimately to no avail. Hephaistos, however, does not use the language of his primary target of persuasion, Hera, but rather echoes Zeus’ own discourse. Zeus tells Thetis that acting to incur Hera’s displeasure amounts to “destructive deeds” (λοίγια ἔργα 518), and then Hephaistos identically terms a continued quarrel between Zeus and Hera “destructive deeds” (λοίγια ἔργα 573).<sup>146</sup> Later, Hephaistos says he will not be able to “help” (χραϊσιμεῖν 589) Hera against Zeus, affirming Zeus’ earlier threat to Hera that none of the gods would “help” (χραϊσιμῶσιν 566) her. Hephaistos’ repetition validates Zeus’ power along with his discourse, to Hera’s detriment. In this way the external narrator indicates how the goal of Hephaistos’ mediation is different than Nestor’s—a confirmation of supreme authority rather than an attempt to balance competing claims to highest status.<sup>147</sup> And it also points to a different outcome.

Hera’s reaction to Hephaistos’ speech confirms the success of his mediation. Hera does not continue to berate Zeus, but instead “smiles” at Hephaistos, as the narrator

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<sup>144</sup> As Kullmann 1955: 170-187 convincingly argues, the “will of Zeus” (Διὸς βουλή) in the *Iliad*'s proem is the same as the “will of Zeus” in the *Cypria* to decimate the human race through mass death in the Trojan War (West Fragment 1). Zeus’ promise to aid Akhilleus serves this plan because it prolongs the war and causes increased human mortality. In fact, the poem’s course of events will lead (beyond the primary fabula), finally, to Akhilleus’ own mortality, which the *Iliad*'s narrator constantly keeps in view, as Slatkin 1991 has argued.

<sup>145</sup> The narrative progression and logic of book 1 appears to locate Akhilleus’ desires at the origin of the (present) divine conflict between Zeus and Hera, but the readings of Slatkin and Muellner would reverse this causality at a fundamental level. Such an understanding of the poem requires, I believe, a synoptic view of the *Iliad* and of its relation to the wider tradition of Greek mythology. This view is necessarily retrospective for the audience or reader, and differs from my strategy of following the diachronic and forward-moving development of the plot, as experienced by the first-time listener. Slatkin and Muellner bring to the fore a divine plot that should remain secondary to the human plot that is the poem’s primary interest. Lynn-George 1988: 39-40 makes the important point that *Iliad* 1 presents both the Διὸς βουλή and Akhilleus’ desires as sources of the poem’s plot, in a tension that manifests the indeterminacy of double determination. Murnaghan 1997 reads Akhilleus as a pawn in Zeus’ larger plan, and Akhilleus’ plot as engineered by Zeus, a fact which does not emerge until later in the *Iliad*'s narrative. Most recently, Heiden 2008: 26-34 has argued that Akhilleus’ desires and Zeus’ will are actually at odds with one another, that Akhilleus and Zeus are in a “polemical configuration,” and that Zeus ultimately prevails.

<sup>146</sup> Kirk 1985: 112 and Pulleyn 2000: 266. These “destructive deeds” of the divine conflict parallel, of course, the “destruction” (*loigos*) visited by Apollo on the Akhaians in the Khryses-Agamemnon conflict (1.67, 1.97, 1.456), and the “destruction” (*loigos*) predicted by Akhilleus for the army as a result of his withdrawal (1.341). Cf. Nagy 1979: 74-76 and Stanley 1993: 46.

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Kirk 1985: 112.

recounts twice (μείδησεν 595, μειδήσσα 596). Practically, this seems to indicate her receptiveness to Hephaistos' argument, and in general her resumption of an even temperament. She also accepts the cup that her son has offered to her (596), a symbol that she likewise accepts his advice. No longer will Hera impede the gods' tranquility; rather, she will even participate in their renewed feasting. The quarrel between Hera and Zeus is left aside for the present.

Yet at the same time, Hera's response contrasts with the earlier pattern of successful conflict-resolution. When Agamemnon accepts Kalkhas' solution for making good Khryses' loss and appeasing Apollo's anger, he makes a public declaration of how he will return Khryseis and offer recompense to the god. Later he actually sends the embassy to Khryse, thereby fulfilling his promise. Hera, on the other hand, says and does nothing. This can be explained at one level by the fact that the situation does not require an active response. As Muellner has noted, the first conflict is resolved by appeasing Apollo's wrath (*mēnis*), while the last quarrel ends when Zeus' *mēnis* is averted.<sup>148</sup> Muellner's point is that Zeus never actually gets angry, nor does he rain violence on Hera; he just threatens it, and Hera manages to avoid it by resuming passive obedience.

The narrator's doubled emphasis on Hera's smile, however, suggests that this variation is significant. Given the fact that Hera's grievance remains unresolved, it is tempting to imagine that her smile is not a simple expression of good will. Pulleyn calls Hera's smile "enigmatic" and opines that the smile indicates how Hera is "dissimulating her true feelings."<sup>149</sup> Building on Pulleyn's interpretation, I would argue that Hera's smile, along with the fact that she offers neither an apology nor a verbal concession, hints to the audience that her conflict with Zeus is *not* definitively resolved. With her smile, Hera gives way for the moment and ends her book 1 quarrel, but she is not beaten. Unlike Agamemnon in his reconciliation with Khryses-Apollo, she does not acknowledge that she was in the wrong, nor does she offer recompense.

In fact, Hera's decision to take a step back after Hephaistos' intervention is more like Akhilleus' choice not to kill Agamemnon with his sword after Athene's intervention.<sup>150</sup> Both Athene and Hephaistos are Olympian gods whose mediations have immediate effect. Yet the responsive restraint of Akhilleus and Hera does not mean that either aggrieved party is placated. Akhilleus continues to spar with Agamemnon verbally and promises future retribution. Nestor's attempted second mediation is ineffective. We have traced the ways that Hephaistos' intervention resembles Nestor's as well as Athene's. All of this points to the conclusion that Hephaistos effects only a temporary solution to the conflict between Hera and Zeus, and indicates to the audience that it will continue plotting out this divine conflict as the narrative moves beyond book 1.

Despite the ultimate ambiguity of Hera's smile, however, the final repetition that constitutes the end of book 1 shows that the third quarrel is resolved for the time being.

<sup>148</sup> Muellner 1996: 128-29.

<sup>149</sup> Pulleyn 2000: 272. Pulleyn offers as evidence for this interpretation the episode in 14.222-23, when Hera is also described as smiling (with the same formulas) while she deceives Aphrodite. Cf. Hades' deceitful smile to Persephone in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* 357 and Lateiner 1995: 42, 194-95 on the deceitfulness and bitterness of Odysseus' smiles.

<sup>150</sup> Lang 1983: 162.

The final scene of harmonious feasting and song among the gods clearly echoes the celebration scene at Khryse that marked the end of Apollo's wrath and of the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon.<sup>151</sup> The divine episode varies the earlier model to fit changed circumstances, yet retains many of its basic features. There is no animal sacrifice or sacrificial feast to begin the divine revel, because the gods do not eat mortal food, nor do they sacrifice to themselves; in addition, there is no angry god to appease with sacrifice. But both scenes include the ritualized pouring of wine, which in the divine instance becomes nectar (470-71; 597-98). In both cases, the participants celebrate the feast for the whole day until the setting of the sun (472, 475; 601-02), and the same formula describes the satiety of the men and the gods (οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδέετο δαιτὸς ἐΐσης 468 = 602). The Akhaian youths sing (ᾄδοντες) a paian to Apollo, who listens with pleasure (472-74), while on Mount Olympos, Apollo is also an important presence (603-04), playing the phorminx himself while the Muses do the singing (ᾄδον).<sup>152</sup> When the sun finally goes down, both mortals and gods take their rest (476; 606-611).

This distinct repetition not only confirms the temporary resolution of Zeus' and Hera's conflict, but also founds a recognizable narrative design for plotting a solution to the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon. It encourages the audience to continue to trace, in the case of Akhilleus' quarrel, the narrative pattern of initiation, development, and resolution of conflict that has been painstakingly established through the two other conflicts in book 1. It incites the audience's desire to pay close attention to the representation of Akhilleus' story as the narrative moves forward.

The concluding lines of book 1 help to crystallize the dynamics of desire shaping the poem's story thus far. These three lines describe Zeus and Hera going to bed together (609-11). They function to draw attention to the marital relationship of the two divinities, and suggest the sexuality of their eroticism, although they do not actually describe physical consummation. That is, this final image evokes the *eros* (sexual desire) immanent in Hera and Zeus' dynamic, a potentiality that Hera makes use of during her seduction of Zeus in book 14. If Hera and Zeus are structural analogues of Khryses and Agamemnon, as well as of Akhilleus and Agamemnon, as I have tried to demonstrate, this image points to the role of desire in all three relationships. In the earlier conflicts the sexual side of desire is displaced or directed toward the third points of the erotic triangles, the concubines Khryseis and Briseis. All the same, this vision of Hera and Zeus' erotic tie reminds the audience that desire pivotally animates the mortal story lines, as well as the divine. It sets the stage for the continued narrative of Akhilleus' desires, and for the introduction of other desires at the center of the Trojan War story.

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<sup>151</sup> Sheppard 1922: 23.

<sup>152</sup> Cf. the similar description of Apollo playing the kithara while the Muses sing on Mount Olympos in the Homeric *Hymn to Apollo* 186-206.

## CHAPTER 2

### Desire and the Female in the *Iliad*'s Superplot

This chapter identifies books 3-7 of the *Iliad* as a “superplot” that contextualizes Akhilleus’ main plot within the larger Trojan War tradition. During these books, Akhilleus disappears from the narrative and his desires are all but forgotten, as the poet introduces characters and events evoking the beginning and end of the war. I will argue that this “superplot” highlights for the audience the central role of desire in both the Trojan War story and the *Iliad* itself, while further explicating the poem’s mechanisms of desire and foreshadowing their destructive consequences.

In book 3, Helen, the *casus belli*, takes over Akhilleus’ generative role as producer of plot. First introduced as a disempowered object of desire contested by two men, in a familiar erotic triangle, Helen then emerges as a desiring subject in her own right, and her compelling presence and voice seduce the audience’s desire and identification. Her tapestry of the fighting indicates how she is a creator of the Trojan War and (partially) responsible for its continuing hostilities, in a parallel to Akhilleus. Near the end of book 3, as I will argue, she competes with Aphrodite for dominance and possession of a male sexual object, in a reconfigured erotic triangle. Helen’s agency and her adulterous desire, which shifts unstably back and forth between Paris and Menelaos, make her a transgressive, “queer” character. Paris is also “queer” in his disinterest in male homosocial aggression and focus on satisfying his *eros*, to the detriment of both Trojans and Akhaians. Together, they call into question the war’s ethics.

The middle of the superplot—books 4 and 5—introduces the poem’s battle narrative, and culminates in Diomedes’ *aristeia* and accompanying theomachy, representing a miniature prevision of the mortal and immortal fighting at the heart of the *Iliad*. I argue that these books help the audience to interpret the subsequent events of the main plot. Diomedes prefigures the heroism of Patroklos and Akhilleus, and Aphrodite’s and Ares’ participation in the battle symbolizes how sexual and aggressive desires, and their imbrication with one another, cause conflict.

The last part of this chapter concerns itself with the theme of war’s cost for women and children as it is introduced and developed in the superplot. I argue that the poet explores the war’s dreadful consequences for civilians especially through Hektor’s culminating encounter in book 6 with Andromakhe and Astyanax, who represent the paradigmatic Trojan wife and child. Andromakhe demands the audience’s identification, as she, motivated by her own desire for Hektor, powerfully vocalizes the anguished experience of women and children as chief victims of war. Andromakhe, an articulate analogue to the mute Khryseis and Briseis of book 1, challenges the war’s morality and problematizes the triangular eroticism that initiates the *Iliad*’s main plot. Yet Homer confirms the narrative inevitability of fighting, death, and slavery through the

reintroduction of Helen, Andromakhe's opposite and the source of conflict, who justifies her own transgressive desire as a subject of epic poetry.

### 1. From the Main Plot to the Superplot

The first book of the *Iliad* introduces Akhilleus as the poem's main hero and primary driver of plot. As I argued in Chapter 1, Akhilleus' unsatisfied desires for reclamation of his concubine Briseis and for homosocial prestige from Agamemnon and the Akhaian army cause him to withdraw from battle and plot the worsening of the Akhaians in his absence, in the hope that they will ultimately fulfill his desires. The poet arouses the implied audience's narrative desire, in identification with Akhilleus, for the satisfaction of the hero's desires. In addition, book 1 provides a narrative template—through two homologous micro-plots of desire and satisfaction—for this fulfillment. By the close of book 1, the audience is on the lookout for the familiar narrative events that will satisfy Akhilleus' desires and guarantee his return.

*Iliad* 2 begins with the next logical narrative step for the advancement of Akhilleus' plot. Zeus sets in motion the accomplishment of his promise to Thetis—his vow to make Agamemnon and the Akhaians feel the lack of Akhilleus and recognize their folly by granting the Trojans temporary success. Zeus sends a deceptive dream to Agamemnon prophesizing imminent Akhaian victory (2.1-40); it is meant to encourage the Akhaians to re-engage with the Trojans in battle, which will give Zeus the opportunity to award the Trojans fleeting martial preeminence. While Agamemnon almost fails to rally the troops with his misguided strategy of testing their bravery and resolve,<sup>1</sup> the Akhaians ultimately do prepare for a renewed assault on Troy. Book 2 ends with Zeus' plan on track as the narrator catalogues the Akhaians' battle array.

Besides moving the narrative one step closer to the satisfaction of both Akhilleus' and the audience's desires, book 2 also intensifies the audience's desire by thematizing Akhilleus' withdrawal. While Akhilleus is powerfully present in book 1, he is powerfully absent in book 2; that is, the narrative focuses on the absence of Akhilleus by repeatedly evoking him thematically or referencing him directly.<sup>2</sup> First, Thersites recapitulates and even amplifies Akhilleus' grievances against Agamemnon (2.225-242),<sup>3</sup> and in that respect appears as a parodic surrogate for Akhilleus.<sup>4</sup> He directly quotes Akhilleus twice, once in his description of Agamemnon's dishonoring seizure of Briseis, and once in a

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<sup>1</sup> Cf. Knox and Russo 1989.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Schein 1984: 101-102.

<sup>3</sup> Akhilleus discusses Agamemnon's greed in a general way, and focuses on the outrage of his abduction of Briseis. Thersites, however, vividly describes Agamemnon's huts as chock full of both bronze and women, and claims that even this bounty does not satisfy the leader; Agamemnon is always looking to take someone else's Trojan captive to ransom for gold or woman to enjoy sexually.

<sup>4</sup> Willcock 1978: 200. The superlative ugliness and deformity ascribed to Thersites suggest that he is a grotesque antitype of Akhilleus, who is best and most beautiful. Cf. Kirk 1985: 139-141 and Lowenstam 1993: 78-80.

threat toward Agamemnon.<sup>5</sup> Later, Agamemnon himself references his quarrel with Akhilleus in regretful tones, speculating on the damage to the Trojans should they be reconciled (2.375-80). But Akhilleus is conspicuously *not* one of the elders that Agamemnon invites to his tent to share in a sacrifice to Zeus (2.404-408).

In the catalogues of the second part of book 2, the lack of Akhilleus is also keenly expressed.<sup>6</sup> In the first Catalogue of Ships, the narrator prepares the implied audience for a reminder of Akhilleus with his description of Nireus as “the most beautiful of all the Danaans who came to Troy after the blameless son of Peleus” (2.673-74). Then the narrator introduces the fifty ships of men that are under the command of Akhilleus, whose name is emphasized by its line-end position (ἦν ἀρχὸς Ἀχιλλεύς 2.685), in a variant of one of the usual formulae for describing a contingent’s ships.<sup>7</sup> The narrator remarks that Akhilleus’ men are *not* arrayed for battle, and explains why: Akhilleus is “angry” (χωόμενος) and “grieving” (ἀχέων) over Briseis (2.686-94). As Kirk notes, this passage brings to the front of the audience’s consciousness the book 1 quarrel and Akhilleus’ withdrawal, i.e. the *Iliad*’s main plot.<sup>8</sup>

In the second catalogue of the best leaders and horses, the narrator returns once more to the withdrawal of Akhilleus (2.769-779). He describes Akhilleus as wrathful twice (μήνιεν 769 and ἀπομηνίσας 772), again evoking Akhilleus’ thematic *mēnis* toward Agamemnon from book 1. The narrator then elaborates on the idleness of the Myrmidons as they practice sport rather than prepare for battle, and describes them “longing for their war-loving leader” (ἀρχὸν ἀρνήφιλον ποθέοντες 778). Kirk focuses on the narratorial “roughness” of portraying the Myrmidons pining for a leader who is among them,<sup>9</sup> but I think this characterization is appropriate and powerful. It not only emphasizes Akhilleus’ complete withdrawal, even from the society of his comrades-in-arms,<sup>10</sup> but it also models the response of sympathetic bodies toward Akhilleus’ absence. The implied audience is meant to identify with Akhilleus when he appears as desiring subject, but when he disappears from the scene of action, the audience is encouraged to relate to Akhilleus’ bereft companions. The poet fosters this identification by remarking on the “desire” (*pothē*) first, of the Myrmidons, and then, of the Akhaian army as a whole.<sup>11</sup> In book 2 and beyond, the poet invites the external audience, like the internal

<sup>5</sup> *Il.* 2.240 [Thersites] = 1.507 [Thetis to Zeus] = 1.356 [Akhilleus to Thetis]; *Il.* 2.242 [Thersites] = 1.232 [Akhilleus to Agamemnon]

<sup>6</sup> Cf. Stanley 1993: 20-24 for discussion of the theme of the absent leader in the Catalogues as well as their structure as a whole.

<sup>7</sup> Kirk 1985: 229.

<sup>8</sup> Kirk 1985: 229. Cf. Kirk 1985: 230 on how 2.690 (πολλὰ μογήσας) echoes Akhilleus’ own description of his battle-toil to Agamemnon in 1.162 (ὄϊ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα).

<sup>9</sup> Kirk 1985: 242.

<sup>10</sup> The Myrmidons’ *pothē* echoes the desire of Protesilaus’ and Philoktetes’ men respectively for their absent leaders (πόθειόν γε μὲν ἀρχόν 2.703 = 2.726). It suggests an equivalence between Akhilleus’ disengagement from battle and the other two mens’ more definitive absences due to death (Protesilaus) or marooning (Philoktetes).

<sup>11</sup> Cf. *Il.* 1.240 and 14.368 for the Akhaians’ *pothē* for Akhilleus.



characters, to desire the return of Akhilleus, which must also coincide with the satisfaction of Akhilleus' own desires.

The initial mention of Akhilleus in the Catalogue of Ships ends with a narratorial prediction that he will soon rise up (τάχα δ' ἀνοστήσεσθαι ἔμελλεν 2.694).<sup>12</sup> This prolepsis creates for the audience the expectation that Akhilleus' plot will continue to progress and that his desires will be met imminently. Yet the *Iliad's* immediately succeeding books defy these audience expectations. The poet almost completely ignores Akhilleus himself, as well as the impact of his withdrawal, in books 3-7.<sup>13</sup> During these five books, Zeus does not act upon his intention to aid the Trojans, in a suspension of the main plot.<sup>14</sup> When battle is finally joined, the Akhaians actually take the upper hand with Diomedes as their champion; the Akhaians do not need Akhilleus and do not seem to feel his absence. Finally, in the beginning of book 8, Zeus reasserts his will and begins to fulfill his promise to Thetis by tipping the scales in favor of the Trojans (8.69-74). Athene's recognition that this is designed to bring Akhilleus honor (8.370-72), and Zeus' subsequent prophecy of Hektor's temporary success and Akhilleus' return (8.473-76), reminds the audience of Akhilleus and his desires, as I discuss in the beginning of Chapter 3. It sets the stage—this time accurately—for Akhilleus' narrative reappearance in book 9 and the resumption of the *Iliad's* main plot.<sup>15</sup>

If books 3-7 are not part of the main plot, what place do they have in the *Iliad's* narrative, what purpose do they serve? Without a doubt they amplify the audience's desire, creating suspense as they delay the fulfillment of Akhilleus' (and Zeus') plot.<sup>16</sup> But books 3-7 are more important than a simple postponement. Cedric Whitman has convincingly argued that these books contextualize Akhilleus' wrath within the larger story of the Trojan War.<sup>17</sup> They do so, for the most part, by retelling, in a carefully crafted narrative, events—as if they were part of the primary fabula—that properly belong to earlier phases of the war. This includes especially accounts of the cause and beginning of the war, as well as of early Akhaian successes. But book 6 also gestures toward the costs of the war, and especially of Akhilleus' wrath, with regard to the inhabitants of Troy. As Whitman writes, “Homer has created a montage of a motivating crime under the guise of

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<sup>12</sup> As Kirk 1985: 233 notes, the poet employs the same formulaic diction with the prediction that the Akhaians will soon remember Philoktetes (τάχα δὲ μνήσεσθαι ἔμελλον 2.724). This suggests once again the correspondence of Akhilleus and Philoktetes, and invites the audience to anticipate a functional similarity between Philoktetes' famous reentry into the Trojan War (which initiates its final stage) and Akhilleus' reentry into battle (which will indeed cause, with the death of Hektor, a turning point in the war).

<sup>13</sup> Akhilleus is mentioned only four times (5.788, 6.414, 6.423, 7.228). Cf. Schein 1984: 102-104 for discussion of these references.

<sup>14</sup> This was first recognized by Müller 1836. Cf. Whitman 1958: 264-65 and West's recent overview of the analytic scholarship on the *Iliad's* narrative form (2011: 51-68).

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Kirk 1990: 295, 327.

<sup>16</sup> Duckworth 1933: 66-67; cf. Morrison 1992: 35-43, 62.

<sup>17</sup> Whitman 1958: 264-70. See also Owen 1946: 27-31; Reckford 1964: 5-13; Mueller 1984: 66.

continuous narrative, and opposed to it a foreshadowing of its ultimate results.”<sup>18</sup> Robert Rabel calls this part of the *Iliad* (with the addition of books 2 and 8) the “subplot.”<sup>19</sup>

I prefer to designate books 3-7 the “superplot” because they treat events that are really—as Whitman has explained—external to the main plot, rather than internal and subordinate.<sup>20</sup> That is, the superplot is *not* an extended narrative digression that distracts from the events of the main plot. Instead, books 3-4 of the superplot are causally fundamental to the main plot, while book 6 explores the fate of Troy long after the end of the *Iliad*’s story. The superplot’s beginning is the basis of the main plot, its *raison d’être*; without the story reiterated in this part of the superplot (i.e. the conflict between Paris and Menelaos that led to the Trojan War), the main plot could not have existed. The superplot’s ending, in turn, points to the ultimate consequences of the *Iliad*’s main plot. This means that the superplot is indispensable for understanding the main plot’s dynamics of desire, as well as for evaluating its ethical and moral character.

## 2. Helen as Object of Desire

While Akhilleus fades out of sight at the end of book 2, Helen begins to come into view, and she is first introduced as an object of desire, contested by two men who are initially represented metonymically by two armies. It is Hera who brings Helen’s name into the narrative in this context, when she complains to Athene about the possibility that the Akhaian army might forsake the war and return home. Hera grumbles that the Akhaians “might leave behind as a boast for Priam and the Trojans/ Argive Helen, for whose sake many of the Akhaians/ have perished in Troy” (καὶ δὲ κεν εὐχλωλὴν Πριάμῳ καὶ Τρωσὶ λίποιεν/ Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην, ἧς εἵνεκα πολλοὶ Ἀχαιῶν/ ἐν Τροίῃ ἀπόλοντο 2.160-61). The poet emphasizes the momentous introduction of Helen by enjambling her name in the line-opening position. Hera neatly situates Helen in an ambiguous and disputed place between both sides by expressing a worry that Helen might remain in the possession of “Priam and the Trojans,” while at the same time identifying Helen as “Argive” and the cause of the “Akhaian” casualties at Troy.<sup>21</sup> Grammatically, Helen is doubly an object: first a direct object of the verb λίποιεν, and then a prepositional object of εἵνεκα. As the person for whom the Akhaians are fighting and dying, Helen has constitute their collective desire to make war against the Trojans and also served as its putative goal. But what Hera fears is that the Akhaians might abandon (λίποιεν) their desire along with its object.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid. 268.

<sup>19</sup> Rabel 1997. He treats the “subplot” in 72-112.

<sup>20</sup> This is why these books represent the threat that Rabel 1997: 75-79 notes of short-circuiting the *Iliad*’s entire narrative with premature endings to the Trojan War (e.g. the duel between Paris and Menelaos). Cf. Morrison 1992: 37-43, 51-54.

<sup>21</sup> Homer accomplishes this complex positioning of Helen while also developing Hera’s consistently pro-Akhaian loyalty. Hera would of course think of Helen as “Argive” rather than characterizing her in some other way or leaving her without an epithet, and she would focus on Akhaian losses rather than acknowledging the general suffering of both parties, as the narrator does in the *Iliad*’s proem (1.2-5).

Nestor's hortatory speech to the Akhaians is designed to reaffirm the army's aggressive desire, partly by emphasizing Helen's situation as one of its objects. He repeatedly enjoins the Akhaians not to give up yet, and the rhetorical and emotional climax of his speech returns to Helen. He proclaims,

Therefore let no one make haste to sail home,  
before he sleeps beside some Trojan's wife,  
and exacts retribution for Helen's struggles and groans.

τῶ μή τις πρὶν ἐπειγέσθω οἰκόνδε νέεσθαι  
πρὶν τινα πὰρ Τρώων ἀλόχῳ κατακοιμηθῆναι,  
τείσασθαι δ' Ἑλένης ὀρμήματά τε στοναχάς τε (2.354-56).

The danger to which Nestor responds, and to which Odysseus alludes in his preceding speech (2.289-97), is that the Akhaians will redirect their desires away from Helen and the Trojans and toward the wives and children that they have left behind in Greece.<sup>22</sup> To counter this possibility, Nestor first offers as new objects of desire the Trojans' wives, who are positioned as sexual substitutes for the Akhaians' own wives. Then he reminds the army of its original reason for fighting and prime object of desire, Helen.<sup>23</sup> She embodies at once the categories of both Akhaian and Trojan wife, and thus metaphorically elides for the army the distinction between the two; the figure of Helen suggests that there is no contradiction between desiring one's own wife and continuing to fight against the Trojans, although this is actually true only for Menelaos.<sup>24</sup> In any case, Nestor's words refocus the army's consciousness on Helen, and align Menelaos' desire to recapture her with the soldiers' own desires for emotional and sexual gratification. They also align desire for sexual gratification with desire for violent revenge.

Nestor's formulation also evokes an equivalence between the future rape of a captive Trojan woman and Helen's own sexual objectification. In fact, he increases the association by imagining in colorful terms "Helen's struggles and groans"<sup>25</sup> and asserting

<sup>22</sup>Agamemnon first mentions the expectant Akhaian wives and children in his testing speech (2.136-37). Cf. Suzuki 1989: 34.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Collins 1988: 41.

<sup>24</sup> Later, during the Catalogue of Ships, the narrator recounts that Menelaos "most especially desired in his heart/ to exact retribution for Helen's struggles and groans" (μάλιστα δὲ ἔετο θυμῷ/ τείσασθαι Ἑλένης ὀρμήματά τε στοναχάς τε 2.589-90). The narrator repeats exactly Nestor's formulaic words regarding Helen and connects them with Menelaos particularly, thus indicating his special stake in the conflict.

<sup>25</sup> Kirk 1980: 153 prefers to read Ἑλένης as an objective, rather than a subjective genitive, which would render the "struggles and groans" suffered by others on Helen's account, rather than by Helen herself. This reading brings the *Iliad's* presentation of Helen into concordance with the *Odyssey's*, which unambiguously depicts a Helen who ran off with Paris willingly. I reject Kirk's attempt at narrative reconciliation for three reasons: first, word order suggests, as the line plays out aurally in real time, an understanding of the genitive as subjective; second, Kirk's reading disrupts the semantic parallelism of lines 355 and 356, which seems to me to be a significant and powerful effect; third, as I will explore in what follows, I believe that Homer deliberately plays with the questions of Helen's agency and guilt. For the *Iliad's* ambivalence concerning Helen's guilt, cf. Schönberger 1960: 198-99; Kakridis 1971: 25-31; Collins 1988: 42-47; Austin 1994: 31-42; Blondell 2010 and 2013: 45, 59-67.

the necessity to “exact retribution” on her account. That is, Nestor conjures an eye-for-an-eye scenario, rape for rape.<sup>26</sup> This choice of diction implies that Helen was carried off by Paris against her will. Nestor paints a picture of Helen as an object of male desire, whose own desires are immaterial (although not non-existent, as her sufferings attest). While his description of her abduction implies a Trojan as the subject of desire, his encouragement of Akhaian vengeance asserts the army’s own oppositional subjectivity; two contending masculine bodies occupy subject positions vis-à-vis Helen as object. This structure replicates and calls to mind the gendered triangular desire of the mortal conflicts in book 1, where two men compete over a woman (Khryseis and Agamemnon over Khryseis, and Akhilleus and Agamemnon over Briseis). Khryseis and Briseis are in fact foreign women whom the Akhaians have captured in battle; they are analogous to the Trojan women that Nestor dangles in front of the army. Nestor’s wording suggests that Helen should be positioned similarly to Khryseis and Briseis: all are objects of men’s desire and vehicles by which men negotiate their status in relation to one another.<sup>27</sup> The extent to which these women might display subjectivity themselves is barely acknowledged and of no consequence.<sup>28</sup>

In the book 1 episodes, male desire for the female goes along with aggressive desire directed toward other men, and this is exactly what Nestor hopes to inspire with his mention of Helen and the Trojan wives.<sup>29</sup> His rhetorical goal is to persuade the army that they still want to fight the enemy, and his strategy is extremely effective. Agamemnon praises his words and orders the army to equip itself for battle, and the Akhaians give a great shout of approbation and commence preparation (2.369-401). The Trojan War is about to start again. Book 2 is a kind of bridge between the main plot and the superplot, between the microcosm of Akhilleus’ story and the macrocosm of the Trojan War story. Even as the primary fabula moves forward, in the narrative’s doubled vision time leaps backwards to the lead-up to the war, culminating in the mustering of the Akhaians (the Catalogue of Ships).

Book 3 evokes a time even further in the past in order to explore the causality behind the Trojan War and to crystallize the erotic dynamic at its heart. The duel between Paris and Menelaos over Helen, which ends with Paris’ sexual possession of Helen, recapitulates, in distorted form and in the narrative’s present time, Paris’ original abduction of Helen from Menelaos’ palace in Sparta. But it also specifies the points of the erotic triangle introduced into the narrative in book 2. As discussed above, book 2 presents the Trojan and Akhaian armies vying for sexual access to wives (symbolized especially by Helen as object). Book 3 clarifies this gendered erotic dynamic by replacing each of these corporate bodies, which occupy points of the triangle, with a single

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<sup>26</sup> Cf. Kirk 1980: 153.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Collins 1988: 41-46; Suzuki 1989: 22-27; Dué 2002: 37-44; Wilson 2002: 44-51; Felson and Slatkin 2004: 93-95; Lyons 2012: 56.

<sup>28</sup> The only hints we get of mortal women’s subjectivity in book 1 is when the heralds take an “unwilling” Briseis from Akhilleus’ tent (1.348), and when Khryseis is described as Khryseis’ “dear father” (1.441), presumably in an expression of Khryseis’ focalization.

<sup>29</sup> Beye 1974: 90 observes that the ultimate expression of conquest in the *Iliad* is a victor’s sexual use of a captive woman.

representative: Paris, Menelaos, and Helen. The war between two armies becomes a fight between two enemy men, as Paris steps out in front of the Trojan army and Menelaos in turn comes forward out of the Akhaian crowd to answer his challenge (3.16-29).<sup>30</sup> The narrator vividly emphasizes their initial face-to-face encounter in its individuality and exclusivity, by juxtaposing their names opposite one another on either side of the main caesura (ὡς ἐχάρη Μενέλαος | Ἀλέξανδρον θεοειδέα/ ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδῶν 3.27-28).<sup>31</sup>

It is Paris who, after an initial retreat, offers the terms of a formal duel between himself and Menelaos:

Cast together me and war-loving Menelaos in the middle  
to fight for Helen and all the possessions;  
whoever conquers and proves the stronger,  
let him take all the possessions and lead the woman home.  
And may you others, having made alliance with trustworthy oaths,  
dwell in fertile Troy, but let them return  
to horse-rearing Argos and Akhaia of the beautiful women.

αὐτὰρ ἔμ' ἐν μέσσω καὶ ἀρηΐφιλον Μενέλαον  
συμβάλετ' ἀμφ' Ἑλένη καὶ κτήμασι πᾶσι μάχεσθαι·  
ὀππότερος δέ κε νικήσῃ κρείσσων τε γένηται,  
κτῆμαθ' ἑλών εὖ πάντα γυναῖκά τε οἴκαδ' ἀγέσθω·  
οἳ δ' ἄλλοι φιλότητα καὶ ὄρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες  
ναίοιτε Τροίην ἐριβώλακα, τοὶ δὲ νεέσθων  
Ἄργος ἐς ἱππόβοτον καὶ Ἀχαιΐδα καλλιγύναικα (3.69-75).

Paris' proposal explicitly makes Helen a stake of the duel. But she is only one of the objects for which the two men fight. Paris twice groups Helen in a single line with “all the possessions” (3.70 and 3.72), i.e. the material goods that Paris stole from Sparta when he and Helen came to Troy. This syntax has the effect of collapsing the distinction between Helen—a person—and plundered wealth, making Helen into a chattel. It denies not only her agency, but even her very subjectivity. Now, instead of being a raped woman (as Nestor posits), Helen is just another of Menelaos' possessions with which Paris has absconded.<sup>32</sup> Paris imagines an erotic triangle in which Helen is an object and the two men are subject-agents.

Menelaos accepts the terms of the duel—provided that they are sealed with sacrifice and witnessed by Priam—with words that affirm Paris' masculinist perspective. He remarks to the Akhaians and Trojans, “you have suffered many evils/ on account of my strife and Alexandros' instigation” (κακὰ πολλὰ πέπασθε/ εἴνεκ' ἐμῆς ἔριδος καὶ

<sup>30</sup> Cf. Muellner 1990: 77 and Louden 2006: 54, 56-57.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Kirk 1985: 269. Similar juxtapositions of their names on either side of caesurae occur in 3.37 and 3.403.

<sup>32</sup> For the construction of Helen as a stolen object, see Schönberger 1960: 198-99; Kakridis 1971: 25-30; Lynn-George 1988: 29; Roisman 2006; Lyons 2012: 55; Blondell 2013: 59-63.

Ἀλεξάνδρου ἕνεκ' ἀρχῆς 3.99-100).<sup>33</sup> Here Menelaos positions the conflict between himself and Paris as the basis for the war, completely omitting any mention of Helen.<sup>34</sup> The two men will fight it out between them and thereby resolve the problem.

The duel scenario makes Helen *casus belli* only in the most passive way imaginable, as the fought-over object. Male desires to possess the female object and best the male rival are presented as the impetus for conflict—and thus for the *Iliad's* narrative—in a repetition of the dynamics of desire in book 1. Therefore, this book 3 narrative recapitulation, which in fact represents an aetiology for the *Iliad's* story, confirms a normative erotic geometry and system of causality centered around desiring male subjects. In its familiarity, this narrative pattern is legible to the poem's implied audience. As Akhilleus disappears from view, this recognizable structure encourages the audience to identify with the wronged Menelaos in place of Akhilleus, and to plot out the satisfaction of Menelaos' desire. He desires, like Akhilleus, both to regain his stolen sexual partner and to exact retribution against the offender. As the greater and temporally prior conflict of Menelaos and Paris replaces the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon in the audience's mind, the poet induces a temporary amnesia regarding Zeus' promise to Thetis, a promise which requires the two armies to engage in battle. The narrative proposition that the duel could actually conclude the Trojan War—a moment of “misdirection”—incites the audience's desire to continue engaging with the narrative, in a dynamic that Morrison has termed “epic suspense.”<sup>35</sup> Even though the implied audience knows that the war does not and cannot end in this way, it is intrigued regarding the future course of the narrative. As Morrison writes, “the duel's outcome remains a mystery”<sup>36</sup> until the last part of book 3.

### 3. Helen as Subject of Desire

At this juncture, when the discursive Helen has been reduced to a mere trophy, voiceless, impersonal, and lacking autonomy or human feelings, Homer introduces the audience to a ‘real’ Helen whose increasingly powerful subjectivity confounds its expectations. The divine messenger Iris leads the audience swiftly away from the

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<sup>33</sup> Zenodotus records the alternative reading of ἄτης (“ruinous blindness”) for ἀρχῆς (“instigation”). In both readings, Menelaos points to Paris' culpability. *Atē* characterizes Paris' action as socially, morally, or religiously wrong.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Kirk 1985: 277 and Taplin 1992: 98-99.

<sup>35</sup> Morrison 1992: 51-52.

<sup>36</sup> Morrison 1992: 59. See also Morrison 1992: 41-43, 51-63; Rabel 1997: 75-79. As Morrison notes, the implied audience is familiar with the Trojan War myth, and must know that the war ends with the sack of Troy. An astute listener might also realize that the book 1 conflict-resolution model (Agamemnon and Khryses, Zeus and Hera) does not even offer one-on-one combat as a narrative possibility, much less as a solution to conflict. Such a listener would thus be suspicious about the efficacy of this tactic for ending the war.

battlefield and into Troy.<sup>37</sup> Disguised as one of Priam's daughters, she finds Helen in the hall of her palace (3.121-125). This spatial shift of the narrative from outside to inside the city, from the opposing armies to Helen in her domestic sphere, metaphorically represents the movement from main plot to the inner core of the superplot.<sup>38</sup> Helen's presence in Troy is the problematic heart of the Trojan War story, i.e. the *Iliad's* larger context.

As the narrative gaze focuses in on Helen, the narrator describes her weaving a large, purple textile. This is the first time in the poem that a mortal woman actually *does* something in narrative time, functioning as an agent; a woman is now something more than a mere object. But the account of what she is weaving is even more significant:

and she was sprinkling in many trials  
of horse-taming Trojans and bronze-cuirassed Akhaians,  
which for her sake they were suffering by the hands of Ares.

πολέας δ' ἐνέπασσεν ἀέθλους  
Τρώων θ' ἵπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,  
οὓς ἔθεν εἴνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων (3.126-28).

Helen is creating a picture of the ongoing Trojan War, the *Iliad's* story. The imperfect verb ἔπασχον indicates that her depiction is of current events.<sup>39</sup> The statement that the armies are suffering “for her sake” repeats in almost the same words Hera's earlier assertion that the Akhaians were perishing for Helen's sake (ἦς εἴνεκα 2.160). A few lines later, Iris tells Helen to come to the walls in order to see “the marvelous deeds/ of horse-taming Trojans and bronze-cuirassed Akhaians” (3.130-31); line 131 is an exact repetition of line 127, which suggests that the impending duel will be in fact the subject of Helen's design.<sup>40</sup> Thus the narrator's description of the woven scene both echoes and anticipates Homer's portrayal of events and their causality in the *Iliad*, thereby connecting Helen's weaving—like Akhilleus' speech—to the poet's own creative production.<sup>41</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Kennedy 1986: 7 calls Iris “the agent of the bard” because her appearance to Helen is unmotivated by anything internal to the narrative. Cf. Purves 2006: 193-95 on the “almost instantaneous” movement of the gods, which is compared in an Iliadic simile (15.80-83) to the movement of the human mind.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Purves 2010: 14-62 for a spatial conception of the *Iliad's* plot.

<sup>39</sup> Kennedy 1986: 5.

<sup>40</sup> Cf. Kirk 1985: 281.

<sup>41</sup> Clader 1976: 6-9; Kennedy 1986: 5; Lynn-George 1988: 29; Taplin 1992: 97-98; Austin 1994: 28-41; Blondell 2013: 68. Akhilleus' speech has predictive, generative power for future events, while Helen's weaving seems to show the present conflict as timeless and iterative. As Kennedy 1986: 12-13 notes, Helen's visionary capacity is limited. The difference between these two metapoetic figures, I believe, corresponds to how Akhilleus produces the linear, forward-moving main plot, while Helen is the cause of the static superplot that backgrounds the main plot. The Trojan War is *not* decided within the bounds of the *Iliad's* narrative; the superplot is an incessant back-and-forth between Trojans and Akhaians (like the putative back-and-forth of Helen's shuttle) with no final resolution. As Bergren 2008 has argued, Helen's web represents this temporal suspension.

Yet, as scholars have noted, Helen neither speaks nor sings epic poetry here, which mitigates her identification with the bard.<sup>42</sup> Unlike Akhilleus, she herself does not verbally repeat or predict the narrator's account. She first appears as an active subject, but in the third person, voiceless, silently weaving,<sup>43</sup> and her visual representation of the war seems to confirm her earlier positioning as object of male desires. Helen's physical entrance into the poem is thus ambivalent: she is somewhere between subject and object, and her own interiority remains opaque, but at the same time her indirect association with the *Iliad*'s poet marks her growing narrative importance.

Iris indicates Helen's positional liminality by referring to her in the second, rather than third person. She tells Helen,

Alexandros and war-loving Menelaos  
will fight with great spears over you;  
Whoever is victorious, you shall be called his wife.

αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος  
μακρῆς ἐγχείησι μαχήσονται περὶ σεῖο·  
τῷ δέ κε νικήσαντι φίλην κεκλήσῃ ἄκοιτις.

Here Helen is the narratee of an internal narrator. She is once again described as object of male aggressive desires, but she is clearly a person ("you"), not a thing. In Iris' speech, Helen is the subject of a passive verb ("you shall be called"), of which the predicate is "wife." Iris restores Helen's humanity and situates her in an established female social role, but does not acknowledge her agency or her independent desires.<sup>44</sup>

Finally, after Iris' visit, Helen emerges into the narrative as a full-blown desiring subject. The narrator says that once Iris has conveyed her message to Helen, "the goddess cast into her heart sweet desire for her former husband and city and parents" (θεὰ γλυκὺν ἴμερον ἔμβαλε θυμῷ / ἀνδρός τε προτέρου καὶ ἄστεος ἠδὲ τοκῆων 3.139-140). For the first time, the audience is allowed to look into Helen's mind and to discover her desire for her family and previous home in Sparta. The fact that Iris ostensibly instigates this desire does not, I think, compromise the independence of Helen's subjectivity. I read this as a classic case of double determination, where a character's inner experience is expressed conventionally as a function of divine intervention.<sup>45</sup> But we can also rationalize the narrator's account in another way: Iris' description of the forthcoming duel (during which she mentions Menelaos by name) and its consequences for Helen reminds Helen of her past life and initiates her longing. In reaction to Iris' words and her own desire, Helen

<sup>42</sup> Kennedy 1986 *passim* and Roisman 2006: 11. Cf. Blondell 2010: 20.

<sup>43</sup> In this capacity, she recalls the Fates, who spin out what will happen, but do not speak it.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Blondell 2013: 62.

<sup>45</sup> For explanation of double determination, see Dodds 1951, ch. 1 and Lesky 1961. For discussion of Helen and double determination, see Edwards 1987: 318 and Taplin 1992: 99-101.



leaves her chamber and makes her way to the Skaian Gates while shedding a tear,<sup>46</sup> veiled and accompanied by two serving-women (3.141-145).

There Priam greets Helen warmly and acknowledges her as a daughter-in-law (“dear child” 3.162), but, like men earlier in the narrative, denies Helen’s guilt and therefore her agency.<sup>47</sup> He says, “you are not responsible, as far as I am concerned, but I think the gods are responsible,/ who roused up against me the Akhaians’ very tearful war” (οὐ τί μοι αἰτίη ἔσσι, θεοί νύ μοι αἴτιοί εἰσιν,/ οἳ μοι ἐφώρμησαν πόλεμον πολύδακρυν Ἀχαιῶν 3.164-165). While Nestor constructs Helen as a raped woman, and Paris suggests that she is a prize possession or object of contestation, Priam’s innovation is to blame the gods, which deflects responsibility away from both Helen and his son Paris.<sup>48</sup>

Priam invites Helen to observe the Akhaian army while he asks and she answers questions about the identities of the Akhaian leaders, in the scene known by scholars as the Teichoskopia (“Viewing from the Wall” 3.161-244). Critics have struggled to explain the Teichoskopia’s logic in response to allegations that it is both anachronistic (why would Priam still be ignorant of the Akhaian heroes in the ninth year of the war?) and superfluous (it repeats unnecessarily the catalogues of book 2).<sup>49</sup> I agree with those who see further introduction of Helen to the poem’s audience as the Teichoskopia’s key function.<sup>50</sup> In what follows I will discuss how the Teichoskopia allows Helen to assert her agency and enunciate her desires through her own, poetic, voice.

When Helen finally speaks—the first mortal woman in the poem to do so—she proclaims that she came to Troy willingly. She asserts, “I followed your son here” (δεῦρο/ υἱεῖ σῶ ἐπόμην 173-4), at last articulating her agency confidently in the first person.<sup>51</sup> Helen expresses regret for her actions, saying that she wishes she had died before coming to Troy (3.173). She even engages in self-blame, calling herself “dog-faced” (κυνώπιδος 3.180) and worrying that her brothers are absent from the battlefield because “they fear the many disgraces and reproaches that are mine” (αἴσχεα δειδιότες καὶ ὀνειδέα πόλλ’ ἅ μοι ἔστιν 3.242).<sup>52</sup> In direct contrast to Priam’s assertion of her

<sup>46</sup> The detail that Helen cries suggests that she experiences desire as emotionally painful as well as “sweet.” Homer here calls to mind the tears and *akhos* of the desiring Akhilleus in book 1 and anticipates Sappho’s famous characterization of *eros* as “sweet-bitter” (γλυκύπικρον fr. 130).

<sup>47</sup> For discussion of why male characters prefer not to blame Helen, see Collins 1988: 57 and especially Blondell 2010: 4-8.

<sup>48</sup> Blondell 2010: 6.

<sup>49</sup> For the idea that the display of the female prize to contestants in a bride-contest is the mythic prototype of the Teichoskopia, see Kakridis 1971: 33-37; Clader 1976: 9-10; Austin 1994: 30-47. Jamison 1994 argues that the Teichoskopia reflects the ceremonial steps of a ritual counterabduction in the Indo-European poetic tradition, as evidenced in book 3 of the Indic epic the *Mahabharata*.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Schönberger 1960: 197-99; Parry 1966: 198-201; Lendle 1968: 68-69; Kakridis 1971: 32, 35-36; Postlethwaite 1985: 6.

<sup>51</sup> The fact that ἐπόμην happens to be a middle verb does not, I think, affect Helen’s self presentation as an agent. See Blondell 2010: 14-15 for Helen’s use of active verbs to describe her elopement. Cf. Blondell 2013: 62 on Helen’s assertion of subjectivity in this scene.

<sup>52</sup> On Helen’s self-blame, see Graver 1995: 51-59; Ebbott 1999; Roisman 2006:11-14; Blondell 2010: 9-16.

innocence, Helen affirms her guilt publicly, in a radical change of narrative perspective regarding the event that started the war.

Helen also insists upon her painful desire for the life she left behind. By necessity her speeches in the Teichoskopia all focus on the Akhaians that she knew (Agamemnon, Odysseus, Aias, and Idomeneus). Beyond this, however, Priam's admonition for Helen to sit beside him in order to view her "former husband and in-laws and intimates" (πρότερόν τε πόσιν πηούς τε φίλους τε 3.162-63) suggests a narrative interest in Helen's desiring subjectivity, recalling and thematizing the desire that Iris inspires in Helen for her Spartan past. Indeed, Helen dwells nostalgically on her family members, friends, and life in Sparta. She describes how she "abandoned bed-chamber and kin/ and late-born child and lovely age-group" (θάλαμον γνωτούς τε λιποῦσα/ παῖδά τε τηλυγέτην καὶ ὄμηλικίην ἐρατεινὴν 3.174-75). Later she uses the same adjective she applied to her age-group ("lovely") to describe Lakedaimon itself (ἐρατεινῆς 3.239). She calls Agamemnon "my brother-in-law" (δαῖρ αὖτ' ἐμός 3.180). She spontaneously identifies Idomeneus and launches into a brief, unsolicited anecdote about how "war-loving Menelaos" hosted him "in our house" (οἴκῳ ἐν ἡμετέρῳ 3.232-33).<sup>53</sup> Finally, Helen wonders where her two brothers, Kastor and Polydeukes, are (3.236-242). After describing her unfulfilled death wish and her abandonment of Sparta, Helen proclaims, "I melt in my weeping for this too" (τὸ καὶ κλαίουσα τέτηκα 3.176). She seems to connect her weeping to her desire, to the fact that she is still alive to experience this separation from her original home.<sup>54</sup>

Although the Akhaian leaders have already been introduced in earlier books, Helen's identifications in the Teichoskopia are not entirely redundant. Helen's verbal echo of the narrator's book 2 catalogues confirms her narrative identification with the *Iliad's* poet and his creative process, an identification which her pictorial representation of the war had already suggested.<sup>55</sup> The Teichoskopia illustrates how Helen, like Akhilleus, can generate narrative. And Helen, as we have seen, does not only repeat; she tells a slightly new and different story that refocuses the narrative around her actions, feelings, and desires. She describes the Akhaian leaders for the most part in their relation to herself, just as she asserts her agency in her journey to Troy.

This new story disrupts the narrative logic of the main plot. It provides for the audience a more expansive vision of female roles and experience in the poem; women are not just desired objects through whom men, as sole agents, negotiate their statuses among themselves. While Helen at first seems like the archetype for this conception of women, her gradual shift in narrative representation, from third, to second, and finally to first person forces a progressive re-evaluation of this androcentric model. Helen becomes the active, rather than passive cause of the war. Priam seems to acknowledge this changed

<sup>53</sup> Cf. Parry 1966: 199.

<sup>54</sup> Martin 2003: 124-25 identifies in Helen's speech here a traditional discourse of lament. He further argues that she is consistently associated with lament in Greek epic, and that lament, "this antiphonal, foundational speech-act, can be represented as the original, authorizing act which lies behind *all* poetry of commemoration" (128). If we accept this, Helen, as a representative practitioner of the genre, is in yet another way associated with the production of heroic epic, with the *Iliad's* poet or narrator.

<sup>55</sup> Suzuki 1989: 40.

causality when, in response to Helen's first speech, he recalls the Amazons against whom he fought in his youth (3.184-190). Amazons subvert the normative expectations for female behavior that have been presented up to this point in the poem. Instead of being fought over, they fight; in fact they fight against men, and Priam explicitly calls them "antagonists of men" (ἀντιάνειραι 3.189).<sup>56</sup> Helen is like the Amazons in her assertive subjectivity, but much more insidious than the Amazons because the quality of her dangerousness is neither as obviously externalized nor as easily managed as their brute force.

As Tony Tanner has observed and Ruby Blondell has discussed most fully, the Helen of the *Iliad* represents the threat that female desire poses for the patriarchy and patriliney.<sup>57</sup> When a man takes a woman in marriage, he brings an outsider into his house upon whom he must depend to run the household and to produce legitimate heirs.<sup>58</sup> Yet the wife's original loyalty is to her natal family; one may note how Helen, unbidden, ends her speech with discussion of her brothers. She focuses on their very close blood relation to one another: they are "my own brothers, whom, for me, one mother bore" (αὐτοκασιγνήτω, τῷ μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ 3.238).<sup>59</sup> In addition to the question of whether the woman will prioritize her marital family, the danger persists that she might betray her husband and thus compromise the integrity of his household and the legitimacy of his offspring because of sexual desire for another man.<sup>60</sup> This is exactly what Helen does when she abandons her marriage to Menelaos, as well as their daughter, and "follows" Paris to Troy.<sup>61</sup> Yet Helen's loyalty to her second husband is also dubious, as her feelings of regret and her renewed desire for her life in Sparta indicate. Helen is a sign for the instability of female allegiance, an instability that undermines male control and has the potential to wreak havoc, as it does for Menelaos and the Akhaians as well as for Paris and the Trojans.<sup>62</sup> In her consistent self-identification as an adulteress, Helen is a queer subject of desire.

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<sup>56</sup> Dubois 1982 (esp. 34-42) has shown how the Amazons in Ancient Greek literature and art are figures of difference. Particularly, they are anti-marriage and anti-culture in their refusal to be exchanged between men.

<sup>57</sup> Tanner 1979: 30 and *passim*, and Blondell 2013: 12-65. Cf. Worman 2001: 19 and Felson and Slatkin 2004: 96.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Tanner 1979: 26, who calls the wife "the stranger in the house."

<sup>59</sup> As Blondell 2013: 31-33 observes, Helen does not actually relocate away from her natal family when she marries Menelaos: he comes to her. This means that Helen's desire for Sparta encompasses desires for both of her original families, natal as well as marital.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Tanner 1979: 60-64.

<sup>61</sup> Blondell 2013: 33 notes that in the *Iliad* and in the larger mythological tradition, Helen does not have any more children with Paris or another husband, and never gives Menelaos a male heir. Tanner 1979: 98 explains: "the negative or reverse aspect of an inclination to adultery would seem to be a disinclination to maternity... It is all part of the decomposition of that unstable, supposedly unitary trinity—the wife-mother-lover."

<sup>62</sup> The mythological tradition presents Helen as the ultimately mobile woman, several times abducted or married (Theseus, Menelaos, Paris, Deiphobos, Akhilleus; cf. West 1975). As Blondell 2013: 29 explains, "the number—and inadequacy—of Helen's various male partners suggest that the forces of female beauty and desire are in their essence uncontrollable." Worman 2001: 19 writes, "Simultaneously the archetypal

Tanner has recognized the narrative productivity of female adultery, asserting that “the failure to transform, tame, familiarize, or domesticate the ambiguous presence from “the outside” is one of the permanently generative themes of Western literature.”<sup>63</sup> Female desire—a state of dissatisfaction—breaks up both the contract that defines marriage<sup>64</sup> and the narrative stasis that it represents. Tanner writes that love in the novel of adultery “is... the sexual drive that initiates the narration, without which the text would remain in a state of inert noncommencement.”<sup>65</sup> As Helen’s bardic role demonstrates, Tanner’s words accurately represent the narratively generative nature of Helen’s subversive desire, which is not only at the root of the *Iliad*’s story overall, but is the prime source and attraction of the poem’s superplot.

Indeed, over the course of book 3, as the poet develops Helen’s subjectivity, the focus of the audience’s interest shifts quickly from Menelaos and Paris to Helen. In the Teichoskopia, both men literally fade from view (Menelaos is conspicuously *not* identified by Helen)<sup>66</sup> as Helen emerges prominently into the public eye and demands the attention of both her internal and external audiences. She comes out of her private home to the walls of Troy, and there the Trojan Elders famously gaze at her in wonder; speaking among themselves, they acknowledge her divine appearance and justify the fighting of the war on her behalf, even as they wish she would return to Greece (3.154-158).<sup>67</sup> Helen’s weaving and speaking also calls upon the poem’s implied audience to engage in an exercise—parallel to that of the Trojan Elders, and indeed of all the men in the poem—of regarding Helen and interpreting her narrative position and significance. Helen arouses the audience’s desire to know and understand her: is she object or subject, blameless or culpable, loyal or faithless, honest or deceitful, virtuous or wicked? The extensive scholarly engagement with these questions testifies to the power of Helen’s attraction. But these questions are difficult, if not impossible to answer, and Helen’s unknowability<sup>68</sup> (signified by the veil that she dons before leaving her house)<sup>69</sup> is the essence of her allure.<sup>70</sup>

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bride and the most illustrious flouter of the marriage bond, Helen embodies the dangerous potential of all women to be unfaithful to their men.”

<sup>63</sup> Tanner 1979: 26.

<sup>64</sup> In the Greek world, the contract is between husband and father, guaranteeing the husband’s ownership of the wife (Taillardat 1982: 12); in Homer specifically, the woman is usually exchanged for bridewealth (cf. Finley 1955; Lacey 1966; Snodgrass 1974; Perysinakis 1991; Lyons 2012: 19-22).

<sup>65</sup> Tanner 1979: 105. Arthur 1981: 26 calls Helen “a disruptive force.”

<sup>66</sup> Clader 1976: 10.

<sup>67</sup> Cf. Schönberger 1960: 200-201; Kirk 1985: 284-85;

<sup>68</sup> Lynn-George 1988: 29 says that Helen “both is, and is more than, woman as object and possession.” Suzuki 1989: 18 asserts that “Helen is marked by radical undecidability.” Austin 1994: 31 calls Helen an equivocal sign and says “that her status cannot be decided.” He also writes that “Helen must be both the object of desire and its subject, the source of desire and its goal” (32).

<sup>69</sup> On the meaning of the veil more broadly in Homeric epic, see Nagler 1974: 44-63.

<sup>70</sup> In a similar vein, Felson 1994 (esp. 1-14) sees Penelope’s enigmatic thoughts and actions in the *Odyssey* as a source and focus of audience desire.

Beyond the appeal of her mystery, Helen's self-presentation makes her a doubly-seductive character. Blondell contends that Helen appears to be a modest and irreproachable wife insofar as she spends her time weaving at home and only emerges from the house veiled and with female attendants.<sup>71</sup> Helen flatters Priam with praise (3.172) and her submissive obedience, which helps to guarantee his continuing good-will toward her.<sup>72</sup> But, as both Hanna Roisman and Blondell have argued, Helen's self-blame is her most powerful tool for arousing the sympathy of those both inside and outside of the narrative.<sup>73</sup> By blaming herself, Helen demonstrates that she recognizes the transgressiveness of her actions and their terrible consequences for others. With her expressions of shame and regret, Helen suggests that she possesses a sense of morality. Thus her self-blame actually elicits the good feeling of others and the impulse to reassure her of her worth rather than blame her. In fact, no speaking character blames her, and, in addition, "the narrative vouches... for the sincerity of her self-blame."<sup>74</sup> Helen seems to be in earnest: there is no indication that she is just making a show for the purposes of manipulation. For all of these reasons, Helen is charming, inviting sympathy rather than condemnation. As such, she is even more desirable to the poem's male characters as well as to the implied audience. The critic Martin West's response to Helen attests to her pull on the external audience. He writes, "Her personality is as captivating as her person... [Homer's] Helen is to my mind the most marvellous, sincere, sweet-natured woman in ancient literature, with the possible exception of Sophocles' Deianeira."<sup>75</sup>

After Helen has been firmly established as a nexus of desire in the Teichoskopia, the narrator returns to the duel and to the male focalizations of its actors, in a kind of narrative reflex directed against Helen's deviant subjectivity (which has caused the narrative to deviate toward her). The herald's description to Priam of the upcoming duel verbally reinscribes Helen as an object:

Alexandros and war-loving Menelaos  
will fight with great spears over the woman;  
Whoever is victorious, may the woman and the possessions follow.

αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος  
μακρῆς ἐγχείησι μαχήσονται ἀμφὶ γυναίκε·  
τῷ δέ κε νικήσαντι γυνὴ καὶ κτήμαθ' ἔποιτο· (3.253-55).

The herald echoes Iris' earlier report, but no longer refers to Helen either in the second person or as a "wife"; she is now a "woman" in the third person. Furthermore, he groups Helen together with the stolen goods in a repetition of Paris' commodifying discourse (cf. 3.70, 72, 91, 93). When Agamemnon—as leader of the Akhaian army and surrogate for

<sup>71</sup> Blondell 2010: 11-12 and 2013: 58.

<sup>72</sup> Roisman 2006: 11-13.

<sup>73</sup> Roisman 2006: 13-14 and Blondell 2010: 9-16 and 2013: 63-69. Cf. Graver 1995: 51-59 and Ebbott 1999 on Helen's self-blame.

<sup>74</sup> Blondell 2013: 68.

<sup>75</sup> West 1975: 3.

his brother Menelaos—sanctifies the terms of the duel with an oath to the gods, he also refers twice to “Helen and all the possessions” (3.282, 285) as the stakes of the duel. In so doing, he contributes to a discourse surrounding Helen that is reparative of patriarchal interests. Besides being a general reconfirmation of male control and female passivity, both Trojans and Akhaians have something to gain from constructing Helen as a stolen object. It puts the Trojans in the position of being able to return Helen and thus end the war, and it justifies the Akhaian attack as an act of retribution. Moreover, removal of blame from Helen confirms that she is a woman worth fighting for.<sup>76</sup> After the destabilization of this discourse in the Teichoskopia, these male voices represent a narrative impulse to reassert as hegemonic Helen’s status as object. Thus Homer indicates to the audience that Helen represents a queer subject with respect to the interpersonal dynamics previously established by the narrative.

Besides avowing the primacy of male power and desire, the terms of the duel reveal a male obsession with repairing the damage that Helen’s desire has wrought. Adultery destroys the sexual union and social solidarity between husband and wife.<sup>77</sup> Both of these unities—physical and metaphysical—can be designated by the word *philotēs* in Homeric diction.<sup>78</sup> When Helen leaves with Paris, she undoes her *philotēs* with Menelaos. This microcosmic dissolution of marital *philotēs* leads to a disruption on a much larger scale, as the Greeks and Trojans cease to practice peaceful intercourse and instead make war. The terms suggested by Paris, and repeated by Hektor and the Trojan herald, prescribe a new peace agreement (*philotēs*) between the armies, whatever the outcome for Paris and Menelaos (3.73, 94, 256). The narrator also reports on how both Trojan and Akhaian soldiers pray to Zeus that they might come into a relation of *philotēs* following the death of the guilty party in the duel (3.319-23). Rabel suggests that the frequency of the word *philotēs* makes it “almost...the leitmotiv of book 3.”<sup>79</sup>

But the male stakeholders in the duel avoid associating the breakdown of *philotēs* with Helen, in yet another discursive tactic designed to elide her agency and subjectivity. No one explicitly names the destroyed marital *philotēs* of Menelaos and Helen; it is conspicuous only by its absence, and by its position as the implicit goal of Helen’s desire (*himeros*) when she remembers her former life in Sparta. Menelaos acknowledges broken *philotēs* in his prayer to Zeus before he hurls his spear in the duel, but connects it with Paris, not Helen. He asks for victory over Paris “so that some person in later days as well may shudder to do evil to a host who offers him *philotēs*” (ὄφρα τις ἐρρίγησι καὶ ὀπιγόνων ἀνθρώπων/ ξεινοδόκον κακὰ ῥέξαι, ὃ κεν φιλότητα παράσχη 3.353-54). Thus he posits Paris as the breaker of *philotēs*, which now indicates the solidarity of guest-friendship, and elides Helen’s disruption of their marital bonds. With his prayer, Menelaos once again positions himself as the desiring subject (focused on revenge) and makes Paris, instead of Helen, the disruptive agent.

<sup>76</sup> Blondell 2010: 4-6. Cf. Clader 1988: 57.

<sup>77</sup> Tanner 1979: 64-65. Euripides’ *Medea* dwells on how Jason’s adultery represents a rupturing of their marriage contract.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Helen and Paris’ sexual *philotēs* in 3.441 and 445. In book 9, Akhilleus testifies to the social *philotēs* of husband and wife (9.340-43).

<sup>79</sup> Rabel 1997: 78.

#### 4. A New Erotic Triangle: Helen, Paris, and Aphrodite

The last major sequence of book 3 demonstrates Helen's power as both subject and object of desire. Her reemergence in the narrative after the duel between Menelaos and Paris is prefigured by the introduction of Aphrodite, the fifth goddess (after Hera, Athene, Thetis, and Iris) to appear *in propria persona* in the *Iliad*. Aphrodite rescues Paris from death and deposits him in his bedchamber before going immediately to summon Helen on the walls of Troy (3.374-83). The narrative follows Aphrodite's movements from the battlefield into the city of Troy and finally to Helen, in a recapitulation of Iris' initial visit to Helen earlier in book 3 (in addition, both goddesses come in disguise as intimates of Helen). Aphrodite is named with the epithet "daughter of Zeus" (Διὸς θυγάτηρ 3.374), which recalls the epithet "born of Zeus" (Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα 3.199) that the narrator applied to Helen in the Teichoskopia.<sup>80</sup> The audience is thus doubly prepared to re-encounter Helen and her desiring subjectivity.

When Aphrodite finds Helen, she commands her to join Paris in their bedchamber, inducing her with a description of Paris as an erotic object.<sup>81</sup> According to Aphrodite, Paris is not only in the bedchamber, but actually in the bed itself (3.391), "shining in his beauty and his garments" (κἀλλεῖ τε στίλβων καὶ εἵμασιν 3.392).<sup>82</sup> To underscore her point, Aphrodite tells Helen that she would think that Paris was going to participate in a chorus, or had just come from there, rather than from the battlefield (3.392-94). Choral dancers are envisioned as erotic objects in the *Iliad* as well as in early Greek poetry more generally.<sup>83</sup> Clearly Aphrodite's association of Paris with the chorus is meant to arouse Helen's desire.

The narrator remarks on how Aphrodite's speech affects Helen: "thus she spoke, and incited her heart (*thumos*) in her breast" (ὥς φάτο, τῆ δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι ὄρινε 3.395). Aphrodite's words cause in Helen an emotional or mental experience, but its exact nature is left unspecified. Following Kirk, and on the basis of what Aphrodite has said, I interpret this stirring to be the experience of desire.<sup>84</sup> The parallelism of Iris' and Aphrodite's visits to Helen support this reading, as the narrator explicitly describes

<sup>80</sup> Aphrodite's epithet "daughter of Zeus" is metrically equivalent to her alternative epithet "smile-loving" (φιλομμειδῆς), and so the use of the first epithet in this situation may be interpreted as a poetic choice. Boedeker 1974: 31-42 identifies Διὸς θυγάτηρ as the "marked" epithet of the two alternatives, and argues that here it emphasizes Aphrodite's role as Paris' protectress—a traditional function of her Indo-European precursor the Dawn Goddess, who carried the same epithet.

<sup>81</sup> Blondell 2010: 22.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. Hera's adornment in 14.170-186, when she prepares for her seduction of Zeus (Louden 2006: 77).

<sup>83</sup> Boedeker 1974: 47-51; Muellner 1990: 80-82; Kurke 2013: 150. Later in the *Iliad*, the narrator recounts how Hermes desired and impregnated Polymele after seeing her dancing in a maiden chorus for Artemis (16.179-83), and the youthful (female *and* male) dancers on the Shield of Akhilleus are described as erotically appealing to viewers (ἱερόεντα 18.603). See also *Hymn Aphr.* 117-120 and Alkman fr. 27 PGM.

<sup>84</sup> Kirk 1985: 322 and Louden 2006: 77. Cf. *Il.* 2.142, where the poet uses the same formulaic line to describe the effect of Agamemnon's "testing" speech on the Akhaian army. The soldiers immediately head for the ships, implicitly because of desire for their wives, children, and homes. Cf. Blondell 2010: 22.

Iris throwing “desire” (*himeros*) into Helen’s “heart” (*thumos*) (3.139).<sup>85</sup>

Other scholars, however, have understood line 395 as a statement of Helen’s anger at Aphrodite based on Helen’s subsequent response to the goddess.<sup>86</sup> Helen lashes out sarcastically at Aphrodite, accusing her of manipulation, and she refuses to obey her command, asserting that it would make her an object of *nemesis*—a righteous indignation directed at someone violating decency<sup>87</sup>—to sleep with Paris (3.399-412). I would like to argue that Helen’s anger is an expression of homosocial desire directed at Aphrodite, a desire that is simultaneous to her sexual desire for Paris. I mean that Homer here constructs another triangle that replicates the narrative’s earlier mortal structures of desire, but with an important twist. In books 1-3, the narrative establishes a familiar pattern of two men competing over a woman, and I have argued that the male subject desires both (sexual) possession of the female and domination of his male rival.<sup>88</sup> The last part of book 3 repeats this geometry of desire, but positions Helen—a woman—as the desiring subject, Paris—a man—as the sexual object, and Aphrodite as Helen’s female rival and object of her aggressive desire. In so doing, Homer reverses the expected gender configurations and thus queers the narrative’s normative structure of desire through the transgressive character of Helen.

Both Homer and Helen characterize Aphrodite as Helen’s rival for the possession of Paris. Aphrodite first emerges in the narrative in relation to Paris: she perceives his distress on the battlefield and takes action on his behalf. More specifically, the narrator says that she “seized” (ἐξήρπαξ’) Paris and then deposited him in his bedchamber (3.380-82). This verb is used in the *Iliad* and elsewhere in early hexameter poetry to describe sexual abduction.<sup>89</sup> The poet thus positions Aphrodite as a desirer of Paris.<sup>90</sup> In addition, the narrator’s description of Aphrodite’s “very beautiful neck and lovely breasts and shining eyes” (περικαλλέα δειρήν/ στήθεά θ’ ἰμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα 3.396-97), which is focalized through Helen’s perception, suggests that Aphrodite is also an object of Helen’s (competitive) desire. The narrator says that Helen “marveled” (θάμβησέν) at Aphrodite (3.398).

Helen addresses Aphrodite with scornful words that reveal her desire to prevail over the goddess in a contest of power and influence. She accuses Aphrodite of trying to deceive her and keep her in Troy, despite Menelaos’ right to take her back to Sparta

<sup>85</sup> Lendle 1968: 68-71 argues that Helen’s desire for Paris (inspired by Aphrodite) is different in kind and much more powerful than the desire that Iris inspires in her. I think that the structural analogy of these two episodes precludes Lendle’s interpretation, and he himself describes the overwhelming effect of both instances of desire in similar terms.

<sup>86</sup> Leaf 1971: 147-48; Willcock 1978: 222; MacCary 1982: 170; Roisman 2006: 18.

<sup>87</sup> Cf. Redfield 1994: 115-119 on the meaning of *nemesis* in Homeric epic.

<sup>88</sup> The earlier mortal triangles are 1) Khryses, Khryseis, and Agamemnon; 2) Akhilleus, Briseis, and Agamemnon; 3) Menelaos, Helen, and Paris.

<sup>89</sup> *Il.* 3.344 (Paris and Helen); *Od.* 15.250 (Eos and Kleitos); *Hymn. Aphr.* 117 and 121 (Hermes and the fictional daughter of Otreus), 203 (Zeus and Ganymede), 218 (Eos and Tithonos); *Hymn. Dem.* 3, 19, 81 (all Hades and Persephone). Cf. Boedeker 1974: 71.

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Boedeker 1974: 64-84 on the narrative theme of Aphrodite having a mortal lover (Phaithon, Ankhises). See also Muellner 1990: 79.



(3.399-405). This complaint indicates Helen's resistance to Aphrodite's authority and her desire to control her own destiny. Helen also suggests that what Aphrodite really wants is to have Paris for herself. She sarcastically orders Aphrodite to give up her godhead and worry over Paris until "he makes you either his wife or his slave" (σ' ἢ ἄλοχον ποιήσεται, ἢ ὄ γε δούλην 3.409). Helen's words reveal that she regards Aphrodite as an erotic rival vis-à-vis Paris, but also that she would like to see Aphrodite taken down a notch, subdued to a (rather pathetic) mortal man.<sup>91</sup> Aphrodite's diminution would make her status equal to or lesser than Helen's. With this illustration of Helen's desire for dominance, or, at the least, prestige and autonomy, the poet makes her structurally analogous to Akhilleus, the prime desirer of the main plot. Helen is to Aphrodite as Akhilleus is to his rival Agamemnon. And in both cases, this aggressive desire is imbricated with desire for a sexual object (Paris or Briseis), the third point in the triangle.

Like Agamemnon in relation to Akhilleus, Aphrodite exhibits a reciprocal desire for domination directed toward Helen.<sup>92</sup> She addresses Helen insultingly, calling her "foolhardy" (σχετλίη 3.414), and she responds to Helen's power-play with a threat of her own that affirms her superior position. She warns Helen not to provoke her full aggressive desire, "lest angered, I reject you, and I make you my enemy to the same outstanding degree as up to now I have treated you as one of my own" (μὴ χωσαμένη σε μεθείω/ τὼς δέ σ' ἀπεχθήρω ὡς νῦν ἔκπαγλα φίλησα 3.414-15). Aphrodite here cautions Helen that their cooperative homosocial relation could indeed turn into a competitive relation, characterized by Aphrodite's wrath and withdrawal. She goes on to explain the way that she would destroy Helen: "I would devise grievous hatreds in the middle of both sides, of Trojans and Danaans, and you would perish with an evil fate" (4.416-17). While Aphrodite's favor has made Helen an object of sexual desire, the goddess' enmity would make Helen an object of aggressive desire, not only Aphrodite's, but also everyone else's.<sup>93</sup> And this would cost Helen both her status and her life. Indeed, Helen realizes that she is out of her league and responds with fear and obedience to the goddess' earlier command, following her to Paris' house (3.418-421).<sup>94</sup> The narrator's closing comment that "the goddess led the way" (ἦρχε δὲ δαίμων 3.420) could also be translated, given the double meaning of ἄρχω, as "the goddess dominated," which is an apt summation of the preceding interaction.

But there is also another way to read Helen's submission to Aphrodite. I have contended—following Anne Carson—that we can read the figure of the rival as an incarnation of desire itself, since desire exists in the space between subject and object that the rival creates and occupies.<sup>95</sup> Thus the rival is not only the object of the subject's

<sup>91</sup> Muellner 1990: 79.

<sup>92</sup> Blondell 2010: 17 sees in this exchange "competitiveness and jealousy on the goddess's part."

<sup>93</sup> Pironti 2007: 225.

<sup>94</sup> Akhilleus also submits to Agamemnon's authority by allowing him to take Briseis, although he does not exhibit fear. Even more similarly, the desiring subjects Khryses and Hera in the two other triangles of book 1 both give way in fear before their more powerful respective rivals, Agamemnon and Zeus (1.33-34 and 568-69).

<sup>95</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, sec. 1 and Carson 1998: 12-17.

aggressive desire, but also constitutive of the subject's sexual desire. In this erotic triangle, Aphrodite, as the divine instigator and personification of sex, is truly emblematic of this role. In the absence of other explicitly erotic vocabulary, Aphrodite herself literalizes Helen's desire.<sup>96</sup> In early Greek hexameter poetry, Aphrodite is everywhere associated with sexual desire; the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* describes how she imbues beasts, mortals, and immortals with desire and Hesiod names *Eros* and *Himeros* as her attendants.<sup>97</sup> In the *Iliad* itself, Hera comes to Aphrodite and asks her for sex (*philotēs*) and desire (*himeros*) as part of her scheme to seduce Zeus (14.198). In the book 3 passage, Helen angrily asks Aphrodite to which far-flung location and favorite man the goddess will lead her next (3.400-402), in a rueful acknowledgment of Aphrodite's erotic agency. It is Aphrodite who orders Helen to Paris' bedchamber and eventually leads her there after Helen stops resisting the goddess' forceful persuasion (3.420). It is Aphrodite who sets out a chair for Helen in front of Paris (3.424-25).<sup>98</sup> She is their go-between. Aphrodite enables and embodies Helen's desire for Paris.<sup>99</sup> Explained in more familiar terms, Aphrodite's appearance, like Iris' earlier in book 3, is a case of double determination, in which the goddess' manipulation is an external analogue to Helen's own mental experience.<sup>100</sup> Understanding Aphrodite in this way also helps to confirm Helen as a subject *and* agent of desire. As Blondell explains, Helen is not a blameless victim of Aphrodite's compulsion, but rather makes the choice to reunite with Paris.<sup>101</sup>

But Helen's desire remains problematic. She does in fact resist Aphrodite and in so doing expresses ambivalence and even anger with regard to her own desire for Paris. In her words to Aphrodite, she suggests that Menelaos was the winner of the duel and that she is his, not Paris' rightful wife; she even refers to Sparta as "home" (3.403-404).<sup>102</sup> Finally face to face with Paris, Helen averts her eyes (3.427), protecting herself from the erotic effect of beauty perceived visually.<sup>103</sup> Instead of acknowledging her

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<sup>96</sup> Cf. Blondell 2010: 27.

<sup>97</sup> *Hymn. Aphr.* 1-6, 34-35, 72-74; *Theog.* 201. Boedeker 1974: 50 catalogues the association of *himeros* with Aphrodite.

<sup>98</sup> Here the narrator gives Aphrodite her alternative equimetrical epithet, "smile-loving" (φιλομμειδής 3.424), which Boedeker 1974: 32-35 has argued is used specifically in this instance and elsewhere to emphasize "Aphrodite's aspect as goddess of sexual love."

<sup>99</sup> Loudon 2006: 77. Cf. *Il.* 5.349, where Diomedes accuses Aphrodite of "beguiling" (ἠπεροπέυεις) women, and 5.422-25, where Hera and Athene mock Aphrodite's wound by suggesting she pricked her hand on a pin while inciting an Akhaian woman to follow the Trojans.

<sup>100</sup> Calhoun 1937: 24-25 and Grube 1951: 74. Cf. sec. 3 above on double determination. Clader 1976: 12 writes that "Helen's dangerous nature is in part personified in Aphrodite," and Kirk 1985: 232 calls Aphrodite "a projection of personal emotions."

<sup>101</sup> Blondell 2010: 22-26 and 2013: 71, *contra* Reckford 1964: 18, Lendle 1968: 69-71, and Roisman 2006: 23, who argue for Helen's victimization and the overwhelming power of Aphrodite. This is not to deny, however, that the experience of sexual desire constitutes a violent assault on the subject in the conception of the Ancient Greeks, as Carson 1998 and Pironti 2007 explore.

<sup>102</sup> Roisman 2006: 17-18.

<sup>103</sup> Blondell 2013: 71. See sec. 5 below.

desire for Paris, Helen “rebukes” (ἠνίπαπε) him for cowardice. She wishes that Menelaos had killed Paris on the battlefield and asserts that Menelaos is the better man. In fact, Helen names Menelaos three times in six lines (3.430, 432, 434) and even calls him “my former husband” (ἐμὸς πρότερος πόσις 3.429). When Helen is most fully developed as a desiring subject, the object of her sexual desire is mystified. Does she want Paris or Menelaos? As Blondell has observed, this scene evokes a “sense of marital instability.”<sup>104</sup> Helen’s desire is uncontrolled, even illegible. At the moment when Homer expresses Helen’s desire most strongly, he focuses once again on its mobility, and thus emphasizes its queerness and the danger it poses for patriarchal interests.

As desiring subject in her own erotic triangle, Helen demands the attention of the external audience. The audience directs its desire at Helen, but also identifies with Helen’s fraught desires. In her moral consciousness, her attempt to defy Aphrodite, Helen invites the sympathy of an implied audience that has accepted the ethical norms of the narrative. According to one critic, she even shows “courage” by standing up to Aphrodite.<sup>105</sup> But for a more critical audience (and also presumably for a conventional audience), Helen is fascinating and even appealing as a queer, disruptive subject.

As book 3 draws to a close, Paris’ reciprocal sexual desire for Helen matches and discursively overwhelms Helen’s desires. Paris dismisses Helen’s rebuke and with it the threat of Menelaos as a rival. He controls the deviance of Helen’s desire with the mastery of his own desire. Paris, unlike Helen, owns and deploys an erotic language that proves to have prescriptive force. He says in 3.441-446,

“Come now, let us get in bed and turn to sex;  
for not ever yet before has desire (*eros*) so eclipsed my mind,  
not even when first I sailed from lovely Lakedaimon,  
having seized you, in seafaring ships,  
and on the Kranean island I mixed with you in sex and the bed;  
so much do I now desire (*eramai*) you and sweet desire (*himeros*) captures me.”

ἀλλ’ ἄγε δὴ φιλότητι τραπέιομεν εὐνηθέντε·  
οὐ γάρ πώ ποτέ μ’ ὦδέ γ’ ἔρος φρένας ἀμφεκάλυψεν,  
οὐδ’ ὅτε σε πρῶτον Λακεδαίμονος ἐξ ἔρατεινῆς  
ἔπλεον ἀρπάξας ἐν ποντοπόροισι νέεσσι,  
νήσῳ δ’ ἐν Κραναιῇ ἐμίγην φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ  
ὥς σεο νῦν ἔραμαι καί με γλυκὺς ἵμερος αἰρεῖ (3.441-446).

Paris here explicitly asserts his *eros* and *himeros* in terms that cannot be denied. Paris compares his present circumstances with the time when he first consummated his sexual desire for Helen. With this brief analepsis, the poet indicates that this textual moment represents a re-enactment of the original adulterous union that underlies the Trojan War story, thereby emphasizing its symbolic importance for the narrative.<sup>106</sup> With Paris as

<sup>104</sup> Blondell 2013: 72. Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 34-35.

<sup>105</sup> Roisman 2006: 19.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Owen 1946: 35; Whitman 1958: 268; Reckford 1964: 17; Lendle 1968: 70-71; Edwards 1987: 196; and, more recently, Blondell 2010: 21.

speaker the focalization of the scene shifts from Helen's perspective to Paris'. Helen goes from a first person speaking subject to a second person addressee, and she is unnamed. Paris retrospectively re-objectifies Helen: he describes "having seized" her (3.444). This change of perspective is representative of the normative male viewpoint that dominates most of the *Iliad*. The narrator says that, after speaking, "Paris led the way to the bed" (ἄρχε λέχοσδε κιών 3.447).

And yet Paris uses a dual participle (εὐνηθέντε 3.441) "that signifies mutuality"<sup>107</sup> and a hortatory subjunctive (τραπέιομεν 3.441) to encourage Helen into bed. He thus acknowledges—if elliptically—Helen's agency and her desire. The narrator recounts that "his wife followed with him" (ἄμα δ' εἶπετ' ἄκοιτις 3.447). Helen (like Paris) is again referred to in the third person, but she is the subject and her togetherness with Paris is emphasized (ἄμα). In addition, the narrator employs the same verb to describe her movement that Helen herself had used when asserting to Priam that she "followed" Paris to Troy (3.174). Book 3 thus culminates in a sexual encounter that gratifies the desires of both Paris and Helen. By highlighting their desires, this episode and book 3 more broadly confirm desire as the source of war and the heroic epic that commemorates it.

## 5. Interpreting Paris' Desire

I have argued that desire drives the actions of central characters in both the main plot (Akhilleus and Agamemnon) and the superplot (Menelaos, Helen, and Paris). Despite this, Paris is the *only* mortal to describe explicitly his experience of sexual *eros* in the *Iliad*.<sup>108</sup> Why does Paris have exclusive access to the language of *eros*, in what way is he different from other men in the poem, and to what end? Revisiting the superplot's main erotic triangle of Menelaos, Helen, and Paris can help to answer these questions.

Homer first thematizes this erotic triangle at the beginning of book 3, when the impending confrontation between two armies over possession of Helen becomes instead a duel between the two men who desire her. When Menelaos first emerges from the Akhaian army to answer Paris' challenge, the narrator describes his eagerness to engage with Paris: "thus Menelaos rejoiced, seeing god-like Alexandros with his eyes" (ὣς ἐχάρη Μενέλαος | Ἀλέξανδρον θεοειδέα / ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδών 3.27-28). Since the desiring subject's visual apprehension of the desired object's beauty is key to sexual desire,<sup>109</sup> the narrator's focus on Menelaos' first sight of Paris is significant. This emphasis implies Menelaos' aggressive desire to master Paris, and brings attention to Menelaos as a desiring subject in this erotic triangle;<sup>110</sup> likewise, it positions Paris as his

<sup>107</sup> Blondell 2010: 26.

<sup>108</sup> Blondell 2013: 59. No other mortal is even described by the narrator as experiencing sexual *eros*. On several occasions heterosexual sex between mortals other than Paris and Helen is either described or implied (cf. 6.160-65; 9.664-69; 24.675-76), but *eros* is never mentioned directly in conjunction with these scenes. It seems to be a marked term that is reserved exclusively for Paris.

<sup>109</sup> Müller 1980: 11-16. Cf. Zeus' experience of *eros* at the sight of Hera, who has elaborately adorned herself to accomplish the successful seduction (*Il.* 14.170-86).

<sup>110</sup> In 16.182 the formula ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδών appears again near the beginning of the line, this time after the verb ἠράσσατ' ("desired"), in the description of Hermes' sexual desire for Polydore.

rival for Helen. Menelaos' relation to Paris and Helen here parallels Akhilleus' relation to Agamemnon and Briseis in book 1.<sup>111</sup>

In these homologous triangles, the rivals—Paris and Agamemnon—are key to Menelaos' and Akhilleus' desires. René Girard calls the rival a “mediator” because he understands the subject's desire for the object to be mediated through the rival; that is, Girard argues that the subject's desire for the erotic object is inauthentic, and that the subject's actual “mimetic” desire is to emulate the rival in his possession of the desired object.<sup>112</sup> While I do not understand Menelaos' and Akhilleus' desires for Helen and Briseis to be inauthentic, I do argue that those desires are predicated on the presence of the rival, particularly the distance that the rival creates between subject and object of desire, as discussed above with regard to Aphrodite. Most importantly, I think that Girard is correct in recognizing that desire for the object is imbricated with a competitive homosocial desire directed toward the rival. In addition, Girard observes that often subject and rival become implicated in a reciprocal dynamic where *both* are competing for the erotic object, where *both* desire to take the place of the other; he calls this “double mediation.”<sup>113</sup> This “double mediation” defines the relation between Akhilleus and Agamemnon in book 1, as the two vie with each other for honor and the status it represents.

However, something different seems to be happening in the erotic triangle of Menelaos, Helen, and Paris. After his initial bravura, Paris tries to evade Menelaos, retreating back among the crowd of Trojans (3.36). The narrator attributes his retreat to fear, comparing Paris to someone recoiling from a snake in a thicket (3.31-37). Yet along with this naturalistic interpretation of Paris' behavior, the narrative offers a more sophisticated and structuralist portrait of Paris' motivating psychology. The narrator's description of how Paris “perceived” (ἐνόησεν) Menelaos does not imply an erotic gaze. Paris does not appear to feel reciprocal aggressive desire toward Menelaos, a desire that might have obviated his fear; he does not really want to fight. I would like to argue that the explanation for Paris' lack of animus toward Menelaos lies in the fact that Paris already has the object of his sexual desire: Helen. I suggest that Paris is absolutely content and thus does not feel particularly interested in participating in the war; he does not experience competitive homosocial desire because he has, in effect, already won the prize.<sup>114</sup> This would explain Paris' apparent cowardice and reluctance to take on the role of warrior, for which Hektor (and also Helen) rebuke him (3.39-45, 3.428-36, 6.26-331). In book 3, Paris is glad to join Helen in their bedchamber, which is where Hektor finds him later in the superplot (6.313-324).

This also explains, I believe, why Paris alone experiences sexual *eros* in the *Iliad*. *Eros* relies on proximity and anticipates imminent sexual consummation. The presence and availability of Helen gives Paris the opportunity to enjoy *eros*, an opportunity denied to Menelaos and others whose desires are aimed at objects that have been taken away or

<sup>111</sup> Cf. Lord 2000: 190 and Wilson 2002: 46-47.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Girard 1965, especially pp. 1-47.

<sup>113</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, sec. 3 and Girard 1965: 99-102.

<sup>114</sup> Cf. Kirk 1985: 329.

do not belong to them.<sup>115</sup> Paris' unique epithet "husband of lovely-haired Helen" (Ἑλένης πόσις ἠΰκόμοιο)<sup>116</sup> is the only epithet that describes a man in relation to his wife, and it points to the significance of Paris' special position as possessor of Helen.<sup>117</sup> Paris' *eros* is different from the desires felt by other men in the poem; in Girard's terms, Paris is the "passionate man" who "moves directly to the object of his desire without being concerned with Others."<sup>118</sup> Paris is free of aggressive "mimetic" desire, and is therefore independent of the Homeric social logic that depends on this competitive desire. In this respect, Redfield is correct in identifying him as "unsocialized." With no aggressive desires to motivate him, "Paris is insensitive to *nemesis*, the moral disapproval of others, and has no sense of *aischos*, shame."<sup>119</sup> As Hektor's play on the verb *μίσγω* suggests, Paris' unique opportunity to "mix" with Helen sexually makes him disinclined to "mix" with warriors on the battlefield, or to face the risk that his dead body might "mix in the dust" (3.48-55).<sup>120</sup>

Helen is the other half of this sexual pair, and also ultimately functions outside of the conventional morality of the poem. She blames herself for coming to Troy and says that she fears to become an object of *nemesis* should she resume sexual relations with Paris (3.410); and yet no mortal man blames her, and she seems, finally, impervious to shame.<sup>121</sup> When Aphrodite comes to summon Helen to Paris' bedchamber, the goddess finds her in the center of a circle of Trojan women (3.384). Helen says that she fears the Trojan women's blame when she initially refuses to obey Aphrodite (3.411-12).<sup>122</sup> Spatially and symbolically the Trojan women circumscribe Helen's erotic independence. Bookending the verbal exchange of Aphrodite and Helen, they appear in a kind of ring composition, literally hemming in Helen's desire. However, when Helen submits to Aphrodite and leaves her place on the wall to go to the bedchamber, the narrator reports that Helen "escaped the notice of all the Trojan women" (πάσας δὲ Τρωῶας λάθην 3.420). Veiled and silent, Helen evades moral constraint in the moment when she succumbs to desire.<sup>123</sup>

<sup>115</sup> The incompatibility of sexual *eros* with aggressive male homosocial desire helps to explain why Zeus says to Aphrodite (the goddess of sexual *eros*), "martial deeds were not given to you, my child,/ but you take part in the lovely deeds of marriage" (οὐ τοι, τέκνον ἐμόν, δέδοται πολεμῆτα ἔργα,/ ἀλλὰ σύ γ' ἡμερόεντα μετέρχεο ἔργα γάμοιο 5.428-29). Cf. n. 159 below for more on this same passage.

<sup>116</sup> *Il.* 3.329, 7.355, 8.82, 11.369, 11.505, 13.766.

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Blondell 2013: 35.

<sup>118</sup> Girard 1965: 140. Cf. Tanner 1979: 30, who describes Paris occupying "a realm of pure desire."

<sup>119</sup> Redfield 1994: 115. Cf. Tanner 1979: 30; MacCary 1982: 179; Collins 1988: 29-36; Van Wees 1992: 127.

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Rabel 1997: 76 and Muellner 1990: 87 on this passage; See Vermeule 1979: 97-103, MacCary 1982: 137-42, Vernant 1989: 138-39 and Pironti 2007: 41-43, 51-53, 227 on the epic use of *μίσγω* to describe the bodily mixing that characterizes both sexual intercourse and violent combat.

<sup>121</sup> On Helen's self-blame, see sec. 3 above. On others' lack of blame, see especially Blondell 2010: 4-8.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Blondell 2013: 66-67.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Austin 1994: 49. Reckford 1964: 19 notes that Helen and Akhilleus are similar in the way that "both are cut off from the normal communal ties of a Hector or an Andromakhe."

Girard describes how the rival who possesses the beloved appears divine to the jealous lover,<sup>124</sup> an image that both Helen and Paris seem to embody exactly. When Helen arrives on the walls of Troy, the Trojan Elders are awestruck at her godly countenance (3.154-158).<sup>125</sup> In the *Iliad*, Helen is marked out as a descendant of the gods with the epithet “born of Zeus” and both poet and audience members may have been familiar with traditions that identified Helen herself as a goddess.<sup>126</sup> She is frequently described as “godly among women” (δῖα γυναικῶν), and “godly” (δῖος) is an epithet that Paris also shares.<sup>127</sup> In the account of Menelaos’ first sight of Paris, the narrator gives Paris the epithet “godlike” (θεοειδέα 3.27), which may here represent Menelaos’ focalization. In any case, “godlike” is Paris’ most frequent epithet, appearing twelve times.<sup>128</sup> The narrative also dwells on Paris’ exceptional good looks.<sup>129</sup> Hektor, for example, in his first speech to Paris, addresses him as “best in form” (εἶδος ἄριστε 3.39) and asserts that the Akhaians will say he is foremost because of his “beautiful form” (καλὸν/ εἶδος 3.44-45), not on account of his strength and courage (of which he is lacking). In hexameter poetry, beauty is associated with divinity, and especially with the goddess Aphrodite; thus Helen recognizes Aphrodite because of her “exceedingly beautiful neck and lovely breasts, and sparkling eyes” (περικαλλέα δειρήν/ στήθεά θ’ ἰμερόεντα καὶ ὄμματα μαρμαίροντα 3.396-97). Paris’ special beauty connects him to Aphrodite,<sup>130</sup> but he is also like Zeus, king of the gods, in his experience of sexual *eros*.

Zeus is almost the only other character in the *Iliad* who feels sexual *eros*, and his desire is expressed with exactly the same formula as Paris’ (*Il.* 3.446 = 14.328). Zeus has the ultimate powers of access to any female sexual object of his choice, a fact that he boasts about to Hera when he details a catalogue of his numerous erotic conquests (14.315-327). As the *Iliad* makes clear throughout, Zeus has no real competitor (sexual or otherwise) and essentially remains outside of human and divine conflicts, although he holds stakes and exercises a controlling hand in both.<sup>131</sup> Zeus, in his position as an archetype for Paris, does not desire dominance over the other gods, since he has it (and everything else) already. Paris and Zeus are the ideal “mediators,” object of others’ aggressive desires, but at peace themselves, with satisfaction always close at hand.

<sup>124</sup> Girard 1965: 58-66. Cf. the first two lines of Sappho, Fr. 31, in which the speaker’s male rival who sits next to her beloved seems to her “equal to the gods” (φαίνεται μοι κῆνος ἴσος θεοῖσιν/ ἔμμεν’ ὤνηρ). As Helen’s rival in the book 3 triangle, Aphrodite actually is a goddess.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Schönberger 1960: 200-201; Kirk 1985: 284-85;

<sup>126</sup> On Helen as a divinity, see West 1975 and Clader 1976.

<sup>127</sup> *Il.* 3.171, 3.228, 3.423 (Helen); *Il.* 13.766 (Paris). Chantraine 2009: 273-74 and Beekes 2010: 338 both identify the adjective’s core meaning as “heavenly” and trace its etymology to the same root from which the genitive of “Zeus” (i.e. Διός) is derived.

<sup>128</sup> *Il.* 3.16, 3.37, 3.30, 3.37, 3.58, 3.450, 6.290, 6.332, 6.517, 11.581, 13.774, 24.763.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. Blondell 2013: 56-57, who calls Paris “a male Pandora.”

<sup>130</sup> Hektor and Paris himself claim that Paris possesses “the gifts of Aphrodite” (δῶρ’ Ἀφροδίτης 3.54, 3.64). Cf. MacCary 1982: 170 and Collins 1988: 39.

<sup>131</sup> Zeus, like Paris in his bedroom, is physically isolated from the mortal battlefield and from the intrigues and squabbles of the other gods. He watches everything alone on the peak of Mt. Ida (8.47-52).

This is to say that *Iliad* 3 presents an initial (androcentric) erotic triangle that recapitulates Akhilleus' triangle, but with important differences. In the case of Akhilleus, Briseis, and Agamemnon, the two men desire dominance over each other as well as intimacy with the captive woman; however, in the case of Menelaos, Helen, and Paris, Menelaos desires to reclaim the absent Helen and to subdue the Trojan prince who has taken her away, while Paris' unmediated desire (sexual *eros*) is directed solely at Helen.<sup>132</sup>

This analysis raises the question of why Paris fights at all.<sup>133</sup> The duel is illogical for Paris personally. By fighting, Paris himself has almost nothing to gain and lots to lose, i.e. the stakes of the duel, "Helen and all the possessions" (3.70, 72, 255, 282, 285). The Trojans as a body, however, have much to gain: the cessation of conflict. The narrative explains Paris' participation in the duel as an act of solidarity with his brother Hektor, who bears the responsibility for Trojan wellbeing. Paris proposes the duel after Hektor rebukes Paris for retreating from Menelaos (3.38-57). Specifically, Paris tells Hektor to arrange the duel "if *you wish* for me to make war and fight" (εἴ μ' ἐθέλεις πολεμίζειν ἢ δὲ μάχεσθαι 3.67), thereby displacing aggressive desire onto Hektor. This narrative tactic allows for the maintenance of psychological realism with regard to both Paris and Hektor, despite a duel that would not make sense for Paris otherwise. It also introduces an alternative mode of male homosociality, the cooperative cohesion (*philotēs*) of male family members and comrades-at-arms, which will become a key theme as the poem continues.<sup>134</sup> Paris is capable of participating in this kind of male interpersonal relationship—with the obligations of mutual loyalty and support that it entails—because this type of homosociality is *not* based in aggressive desire.

Even if Paris' own motivations can be explained, the duel is also illogical on the level of plot. Neither the main plot nor the superplot can continue if the terms of the duel—which mandate a peace treaty (*philotēs*) no matter what the outcome—are to be fulfilled. The duel must end in a status quo for the rest of the *Iliad* to exist.<sup>135</sup> Thus it can only be justified narratively as a thematic necessity. I would like to suggest that the duel highlights the failure of the poem's normative social values (not just Paris' personal failure of aggressive masculinity). Paris fights with Menelaos as if he were his rival and as if Helen as the prize were truly contested, in a mimicry of expected masculine heroic behavior. But no one is killed, no one gains glory, and no *philotēs* is achieved between

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<sup>132</sup> The book 1 erotic triangle between Zeus, Hera, and the Akhaians is similarly one-sided. Hera desires domination over Zeus and the concomitant control over the Akhaians, while Zeus is satisfied with his absolute power and acts simply to keep Hera in her place.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. Postlethwaite 1985: 3-4.

<sup>134</sup> As I discuss in Chapters 3 and 4, *philotēs* defines the relationship between Akhilleus and Patroklos, and is conspicuous by its absence in the case of Akhilleus and the Akhaians. Rabel 1997: 28 and 87-89 similarly distinguishes two male relational modalities: "competitive heroism," which he describes as an expression of personal strength and glory, and "cooperative heroism," which Rabel connects to personal weakness: the individual is interested in group solidarity when he is threatened. I, however, see male homosocial solidarity as a positive and basic heroic social construct that is separate from questions of strength or weakness.

<sup>135</sup> West 2011: 127-128.



Trojans and Akhaians. Instead, Paris and Helen join in sexual *philotēs*,<sup>136</sup> thereby queering the behavioral norms expected of each as a man and a woman. But Paris is the only man who actually gets the object of desire for whom all the other men are fighting. Thus Paris can be interpreted as the most successful combatant although he merely parodies martial heroism. To possess Helen, it seems that a man must become like Paris.<sup>137</sup>

Yet no one in the narrative wants to resemble Paris, or even to associate with him. The narrator explicitly says that the Trojans themselves do not have *philotēs* (solidarity) with Paris; instead “he is hated by them all equally to black death” (ἴσον γὰρ σφιν πᾶσιν ἀπήχθετο κηρὶ μελαίνῃ 3.454). While Paris enters the duel because of his *philotēs* with Hektor, the Trojans’ animosity toward their own prince suggests that Paris ultimately fails at cooperative as well as aggressive homosociality. The problem is that Homeric men who are not family members associate and identify with each other in relations of *philotēs qua* warriors. In fact, as suggested above, the properly socialized Homeric man *is* a warrior, implicated in dynamics of aggressive homosocial desire.<sup>138</sup> Male-male *philotēs* is constituted either by shared membership in the *Männerbund*—being part of a fighting collective—or by kinship (as is the case with Hektor and Paris).<sup>139</sup> Thus Paris’ failure of aggressive homosociality means that he has nothing in common with other men who are not already family. In his gender nonconformity—his queerness—he is a radical Other, and, as such, a social outcast.

Why, then, do the Trojans risk death and destruction so that Paris can retain Helen? Van Wees argues convincingly that the Trojans fear Paris’ power as a wealthy prince of Troy.<sup>140</sup> As he notes, during the Trojan assembly in 7.345-78, Paris, supported by his father the king, successfully dismisses Antenor’s proposal that he give back Helen to Menelaos. This scene is structurally reminiscent of the Akhaian assembly in book 1, when Akhilleus proposes that Agamemnon give back Khryseis to Khryses; after the two

<sup>136</sup> Rabel 1997: 77-79. Lendle 1968: 67 observes that Paris’ arming scene before the duel is a typical element that introduces a hero’s *aristeia*, an *aristeia* that is inverted in Paris’ case. Dragged in the dust, he is “almost made into a caricature of a hero” (er wird fast zur Karikatur des heroischen Helden gemacht). His triumph is not on the battlefield, but in the bedroom. Louden 2006: 74-79 analyzes Paris as a parody of Hektor. Cf. Reckford 1964: 10; Arthur 1981: 23; Muellner 1990: 87-89.

<sup>137</sup> In *Odyssey* 4, Menelaos, who has returned with Helen back to Sparta, is rather similar to Paris in his luxury, peaceful existence, and passivity. Presumably the subduing nature of sexual *eros* and *philotēs*, which dominate the body by relaxing the limbs and bringing on sleep, makes Paris unfit, as well as unwilling, to face the similar bodily harm that the warrior risks in battle. Cf. Pironti 2007 on the violence of desire (94-100), and on how sex and war afflicts the Homeric body in the same way (229-230).

<sup>138</sup> Both Akhaian and Trojan leaders connect male solidarity and manhood with martial bravery. Agamemnon exhorts his fellow soldiers: “Oh *philoī*, be men and keep a courageous heart” (ὦ φίλοι, ἀνέρες ἔστε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔλεσθε 5.529). Hektor later several times employs the same formula, slightly modified, when he tells the Trojans, “be men, *philoī*, and remember impetuous courage” (ἀνέρες ἔστε, φίλοι, μνήσασθε δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς 6.112 = 8.174 = 11.287 = 15.487).

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Felson and Slatkin 2004: 101-102 on the *Männerbund* as an Homeric social unit that is both alternative and parallel to the *oikos*. As I will discuss in Chapter 4, sec. 3, the bond of non-related warrior pairs is conceived of in the same terms as that of blood-brothers, as a metaphorical extension of the kinship relation.

<sup>140</sup> Van Wees 1992: 176-81.

men come into conflict, Nestor, like Priam, intervenes to confirm Agamemnon's authority.<sup>141</sup> When Antenor suggests removing Helen, Paris—in analogy to Agamemnon—finally seems to experience aggressive desire toward a rival. Paris insults and diminishes Antenor, proclaiming that the gods have taken away his wits (7.359-60), apparently regarding his own countryman as a more serious threat to his possession of Helen than the Akhaians. That is, he directs his aggression (such as it is) toward a Trojan, rather than at an enemy, demonstrating in the same moment both his dominance and divisiveness in Troy. Thus the poet marks Paris' behavior as not only unsocialized, but also antisocial.<sup>142</sup>

This negative evaluation of Paris, who in fact has what everyone else wants, in turn calls into question the worth of Helen as *casus belli*. Is having Helen really desirable if it means transformation into Paris? Thus this episode interrogates both the stakes and the premises of male aggression. At the same time, the duel's inconclusive ending guarantees that this aggression will continue. Book 3 as a whole makes clear that triangular desire, and the male conflict that it generates, is the very stuff of the *Iliad*'s narrative.<sup>143</sup> The aborted duel sets the stage for the beginning of battle narrative in books 4-5 and thus valorizes war as the subject of epic, even as it undermines its ethics.

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<sup>141</sup> Homer marks the parallelism between Nestor's and Priam's interventions by introducing each character's speech with the same formulaic line: "with kindly thoughts he spoke out and addressed them" (ὃ σφιν εὐφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπεν 1.253 = 7.367).

<sup>142</sup> Both Agamemnon and Akhilleus also display antisocial behavior when they come into conflict and destroy the Akhaian army's cohesion. Akhilleus is even more antisocial than Paris in the severity of the aggressive desire that he directs toward his own men, which is marked by his withdrawal and prayer that the Trojans temporarily crush the Akhaians (cf. Chapter 3, sections 2-4).

<sup>143</sup> Glaukos' story of his ancestor Bellerophon in book 6 confirms this conclusion. Glaukos' tale (6.152-95) constitutes a miniature epic narrative that is embedded within the poem's larger narrative. The hero Glaukos' identification with his ancestor Bellerophon—whom he invokes as proof of long-standing guest-friendship with Diomedes—suggests that the story of Bellerophon can be understood as a kind of alternative little *Iliad*, a parallel martial epic of an earlier heroic generation. Triangular desire is at the root of Bellerophon's heroic exploits, just as it is the *raison d'être* of his descendant Glaukos' participation in the Trojan War. When Proitos' wife Anteia falls in love with Bellerophon, he refuses her proposition. Anteia then tells Proitos that Bellerophon was the one who wanted to sleep with her. This arouses Proitos' aggressive desire to punish Bellerophon, and he drives him out of Ephyre to Lykia. Here Anteia's adulterous desire, like Helen's, is thematized as the problematic catalyst that creates the erotic triangle. At the same time, Glaukos introduces the story by saying that Proitos exiled Bellerophon "since he was much better" (ἐπεὶ πολὺ φέρτερος ἦεν 158)—an echo of the language used to describe the status of Agamemnon and Zeus in the book 1 erotic triangles—which makes Proitos' competitive homosocial desire the prime cause. Here again we see that sexual and aggressive desires are inextricable. When the Lykian king tries, in observance of Proitos' wishes, to send Bellerophon to his death, the young man performs three labors and survives an ambush. Ultimately, the Lykian king concedes and gives Bellerophon his daughter's hand in marriage. This is where Glaukos' story of Bellerophon ends; Bellerophon's marriage marks the annulment of male aggressive desire, and, consequently, the end of conflict, of heroic action, and of the epic narrative. Cf. MacCary 1982: 138-39, who calls this story "paradigmatic of the whole plot of the *Iliad*."

## 6. Aggressive and Sexual Desires at the Superplot's Violent Center

Book 3 ends with Agamemnon claiming victory for Menelaos after Paris' unexplained disappearance. Reiterating the terms agreed upon and reinscribing Helen as object of exchange between men, he demands the return of "Argive" Helen and the stolen possessions, as well as payment of recompense for their seizure (3.456-60). But both the epic tradition and the continuation of the *Iliad's* narrative require the reinitiation of conflict. In the Divine Council at the beginning of book 4, Zeus' suggestion that the gods allow Menelaos to take back Helen and thus preserve Troy from ruin is disingenuous, as the narrator makes clear when he says that Zeus is trying to provoke Hera by speaking "deviously" (παρὰβλήδην 4.6).<sup>144</sup> Instead of stopping the war, Zeus sends Athene to restart it; Athene convinces Pandaros to break the truce by shooting an arrow at Menelaos (4.74-126). Pandaros—a morally questionable Trojan archer—is a surrogate for Paris, and his wounding of Menelaos represents a second reenactment of Paris' original violation of Menelaos' household; Pandaros' shot once again expresses Paris' responsibility for initiating the Trojan War, but also by extension the Trojans' collective guilt in their support of Paris.<sup>145</sup>

While book 3 explores the desires and culpability of both Paris *and* Helen, book 4 reasserts the primacy of male desire and with it patriarchal control: a man started the conflict and the men will fight it out between themselves for supremacy. The narrative directs audience interest and sympathy away from Helen toward Menelaos, with graphic description of his injury and of Agamemnon's fear for his brother's life (4.130-182).<sup>146</sup> As Rabel notes, the audience actually experiences Pandaros' shot through three different focalizations: the narrator's, Agamemnon's, and then Menelaos'.<sup>147</sup> The poet's progressive shift to the Atreidai's emotionally-powerful points of view invites the audience to identify with Menelaos and Agamemnon.<sup>148</sup> Agamemnon's repeated emphasis on the Trojans' violation of their oath also directs the audience's moral evaluation. Despite knowledge of divine intervention, the audience is asked to see the Trojans in the wrong and the Akhaians in the right. Thus the poet encourages the audience to align its desire with Agamemnon's desire for revenge. The identification is strengthened as the audience observes at length the Akhaian preparation for battle and Agamemnon's own exhortation of the troops (4.222-421). Both armies advance, and finally, in book 4, line 457, the battle narrative begins.

<sup>144</sup> Kirk 1985: 331-332. Cf. Rabel 1997: 80-81.

<sup>145</sup> Whitman 1958: 268; Mueller 1984: 76; Postlethwaite 1985: 2-3; Taplin 1992: 103-105.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Chapter 4, sec. 3 for more on Agamemnon's reaction to Menelaos' injury.

<sup>147</sup> Rabel 1997: 80.

<sup>148</sup> The narrator's repeated apostrophe of Menelaos (4.127 and 146), which is then echoed by Agamemnon (4.155 and 189), further evokes the audience's sympathy for the hero. See Chapter 3, sec. 4 for explication of this same rhetorical tactic as it is applied to Patroklos in book 16.

The narrative center of the superplot (midway between books 3 and 7) is Diomedes' *aristeia* in book 5.<sup>149</sup> There Diomedes takes over from the Atreidai the role of chief representative of the Akhaian army, and much of the book is focalized through his perspective, as he wreaks havoc on the Trojan forces. If the beginning of the superplot represents the origin of the Trojan War and the background to the *Iliad*'s main plot, and book 6 represents the brutal consequences of both the war and the main plot (as I will explore in sec. 7 below), the superplot's middle is a kind of microcosm of the war itself and of the *Iliad*'s main plot. The narration of male heroism at the superplot's midpoint thus makes clear that male homosocial aggression is the substance of both the Trojan War story and the *Iliad*'s plot.

As a succinct preview or encapsulation of the main plot, this part of the superplot introduces both typical and specific language, scenes, and events that will reappear in the main plot's battle narratives (both the Great Day of Battle—itsself centrally located in the *Iliad*'s narrative in books 11-18—and Akhilleus' *aristeia*).<sup>150</sup> Here, making Diomedes the subject of verbs of desire, the poet indicates linguistically the aggressive desire that drives Iliadic heroes to fight with one another. The narrator says that Diomedes is “desirous in his heart to fight Trojans” (θυμῶ μεμαῶς Τρώεσσι μάχεσθαι 5.135), which (along with Athene's assurance) inspires him to “mix with the fore-fighters” (προμάχοισιν ἐμίχθη 134), in a joining that shares semantics with sexual consummation. Then again he is compared with a lion who is “very desirous” (ἐμμεμαῶς 142) to attack a sheep-fold. Later, the narrator describes how Diomedes “was always desiring to kill Aineas (ἴετο δ' αἰεὶ/ Αἰνεαυ κτεῖναι 434-35), whom he repeatedly attacks, “desiring to slay him” (κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων 436). This comprehensive vocabulary of aggressive desire, which I will explore in-depth in Chapter 4, sec. 1, appears throughout the *Iliad*'s battle narratives, but is used with particular frequency and force to describe Akhilleus' desire to kill Hektor in books 20-22.

Diomedes' encounter with Apollo represents an example of the superplot foreshadowing action of the main plot. Apollo is protecting the wounded Aineas, the object, as we have seen, of Diomedes' aggressive desire. Diomedes attacks Aineas and Apollo three times, and is thrice warded off by Apollo. At his fourth onrush, Diomedes is warned by Apollo not to try and fight on equal terms with a god, and he retreats (5.436-44).

This scene—and its formulaic language—is repeated twice in book 16 during Patroklos' *aristeia* in the main plot.<sup>151</sup> First, Patroklos three times attacks the walls of Troy, only to be repulsed by Apollo. On his fourth attack, Apollo orders Patroklos to stop because he is not fated to capture Troy, and he obeys (16.702-711). Roughly eighty lines later, Patroklos again attacks the Trojans three times, killing nine men in each sally. On his fourth assault, the narrator addresses Patroklos in a rare apostrophe, announcing, “then, Patroklos, the end of your life appeared” (ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι, Πάτροκλε, φάνη βίότοιο τελευτή 16.787). Death comes, as the repetition leads the audience to expect, in the form

<sup>149</sup> Whitman 1958: 265.

<sup>150</sup> Cf. Fenik 1968: 9-77.

<sup>151</sup> Cf. Whitman 1958: 167; Fenik 1968: 46-48; Leaf 1971: 224; Willcock 1978: 236; Kirk 1990: 106.

of Apollo, who deals the first blow to Patroklos personally (16.788-93). This scene of triple attack, with intervention by Apollo on the fourth try, first appears in book 5 as a prototype. There, in the case of Diomedes, its significance is established as a marker of the limits of human power. In book 16, it appears as a doublet, in both cases serving to circumscribe Patroklos' heroism, demarcating the boundaries of his achievements and his life in an episode that is pivotal to the main plot.<sup>152</sup>

Perhaps most importantly, Diomedes' *aristeia* in the superplot parallels and anticipates Akhilleus' *aristeia* in the main plot. Diomedes is called "the best of the Akhaians" and "the strongest of the Akhaians" in the superplot, while Akhilleus calls himself the "best of the Akhaians" in the main plot.<sup>153</sup> Both Diomedes and Akhilleus fight against gods during theomachies, and they both initially fail to subdue Hektor. Diomedes shrinks from engaging with Hektor when he sees Ares fighting at his side (5.596-606). In a last repetition of the quadruple-attack type scene in the main plot, Akhilleus repeatedly assaults Hektor, but Apollo veils Hektor in a mist, and Akhilleus is finally forced to concede that he is not able to conquer Hektor at that moment (20.445-54). This almost-encounter builds the audience's narrative desire for the two warriors' climactic single-combat in book 22, when Akhilleus does kill Hektor, in an act that spells doom for the Trojans. Although Diomedes does not and cannot deliver this fatal blow if the *Iliad*'s narrative is to continue,<sup>154</sup> Diomedes in the superplot represents the same problem for the Trojans that Akhilleus does in the main plot. The destruction that Diomedes threatens, Akhilleus will later fulfill; Diomedes is Akhilleus' male battlefield surrogate, as Helen is Akhilleus' female surrogate who doubles his role as subject of desire and producer of plot.<sup>155</sup> As Helenos tells Hektor, the fear Diomedes inspires in the Trojans is even greater than the terror inspired up to that point by Akhilleus himself (6.99-100).

Theomachy is another important element of book 5 that reappears in more extended form as part of the main plot in books 20-21, and which represents through immortal actors the *Iliad*'s connection between desire and violence. Significantly, the poet introduces Aphrodite as the first divinity to be implicated in the fighting. She enters the battlefield to save her injured son Aineas in an action parallel to her earlier rescue of Paris; the narrator describes her notice of Paris' and Aineas' distress in identical terms (3.374 = 5.312).<sup>156</sup> Aphrodite's intervention thus brings to mind Paris, Helen, and their desires for one another. Then Diomedes wounds Aphrodite's hand and addresses her with flyting words:

<sup>152</sup> See Chapter 3 sec. 4 for more detailed discussion of this episode and its narrative function.

<sup>153</sup> Diomedes: ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν (5.103); ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν (5.414); κάρτιστον Ἀχαιῶν (6.98). Akhilleus: ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν (1.244, 1.412, cf. 16.274). Akhilleus vies with Agamemnon to lay claim to this title in the main plot (for Agamemnon's boast to be "best of the Akhaians," see 1.91, 2.82). Cf. Nagy 1979: 26-34.

<sup>154</sup> Whitman 1958: 168 remarks that in book 5 "nothing is really done."

<sup>155</sup> For further observations on the relation between Diomedes and Akhilleus, see Bassett 1938: 216; Owen 1946: 47; Whitman 1958: 167; Reinhardt 1961: 124; Nagy 1979: 30-31; Edwards 1987: 198-99; Kirk 1990: 51; Rabel 1997: 90; and especially Loudon 2006: 14-30.

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Reinhardt 1961: 130-33.

“Yield, daughter of Zeus, from war and battle;  
 isn’t it sufficient that you beguile strengthless women?  
 But if you enter war, surely I think that you  
 will shudder at war, even if you hear it elsewhere.”

“εἶκε, Διὸς θύγατερ, πολέμου καὶ δηϊοτῆτος·  
 ἢ οὐχ ἄλις ὅττι γυναῖκας ἀνάλκιδας ἠπεροπέυεις;  
 εἰ δὲ σύ γ’ ἐς πόλεμον πωλήσῃαι, ἢ τέ σ’ οἴω  
 ῥιγῆσθαι πόλεμόν γε καὶ εἴ χ’ ἐτέρωθι πύθηαι” (5.348-51).

Diomedes’ taunt identifies Aphrodite as instigator of desire in women and further recalls Aphrodite’s encounter with Helen in book 3.<sup>157</sup> Athene’s subsequent mockery of the wounded Aphrodite repeats Diomedes’ idea (5.422-25); she suggests that Aphrodite pricked her finger on the pin of an Akhaian woman’s peplos as she was urging her to “follow” (σπέεσθαι) the Trojans, “with whom she is now terribly intimate” (τοὺς νῦν ἔκπαγλα φίλησε). Athene’s language echoes the earlier descriptions of Helen “following” Paris, and repeats Aphrodite’s own account of her intimacy with Helen in 3.415.<sup>158</sup> By reintroducing Aphrodite and her roles vis-à-vis Paris and Helen, Homer, even in the archetypal battle narrative, acknowledges sexual desire as the source of the conflict. After having done her damage, Aphrodite retreats to safety. Aphrodite herself (like Paris) is not a warrior, but she causes others to fight.<sup>159</sup> On the divine level, Aphrodite’s involvement has the ripple effect of drawing several other gods into the battle in succession: Apollo, then Ares, and finally Hera and Athene as well.

The superplot’s theomachy and its repetition in the main plot also offer the audience further insight into the similarity of sexual and aggressive desires, and their imbrication with one another. Pironti has observed the strong link between Aphrodite, whom the *Iliad* associates with sexual desire, and Ares, the god of war, in these episodes and elsewhere in early hexameter poetry.<sup>160</sup> In book 5, Diomedes (supported by Athene) wounds both gods in succession, and they both escape to Mt. Olympos to be healed and comforted. In fact, Aphrodite borrows Ares’ chariot to flee the battlefield. Similarly, in 21.391-433, Ares faces up against Athene, and she wounds him with a boulder. Aphrodite appears to rescue him and Athene pushes her to the ground and vaunts over the two of them. She calls Aphrodite the “ally” (ἐπίκουρος 431) of Ares. Thus not only do these gods have parallel experiences, both entering battle and exhibiting vulnerable

<sup>157</sup> Cf. T scholium *ad loc.* and Kirk 1990: 97.

<sup>158</sup> Kirk 1990: 105.

<sup>159</sup> I take Zeus’ subsequent gentle rebuke of Aphrodite (5.428-30) as an acknowledgment of the destructive role she has played. He tells her to leave “warlike deeds” (πολεμήϊα ἔργα) to Ares and Athene, and concern herself with her proper domain of “the lovely deeds of marriage” (ἡμερόεντα μετέρχεο ἔργα γάμοιο). His words follow and respond to Athene’s taunt that Aphrodite is always inciting Akhaian women to enter into adulterous relations with Trojans. Zeus here seems to be saying that Aphrodite has done enough damage, and his assertion of her role as a goddess of marriage perhaps has prescriptive force; she should be promoting marital bliss rather than its opposite. Cf. Pironti 2007: 221-222 and Breitenberger 2007: 27-30.

<sup>160</sup> Pironti 2007: 218-225.

bodies; they help each other whenever necessary. Other poems posit an even more intimate connection: Aphrodite and Ares appear as lovers in the Song of Demodokos in the *Odyssey* and in Hesiod they are spouses and co-parents of Fear, Rout, and Harmonia.<sup>161</sup> Within the *Iliad*, this close tie between Aphrodite and Ares personifies the working of the desires that generate the poem's narrative. Sexual desire breaks up legitimate unions, causing the man who has lost his partner to desire her back. That desire goes hand in hand with aggressive homosocial desire to dominate the rival. Thus the superplot indicates through divine epiphany how sexual desire leads to aggressive desire and how together they constitute conflict as well as heroic epic.<sup>162</sup>

## 7. War's Cost for Women and Children

Diomedes' pre-enactment in the superplot of Akhilleus' role in the main plot sets up the superplot's subsequent book 6 exploration of the main plot's (and Trojan War's) ultimate consequences. Diomedes' martial might creates a crisis for the Trojans. On the advice of the seer Helenos (6.86-98), Hektor returns to Troy to order the Trojan women to make prayers and offerings to Athene for her help against Diomedes. Diomedes is thus the device by which the poet shifts the narrative spatially to inside of the city and thematically to a consideration of war's effect on the Trojans.<sup>163</sup> Hektor's visit to Troy presages his own death and its consequences for his family and city.<sup>164</sup> Homer expresses these consequences most profoundly and effectively by introducing female subjects who speak and embody them. In Troy, Hektor meets a group of Trojan women, his mother Hekabe, and, his wife Andromakhe, who are all anxious about the danger posed by the Akhaians. Andromakhe enunciates fear and anguish at the fate that awaits her and her son Astyanax after Hektor's death, and in so doing emerges as the articulate emblem of the women and children of a defeated city.

Midway between his encounters with Hekabe and Andromakhe, Hektor meets his sister-in-law Helen and his brother Paris. With this scene, Homer asserts again the centrality of Helen and her desire to the war and its consequences. Helen reaffirms her identity as an adulteress who causes men to fight and is a source of epic, and thus as a counterpart to Akhilleus. She represents the female as agent, rather than victim, and emphasizes by contrast the Trojan women's lack of power.

During Diomedes' *aristeia*, the implied audience shares Diomedes' aggressive desire to destroy the Trojans, but the nature of the audience's desire changes in book 6.

<sup>161</sup> *Od.* 8.266-366 and *Theog.* 933-37.

<sup>162</sup> As discussed in the Introduction, sec. 4, the same vocabulary of desire is used to describe sexual desire (associated with Aphrodite) and desire for war (associated with Ares): the two gods are thus connected semantically and linguistically, as well as narratively.

<sup>163</sup> Cf. Morrison 1992: 63.

<sup>164</sup> Hektor and Andromakhe discuss the prospect of Hektor's death, and Andromakhe and her maidservants preemptively mourn Hektor (6.498-502). In addition, Hektor's return to the company and care of female relatives in Troy foreshadows the way that these same women will attend to his dead body in preparation for his funeral in book 24. Cf. Owen 1946: 61-63; Schein 1984: 168-69; Edwards 1987: 209; Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 98.

The eloquent voices of the Trojan women change the war's focalization, even as they keep the audience's narrative desire focused on Trojan death and suffering. The many predictions of Hektor's demise and of Andromakhe's pain and future enslavement create audience anticipation of these events, but it is a dreadful anticipation.<sup>165</sup> That is, as the narrative perspective shifts—at least temporarily—from the side of male Akhaian warriors to female Trojan civilians, Homer invites the audience to realign its sympathies and to consider how terrible an Akhaian victory would be for the Trojans. The audience now has the opportunity to re-evaluate the object of desire and to identify it as pitiable and full of *pathos*, in a narrative development that problematizes the war's and the poem's morality.

The narrative importance in book 1 of Khryseis and Briseis, female captives of Akhaian heroes, gestures already toward the issue of war's unpleasant consequences for women.<sup>166</sup> However, the poet really introduces the theme of war's cost for women and children beginning in book 2 and develops it throughout the superplot, preparing the audience for its culmination in *Iliad* 6.<sup>167</sup> This theme is a poetic foreshadowing of what is to come in the larger Trojan War story, beyond the bounds of the poem's narrative, but it also foretells death and suffering in the *Iliad*'s main plot. Its persistent repetition functions to intensify the audience's desire to understand more fully the nature of the war's consequences, and to plot out their actual occurrence in the *Iliad*.<sup>168</sup>

The linguistic leitmotif of this theme is the line-end formulaic phrase “wives and young children” (ἄλοχοι καὶ νήπια τέκνα) and its variants.<sup>169</sup> Agamemnon first employs this formula in his deceptive testing speech, with reference to the Akhaian wives and children at home awaiting the return of their men (2.136-37). But Nestor, as he tries to strengthen the Akhaian army's resolve, takes up the theme of female non-combatants with changed referent. He moves away from Agamemnon's picture of bereft Akhaian wives to an image of an enslaved Trojan wife. As discussed near the beginning of this chapter, Nestor encourages each man not to give up “until he has slept with the wife of a

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<sup>165</sup> Duckworth 1933: 53, 60.

<sup>166</sup> Arthur 1981: 24 sees Briseis, who is repeatedly called a “prize of honor” (*geras*), as “the symbol of the dehumanizing effects of war” in the *Iliad*. I agree that Briseis embodies these effects, but I would argue that book 1's almost exclusively male focalization keeps the audience from truly considering the horror and suffering to which she is presumably subjected. Briseis briefly emerges as a focalizer of female *pathos* in 19.287-300, when she delivers a moving lament over the body of Patroklos that expresses her pain and narrates the history of her enslavement (cf. Chapter 3, sec. 6). The other slave-women join in her mourning, publicly lamenting Patroklos but privately bewailing their own misfortunes, as the narrator discloses (19.301-02).

<sup>167</sup> Arthur 1981: 25-26 notes this theme and cites several of the following passages, but does not follow the details of the theme's progressive development.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Duckworth 1933: 60.

<sup>169</sup> This exact formula appears first in nominative (2.136) and then accusative (6.95, 276, 310, 17.233). Its highest frequency is in book 6. A variant of this formula is “dear wives and young children” (ἀλόχους τε φίλας καὶ νήπια τέκνα), which appears in nominative and accusative plural (4.238, 18.514, cf. 24.730) and in singular with the “children” (τέκνα) replaced by “son” (υἱόν) (5.688, 6.366, cf. 5.480). The tendency for “wife” and “wives” to appear half-way through the second or third foot elsewhere in the *Iliad* as well may have suggested this theme to an ear schooled in the oral-formulaic style.



Trojan man” (πρίν τινα πὰρ Τρώων ἀλόχῳ κατακοιμηθῆναι 2.355). With this exhortation, Nestor introduces the idea of the future victimization of Trojan women (and their children), which will become the dominant focus and expression of the theme of war’s civilian cost.<sup>170</sup>

During the oath-taking prior to Paris and Menelaos’ duel, both Akhaian and Trojan soldiers pray to the gods to punish *both* those who break the truce *and* their families: “let the brains of them and their children run to the ground like wine, and let their wives be subdued by others” (ὣδὲ σφ’ ἐγκέφαλος χαμάδις ῥέοι ὡς ὄδε οἶνος/ αὐτῶν καὶ τεκέων, ἄλοχοι δ’ ἄλλοισι δαμῆεν 3.300-301). After Pandaros shoots Menelaos in violation of the truce, the audience can retroactively associate this curse with the Trojans. Agamemnon’s own reaction supports this retrospective assignment; he twice asserts that Zeus will bring justice down on the heads of Trojan men, women, and children for the oathbreaking (4.160-162, 235-39). Specifically, he promises the Akhaians that vultures will eat the Trojan men’s flesh, and that “we will lead away their dear wives and young children in ships, when we sack the city” (ἡμεῖς αὖτ’ ἀλόχους τε φίλας καὶ νήπια τέκνα/ ἄξομεν ἐν νήεσσιν, ἐπήν πτολίεθρον ἔλωμεν 4.238-39). Here Agamemnon imagines Trojan women and children as displaced captives at the end of the Trojan War. As the Trojans’ forces are being worsted in battle, the Trojan ally Sarpedon reminds Hektor of this outcome when he urges Hektor to order his men to stand strong and “defend their wives” (ἀμυνόμεναι ὥρεσσι 5.486).

In the battle narrative at the beginning of book 6, Agamemnon once more reminds the audience of the suffering that awaits all the Trojans when he encourages Menelaos *not* to take Adrestos for ransom. Agamemnon tells Menelaos that after what the Trojans have done to him, none of them should escape a harsh doom, “not even the male child that a mother carries in her womb” (μηδ’ ὄν τινα γαστέρι μήτηρ/ κοῦρον ἐόντα φέροι 6.58-59). Helenos’ advice to Hektor a few lines later sounds from the audience’s perspective like a direct response to Agamemnon’s threats. Helenos suggests that Hektor order the Trojan women to promise Athene a rich sacrifice “if she should take pity on the city and the Trojans’ wives and young children” (αἶ κ’ ἐλεήσῃ/ ἄστυ τε καὶ Τρώων ἀλόχους καὶ νήπια τέκνα) and hold back Diomedes from Troy (6.86-101). The language of this prayer acknowledges the grave danger facing the Trojan women and children. Hektor’s decision to follow through with Helenos’ advice sets the stage for further treatment of this theme inside the walls of Troy.

When Hektor enters the city he is confronted bodily by the women of Troy. The “Trojans’ wives and daughters” (Τρώων ἄλοχοι...ἠδὲ θύγατρεις) throng around him in

<sup>170</sup> Trojan women are not, however, the exclusive referents for this theme. Dione, Aphrodite’s mother, threatens Diomedes’ wife with bereavement and longing, should Diomedes continue to fight with the gods (5.410-415). Sarpedon talks of how he “left behind his dear wife and young son” (ἄλοχόν τε φίλην ἔλιπον καὶ νήπιον υἱόν 5.480) to come to Troy, and begs for Hektor’s help after he is wounded, so that he can once again “delight his dear wife and young son” (εὐφρανέειν ἄλοχόν τε φίλην καὶ νήπιον υἱόν 5.688). These instances, as well as Agamemnon’s invocation of the Akhaian wives and children, are about family members left behind at home, who suffer in the absence of their men-folk. They, however, are relatively safe and secure, far from danger. Their situation is not as dire as that of the Trojans, who face death, rape, and enslavement if they lose the war, since they are inhabitants of a besieged city. Homer’s choice to focus on the plight of Trojan civilians undermines the heroic aggrandizement of aggressive male homosociality.

order to ask about their “sons, brothers, kinsmen, and husbands” (6.238-40). The poet has concretized in a collective body the women who were before abstract concepts; even more, he has revealed in a dramatic way their subjectivities, their anxious eagerness and concern for their male intimates on the battlefield. Only after *showing* their interiority, does the narrator *tell* it to drive home the point: “and cares gripped many women” (πολλῆσι δὲ κήδε’ ἐφῆπτο 6.241).<sup>171</sup> Hektor enjoins them all to pray to the gods.

With this first powerful view of the actual Trojan women, undifferentiated in a group, Homer expresses the universality of the female suffering present and to come. With regard to their common experience and shared fate as women of a besieged city, all the Trojan women are alike. Of course here the poet only focuses on the women’s worry regarding the welfare of their menfolk, not their own wellbeing. Nevertheless, the treatment of the theme earlier in the superplot has securely linked the fortunes of Trojan men with those of Trojan women and children, with the result that the audience can connect the women’s anxiety to the uncertainty of their own futures as well.

The next scene, Hektor’s encounter with Hekabe, represents a specific exploration of what initially has been portrayed in generality.<sup>172</sup> Hektor meets Hekabe together with Laodike (6.251-52): they are individual embodiments of the “Trojans’ wives and daughters.”<sup>173</sup> Even more importantly, Hekabe is the paradigmatic Trojan mother, concerned for her son Hektor, the paradigmatic Trojan warrior. She is solicitous about his wellbeing, worrying that the Akhaisians are “wearing down” (τείρουσι) the Trojans, fretting about his battle-weariness, and offering him wine for rejuvenation (6.255-262). She acknowledges the threat of the situation with her suggestion that Hektor pray and pour libations to Zeus (256-60). Her direct speech is an unmediated and detailed expansion of the Trojan women’s collective reported speech. It further illuminates for the audience the women’s mindset.

Hektor replies to Hekabe, as he did to the group of women, with an admonition that she, together with other older women, pray to the gods. However, this time his instructions are specific: he repeats Helenos’ directive for the women to pray to Athene that she might “take pity on the city and the Trojans’ wives and young children” (6.275-276). In this way Hektor reminds both Hekabe and the audience that the security of all Troy’s inhabitants is at stake.

After Hektor leaves to summon Paris to the battlefield, Hekabe immediately begins fulfilling his commands, preparing the enterprise and gathering the other women (6.286-96). Together the Trojan women enter Athene’s temple, led by Athene’s priestess Theano, who is identified as “the wife of horse-taming Antenor” (ἄλοχος Ἀντήνορος ἱπποδάμοιο 6.299). Here too, the poet takes pains to label Theano as one of the

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 146 on this formulaic phrase, which “ties men to death” and in this instance, women to grief.

<sup>172</sup> Schadewalt 1944: 212 recognizes this progression and identifies it as a typical Homeric narrative technique.

<sup>173</sup> This to me explains the mention of Laodike and her description as “best in form of her daughters” (θυγατρῶν εἶδος ἀρίστην 6.252). Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 194 think that Laodike reminds the audience of Helen, whom Hektor is soon to visit. *Contra* Kirk 1990: 194, who says that Laodike “adds nothing here.”

“Trojans’ wives,” as emblematic of the whole. Theano is the woman who actually addresses Athene, in a third and final repetition of Helenos’ original words, but with a twist. She promises the goddess sacrifice if she will “take pity on the city and the Trojans’ wives and young children” by breaking the spear of Diomedes and making him fall prone before the Skaian Gates (305-310). This last variation, unlike Helenos’ and Hektor’s rehearsals, is the real thing, a speech-act directed at Athene. And the speaking subject is female, a Trojan wife, a representative of the women and children for whose sake the prayer is being made. Instead of asking merely for Diomedes to be turned away, Theano prays for his death in vivid terms, thus expressing powerfully her desire for the threatening enemy to be destroyed.<sup>174</sup> Theano’s words are therefore a narrative culmination that focuses audience attention directly on the fate of the Trojan women and on their subjective experience.

The first part of book 6 dwells repeatedly on the Trojans’ plan to supplicate Athene and its execution, only to have the narrator immediately announce its failure (6.311). Even before this definitive judgment, the audience must know that the offering to Athene will be a futile gesture. Book 5 has provided ample evidence that Athene is on Diomedes’ and the Akhaians’ side. To make matters worse, the women offer Athene a suspect gift. They give her a Sidonian peplos that was brought to Troy by the prime offenders, Paris and Helen (6.289-92),<sup>175</sup> and, moreover, the focus on women’s textile work and the description of the peplos as “greatest” (μέγιστος 6.90, 271, 294) calls to mind Helen’s own “great” tapestry and its signification of Helen’s agency as *casus belli*. Moreover, the implied audience would know from the epic tradition that Diomedes does not die at Troy.<sup>176</sup> It would also know that Diomedes is not the real threat to the city; he has no especially impactful role in the traditional story of Troy’s fall. The Trojans are thus worrying about the wrong hero as well as invoking the wrong god in the wrong way.<sup>177</sup> However, the pointlessness of the Trojan women’s prayer vis-à-vis Diomedes effectively suggests the ineluctability of their future misery at the hands of Akhilleus. Here the superplot’s use of dramatic irony makes the audience consider the Trojans’ impending doom even more carefully.<sup>178</sup>

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Morrison 1991: 152-57 for a different view on how Theano’s prayer functions in the narrative and why it differs from Helenos’ original injunction.

<sup>175</sup> Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 101 remark that the peplos is “unlikely to please the goddess.”

<sup>176</sup> Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 164.

<sup>177</sup> While, from a synoptic perspective, Diomedes has an important structural function in the *Iliad* as a precursor of Akhilleus, from a diachronic viewpoint that follows the narrative’s linear progression, he is a digressive character. He distracts attention away from Akhilleus and replaces him in the audience’s consciousness, as well as in the Trojans’ consciousness. Diomedes’ plot supersedes Akhilleus’ plot. Perhaps indicative of this are the references to Diomedes’ father Tydeus and his heroic role in the Theban Cycle (4.370-400; 5.124-26; 5.800-13; 6.222-23). Tydeus belongs to an epic tradition different than the Trojan Cycle. Diomedes’ constant identification by his patronymic, and other characters’ practice of urging him not to fall short of his father’s example serve to underline how he is not properly the main hero of the *Iliad*.

<sup>178</sup> As Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 25 observe, book 6’s tension comes “from a stark contrast between what the audience know will happen to the city and what the characters inside it fear and hope.” Cf. Duckworth 1933: 75-77 on types of “dramatic” or “prophetic” irony.

I will now pass over for the time being Hektor's visit to Paris and Helen, and discuss first his encounter with Andromakhe, which represents the climax of book 6 and the theme of war's cost for women and children. Hektor tells Helen that he is going to his house in order to see his "servants, dear wife, and young son" (οἰκῆας ἄλοχον τε φίλην καὶ νήπιον υἷόν 6.366). His words adapt the formula that has been used repeatedly to describe the Trojan women and children, changing it to the singular, and thus immediately identify Andromakhe and Astyanax as particular examples of the group. When Hektor searches for Andromakhe in his own home, she is not there (6.370-71). He enquires of the maidservants whether she is with her sisters-in-law or with the women who have gone to pray to Athene (6.377-80). Hektor's question again associates Andromakhe with the corporate body of Trojan women, and with their futile appeal to the goddess. The housekeeper's answer affirms in turn that Andromakhe shares the Trojan women's concerns, but also marks her out as distinct. The housekeeper says that Andromakhe has gone to the wall of the city "because she heard that the Trojans were being worn down" (οὔνεκ' ἄκουσε/ τεῖρεσθαι Τρῳᾶς 6.387). Her language describing Andromakhe's motivation echoes Hekabe's own apprehension that the Akhaians were "wearing down" (τείρουσι) the Trojans in battle, and thus links the psychologies of Hektor's wife and mother. Yet Andromakhe is *not* with Hekabe on the mission to Athene. She has stepped out of the homogenous group of women, and away from normal female activities and locations.<sup>179</sup> Already before the audience meets her in the narrative, Andromakhe is distinguished as an extraordinary representative of the women.

Andromakhe is also unlike the other Trojan women in that she is accompanied by her baby child and his nurse, as both the narrator and the housekeeper take care to point out from the beginning of the episode (6.372, 389). In fact, when Hektor finally finds them at the Skaian Gate, the narrator gives Astyanax a lyrical introduction that is almost as long as the preceding description of his mother's origins (6.395-403).<sup>180</sup> When she appeals for Hektor to not risk his life in battle, Andromakhe invokes the possible suffering of Astyanax as well as of herself. Her statement of her own resourcelessness in Hektor's absence is framed, in ring composition, with a plea for him to care for the fate of his wife *and* child. She starts by accusing Hektor, "you do not pity your young child and ill-fated me, who soon will be your widow" (οὐδ' ἐλεαίρεις/ παῖδά τε ναηπίαχον καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον, ἢ τάχα χήρη/ σεῦ ἔσομαι 6.407-409), and she ends with the entreaty, "but come now, take pity and remain here at the gate, do not make your child an orphan and your wife a widow" (ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἐλέαιρε καὶ αὐτοῦ μίμν' ἐπὶ πύργῳ, / μὴ παῖδ' ὀρφανικὸν θήης χήρην τε γυναῖκα 6.431-32). In both of Andromakhe's sentences, woman and child are clustered together in one line, a grouping that is again reminiscent of the formulaic phrase "wives and young children" (ἄλοχοι καὶ νήπια τέκνα). These linguistic echoes, the inclusion of Astyanax in this scene, and the way this encounter between Hektor and Andromakhe is positioned as an expanded narrative capstone to Hektor's time in Troy, point to the conclusion that Andromakhe and her son should be

<sup>179</sup> Arthur 1981: 30.

<sup>180</sup> I think that Schadewalt 1944: 222 is mistaken when he describes Astyanax's later crying, which provokes Hektor's and Andromakhe's tenderness (6.466-93), as an unexpected twist—the unforeseen introduction of a third party—since the poet pointedly marks Astyanax's presence throughout the scene.

understood not only as examples of the Trojan women and children, but also as their poetic paradigms. Through the articulate and passionate Andromakhe and through the baby Astyanax, Homer will most specifically, clearly, and movingly express the theme of the war's consequences for helpless civilians.

In the beginning of this episode, the housekeeper describes Andromakhe rushing to the city wall “like a madwoman” (μαينوμένη ἔϊκυῖα 6.389). This characterization indicates at the same time her dislocation from her usual activities and her fierce desire for Hektor, who has been separated from her by war.<sup>181</sup> She runs toward the battlefield in order to find him, to connect with him; her desire is what creates this dramatic scene. In fact, Andromakhe's desire itself constitutes one aspect of war's cost for women, since longing and its concomitant loneliness are characterized by suffering: the Trojan women, desirous of news regarding their male relatives, are beset by cares (6.241) and Andromakhe addresses her husband in tears (6.405). Andromakhe's desire also attracts the audience, whose own desire is channeled in sympathy and identification with this representative Trojan wife. The poet prolongs the audience's, Andromakhe's, and even Hektor's desires—creating suspense—by delaying the meeting of husband and wife as they search for each other.<sup>182</sup>

The meeting, however, does finally occur, and it represents an (albeit brief) satisfaction of Andromakhe's desire. Andromakhe clings to this unification, and the point of her discourse is to prevent her separation from Hektor. Above all, she wants to prevent the final separation caused by Hektor's death, which she predicts in the beginning of her speech (6.408-12). She tells Hektor that final separation from him will sentence her to lack of “warmth” (θάλπωρή) and “grief” (ἄχρεῖ) (411-413), symptoms of desire. Andromakhe is the only Trojan woman besides Helen to express her own anguish and desire. Andromakhe's impassioned voice is what makes the theme of war's cost come alive for the audience and catch its attention.

Andromakhe then recounts how Akhilleus killed her father Eëtion and all seven of her brothers, and sold her mother for ransom during his sack of Thebe (6.411-430). This is not your usual battle narrative. As Minchin explains, “This story is not about warfare, as are Nestor's tales, but about its social consequences. This is a woman's view of war, the destroyer of families.”<sup>183</sup> Her speech's argument function is to assert her utter reliance on Hektor in the absence of other familial support. She goes on to say that Hektor is “father, mother, brother, and flowering husband” to her (6.429-30). But her speech's key function is to remind the audience that war—particularly as personified by Akhilleus—brings death to men and concomitant suffering to women.<sup>184</sup> Akhilleus' killing of all of

<sup>181</sup> Cf. Schadewalt 1944: 216 and Arthur 1981: 30. The poet uses the same verb (with an added prefix) earlier in book 6 to describe Anteia's desire for Bellerophonotes: τῶ δὲ γυνῆ Προΐτου ἐπεμήνατο, δῖ' Ἄντεια (6.160).

<sup>182</sup> Schadewalt 1944: 215-16.

<sup>183</sup> Minchin 2007: 263.

<sup>184</sup> For the terms “argument function” and “key function,” cf. de Jong 2001: xii and xv, and Chapter 1, sec. 4. As Kakridis 1949: 50 first recognized, Homer employs the “scale of affections” motif when Andromakhe marks out Hektor as her closest intimate, who takes the place of all the others. But the poet modifies the traditional theme to emphasize Andromakhe's bereavement: she loves Hektor best because he is the only one left. Contrast the function of Andromakhe's reminiscence with Helen's memory of Sparta; she

Andromakhe's male natal kin foreshadows for a second time in Andromakhe's speech and in more specific terms Akhilleus' killing of Hektor in the main plot and her subsequent grief.<sup>185</sup> In this way, the superplot once again prefigures the key events of the main plot as part of its encapsulation of the entire *Iliad*. Here the direct foreshadowing of Hektor's death and its consequences functions to arouse the audience's expectation and desire to find out the mode and circumstances of Hektor's defeat,<sup>186</sup> while also elucidating the horror of that desired object and complicating the morality of all of the poem's succeeding battle narratives.

But the story of Akhilleus taking Andromakhe's mother captive looks even further into the future, after the events of the *Iliad*. It suggests to a knowledgeable audience the epic tradition of Andromakhe's own sexual enslavement to Akhilleus' son Neoptolemos; Andromakhe's fate will be even worse than her mother's because she will have no family to redeem her with ransom.<sup>187</sup> In this way the superplot extends its range beyond the bounds of the *Iliad*'s narrative to the sack of Troy and its aftermath. And it extends its treatment of war's cost on women from the psychological to the physical, from bereavement to displacement, rape, and servitude. Once again Homer uses dramatic irony—the discrepancy between Andromakhe's limited knowledge and the audience's familiarity with the traditional story—to accentuate the emotional force of the narrative.

Hektor's answering speech confirms his own trajectory toward death and also provides a more explicit view of Andromakhe's future slavery. He asserts that he will not refrain from fighting on the front lines because of his sense of shame, his internalized habit of bravery, and his desire for fame (6.441-46). That is, Hektor shows that he, unlike his brother Paris, has been socialized to conform to heroic norms of behavior. Although, like Paris, he is not motivated by aggressive desire toward other men, he will fight because he feels that it is what he ought to do and for glory (*kleos*).<sup>188</sup> He will fight even knowing that it will lead to his own death and Troy's fall (6.447-449) and perhaps it is *because* of this knowledge that he feels compelled to strive for fame.<sup>189</sup> While he dreads

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longingly thinks of the past in a moment when she renounces her second marriage with Paris, Hektor's brother.

<sup>185</sup> This foreshadowing may be especially obvious to the implied audience if it is meant to know from the epic tradition that Akhilleus kills Hektor. The contrast between Akhilleus' famous defilement of Hektor's corpse and his respectful burial of Eëtion (Owen 1946: 68-69; Edwards 1987: 210; Kirk 1990: 214; Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 196-98) makes Andromakhe's story even more marked by dramatic irony for an audience who is familiar with Hektor's fate. Kirk 1990: 214 tracks the ways in which Andromakhe's response to Hektor's death in 22.477-514 echoes her speech here in book 6. See especially Lohmann 1988: 63-69 and Taplin 1992: 126-27 for the relation between Andromakhe in book 6 and book 22.

<sup>186</sup> Kakridis 1949: 56.

<sup>187</sup> Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 45, 200. Proclus records that in the *Sack of Ilion*, Neoptolemos received Andromakhe as his war-prize (West 2003: 146-47). What happens afterwards is dramatized by Euripides in the *Andromakhe*.

<sup>188</sup> Cf. Schein 1984: 178. Hektor has nothing to gain from other men but renown: he already has a wife and son, and he is the heir-apparent to the Trojan throne.

<sup>189</sup> Taplin 1992: 121-22.

Andromakhe's suffering more than anything else (6.450-55), Hektor's desire for *kleos* is greater than and incompatible with his marital union.<sup>190</sup>

Hektor then predicts the conditions of Andromakhe's servitude after the sack of Troy with details that recall first of all Khryseis, Agamemnon's spear-won concubine of book 1. Already Andromakhe's origin as princess of Thebe and her description of Akhilleus' sack of the city connects her to Khryseis, whom Akhilleus says he captured when he took Thebe (1.366-69). In his threatening words to her father Khryses, Agamemnon promises that Khryseis will be his slave at home in Argos, working the loom and serving his bed (1.30-31). Hektor paints a similar but more expanded picture when he suggests that Andromakhe will end up weaving and carrying water as a slave in Argos or another Akhaian city against her will and compelled by hard necessity (6.456-58). While Hektor does not explicitly mention rape, he gestures obliquely toward it when he says he would like to die before he perceives Andromakhe "shouting and being dragged away" (οῆς τε βοῆς σοῦ θ' ἔλκηθοῖο 6.465). Not only does Hektor go into more detail than Agamemnon, but he also acknowledges Andromakhe's interiority, her forced suffering: he grants her subjectivity. Khryseis escapes prolonged concubinage in Argos, since her father—backed by Apollo—forces her return, but both Hektor and Andromakhe know that without surviving relatives she can expect no such intervention. Hektor's words thus make Andromakhe the fully fleshed-out paradigm of the female war captive, just as she is the paradigmatic Trojan wife.

Andromakhe's identity as prime emblem for female concubinage is confirmed by language that also connects her to Briseis in book 1.<sup>191</sup> Hektor's description of how an Akhaian man will "lead you crying, having taken away your day of freedom" (δακρύνουσάν ἄγεται, ἐλεύθερον ἡμᾶρ ἀπούρας 6.455) recalls Agamemnon's embassy that took Briseis away from Akhilleus' tent. The verb "to lead" (ἄγω) is employed several times to describe Briseis' removal (1.323, 338, 347), and the line-end position of ἀπούρας evokes the full-line formula repeatedly used to describe Agamemnon's overreaching act: ἠτίμησεν· ἐλῶν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας (1.356 = 1.507 = 2.240). In addition, the picture of Andromakhe as "very unwilling" (πόλλ' ἀεκαξομένη 6.458) reminds the audience of its brief glimpse of Briseis' subjectivity as she is led away from Akhilleus: the narrator says that she went with the heralds "unwillingly" (ἀέκουσ' 1.348). Briseis' identity as Akhilleus' concubine once again reminds the audience that Andromakhe will in fact be the captive of Akhilleus' son, Neoptolemos, in a neat parallel.

In the last part of Hektor and Andromakhe's meeting, the narrative focus shifts from parents to child. Hektor takes Astyanax in his arms, and the boy starts crying in fright at the nodding of Hektor's helmet crest (6.466-470). Astyanax's alarm, while here unnecessary, evokes a future moment when a similarly-attired Akhaian soldier will threaten real harm. It calls to mind how innocent children can become victims of war, just like their mothers. Astyanax's reaction—symbolically representing war's cost for

<sup>190</sup> Schadewalt 1944: 218; Arthur 1981: 37; Lohmann 1988: 45-47. Cf. Clarke 1978: 395, n. 37 for a frank analysis of Hektor's failure to display conjugal love for Andromakhe.

<sup>191</sup> Cf. Dué 2002: 12-14, 67-73 for comparison between Briseis (based especially on the autobiography contained in her book 19 lament) and Andromakhe. I will discuss Briseis' lament in Chapter 3, sec. 6.

children—also serves to persuade Hektor, just for a moment, to renounce his aggressive homosociality and become one with his family: he laughs with his wife and takes off his helmet (6.471-72).<sup>192</sup>

But Hektor's next words indicate that he has not really changed and that he does not really understand Andromakhe's anguish. He utters a prayer that his son will become an even better warrior than he, killing an enemy and delighting his mother with the bloody spoils (6.476-81). Hektor wants his son to participate and excel in the same fatal male homosocial system that Andromakhe abhors. His idea that Astyanax's martial success would cause Andromakhe joy seems like a pure projection that does not reflect what we have learned of Andromakhe's subjectivity.<sup>193</sup> Perhaps this is why, after Hektor's prayer, the narrator describes her "tearfully laughing" (δακρύνειν γέλασσα 6.484) instead of simply laughing, as she was before. Hektor's words, more than anything, confirm the inevitability of his own death and of his family's suffering. Moreover, to an audience familiar with the traditions of Astyanax's death, Hektor's prayer is ripe with dramatic irony. According to the early epic tradition, Astyanax is killed during the sack of Troy by being hurled from the walls of the city.<sup>194</sup> Thus Hektor's misguided prayer suggests its opposite to a knowledgeable audience, reinforcing the theme of war's consequences for children.<sup>195</sup>

Hektor then prepares to leave Andromakhe, offering ominous words of false comfort. Although he is returning to the battlefield, he tells her not to grieve because "no man in excess of fate will send me to Hades" (οὐ γὰρ τίς μ' ὑπὲρ αἴσαν ἀνὴρ Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν 6.487). These words are hardly reassuring to Andromakhe, but to the perceptive listener they are even worse. The formula "will send to Hades" (Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν) repeats the end of line 3 of the *Iliad*'s proem, which promises the deaths of "many strong souls of heroes."<sup>196</sup> Hektor here inadvertently suggests once again that he will be one of the heroic dead. Andromakhe is not consoled. When Hektor puts back on his helmet and returns to war, this separation renews Andromakhe's desire for her husband, and she once again cries and even leads her serving-women in lament (γόον), compelled by the intuition that their parting will be final (6.496-502).<sup>197</sup> After Hektor is actually killed in the main plot, the narrator returns to Andromakhe's desire—never again

<sup>192</sup> Schadewalt 1944: 223. Cf. Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 215-16.

<sup>193</sup> As Schadewalt 1944: 219 observes, Andromakhe is nothing like a Spartan wife or mother who urges on her husband or son into battle.

<sup>194</sup> Edwards 1987: 211. Neoptolemos throws him off the wall in the *Little Iliad* (fr. 18 and 29 West) and Proclus records that Odysseus throws him off in the *Sack of Troy* (West 2003: 146). Cf. Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 213-214.

<sup>195</sup> *Contra* Morrison 1992: 70, who argues that Hektor's hopeful prayer for Astyanax and the narrator's lack of comment on whether or not it will be fulfilled make the audience question its traditional knowledge: "the narrator allows the audience to consider these contradictory pictures."

<sup>196</sup> Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 221.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. Dione's warning to Diomedes in book 5, where she imagines Diomedes's wife waking up the household "lamenting" (γοόωσα) in her "desire" (ποθέουσα) for her dead husband (5.413-414).



to be fulfilled—and describes it in similar terms.<sup>198</sup> The *Iliad* concludes only when Andromakhe’s desire comes as close as possible to being satisfied, when she is able to again hold the dead Hektor’s head in her arms and formally mourn over his body (24.723-45).<sup>199</sup>

Before Hektor meets Andromakhe in book 6, he pays a visit to Paris and Helen, in a scene that reaffirms Helen’s agency and destructive desire, and positions her as a foil to Andromakhe. Hektor finds his brother and sister-in-law in their bedchamber, where Helen is supervising her handmaidens’ weaving (6.321-24). Paris and Helen are in the same place where the poet left them in book 3, and so this episode immediately calls to mind their previous sex scene and the narrative exploration of their desires that caused the Trojan War. Moreover, the women’s weaving reminds the audience of Helen’s own tapestry, which symbolizes her agency as a creator of both conflict and poetry.<sup>200</sup> Hektor’s first words are a rebuke to Paris for not participating in a war that is being fought for his sake (σέο δ’ εἵνεκα 6.328).<sup>201</sup> Hektor thus comments on Paris’ lack of aggressive homosocial desire in the context of his *eros* for Helen, in a repetition of book 3. In this way, the episode’s beginning reintroduces the key elements of the earlier portrayal of Paris and Helen, and positions the two of them together as *casus belli*.<sup>202</sup>

This episode continues, however, to develop the idea that Helen in particular makes men fight. In his conciliatory reply to Hektor, Paris says that Helen, with soft persuasive words, has been “urging him to war” (ὄρμησ’ ἐς πόλεμον 6.338), and that he intends to rejoin the battle. Hektor also orders Helen to urge Paris on (σύ γ’ ὄρυσθι τοῦτον 6.363), and at the end of book 6 Paris does indeed sally forth (6.503-14). Book 6 emphasizes Helen’s agency in causing male conflict by making Helen the catalyst that pushes even Paris into mortal combat.

In addition, Helen’s own words in book 6 once again bring up the spectre of her dangerous desire. Worman calls Helen’s speech to Hektor—termed “honeyed words” (μύθοισι μελιχίοισι 6.343) by the narrator—“a delicate seduction.”<sup>203</sup> In a few words (6.343-58), Helen acknowledges and then renounces her desire for Paris, only to imply subtly that she is interested in Hektor instead. First, echoing her speech to Priam during the Teichoskopia, Helen abuses herself and wishes that she had died before “these deeds happened” (τάδε ἔργα γενέσθαι), i.e. before she ran away with Paris. She even calls

<sup>198</sup> In book 22, Andromakhe speaks of her own and Astyanax’s sad futures while “lamenting” (γοόωσα) with the Trojan women (22.476). In the main plot, as in the superplot, the description of Andromakhe’s anguish over Hektor is preceded by the treatment of his mother Hekabe’s distress (22.405-436). Cf. Lohmann 1988: 63-69 and Chapter 4, sec. 4.

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Chapter 4, sec. 5.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 169.

<sup>201</sup> Hektor tells Paris to come and fight before the city burns (6.328-31), reminding the audience yet again of Troy’s ineluctable fate. Cf. Kirk 1990: 202-203.

<sup>202</sup> As Taplin 1992: 118 writes, “Helen is still the same half-wife in a half-home with a man whom she half-loves and half-wishes would go out and get killed.”

<sup>203</sup> Worman 2001: 27. Worman explains, “Both Nestor and the Sirens also speak in a honeyed manner, so that the term delimits a range of speech types from the authoritatively but gently persuasive to the dangerously seductive.”

herself an “evil-working, chilling bitch” (κυνὸς κακομηχάνου ὀκρυόεσσης), thus suggesting the “deadly” consequences of her desire.<sup>204</sup> Then she says she wishes that she had a better husband who was better socialized—“who knew people’s *nemesis* and many reproaches” (ὄς ἤδη νέμεσίν τε καὶ αἴσχεα πόλλ’ ἀνθρώπων). Helen’s stated desire for a better husband recalls her taunt to Paris that her former husband Menelaos might actually be a better warrior than he (3.430-36).<sup>205</sup> Furthermore, as Arthur first noted, Helen’s description of her ideal husband sounds like Hektor, especially as he presents himself in the following scene with Andromakhe.<sup>206</sup> Helen then makes her meaning more obvious by inviting Hektor to rest from his labor (πόνος)—which she says her own and Paris’ recklessness caused—by taking a seat (δίφρος). This is the same chair that Aphrodite pulled up for Helen right before Helen went to bed with Paris (3.424-25), and it is a chair that seats two.<sup>207</sup> Helen’s flirtation reminds the audience of the shiftiness of her desire, and the threat its inconstancy presents for the wellbeing of the poem’s characters, and especially Hektor, his family, and the rest of the city.<sup>208</sup> In essence, Helen, as cause of war, is analogous to Akhilleus in the danger she poses for the Trojans.<sup>209</sup> Hektor’s meeting with Helen thus represents another poetic meditation on the future destruction of Troy, and Helen’s quasi-seduction of Hektor is a counterpart to Andromakhe’s subsequent words about Akhilleus’ murderous capacities.

Helen ends her speech with an unexpected defense of her and Paris’ behavior. She asserts that Zeus ordained their “evil destiny” so that “even in later times we will be a subject of song for future people” (ὡς καὶ ὀπίσσω / ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ’ αἰοίδιμοι ἔσσομένοισι 6.357-58). Here most explicitly Homer presents Helen as a self-conscious creator of epic poetry; her adultery is part of Zeus’ will, designed to provide material for future song, i.e. the *Iliad* itself.<sup>210</sup> In this, Helen is once again like Akhilleus, who in book 1 enlists Zeus’ help to plot out the *Iliad*’s story. Yet the poet bookends Helen’s appearance in book 6 with Hektor’s encounters with Hekabe and Andromakhe in order to show the devastating nature of the poem that Helen and Akhilleus are creating together.<sup>211</sup>

Helen’s reflection on the war is the antithesis to Andromakhe’s perspective. Helen is not worried about the consequences of war; from her perspective, epic infamy is the worst (or best?) thing to expect. Andromakhe, on the other hand, dreads war as a path to

<sup>204</sup> Worman 2001: 29.

<sup>205</sup> Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 177. Earlier they remark that Helen “is the only woman in early Greek epic who explicitly wishes for a better husband, and she has already had two” (43). Martin 2003: 137 (n. 25) notes that this blame speech is typical of the genre of lament, with which Helen is consistently connected.

<sup>206</sup> Arthur 1981: 29.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid. and Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 179.

<sup>208</sup> Blondell 2013: 72.

<sup>209</sup> Cf. Arthur 1981: 26 and Blondell 2013: 27.

<sup>210</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 118-19 and Graziosi and Haubold 2010: 180.

<sup>211</sup> As Clader 1976: 12 observes, Helen has the ability to bestow poetic immortality, but it often comes at the price of death.

death and suffering. The two women are also opposites in almost every other way.<sup>212</sup> Helen is stolen away from Menelaos by Paris, and without recompense, while Andromakhe is described as “much-gifted” (πολύδωρος 6.394) in her legitimate marriage to Hektor. Helen is a faithless wife and desires other men, whereas Andromakhe desires only Hektor and considers him her all and all.<sup>213</sup> Helen abandons her only child (3.174-175), while Andromakhe keeps Astyanax always with her and is solicitous for his welfare. Helen urges on her husband Paris to war, while Andromakhe tries to keep Hektor away from war. Helen resembles Akhilleus, and Andromakhe has reason to hate Akhilleus. Helen is a powerful agent who works to great effect, while Andromakhe is a victim, powerless to alter her family’s fate and her own. Helen ultimately escapes suffering, while Andromakhe suffers immensely because of Helen.<sup>214</sup> Hektor’s encounter with Helen functions to reintroduce the problem on which the war is based, and to make his subsequent meeting with Andromakhe—and its exploration of war’s cost on women and children—stand out for the audience more strongly by opposition.<sup>215</sup>

Andromakhe is the only other mortal woman in the *Iliad* to rival Helen’s subjectivity and desire. In fact, Andromakhe seems to have the upper hand in book 6: Hektor refuses Helen’s overtures and goes to see his wife and child (6.360-68), and Andromakhe’s voice supersedes Helen’s in this third and final meeting, as she enunciates war’s horrific cost. Yet Hektor does not reject Helen for Andromakhe’s sake. He rejects her because of his sense of obligation to his Trojan comrades-at-arms, because, as he says, “they have great desire (ποθῆν) for me since I am absent” (6.362).<sup>216</sup> Hektor is worried about the army’s desire, not Andromakhe’s, and his own answering desire is directed toward his men and glory, as he later asserts (6.441-46).<sup>217</sup> In this privileging of conflict and *kleos*, Hektor ultimately embraces what Helen stands for, and he leaves Andromakhe longing for him. While Andromakhe has the last word in the superplot, Helen gets the last word in the main plot: it is she who sings the third and final lament for

<sup>212</sup> Cf. Schadewalt 1944: 214; Owen 1946: 64-65; Lohmann 1988: 57-59; Louden 2006: 55, 60-63.

<sup>213</sup> Helen stops weaving her famous tapestry in order to view and long for a man who is no longer her husband from the walls of Troy, whereas later Andromakhe stops weaving a very similar (δίπλακα πορφυρέην 22.441), yet different tapestry in order to view and lament her own husband’s dead body from the city walls. Lohmann 1988: 59-62 compares and contrasts these two scenes, and based on this analysis concludes that “Homer more deeply anchored the conception of a contrasting juxtaposition of both pairs [Paris-Helen and Hektor-Andromakhe], and especially both women, in the architecture of this epic than it previously appeared” (Homer die Konzeption der kontrastierenden Gegenüberstellung der beiden Paare, besonders der beiden Frauen, in der Architektur des Epos noch tiefer verankert hat, als es bisher schien). See also Louden 2006: 60-61, who identifies Helen in book 3 as a “parody” of Andromakhe.

<sup>214</sup> As Austin 1994: 24 writes, “Of all the women in the *Iliad*, Helen alone escapes the slavery in store for the others—Chryseis, Briseis, Andromache, Hecuba, the seven beautiful and gifted women of Lesbos whom Agamemnon gives to Achilles in book 19—the list is almost endless... To heighten the difference further, Helen... will be responsible, or held responsible at least, for the slavery that befalls the other women.”

<sup>215</sup> Schadewalt 1944: 214 and Lohmann 1988: 62.

<sup>216</sup> Cf. the Myrmidons’ *pothē* for Akhilleus, in sec. 1 above.

<sup>217</sup> As Kakridis 1949: 58 remarks, Hektor’s “duty to hold high his own glory as well as that of his family ranks above his affections.” Cf. Schein 1984: 173-74.

Hektor (24.761-75). This surprising assymetry with book 6, the poet's decision to make Helen the last mourner, indicates how Hektor, in his decision to fight and die, is closer to Helen than to his own wife.<sup>218</sup> It represents Helen's triumphant role in the *Iliad* as maker of epic, as object and subject of desire.

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<sup>218</sup> Cf. Clader 1976: 11; Taplin 1992: 120; N. Richardson 1993: 350; Martin 2003: 128.

## CHAPTER 3

## Irresolutions and the Dire Consequences of Akhilleus' Plot

This chapter shows how Homer develops and prolongs the *Iliad*'s main plot in the middle part of the poem by complicating and extending Akhilleus' desires and therefore denying fulfillment of the audience's narrative desire. In book 9, the poet teases the audience with the hope of narrative satisfaction by first positioning Agamemnon's embassy to Akhilleus as a repetition of the Akhaians' return of Khryseis to Khryses and successful appeasement of Apollo in book 1. Although the audience initially expects a reconciliation between Agamemnon and Akhilleus, instead the book 9 embassy actually renews their original conflict and reaffirms both Akhilleus' and the audience's driving desires.

During the embassy, the audience is asked to reinterpret the morality of Akhilleus' desires—in terms of their social meaning and consequences—with reference to the superplot of books 3-7. In Chapter 2, I showed how the superplot gestures toward the entire course of the Trojan War story and focuses especially on the war's deviant erotic causality and devastating outcome through the figures of Helen and Andromakhe. In book 9, Homer implicitly compares Akhilleus to Helen, Menelaos, and Paris, suggesting through analogy the dangerous quality of Akhilleus' desires. Indeed, these desires come to destructive fruition with the extensive casualties during the Great Day of Battle (books 11-18), and particularly with the death of Patroklos in book 16. The poet presents Akhilleus' persistent desire for honor as the cause of Patroklos' fatal entrance into battle and makes Patroklos' death, which is determined by his own independent desires, an indicator of Akhilleus' limited power and vision.

After a long delay, book 19 narrates the desired reconciliation between Agamemnon and Akhilleus, yet the poet marks even this narrative resolution as only partial, since Akhilleus continues to deviate from the paradigmatic model of Khryses-Apollo during the reconciliation scene. Indeed, although book 19 completes the main plot's first movement, the loss of Patroklos initiates for Akhilleus a new set of desires that eclipse his previous desires and lead to a second movement of the main plot (books 18-24).<sup>1</sup> The audience must wait until book 24 for the narrative satisfaction achieved by the resolution of Akhilleus' desires and repetition of the book 1 paradigm.

Book 8 is the pivot point that resumes the main plot and reintroduces it to the audience after the lengthy narrative diversion of the superplot. In book 8, Zeus finally

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<sup>1</sup> Recent scholarship has divided the *Iliad* into three parts or "movements" to be performed on three successive days (e.g. Taplin 1992, Stanley 1993, Loudon 2006, Heiden 2008). From the perspective of plot trajectory, however, I believe that it is more accurate to identify only two movements of the main plot, and to distinguish the main plot from the superplot. Cf. Introduction, sec. 2.

grants the Trojans the upper hand in battle.<sup>2</sup> He thereby begins to put into effect his promise to Thetis that he would satisfy Akhilleus' desire for honor by making the Akhaians regret Akhilleus' withdrawal. In fact, Zeus reasserts his promise in the form of a prophecy of Hektor's success up to the moment when Akhilleus rejoins the battle (8.473-74).<sup>3</sup> Zeus' actions and words in book 8 recall for the audience the events of book 1<sup>4</sup> and re-stimulate its desire for the completion of Akhilleus' plot.

Zeus' prophecy, however, does more than simply confirm the course of the main plot as it is wished for by Akhilleus in book 1. Zeus says that Akhilleus and Hektor will fight "in most dreadful groaning because of the dead Patroklos" (στείνει ἐν αἰνοτάτῳ περὶ Πατρόκλοιο θανόντος 8.475-76). Here for the first time the narrative foreshadows 1) actions of the main plot that post-date Akhilleus' return; and 2) the death of Patroklos and its impact on Akhilleus. The poet creates audience expectation for a second movement of the main plot that will involve Akhilleus fighting Hektor with relation to Patroklos. Therefore it prepares the audience to look beyond Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon and to consider the possible consequences of that conflict. Thus, even as book 8 continues the main plot from book 1, it also suggests an expansion of the plot's scope and a deepening of its meaning.

Book 8 points backwards and forwards,<sup>5</sup> reminding the audience of what came before and arousing its desire for what is still to come. J. A. Davison and Bruce Heiden have suggested that the first day of the *Iliad's* performance ended with book 8.<sup>6</sup> Stanley imagined that book 8 actually began the second day of the poem's performance.<sup>7</sup> In either case this book represents a moment of return to the main plot that entices the audience to continue plotting out Akhilleus' desires, and it prepares the audience for the narrative complication of those desires.

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<sup>2</sup> At the midday of battle, Zeus weighs the fates of the two armies and the Akhaian doom-day is heavier (8.68-74). When Hera and Athene prepare to enter the battle to aid the Akhaians, Zeus prevents them with threats (8.350-456). Reinhardt 1961: 140-51 and Kirk 1990: 327 observe that the goddesses' attempted intervention is a doublet of the book 5 episode when they descend to the Trojan plain to fight at Diomedes' side. In the superplot, Zeus allows Hera and Athene to help the Akhaians, but here in the main plot, he intercedes. As Kirk explains, this scene shows by contrast that "Zeus' will is paramount" and that the Trojans will indeed be victorious in accordance with Zeus' promise to Thetis.

<sup>3</sup> The audience has already been reminded of Zeus' promise by Athene's earlier complaint to Hera that Zeus "actualized the plans of Thetis" (Θέτιδος δ' ἐξήνυσσε βουλάς 8.370). This may also reference the narrator's statement in the proem that "the will of Zeus was being accomplished" (Διὸς δ' ἔτελείετο βουλή 1.5) when Akhilleus' wrath sent many souls of heroes to Hades.

<sup>4</sup> Beyond this obvious plot connection between book 8 and book 1, Heiden 2008: 106-19 catalogues an extensive series of "thematic analogies" that link the two books together.

<sup>5</sup> Reinhardt 1961: 138.

<sup>6</sup> Davison 1965; Heiden 1996 and 2008: 1-17, 69-73.

<sup>7</sup> Stanley 1993: 261-66.

## 1. The Embassy to Akhilleus: An Insult Revisited

The beginning of book 9 suggests that Akhilleus' plot to attain honor is working. At the close of book 8, the Trojan army had camped on the plain after a successful day of battle, ready to launch a renewed assault against the Akhaians the next morning. The book's opening scene switches the narrative focalization from the confident Trojans to the beleaguered Akhaians, who are beset with "panic" (φύζα) and "unendurable sorrow" (πένθει δ' ἀτλήτω) (9.1-3). After this general picture of the Akhaian army's state of mind, the narrator focuses on Agamemnon as its particular representative, asserting his "grief" (*akhos*) and describing his tears, which are elaborated with a simile (9.9-15). As I have argued earlier, grief is a symptom of desire, with *akhos* as the most marked word for this symptom;<sup>8</sup> indeed, Akhilleus has promised that Agamemnon specifically will "grieve" (ἀχνύμενος) when *all* the Akhaians experience "desire" (*pothē*) for Akhilleus in the face of Hektor's deadly attack (1.240-43). Already Zeus' intention to make the Akhaians—and especially Agamemnon—feel the lack of Akhilleus seems to be accomplished.

The situation of the Akhaian army here is also reminiscent of the previous time that the Akhaians were in dire straits: when they were dying from the plague sent by Apollo (1.44-53),<sup>9</sup> which was caused by the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon over Khryseis. As I argued in Chapter 1, this first conflict constitutes a narrative paradigm for Akhilleus' subsequent quarrel with Agamemnon. In response to the book 1 Akhaian crisis, Akhilleus calls an assembly, which ends with (among other things) Agamemnon returning Khryseis to Khryses and sending recompense to Apollo, thereby ending the plague. Now, in book 9, another assembly is called. Many scholars have noted the parallelism and similarities between the book 9 assembly and subsequent council, and the book 1 assembly, which are manifested on this structural level, as well as with regard to theme and language.<sup>10</sup> As Rabel has observed, the Khryses-Apollo paradigm creates an expectation that this book 9 assembly will result in a successful reconciliation between Agamemnon and Akhilleus.<sup>11</sup> Indeed, the implied audience desires this outcome in sympathy with the Akhaian suffering, identifying with the Akhaian desire for Akhilleus.

But the audience also knows better. Zeus' book 8 prophecy has indicated that Akhilleus will not return to battle until after Patroklos' death.<sup>12</sup> The poet evokes the Khryses-Apollo pattern as a touchstone for interpreting book 9. It is an indicator of how things go wrong in the attempt to reconcile with Akhilleus. Observing the ways in which book 9 departs from the book 1 conflict-resolution model also inspires the audience to re-

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Introduction, sec. 4, where I noted additionally that etymological connections have often been drawn between *akhos* and Akhilleus' name (e.g. Nagy 1979: 69-83).

<sup>9</sup> Rabel 1997: 116; Heiden 2008: 126-27.

<sup>10</sup> See especially Lohmann 1970: 173-78, 214-227 and Louden 2006: 112-20.

<sup>11</sup> Rabel 1997: 116-17.

<sup>12</sup> Lord 2000: 193.

conceive a desire for the “correct” resolution that is in accordance with the narrative paradigm.<sup>13</sup>

In book 9, Agamemnon’s opening words and the fact that he is the one to call the assembly (9.10-12) create a first impression that he regrets his conflict with Akhilleus, yet that impression is quickly proved wrong. In book 1, Akhilleus had told Thetis to ask Zeus for help “so that the son of Atreus, wide-ruling Agamemnon, might recognize his delusion (*atē*)” (γνῶ δὲ καὶ Ἀτρίδης εὐρὺ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων/ ἦν ἄτην 1.411-412), and here Agamemnon begins by acknowledging to the army the *atē* that has afflicted him (9.18).<sup>14</sup> But the *atē* that he recognizes relates to his decision to come to Troy instead of to his treatment of Akhilleus. That is, Agamemnon does not initially appear repentant vis-à-vis Akhilleus, and moreover he does not take responsibility for this *atē*, saying that Zeus sent it to him. In addition, Agamemnon’s statement and what follows repeat exactly his words from the book 2 assembly (2.111-18, 139-41); in both places Agamemnon suggests that the army abandon the war and return home. Although Agamemnon meant this as a test of the army’s resolve in book 2, the Akhaians took him seriously and his misguided leadership threatened to abort the whole mission. Thus this beginning does not bode well with regard to Agamemnon solving the current crisis—his own conflict with Akhilleus—that afflicts the Akhaians.<sup>15</sup>

When Diomedes vehemently rejects Agamemnon’s idea of flight and verbally abuses him (9.32-49), Nestor intervenes to keep the peace, and then subsequently identifies Akhilleus’ absence as the problem that should be addressed and advises that Agamemnon repair his insult toward Akhilleus with “gifts and soothing words” (9.96-113). Heiden suggests that Nestor here takes on the role of Kalkhas, who intervened in the book 1 paradigm to diagnose the cause of the plague and propose the return of Khryseis and propitiation of Apollo (1.92-100).<sup>16</sup>

Despite the apparent parallelism of Nestor’s and Kalkhas’ interventions, Nestor’s entrance to mediate the dispute between Diomedes and Agamemnon in book 9 recalls more directly his failed mediation between Akhilleus and Agamemnon in book 1. Not only is the situation similar,<sup>17</sup> but Nestor’s treatment of the two antagonists is nearly identical.<sup>18</sup> Nestor tells Diomedes “you are strong” (καρτερός ἐσσι 9.53), repeating the same phrase that he applied to Akhilleus (1.280). At the same time, he tells Agamemnon “you are kingliest” (βασιλεύτατος ἐσσι 9.69), which echoes his assertion in book 1 that Agamemnon “is superior, because he rules over more” (φέρτερός ἐστιν, ἐπεὶ πλεόνεσσι

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 74-75.

<sup>14</sup> Lynn-George 1988: 89; Loudon 2006: 118.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Hainsworth 1993: 61-62 and Griffin 1995: 77, who note the repetition but reject interpreting this passage as a pointed allusion to book 2. See also Wilson 2002: 72-73 for a more generous view of Agamemnon’s rhetorical tactics.

<sup>16</sup> Heiden 2008: 127.

<sup>17</sup> Lohmann 1970: 217-24; Hainsworth 1993: 66; Loudon 2006: 119-20.

<sup>18</sup> Lohmann 1970: 224-25 sees a difference between Nestor as impartial mediator in book 1 and definitively on the side of Agamemnon in book 9, but I think that his two interventions are functionally identical.



ἀνάσσει 1.281).<sup>19</sup> These resemblances suggest that the sequence of events in book 9 is departing from the Khryses-Apollo reconciliation pattern and conforming instead to the book 1 narrative of the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon.

The fact that Nestor's mediation in book 1 fails to mollify either party or resolve their differences helps the audience to perceive the (dis)function of his intervention in book 9 as well. In both instances, Agamemnon picks up on Nestor's assertion of his kingliness in comparison to Akhilleus, with devastating effect. In book 1, he responds to Nestor with the claim that Akhilleus is trying to usurp his power (1.286-91), and Akhilleus interrupts in outrage (1.292-96). In this case, therefore, Nestor inadvertently heightens their mutual animosity and status conflict. In book 9, Agamemnon finally admits his *atē* vis-à-vis Akhilleus, concedes that Akhilleus' return is desirable, and decides to send an embassy to Akhilleus with the promise of gifts (9.115-61). But many scholars have observed that these gifts are themselves a declaration of his desire to dominate Akhilleus.<sup>20</sup> He ends his recital of the gifts with an outright call for Akhilleus to subordinate himself to him and recognize that he is "kinglier" (βασιλεύτερός) (9.158-61). His speech does not include the "soothing words" that Nestor advises; there is neither apology nor a statement of his need.<sup>21</sup> Nestor has (unwittingly) helped Agamemnon to convert his desire for the return of the absent Akhilleus at the beginning of book 9—which he expressed through the symptoms of grief and tears—to an aggressive desire to dominate his competitor. As Wilson notes, Agamemnon's approach to Akhilleus here "conforms with his behavior in Book 1."<sup>22</sup>

Indeed, the failure of Agamemnon's embassy to replicate the narrative pattern set by the delegation to Khryse in book 1 foreshadows the failure of its mission.<sup>23</sup> Nestor composes the embassy and directs its members on how best to persuade Akhilleus (9.167-81), but again Nestor's agency here does not presage a positive outcome, given both his lack of involvement in the paradigmatic reconciliation with Khryses and his bad record of mediating successfully between Agamemnon and Akhilleus.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, Odysseus' prominent inclusion<sup>25</sup> in the delegation to Akhilleus recalls his leadership of the delegation to Khryse in book 1 and suggests at the outset a positive

<sup>19</sup> Later, during his second speech in the council, Nestor continues his flattering aggrandizement of Agamemnon's ruling power (9.96-99), even as he expands upon his former negative evaluation of Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis (compare 1.275-76 and 9.106-11). Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 85-86.

<sup>20</sup> E.g. Lynn-George 1988: 89-91; Donlan 1993: 164-66; Redfield 1994: 15-16; Lateiner 1995: 76-77; Muellner 1996: 141; Wilson 2002: 78-80. Wilson 2002: 76-80 also argues that Agamemnon, by terming the gifts "ransom" (*apoina*) rather than "recompense" (*poinë*), elides his offense as well as the need to compensate Akhilleus and positions himself instead as an innocent Khryses-figure, who is doing the good deed of recovering the lives of the Akhaians, which Akhilleus is symbolically holding hostage by his absence.

<sup>21</sup> Bassett 1938: 195-96; Thornon 1984: 126-27; Lynn-George 1988: 88; Wilson 2002: 81.

<sup>22</sup> Wilson 2002: 80. Cf. Whitman 1958: 192-93.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. Loudon 2006: 120-134 for another comparison between these two delegations.

<sup>24</sup> Loudon 2006: 122-23.

<sup>25</sup> Wilson 2002: 81-82 argues that Nestor's glance at Odysseus positions Odysseus as the real head of the delegation, despite the formal designation of Phoinix as leader.

parallelism between the embassy to Akhilleus and the reconciliation with Khryses-Apollo. But whereas Odysseus was the only named participant in the delegation to Khryse, this embassy is comprised of five named ambassadors, including two heralds, to whom I will return later. The major disparity between the two delegations, however, is the fact that the first returns the disputed girl (Khryseis) and brings in addition a hecatomb to sacrifice to Apollo (1.431-39), while the second brings nothing at all except speeches and promises. The delegation to Khryse immediately delivers a true reparation, but the embassy to Akhilleus is all word and no deed.<sup>26</sup>

Moreover, the arrival of the embassy at Akhilleus' tent constitutes a strange reversal of the Khryses reconciliation paradigm. Whereas in book 1 it is Odysseus who first addresses Khryses with an explanation of the reparation, while delivering Khryseis into the hands of her father (1.440-45), in book 9 it is Akhilleus who first speaks words of welcome and invites the delegation inside (9.196-200). In book 1, Odysseus' delegation provides the animals for the sacrifice and thus the meat for the feast, as well as the wine (1.446-471), whereas, in book 9, Akhilleus and his companions provide the feast and perform the requisite sacrifice (9.201-221). The embassy is supposed to be conciliating Akhilleus, not the other way around, yet the ambassadors come empty-handed and are themselves greeted as well as wined and dined.

This reversal also applies, in a different way, to the embassy's first vision of Akhilleus, whom they find "pleasuring his mind with the clear-toned phorminx" (φρένα τερπόμενον φόρμιγγι λιγείη 9.186). A few lines later the narrator elaborates that he "was pleasuring his heart, and singing the fames of men" (θυμὸν ἔτερπεν, ἄειδε δ' ἄρα κλέα ἀνδρῶν 9.189). In contrast to this initial posture on Akhilleus' part, the narrator only describes Khryses "rejoicing" (χαίρων) *after* receiving back his daughter Khryseis (1.446), and says that Apollo "pleasured his mind while listening" (φρένα τέρπετ' ἀκούων 1.474) to the song of the Akhaian youths *after* the propitiatory sacrifice.<sup>27</sup> In the paradigmatic narrative, the delegation's reparation effects a positive change of mood in the compensated parties (Khryses and Apollo), as they all celebrate together. But in book 9, Akhilleus is enjoying himself apart from the larger body of Akhaians *before* the embassy even arrives.

What is the audience to make of this? What about Akhilleus' unsatisfied desires for honor and for Briseis? The unavoidable conclusion is that at the moment of the embassy's entrance Akhilleus is not particularly desirous of anything or anybody.<sup>28</sup> His

<sup>26</sup> Lynn-George 1988: 87-91 discusses how the embassy is conspicuously lacking; he summarizes, "The gifts to be 'given all at once' are deferred, do not materialise as objects, are repeated as language in a drama which focuses on the materiality and insubstantiality of words" (91).

<sup>27</sup> Cf. Apollo's own accompaniment of the Muses' song on the phorminx *after* the gods' feast on Olympos at the end of book 1 (1.603-04), which is part of the divine conflict-resolution narrative that is an analogic confirmation of the Khryses' paradigm.

<sup>28</sup> Hainsworth 1993: 88 writes, "the poet allows us to assume that Akhilleus' emotional turmoil...has given way to tedium." I see no indication of tedium, but rather simply contentedness, the absence of desire. Indeed, the poet says explicitly that Akhilleus is experiencing pleasure (see below). Contrast this passage with the closing description of Akhilleus' desire in book 1, where he is pictured "withering away his dear heart" (φθινύθεσκε φίλον κῆρ 491) and "longing for the battle-cry and war" (ποθέεσκε δ' αὐτήν τε πτόλεμόν τε 492).

isolation is such that he is not only absent from the macrocosmic aggressive male homosociality of the Trojan War, but also at least temporarily divorced from the microcosm of the Akhaian army and its internal status competition. Instead of hungering for honor from his peers, Akhilleus, in his own tent, enjoys the society of his intimates, especially Patroklos, who, as his *philos*, is a symbolic extension of Akhilleus' self, a sharer in his identity. There is no desire where there is no separation and no lack; Akhilleus is complete at this moment in his self-contained world with his best friend and enough resources to spare (the food, wine, and bedding that he offers his guests, but also the surplus concubines with whom he and Patroklos sleep at 9.664-68).<sup>29</sup> As Fantuzzi observes, "this scene conveys the idea that Achilles has no need of repossessing Briseis."<sup>30</sup> It suggests that the embassy's mission is futile.

The embassy has caught Akhilleus in a moment of contented, but also unheroic stasis. He sings epic songs, in identification with Homer himself, but they are songs of other men's glory, not his own.<sup>31</sup> This appearance of Akhilleus as bard recalls his generative function in book 1, but now the nature of what he created has become clear. The *Iliad's* main plot has been up to now the story of Zeus, on Akhilleus' behalf, making *other people* fight each other, while Akhilleus sits in his tent. The poet does not name the poem that Akhilleus is singing, but Akhilleus here recalls his poetic analogue in the superplot, Helen, who weaves a picture of the war she caused (3.125).<sup>32</sup> Both Akhilleus and Helen remain outside of the conflict for which they are responsible. Akhilleus' plot is his absence from battle; this is his strategy to accumulate honor. But what kind of *kleos*, if any, will come of this? Helen imagines *herself* as a subject of epic song (6.357), but clearly not in the role of glorious warrior. Her fame is closer to infamy, and so is Akhilleus' in his withdrawal.<sup>33</sup> But he does not seem to care, actually taking pleasure in his music.<sup>34</sup> This detached, even satisfied Akhilleus is very different from the angry hero

<sup>29</sup> Fantuzzi 2012: 196-98. Lohmann 1970: 229 similarly observes, "This Achilles of book 9 is no more dependent on the goodwill of others; he does not need them; on the contrary, they now need him" (Dieser Achill des 9. Buches ist nicht mehr abhängig vom Wohlwollen der anderen, er braucht sie nicht, im Gegenteil, sie brauchen jetzt ihn). Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 138.

<sup>30</sup> Fantuzzi 2012: 198.

<sup>31</sup> Cf. Hainsworth 1993: 88.

<sup>32</sup> Cf. Griffin 1995: 98.

<sup>33</sup> In his long speech to the embassy, Akhilleus acknowledges that his "good fame" (κλέος ἐσθλόν) will be lost if he does not re-enter the war (9.414-15). The (ambivalent) *kleos* that the *Iliad* itself bestows on Akhilleus extends beyond the fame of his martial heroism, but I think Taplin 2001: 362 overstates the case when he says that "Achilles is not immortalized for his massacre of Trojans in Books 20 and 21 so much as for his impending death before his time, for his rejection of the embassy in Book 9, and for his treatment of Priam."

<sup>34</sup> Akhilleus' pleasure contrasts with Patroklos' apparent lack of pleasure. Patroklos is the primary audience of Akhilleus' song, sitting opposite him "in silence" (σιωπῆ 9.190). Frontisi-Ducroux 1986: 11-13 (cf. 23-25) has suggested that Patroklos as obedient auditor provides a model for the audience of the *Iliad* itself. Yet he is hardly an ideal audience, since he does not seem to experience narrative desire; rather, he waits for Akhilleus to *stop* singing (9.191). Does he object to the poem's subject matter (which presumably lacks heroic exploits by Akhilleus or the Myrmidons) or to the fact that Akhilleus is playing at all? Mark Griffith has pointed out to me that men who play the lyre in Greek myth deviate from standards of normative masculinity. Patroklos' unenthusiastic reception may indicate that Akhilleus should be fighting rather than

of book 1, and his mood indicates for the audience that reconciliation is not the embassy's narrative function.

We must look elsewhere in book 1 to find the appropriate model for the embassy of book 9. As many have recognized, the embassy directly recalls another delegation from book 1 of an entirely different kind: Agamemnon's dispatch of heralds to take Briseis away from Akhilleus' tent. The narrator makes the link explicit between Agamemnon's two delegations to Akhilleus by describing their progress to and arrival at his tent in similar terms (1.327-332, 9.182-199).<sup>35</sup> The narrator's ungrammatical use of dual forms for the embassy of five in book 9 contributes to this resonance. I follow the scholars who have recognized the duals in book 9 as purposeful echoes of the earlier duals that refer more understandably to Agamemnon's two heralds in book 1.<sup>36</sup> Similarly, the impropriety of the book 9 embassy coming empty-handed and being greeted by Akhilleus references the identical pattern of the delegation to Akhilleus' tent in book 1.

Agamemnon's delegation to Akhilleus in book 1 marks the climactic moment in their conflict, when Agamemnon actually deprives Akhilleus of Briseis and definitively dishonors him, thus instigating Akhilleus' desires to reclaim his concubine and recoup his status. Since Agamemnon's offer of gifts in book 9 may be understood as a half-hearted and self-serving recompense, which, in fact, again insults Akhilleus' honor, the embassy has the potential to remind Akhilleus of Agamemnon's original slight.<sup>37</sup> Indeed, the embassy's similarity to the book 1 delegation suggests that it will function identically to initiate Akhilleus' desires, which seem to have become dormant. Now the audience can identify Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis as the likely paradigm for the embassy of book 9.

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making music. In contrast to Akhilleus, Odysseus tells, not sings, his heroic stories in the *Odyssey*. If Akhilleus' playing and the pleasure he derives from it are untoward, they constitute an early sign that his absence from battle is marked by destructive delusion.

<sup>35</sup> See Segal 1968: 104; Lohmann 1970: 228; Loudon 2006: 123-24 for catalogues of the similarities. Cf. Taplin 1992: 74-82 on the visit type-scene in the *Iliad* and Heiden 2008: 127-31 for comparison of the embassy in book 9 with "four embassies that were narrated in book 1, as well as a fifth narrated in book 8."

Segal 1968: 106 also notes that the motif of walking by the sea recalls Khryses' retreat from Agamemnon in 1.34 as well as the heralds' journey in 1.327; in both cases Agamemnon's pattern of bad behavior is brought to mind.

<sup>36</sup> Boll 1917 and 1919-20; Schadewaldt 1966 [1943]: 138; Segal 1968: 105-106; Lohmann 1970: 227-30; Rabel 1997: 122-23. *Pace* Nagy 1979: 49-55, who argues that the duals refer to Phoinix and Aias, and, by excluding Odysseus, emphasize his traditional enmity toward Akhilleus. Martin 1989: 236-37 more plausibly suggests that the narrator, taking on Akhilleus' focalization, assumes the presence of Phoinix "as natural" and uses the duals to refer to Odysseus and Aias, who are not members of his household. For summary of scholarly approaches to the duals, see Griffin 1995: 51-53. Scodel 2002: 160-171 and Loudon 2006: 120-134 represent more recent readings.

<sup>37</sup> *Contra* Lohmann 1970: 217ff., who understands the book 9 embassy to constitute a reversal of the seizure of Briseis, rather than a repetition of it.

## 2. Akhilleus' First Speech to the Embassy

When the embassy arrives, Akhilleus' warm welcome expresses his expectation that the ambassadors have come to make good the insult to his honor and elevate his status among the Akhaians. In his statement of greeting, he says "surely there is some great need" (ἤ τι μάλα χρεώ 9.197). Although he does not specify either the subject or object of need, it is easiest to interpret this as the Akhaians' need for Akhilleus.<sup>38</sup> Akhilleus had prayed to Zeus for this very outcome. When Agamemnon's heralds came in book 1 to take Briseis away, Akhilleus looked forward to a situation in which Agamemnon and the Akhaians have "need of me" (χρειώ ἐμεῖο 1.342). His opening words thus suggest that he believes that the Akhaians have finally recognized how indispensable he is to the war effort and are ready to honor him accordingly.<sup>39</sup> It is because of his expectation of renewed solidarity that Akhilleus greets the ambassadors as *philoī* and *philtatoi* (9.197-98) and entertains them grandly (9.199-221).

But after Odysseus has communicated a slightly sanitized version of Agamemnon's offer of gifts, Akhilleus' response indicates his perception that Agamemnon has insulted him again. His long speech of rejection repeats themes and language from his antagonistic speeches toward Agamemnon in book 1. In both cases Akhilleus denounces Agamemnon's unequal distribution of gifts and his unjust appropriation of Briseis, given his own prominent contribution to the war effort; he questions the basis of the war; he considers return home to Phthia; he even throws the same insults at Agamemnon, asserting that he is "clothed in shamelessness" (ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένε 1.149 ~ 9.372) and comparing him to a dog (κυνῶπα 1.159; κύνεός 9.373).<sup>40</sup> Akhilleus' book 9 speech demonstrates how he receives Agamemnon's offer as an expression of continuing disdain, and how the offer actually resurrects his previous state of mind, renewing his intense desire for honor.<sup>41</sup> It squarely positions book 9 as a variation of book 1, and reminds the audience of the triangular eroticism driving the main plot.<sup>42</sup> The audience once again focuses on the problem of Akhilleus' unsatisfied desires and reconceives a narrative desire for the solution to that problem.

At the same time, Akhilleus' speech is much more, representing an elaboration on and expansion of his position in book 1.<sup>43</sup> Many scholars have argued that it is

<sup>38</sup> Leaf 1971: 386. Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 123-125, who argues that these words also imply Akhilleus' own answering need to be recognized by the Akhaians.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. 11.609-10, when Akhilleus again hopes that the Akhaians are ready to "supplicate" (λιισσομένους) him, "for a need has come that is no longer bearable" (χρειώ γὰρ ἰκάνεται οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτός).

<sup>40</sup> Lohmann 1970: 240 catalogues the parallelism of Akhilleus' speeches (1.149-171 and 9.308-429). He also tracks (1970: 236-245) how Akhilleus' speech is a point by point rebuttal of Odysseus' speech conveying Agamemnon's offer.

<sup>41</sup> Muellner 1996: 142 similarly argues that Odysseus' speech "exacerbates Achilles' *mēnis* instead of arousing his *philótēs*."

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Lohmann 1970: 239.

<sup>43</sup> Lohmann 1970: 239-245 analyzes how Akhilleus' book 9 speech is an "amplification" of book 1.

extraordinary in both its mode of expression and its content, i.e. its existential questioning, its apparent reassessment and rejection of heroic mores.<sup>44</sup> I agree that Akhilleus here assumes an extraordinary stance, but I understand it to constitute a profound alienation from the Akhaian army and war effort rather than a rejection of the values of the society *per se*. Akhilleus here expresses his deep disappointment with the ambassadors, conveying his conviction that the Akhaians have failed to satisfy his desires and that they will not do so in the future.<sup>45</sup> The embassy's unanticipated affront not only rekindles his aggressive desire toward Agamemnon and the Akhaians, but also leaves him with the impression that he will never receive the deference that he wants. No longer believing that the Akhaians will restore his status, he abandons—at least for the moment—his former plan and longing (*pothē*) to return to the Akhaian group and fight on its behalf. With more than enough resources in Phthia (9.364-67, 394-400), he desires nothing from the Trojans. The confluence of his absence of desire toward the Trojans and his perception that the Akhaians will not satisfy his desire for honor determines Akhilleus' initial intention to return to Phthia (9.428).

Akhilleus' evocation of the superplot partway through his speech helps us to arrive at this interpretation. The superplot—coming between the events of the main plot in books 1 and 9—represents a new context for understanding both Akhilleus' self-perception and the possible consequences of his unsatisfied desires. Akhilleus brings up the superplot when he considers Agamemnon's appropriation of Briseis:

[The prizes] lie intact for the other princes, but from me alone of the Akhaians  
 he seized and he keeps the wife fitted to my heart; lying beside her,  
 let him take pleasure! But why must the Argives make war with the  
 Trojans? Why did the son of Atreus gather the men and lead them here?  
 Was it not on account of white-armed Helen?  
 Do the sons of Atreus alone among mortal men regard their wives as their  
 intimates?  
 Because whoever is a good and wise man  
 regards his wife an intimate and cares for her, just as I regarded her an intimate  
 from my heart, even though she was won by the spear.

τοῖσι μὲν ἔμπεδα κείται, ἐμεῦ δ' ἀπὸ μόνου Ἀχαιῶν  
 εἴλετ', ἔχει δ' ἄλοχον θυμαρέα· τῇ παριαύων  
 τερπέσθω. τί δὲ δεῖ πολεμιζέμεναι Τρώεσσι  
 Ἀργείους; τί δὲ λαὸν ἀνήγαγεν ἐνθάδ' ἀγείρας

<sup>44</sup> E.g. Parry 1956: 5-7; Whitman 1958: 183-94; Martin 1989: 146-205.

<sup>45</sup> *Contra* Nagler 1974: 134, who argues that “Homer has Akhilleus reject the supplicants who offer him the fulfilment of his own desires as he stated them.” Rabel 1997: 117-132 also argues that Akhilleus realizes his desires are unsatisfiable, but on existential grounds. Drawing on Lacan, Rabel differentiates between “need” as an “impulse to attain defined goals (material, sexual, and egotistical) and to be content once they are attained” and “desire,” which is when “demands exceed need.” Rabel contends that Akhilleus here feels a “desire” that cannot by its nature be satisfied, unlike Khryseis' paradigmatic “need,” which was satisfied by the return of Khryseis. With this argument, Rabel ignores the fact that Agamemnon's offer of gifts is 1) merely an offer, not the thing itself and 2) may be interpreted as an insult to Akhilleus.

Ἀτρείδης; ἢ οὐχ Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο;  
 ἢ μῶνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων  
 Ἀτρείδαι; ἐπεὶ ὅς τις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων  
 τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλεῖ καὶ κήδεται, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν  
 ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον δουρικτητὴν περ ἑοῦσαν (9.335-43).

Here Akhilleus starts by noting the injustice of Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis, and ends by saying that he "regarded as intimate" (*phileon*) Briseis, using the past tense to emphasize how their intimacy has been disrupted.<sup>46</sup> In the center of this passage, by bringing up the fact that the Atreidai are waging war because Helen—Menelaos' wife—was taken from them, Akhilleus implies that he regrets the removal of Briseis—whom he calls his "wife"—just as much as Menelaos and Agamemnon regret the rape of Helen,<sup>47</sup> and also that he will respond in a similar fashion to this injury. He thereby asserts a structural equivalence between the erotic triangles of Menelaos-Helen-Paris and Akhilleus-Briseis-Agamemnon.<sup>48</sup> While the audience may have contemplated this parallelism during the superplot, this is the first time that the text itself directly invites the comparison.

With this analogy, Akhilleus clearly casts himself as Menelaos, the injured party deprived of a wife, and Agamemnon in the role of Paris, the one-time guest-friend turned mortal enemy. This speaks to the degree to which Akhilleus is hostile toward Agamemnon, regarding him as a hated enemy (*ekhthros*)<sup>49</sup> rather than as a member of his identity group (*philos*). Richard Martin has tracked how elsewhere in this speech Akhilleus talks as if Agamemnon had carried out a raid against him, that is, Akhilleus "uses the conventions normal for speaking about one's relations with outsiders when he talks about his own commander."<sup>50</sup> By branding Agamemnon an enemy, Akhilleus psychologically distances himself from Agamemnon and the Akhaian force that he leads—Akhilleus' former *philo*i—just as he has physically removed himself from the collective of the army. Akhilleus is the only character in the *Iliad* who appears to pray to Zeus for the defeat of his own side. But Akhilleus' comparison of his conflict with Agamemnon to the conflict between Menelaos and Paris reveals that Akhilleus does not

<sup>46</sup> Cf. Hainsworth 1993: 107.

<sup>47</sup> By including both Menelaos and Agamemnon in this equation, Akhilleus perhaps alludes to and repeats Agamemnon's similar comparison of his concubine Khryseis—who was reclaimed by her father Khryses—to his wife Klytaimnestra (1.113-15).

<sup>48</sup> Collins 1988: 41, 58; Suzuki 1989: 22-23; Griffin 1994: 114; Dué 2002: 39-43; Wilson 2002: 44-51; Felson and Slatkin 2004: 93-95; Fantuzzi 2012: 109; Lyons 2012: 56-60. Cf. Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 13.560.

<sup>49</sup> Louden 2006: 127-30 makes the convincing case that the *ekhthros* man to whom Akhilleus refers in the beginning of his speech (9.312-13) is none other than Agamemnon. Later in his speech Akhilleus says of Agamemnon, "hated are his gifts to me, and I honor him not a whit" (ἐχθρὰ δέ μοι τοῦ δῶρα, τίω δέ μιν ἐν καρὸς αἴση 9.378).

<sup>50</sup> Martin 1989: 173.

see the Akhaians as his allies, as ‘his own side’: they are the enemy, and now irrevocably so.<sup>51</sup>

Just as Menelaos expected the return of Helen and recompense from the Trojans in return for renewed *philotēs* between the armies after Paris disappeared from the duel (3.456-61), but was instead insidiously shot by Pandaros (4.124-47), so Akhilleus was disappointed of the reparation that he anticipated from the embassy and simultaneously reinjured by Agamemnon. And just as the Akhaians will accept no recompense from the Trojans after this betrayal, will contemplate no *philotēs*, and press on for the utter destruction of Troy (7.400-404), Akhilleus now will accept no material recompense (9.378-86), sees no hope of reconciliation (besides planning himself to return to Phthia, he also advises the army to go home, thus abandoning his strategy to acquire honor), and only desires that Agamemnon “pay back to me all the heart-grieving outrage” (ἀπὸ πᾶσαν ἔμοι δόμεναι θυμαλγέα λώβην 9.387).<sup>52</sup>

This parallelism between the erotic triangles of Menelaos-Helen-Paris and Akhilleus-Briseis-Agamemnon suggests that Akhilleus’ aggressive desires may have dire consequences. Menelaos and Paris’ conflict has caused the Trojan War; in the superplot, the confirmation of that conflict (books 3-4) leads directly to death and suffering on the battlefield and in Troy (books 5-7). Likewise, Akhilleus’ request to Zeus for Trojan success has already led to the defeat and anguish of the Akhaians in book 8. In book 9, Akhilleus’ reassertion of his aggressive desire in response to Agamemnon’s insulting offer prepares the audience for the Great Day of Battle that occupies books 11-17 and finally ends in book 18.

The narrative of book 9 may also remind the audience of Zeus’ prophecy of Patroklos’ death in book 8. When the ambassadors arrive at Akhilleus’ tent they encounter not only Akhilleus but also Patroklos, who for the first time appears prominently in the narrative. In this extended scene the audience not only perceives the closeness of Akhilleus and Patroklos but also connects Patroklos with Akhilleus’ hostile alienation from the Akhaians. This suggests for the first time a causal relation between Akhilleus’ aggressive desire and the death of Patroklos, and it indicates what that death will mean for Akhilleus.<sup>53</sup> It points to the devastation that Akhilleus, by regarding friends as enemies, is creating not only for the Akhaians, but also for himself.

In fact, in book 9 the poet specifically makes clear the ominous nature of Akhilleus’ hostility toward those who were and ought still to be part of his community. During his speech chastising Diomedes’ insubordination in the *agora*, Nestor had declared, “outside of brotherhood, law, and hearth is he who desires chilling civil war”

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Shay 1994: 25, who recognizes Akhilleus’ unmitigated enmity toward his fellow soldiers—“this simplification and shrinkage of loyalties”—as a typical reaction to a betrayal of *themis*, “what’s right,” in a military context; in this case the betrayal is Agamemnon’s unjust seizure of Briseis.

<sup>52</sup> Cf. Martin 1989: 183-84 and Wilson 2002: 90-92. In rejecting Agamemnon’s offer, Akhilleus gives up his opportunity to reunite with Briseis. He privileges his homosocial desire for dominance above his heterosexual desire for Briseis; in insisting upon the first, he abandons the second. Thus Akhilleus sarcastically remarks, “lying beside her [Briseis], let him [Agamemnon] take pleasure!” (τῆ παριαύων/τερπέσθω 9.336-37). Cf. Chapter 4, sec. 3.

<sup>53</sup> *Contra* Heiden 1996: 20, who argues that the audience understands already in book 8 that Akhilleus’ withdrawal will cause Patroklos’ death.



(ἀφρήτωρ ἀθέμιστος ἀνέστιός ἐστιν ἐκεῖνος/ ὅς πολέμου ἔραται ἐπιδημίου ὀκρυόεντος 9.63-64). Nestor criticizes him who “desires” (ἔραται) conflict with his own people, i.e. directs aggressive desire toward his community, speaking to that person’s ostracism and to the horror of internecine warfare. Odysseus pointedly recapitulates this sentiment directly to Akhilleus during his speech conveying Agamemnon’s offer. Odysseus reminds Akhilleus of his father Peleus’ admonition:

but you, restrain the great heart  
in your breast, for an attitude of solidarity is better;  
and leave off from strife that causes evils, so that  
both young and old among the Argives honor you more.

σὺ δὲ μεγαλήτορα θυμὸν  
ἴσχειν ἐν στήθεσσι· φιλοφροσύνη γὰρ ἀμείνων·  
ληγέμεναι δ’ ἔριδος κακομηχάνου, ὄφρα σε μᾶλλον  
τίωσ’ Ἀργείων ἡμὲν νέοι ἢ δὲ γέροντες (9.255-58).

Like Nestor, Odysseus here suggests—through *prosopopoeia* of Peleus—that Akhilleus will receive more honor as a cooperative member of Akhaian society and that civil strife is exceedingly destructive. Odysseus’ patronizing words, in refusing Akhilleus honor on his own terms, perhaps help to shape Akhilleus’ impression that his strategy to recover and improve his status has failed. They also invite the audience to consider how Akhilleus’ desires both define him as a social outcast and have mortal consequences for the Akhaians. Book 9 arouses again the audience’s sympathetic desire to see Akhilleus’ desires satisfied, but also inspires a more dreadful desire to plot out Akhaian deaths, including that of Akhilleus’ nearest and dearest.

Despite these meaningful similarities between the erotic triangles that drive the main plot and the superplot, their differences are also significant. While the Akhaians and Trojans are fighting for Helen, Akhilleus is *not* fighting for Briseis. First of all, he has not himself attacked Agamemnon physically. Akhilleus accepted the limitations on the violent personal expression of his aggressive desire that were set by Athene in book 1, who stopped him from killing Agamemnon on the spot (1.206-14). In place of his sword, Athene orders Akhilleus to rebuke Agamemnon with words (1.211) and Akhilleus verbally abuses his adversary in books 1 and 9. After Athene’s intervention, he formulates a strategy to satisfy his desires by refraining from battle—once again, *not* fighting—until Agamemnon and the Akhaians need him and grant reparation (1.298-303, 340-44).

In his employment of this extraordinary tactic,<sup>54</sup> Akhilleus resembles Paris from the superplot more than Menelaos. Paris is the one characterized by his absence from battle, both in his disappearance during the duel of book 3 and his location in his bedroom in book 6. Steven Lowenstam has remarked upon the similarities between Paris and Akhilleus.<sup>55</sup> To begin with, he notes how their absences seem to echo one another.

<sup>54</sup> Muellner 1996:123.

<sup>55</sup> Lowenstam 1993: 86-89.

Hektor imagines that Paris is refraining from fighting because he is angry (6.326) and Paris answers that he is actually grieving (6.336); both emotions connect Paris' withdrawal to Akhilleus'.<sup>56</sup> In addition, when not fighting, both men are associated with musical activity (3.54, 3.393-94; 9.186-89).

I would like to add that Paris in the superplot and Akhilleus in book 9 are both distinguished by their lack of aggressive desire toward those who are supposed to be their enemies. I have already shown how Paris has no independent desire to fight Menelaos in the duel of book 3 or return to battle in book 6, and that both times he does fight only after his brother Hektor's censure and exhortation.<sup>57</sup> During the embassy of book 9, Odysseus tries at the end of his speech to incite Akhilleus' hostility toward Hektor, telling Akhilleus that he could kill Hektor now that Hektor is exposing himself and boasting that he has no equal among the Akhaians (9.304-06). But Akhilleus in response clearly asserts that he has no desire to destroy Hektor: "now I do not want (οὐκ ἐθέλω) to make war with godly Hektor" (9.356). Indeed, Akhilleus gives this absence of aggression toward Hektor as the reason for his intention to leave Troy and return to Phthia (9.356-63).

Paris' want of aggression toward the enemy alienates him from his own people, in a parallel to Akhilleus' situation. Hektor considers him contemptible for his passivity, especially given the fact that he caused the war (3.39-57), and both the Trojans and their allies hate Paris (3.451-54). Akhilleus, while not an explicit object of Akhaian hate, is also radically estranged from his community. The superplot explores how Paris' desire (*eros*) for Helen brings suffering and death to others, and especially to his own people, the Trojans. Akhilleus' resemblance to Paris coupled with the aggressive desire that he has directed at his comrades-in-arms (which is itself connected to his desire for a woman) suggests once again that he will bring destruction on the Akhaians.<sup>58</sup> The poet does not present Paris as an admirable figure and therefore Akhilleus' similarity to Paris raises questions for the audience about the morality of his withdrawal and its consequences. For Lowenstam, the question is "whether Achilles' action is as self-indulgent as that of Paris."<sup>59</sup> I do not consider it a question of self-indulgence, since I regard Agamemnon as the instigator of Akhilleus' desires. Rather, I see the moral question centering on the extent of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward his erstwhile *philoï*, on the way that he treats the Akhaians, and especially Agamemnon, as his mortal enemies rather than as friends with whom he has fallen out.<sup>60</sup> He has plotted to satisfy his reasonable desire to dominate the Akhaians *symbolically*, i.e. to amass honor and therefore occupy a position of higher status within Akhaian society, by unreasonably arranging their *actual* defeat in battle and positioning himself outside of and in opposition to their society.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Collins 1988: 29-35 on Paris' grief in this scene and his relation to Akhilleus.

<sup>57</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, sec. 5.

<sup>58</sup> Cf. Lowenstam 1993: 88.

<sup>59</sup> Lowenstam 1993: 89.

<sup>60</sup> This is the error that Phoinix and Aias attempt to correct in their subsequent speeches, as I explore in sec. 3 below.

<sup>61</sup> Slatkin 2011: 130-38 explores how warrior comrades—*philoï*—speak to each other with rebukes in order to encourage bravery and improve unit cohesion. She considers how fellow fighters hold each other's lives

Yet Akhilleus expresses the perception in this first speech—reflected in his plan to leave Troy—that Agamemnon and the Akhaians have not and will never satisfy his desire, and it is from this perspective that we should interpret Akhilleus’ deconstruction of heroic values. Akhilleus’ statement that no material reward is worth the price of his life because life, once lost, is gone for good (9.401-409) should be understood in relation to his earlier complaint that Agamemnon and the Akhaians did not accord him due honor for his sacrifices: “there was no gratitude (*kharis*) for fighting always and ceaselessly against enemy men” (9.315-17). Akhilleus’ questioning of heroism’s worth comes only in the context of perceiving his own heroic feats going unrewarded and unappreciated. As Akhilleus himself recounts (9.325-29), in the past he did not hesitate to risk life and limb in battle and he fought with men “for the sake of their wives” (ὄάρων ἔνεκα σφετεράων 9.327), evoking the familiar Iliadic structure of triangular desire as the basis for conflict. Whereas previously a desire for female captives inspired Akhilleus to wage war against foreigners, now Agamemnon’s seizure of Briseis has redirected Akhilleus’ aggressive desire toward the Akhaians. And he sees no hope of satisfying that desire. Because Akhilleus has no current motivation to risk his life, he suggests that it is not worth risking at all.<sup>62</sup>

Although Akhilleus does not truly reject the foundation of the heroic economy, he does fundamentally question the value of *kleos*, and thus of epic itself (as a prime vehicle for *kleos*) when he cites Thetis’ prophecy concerning his double fate. According to Thetis, Akhilleus can choose death at Troy and “imperishable fame” (κλέος ἄφθιτον), or a long, obscure life at home (9.412-16). Akhilleus does not comment on the prophecy; he leaves his words hanging in mid-air, his choice undetermined. Even when no other desire drives Akhilleus to risk, or, definitively, to lose his life, might the desire to attain *kleos* alone justify a fatal return to battle? *Kleos* is bigger than the heroic social economy and beyond the circumscribed limits of mortal life. It is neither a material reward nor an immaterial marker of one’s status in a society, an expression of power over others, like *timē*. It is larger, more mobile, and longer lasting than that: it is the glory that epic poetry claims to spread throughout space and time, as Nagy has shown.<sup>63</sup> Akhilleus has already

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in their hands and argues that the use of enemy speech to exhort friends represents how an ally’s failure to stand by one’s side can in fact cost a soldier his life. This is exactly the line that Akhilleus has crossed: with his withdrawal, he actually does abandon his *philoī* to fight alone, and thus stands in an inimical relation to them.

<sup>62</sup> *Contra* Lynn-George 1988: 21, who argues that Akhilleus’ words constitute “a contestation of all forms of exchange.”

<sup>63</sup> Nagy 1979: 16-41 and *passim*. I understand Homer’s world to acknowledge and proffer two spheres of heroic rewards. The smaller sphere, bounded by space and time, is one’s own contemporary community, which rewards a living hero with *timē* and *geras*. The larger sphere, which encompasses the smaller, stretches everywhere and forever, “so long as men can breathe and eyes can see.” The hero’s reward in this sphere, during his lifetime and after death, is “imperishable” *kleos*. (Two Homeric terms often associated with *kleos* are *kudos* and *eukhos*. The work of Benveniste 1973: 346-56 and Muellner 1976: 108-112, however, suggests that *kudos* and *eukhos* express the hero’s experience or declaration of triumph rather than the social or poetic effects of that victory, although the first category can lead to the second.) Later, in book 12, Sarpedon considers the question of why one fights. First he acknowledges the social rewards of fighting (12.310-21) and then he references its poetic rewards when he imagines a Lykian saying that his leaders are not “without fame” (ἀκλέεις 12.318) because they fight in the front lines. He argues that all of

suggested that he will leave Troy and so perhaps implies that longer life is better than eternal fame. But regardless of Akhilleus' choice of destiny, his questioning of *kleos*' value demands that the audience itself think again about the nature of heroic song, how it tells the story of death even as it is driven by desire.<sup>64</sup> The audience, with Akhilleus, pauses to contemplate what it would mean for desires to be abandoned, unsatisfied: a full term of life, but the absence of immortality in song and the negation of heroic epic itself.<sup>65</sup>

### 3. The Speeches of Phoinix and Aias

Phoinix's and Aias' speeches are responses to Akhilleus' assertion that the Akhaians will never satisfy his desires, that they are his irreconcilable enemies. Their goal is to convince Akhilleus to rejoin Akhaian society and redirect his aggressive desire toward their shared enemy, the Trojans. Their strategy is threefold: 1) to assert that Agamemnon's gifts do indeed position Akhilleus as an honored member of Akhaian society, an insider, a *philos* (Phoinix and Aias); 2) to remind Akhilleus that his conflict is with his own community, not with enemies (Phoinix and Aias); 3) to warn Akhilleus of the destructive consequences of fighting with one's friends (Phoinix).<sup>66</sup> Phoinix and Aias are partially successful in that they convince Akhilleus to hope again for appropriate deference from the Akhaians. And so Akhilleus stays at Troy, still desiring and now again expecting the honor (in material and immaterial forms) that will redeem his place and status among the Akhaians. He does not, however, rethink his destructive tactic of withdrawal.<sup>67</sup>

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these rewards are meaningful only because everyone has to die (the more logical corrective to Akhilleus' comment in 9.320 that rewards are meaningless because of the universality of death): if you have to die anyway, it is better to risk a shorter life and enjoy these compensations than be without reward in both life and death (Cf. Redfield 1994: 100-101; Crotty 1994: 42-43, 62).

<sup>64</sup> This is the message of the superplot, as I argue in Chapter 2 *passim*. The phorminx that accompanies Akhilleus' song of the *klea andrōn* is itself spoil from the sack of Thebe (9.186-89), signifying the intimate relation between violence and epic (cf. Lynn-George 1988: 151-52). Nagy 1979: 75-85 shows how Akhilleus' *kleos apthiton* is predicated on his death. Hektor imagines the enunciation of his own *kleos* being evoked through the grievous sights of his enslaved wife (6.459-61) or the burial mound belonging to the enemy whom he has killed (7.87-91), as Murnaghan 1999: 213-14 observes, in her insightful discussion of the links (and discontinuities) between the genre of lament and epic poetry. As she concludes, "the creation of *kleos* begins with grief for the hero's friends and enemies alike" (217). Cf. Crotty 1994: 16, 67-69, who calls epic poetry a "memory of griefs."

<sup>65</sup> Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 122 and 151-229.

<sup>66</sup> Cf. Muellner 1996: 143-55, whose analysis of these speeches shares much in common with my own.

<sup>67</sup> Schadewaldt 1966 [1943]: 135-36 recognized that Phoinix's and Aias' speeches cause Akhilleus to modify his original position: instead of going home to Phthia, he decides to stay at Troy until Hektor has reached his own ships. Schadewaldt attributes Akhilleus' flexibility to a characteristic "mildness," that is, a sensitivity toward others' suffering that mitigates his self-assertion. Similarly, Schein 1984 asserts that Akhilleus "is consistently portrayed as tender, compassionate, and loving toward others" (97) and "is almost bursting with love and deeply needful of solidarity with his comrades" (98), but that he cannot express this love fully because of his hatred toward Agamemnon (115). In opposition to these perspectives, as argued above, I regard Akhilleus as hostile, or at best unfeeling toward his Akhaian comrades as long as

Phoinix begins his speech in response to Akhilleus' closing suggestion that Phoinix sleep in Akhilleus' tent and return with him to Phthia (9.427-29). Akhilleus' offer is a recognition that Phoinix is his personal *philos* and an assertion that, as an ally of Akhilleus, Phoinix must also be alienated from the rest of the Akhaians. In his reply, Phoinix' first affirms that he is indeed Akhilleus' *philos* and thus inseparable from him (9.434-45) and he returns to the theme of their *philotēs* when he describes how Peleus treated him as a surrogate son and how he in turn helped to bring up Akhilleus (9.480-95). But Phoinix rejects Akhilleus' assumption that being *philos* to Akhilleus means being an enemy of Agamemnon and the Akhaians. Rather, he clearly positions himself together with the other ambassadors as *both* the Akhaians closest to Akhilleus (σοὶ αὐτῶν/ φίλτατοι Ἀργείων 9.521-22) *and* representatives of Agamemnon and the Akhaian army, with the intention of supplicating Akhilleus on their behalf (9.519-21). As several scholars have pointed out, the embassy does not actually supplicate Akhilleus,<sup>68</sup> but Phoinix would like to represent their action as a supplication that constitutes the reparation desired by Akhilleus. Thus Phoinix argues that Agamemnon's offer is appropriate recompense (9.515-19) and portrays himself as *philos* to all the parties involved. By doing so, he suggests not only that Akhilleus should rejoin the Akhaians, but even that they all already belong to the same identity group. Moreover, Phoinix ends his speech by promising Akhilleus that "the Akhaians will honor you equally with a god" (ἴσον γὰρ σε θεῶν τείσουσιν Ἀχαιοί 9.603) should he accept the gifts and rejoin the war effort. Thus he once again figures Agamemnon's offer as a true reparation that satisfies Akhilleus' desire for honor among the Akhaians. These parts of Phoinix' speech constitute the first element of his strategy for success in persuading Akhilleus.

Phoinix addresses the internecine nature of Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon and its possible negative consequences—the second and third parts of his strategy—through an autobiographical story, an allegory, and a mythological *exemplum*. Phoinix's narrative of his conflict with his father Amyntor over the sexual possession of a concubine represents a clear parallel to Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon over Briseis.<sup>69</sup> But the rhetorical message of Phoinix's analogy has been less obvious to scholars. I follow Ruth Scodel's claim that Phoinix's autobiography is in essence a negative *exemplum*. Scodel argues that Phoinix' story is too comic to be taken as a positive heroic paradigm, especially given the fact that Phoinix loses his fertility.<sup>70</sup> I contend that Phoinix' aim is to point out to Akhilleus that he is in essence fighting with his own family and friends, just as Phoinix fought with his father and escaped the vigil of his kinsmen.<sup>71</sup> The end result for Phoinix is total alienation from his natal community and no hope of future heirs. Even though Peleus offers him a surrogate family, wealth, and

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he desires something from them and does not see his desires being met. I think that he modifies his position in book 9 because Phoinix and Aias convince him that he can hope for true recompense—and thus reintegration—in the future, not because he feels sorry for the Akhaians' plight. The *philotēs* that moves Akhilleus is a renewed sense that the army will acknowledge him properly as the "best of the Akhaians."

<sup>68</sup> E.g. Schadewaldt 1966: 81; Wilson 2002: 99.

<sup>69</sup> See Rosner 1976: 318-319 for point-by-point comparison of the two situations.

<sup>70</sup> Scodel 1982: 132-33. Cf. Bassett 1938: 199.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 136.

status, Phoinix lacks any blood relatives. Phoinix suggests that should Akhilleus return to Phthia, he might also have a sufficient life, but that he will have similarly cut himself off from the community of the Akhaian army, his true home.<sup>72</sup>

Phoinix' autobiography also serves the larger function of bringing to the audience's attention once again the key Iliadic theme of desire as the cause of conflict. As such, this story represents a curious melding of the erotic dynamics at work in both the main plot and the superplot. The conflict is between two men over a concubine, but Phoinix, unlike both Akhilleus and Agamemnon, does not himself desire the concubine. Rather, it is Phoinix' mother whose sexual desire (for her husband!) leads to the quarrel, as she convinces Phoinix to have sex with Amyntor's concubine. The poet doubles the figure of the woman in this erotic triangle, with one woman representing the silent and disempowered Khryseis/Briseis and the other representing Helen as disruptive erotic agent.<sup>73</sup>

With his allegory of the Prayers (Λίτται), Phoinix expands upon the idea of the bad that could come if Akhilleus rejects the embassy's attempt to restore harmony and solidarity between him and Agamemnon. He describes how the Prayers follow upon "Delusion" (*Atē*) and the harm that it brings, providing a remedy (9.504-507); Phoinix must intend *Atē* to refer to Agamemnon's decision to dishonor Akhilleus (which Agamemnon himself admits was the result of *atē* in 9.115-19) and the Prayers to represent the embassy itself.<sup>74</sup> Yet Phoinix warns that if the Prayers go unheeded, they themselves supplicate Zeus, asking him to send *Atē* to the inflexible party, so that he may in turn suffer harm (9.510-12). He therefore advises Akhilleus to honor the Prayers. Here Phoinix points to the danger of refusing supplication. Judith Rosner has noted that Agamemnon's rejection of Khryses' supplication provides a paradigm for this negative result, since it leads to the plague that kills many Akhaians.<sup>75</sup> Yet the fact that the embassy does not constitute a supplication, despite Phoinix's attempt here and elsewhere to finesse the point,<sup>76</sup> compromises the persuasive force of this fable.

The *exemplum* of Meleagros is Phoinix's capstone attempt to persuade Akhilleus to reconcile with his own community. Phoinix introduces this myth as one of the *klea andrōn* (9.524-28). In so doing, he usurps creative control from Akhilleus, who was the one playing the *klea andrōn* when the embassy arrived at his tent, thus appropriating the power to produce epic. Phoinix is trying to change the direction of Akhilleus' plot, to make it the story of Akhilleus' participation in the war as an honored Akhaian rather than of his withdrawal.<sup>77</sup> In addition, Phoinix's words respond to Akhilleus' own

<sup>72</sup> Indeed, as Nagy 1979: 184-85 has shown, "Phthia" evokes the idea of wasting away with its relation to *phthi-* verbs ("to whither").

<sup>73</sup> Phoinix's mother also recalls the lecherous Anteia from the story of Bellerophon in 6.156-166.

<sup>74</sup> Rosner 1976: 320.

<sup>75</sup> Rosner 1976: 321. While the narrative up to this point has presented Akhilleus in opposition to Agamemnon, here the audience may begin to perceive how Akhilleus—in parallel to Agamemnon—causes harm to Akhaians as well as Trojans.

<sup>76</sup> Cf. Rosner 1976: 322; Hainsworth 1993: 128; Wilson 2002: 100.

<sup>77</sup> Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 138; Wilson 2002: 101.

contemplation of the mortal cost of “imperishable *kleos*.” Phoinix offers the *kleos* of Meleagros as an example for Akhilleus, even if he urges Akhilleus to return to battle sooner than Meleagros (9.600-605). Phoinix thus subtly dismisses the idea that Akhilleus could go home and forfeit *kleos* altogether;<sup>78</sup> he suggests rather that Akhilleus, like Meleagros, should earn *kleos* by re-entering the fighting.

Meleagros’ story offers a series of parallels to Akhilleus’ situation,<sup>79</sup> and Phoinix tells this story to make the point to Akhilleus once and for all that he is fighting with his own people to destructive effect and that he ought to redirect his aggressive desire. Oineus, who angers a divinity through *atē* and causes the Kalydonian boar to ravage his land (9.533-42), represents Agamemnon, and Meleagros, who kills the boar and saves his people (9.543-45), represents Akhilleus. Thus Phoinix suggests at first that Agamemnon and Akhilleus are like father and son. The Kouretes and the Aitolians fighting each other over the boar’s trophies are reminiscent of Agamemnon and Akhilleus quarreling over Briseis. Now Phoinix presents the two men as allies formerly united in a common cause who have become mortal enemies. Meleagros becomes angry and withdraws from battle because his mother Althaie curses him to die (9.566-72). Once again Phoinix portrays Agamemnon and Akhilleus’ quarrel as an intra-familial conflict, this time between mother and son. And in another amplification of the theme of enmity between family members, Althaie curses Meleagros because he has killed her brother, his own uncle (9.567). With this series of analogies, Phoinix tries to remind Akhilleus that he is in conflict with a *philos*.

With the Aitolians being beaten back in the absence of Meleagros, a sequence of ambassadors—elders, then father, mother, and sisters, then companions—offer Meleagros gifts and supplication in an attempt to convince him to return to battle (9.573-80). These ambassadors obviously represent the embassy to Akhilleus. Since they are members of Meleagros’ entire community, from widest to nearest (leading citizens, blood family, friends),<sup>80</sup> Phoinix is once again trying to stress how he and the other ambassadors are Akhilleus’ intimates, and how they are asking him to rejoin their community.<sup>81</sup>

Meleagros’ wife Kleopatre offers a final supplication when the Kouretes are about to sack the city, recounting all of the horrible things that happen when a city falls: the

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Schadewaldt 1966: 141.

<sup>79</sup> These are catalogued by Rosner 1976: 323.

<sup>80</sup> Kakridis 1949: 19-23 has famously argued that Phoinix alters the traditional “scale of affections” by putting Meleagros’ companions in the most prominent position in order to stress the importance of these “most cherished and intimate” (κεδνότατοι καὶ φίλτατοι 9.586) companions, who represent the ambassadors to Akhilleus, earlier named by Phoinix as Akhilleus’ “most intimate” (φίλτατοι 9.522). In support of this reading, I would offer my earlier observation that, in his autobiographical tale, Phoinix has already tried to convince Akhilleus that he belongs more with the Akhaians than with his own father Peleus in Phthia (cf. Muellner 1996: 148). Lohmann 1970: 258-59 and Rosner 1976: 324 have offered an alternative, plausible analogy. They argue that in fact each group of supplicants to Meleagros represent an ambassador, and that they come to him in the same order as the ambassadors deliver their speeches to Akhilleus: the elders are Odysseus, blood relatives represent Phoinix, and the companions stand in for Aias.

<sup>81</sup> Nagy 1979: 105. Cf. Wilson 2002: 101-102, who argues that Phoinix figures the gifts offered to Meleagros (and thus to Akhilleus) as “*gifts* to a *philos* from *philoï*,” not recompense for an insult.

men are killed, the city is burned, the women and children are enslaved (9.588-594). Phoinix' story here of course calls to the audience's mind the future destruction of Troy, which was foreshadowed in book 6.<sup>82</sup> But what Phoinix wants is to remind Akhilleus of the harm that could come to his own community—first of all the death of his male companions—if he continues to desire their defeat by the Trojans. According to Phoinix, Kleopatre's words move Meleagros' heart and he re-enters the battle to save the day, but forfeits the promised gifts (9.595-98).

Why does Phoinix have Kleopatre make the final and successful appeal, and why does he dwell on her identity and parentage earlier in the tale (9.556-64)? Whom does she represent in Akhilleus' plot? Johannes Kakridis thinks that she was an indispensable part of the traditional myth of Meleagros and thus could not be excluded although she serves no analogic function.<sup>83</sup> In opposition to this view, Wolfgang Schadewaldt (building on E. Howald's earlier work) has influentially argued that Homer invents the name Kleopatre to invoke Akhilleus' closest intimate Patroklos and makes Meleagros' wife foreshadow Patroklos' role in causing Akhilleus to return to battle.<sup>84</sup> I agree with Schadewaldt that Kleopatre's key function is to provide more clues for the most observant of the implied audience regarding the close relation between Patroklos' death and Akhilleus' ultimate return. When Meleagros withdraws into his own quarters, he lies beside Kleopatre (9.556), which clearly positions Kleopatre in analogy to Patroklos, who also remains beside Akhilleus during his withdrawal.

At the same time, Phoinix himself must intend Kleopatre to evoke Briseis in Akhilleus' mind. When he introduces Kleopatre, Phoinix calls her Meleagros' "wife" (ἄλόχῳ 9.556), echoing the word that Akhilleus applies to Briseis in his own speech. Phoinix calls Kleopatre "beautiful" (καλῆ) and dwells on the fact that she is Meleagros' sexual partner (9.556, 565, 590). In addition, he describes her mother as an erotic object over which a god and a man contend (9.557-60), perhaps evoking the conflict of Akhilleus (born of a goddess) and Agamemnon over Briseis.<sup>85</sup> Phoinix wants to inflame Akhilleus' desire for Briseis by making him remember that he will recover her only if he rejoins the Akhaian army. Phoinix cannot know the role that Patroklos will play in Akhilleus' return and does not want Akhilleus to wait for Patroklos to supplicate him; as Phoinix makes clear, he wants Akhilleus to take Agamemnon's gifts and rejoin the war effort immediately. As we shall see, Briseis will in fact mourn over the dead Patroklos (19.282-300) just as Kleopatre mourns over the prospective deaths of the Aitolians (9.591-94).

Phoinix ends by warning Akhilleus not to defer his reentry, lest, like Meleagros, he be honored less (9.600-605). Phoinix' words are meant to demonstrate to Akhilleus that the Akhaians are ready to satisfy his desire for honor, and at the same time to discourage further delay. Phoinix' clever phrasing makes Akhilleus' return to battle an

<sup>82</sup> Rosner 1976: 323-25 also catalogues how the war between Aitolians and Kouretes parallels the war between Trojans and Akhaians.

<sup>83</sup> Kakridis 1949: 23-31.

<sup>84</sup> Schadewaldt 1966: 140. Cf. Nagy 1979: 105.

<sup>85</sup> Rosner 1976: 325-26, who also detects—but on different grounds—a possible reference to Briseis here.



unquestioned assumption; the only question is its timing. This positions Akhilleus in solidarity with the Akhaian army and dismisses the possibility of leaving for Phthia.

Akhilleus is willing to acknowledge Phoinix' status as his intimate, but rejects the idea that by extension the other Akhaians, and especially Agamemnon, are also his *philoï*.<sup>86</sup> Akhilleus addresses Phoinix by the affectionate and familiar term ἄττα,<sup>87</sup> but flatly warns him that he cannot simultaneously be a *philos* to both himself and Agamemnon. If Phoinix is intimate with Agamemnon, then he will be regarded as inimical to Akhilleus (9.612-15). Akhilleus tries to identify Phoinix definitively with his own side by differentiating him from the other ambassadors, who are representatives of Agamemnon and the Akhaians. The rest of the embassy will bring their message to the army, but Phoinix will sleep in Akhilleus' tent. Akhilleus will reward Phoinix for his loyalty by granting him princely status and giving him a say in their shared decision-making (9.616-19). Akhilleus even takes Phoinix' assent for granted, signaling to Patroklos to make a bed for Phoinix in order to indicate to the other ambassadors that they are no longer welcome (9.620-22). From all this, it seems that Phoinix has utterly failed to move Akhilleus from his earlier position.

Yet there are signs that Akhilleus is reconsidering his departure from Troy even though he is unwilling to rejoin the Akhaians immediately. In response to Phoinix' admonition that he will be less honored if he does not accept Agamemnon's offer now, Akhilleus says,

I do not have any need of that honor;  
but I think that I will be honored by the allotment of Zeus,  
which will hold me beside the curved ships while breath  
remains in my chest and my knees rise up.

οὐ τί με ταύτης  
χρεῶ τιμῆς· φρονέω δὲ τετιμῆσθαι Διὸς αἴση,  
ἢ μ' ἔξει παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν εἰς ὅ κ' αὐτμῆ  
ἐν στήθεσσι μένη καὶ μοι φίλα γούνατ' ὀρώρη (9.606-610).

While Akhilleus' words seem to deny his desire for honor from the Akhaians, they actually reference his own plot to satisfy that desire. In book 1, Akhilleus wishes that Zeus might honor him precisely because Agamemnon has dishonored him (1.353-56). Akhilleus specifies that he wants Zeus to honor him by aiding the Trojans and making the Akhaians, as they die, regret their withholding of honor and acknowledge him as “best of the Akhaians” (1.408-412). Here Akhilleus sarcastically repudiates “that honor”—actually a dishonor—represented by Agamemnon's gifts and again looks to Zeus for real honor,<sup>88</sup> which would be granted through the subjugation of the Akhaians.

<sup>86</sup> Cf. Muellner 1996: 150 and Kim 2000: 98-100.

<sup>87</sup> Hainsworth 1993: 140; Griffin 1993: 141.

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Agamemnon's symmetrical claim in book 1 that Zeus will honor him even if Akhilleus will not (1.174-75). Akhilleus words here again suggest an unexpected analogy between himself and Agamemnon (see n. 75 above).

When he says that Zeus' allotment will keep him beside the ships, Akhilleus acknowledges that he will only receive honor from Zeus (and thus from the Akhaians) if he remains at Troy. But he also recognizes that he will not attain this honor until the Akhaians are pushed all the way back to the ships, even though he had hoped that their current situation was drastic enough to inspire a real supplication.<sup>89</sup> He now understands that he will have to wait until the Akhaians are almost destroyed to receive the honor he desires. For this reason, Akhilleus later specifies to the embassy that he will not fight until Hektor has reached the ships (9.650-53). Although the embassy has forced Akhilleus to question the efficacy of his strategy of withdrawal and to rethink its terms, these words indicate a renewed faith in his original plan, a belief that he can satisfy the aggressive desire that he has directed toward the Akhaians. While Phoinix has failed to mitigate that aggressive desire, he has convinced Akhilleus that the Akhaians are still invested in his return. Akhilleus reveals his increasing resolve to fulfill the plot he conceived in book 1 with his closing remark to Phoinix that they will decide together the next day whether to stay or to go (9.619).

Aias recognizes the intransigence of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward the Akhaians, calling his spirit "savage" (ἄγριον 9.629), but tries one last time to convince him that he ought not to continue fighting against his own community. Aias counters Akhilleus' own assertion that Zeus will honor him "beside the curved ships" with a reminder that the Akhaians honored him especially as their comrade "beside the ships:" "he has no regard for his companions' *philotēs*, that with which beside the ships we honored him beyond others" (οὐδὲ μετατρέπεται φιλότητος ἑταίρων/ τῆς ἧ μιν παρὰ νηυσὶν ἐτίομεν ἔξοχον ἄλλων 9.630-31). With these words, Aias again asserts Akhilleus' membership and high status in the Akhaian community. He also ends his speech by returning to the theme of the ambassadors' solidarity with Akhilleus: they are under his roof and desire to be "dearest and most intimate" (κῆδιστοί...καὶ φίλτατοι) to him of all the Akhaians (9.640-42).

Phoinix had presented to Akhilleus a series of negative *exempla* of unresolved and destructive family feuds, but Aias tries the opposite strategy in the middle of his speech by offering a positive model of harm followed by successful reconciliation within a community. He tells Akhilleus that a man will accept recompense from his brother's or child's murderer and then allow the perpetrator to remain unmolested in the *dēmos* (9.632-36). The point of this story is that someone can suffer the worst harm imaginable from a neighbor yet resolve the conflict peacefully with appropriate payment, so that the community remains intact. Aias implicitly likens Agamemnon and Akhilleus to the murderer and injured party belonging to the same *dēmos*, thus emphasizing that they are both members of the Akhaian army. But Aias also draws a contrast between Akhilleus, who is making such a fuss "for the sake of a girl" (εἴνεκα κόυρης) and the paradigmatic man, whose close relative has been killed. He argues that Agamemnon *is* offering

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<sup>89</sup> *Contra* Macleod 1982: 24, who understands Akhilleus' statement to mean that he now sees honor from Zeus as "an end in itself" and no longer cares for honor from the Akhaians: "Achilles will salve his self-esteem simply by watching the Greeks' discomfiture." Cf. Hainsworth 1993: 140 and Griffin 1995: 141, who struggle to interpret these lines.

appropriate recompense for his (relatively minor) offence and that Akhilleus should accept his gifts (9.636-39).<sup>90</sup>

Since we have already tracked how Akhilleus regards Agamemnon's gifts as a renewed insult rather than sufficient recompense, it comes as no surprise that Akhilleus resoundingly rejects this part of Aias' speech. He says that his "heart swells with anger" (οιδάνεται κραδίη χόλω 9.646) because he cannot forget how Agamemnon treated him badly, "as if I were some dishonored vagabond" (ὡς εἴ τιν' ἀτίμητον μετανάστην 9.648). Akhilleus feels that Agamemnon has exiled him from the Akhaian community, made him an outsider.<sup>91</sup> But Aias' repeated affirmation that Akhilleus *has been* a member of that community and *could be again* hits home.<sup>92</sup> Akhilleus says that Aias has spoken words that accord with his feelings (9.645).<sup>93</sup> Akhilleus wants to be honored by the Akhaians, and Phoinix and Aias together have made him see that this is possible. So he definitively states that he will re-enter battle, but only when the Akhaians really feel the need for him, when they are dying and their ships are burning, when Hektor reaches Akhilleus' own ships (9.650-55). Akhilleus does not now redirect his aggressive desire, ignoring Phoinix' message about the dangerous power of that desire; rather, he confirms his plot to recoup status in his community by hurting that same community.<sup>94</sup>

Book 9 ends with the return of the ambassadors—with the exception of Phoinix—to Agamemnon's tent, where Odysseus reports Akhilleus' answer to Agamemnon and the other princes (9.669-92). While he states Akhilleus' rejection of the embassy, Odysseus misrepresents Akhilleus' final position, conveying Akhilleus' earlier threat to return to Phthia but passing over his concluding promise to re-enter battle when Hektor reaches his ships. Many different explanations have been offered for Odysseus' omission,<sup>95</sup> but I think Hainsworth is correct in noting that only Akhilleus' immediate absence is relevant to the Akhaians.<sup>96</sup> They are interested in fending off the Trojans now, not later; they need to protect themselves from defeat. Diomedes criticizes Akhilleus as "proud" (ἀγῆνωρ 699), but dismisses him as an object of concern. Since they cannot rely on Akhilleus at present, they must find another course of action. He advises, to the approval of all, that the Akhaians prepare themselves for battle the next day and fight as best as they can, with the princes leading the way (9.697-713).

The close of book 9 thus leaves the implied audience looking forward. The audience expects renewed battle and desires it as a necessary element of Akhilleus' plot,

<sup>90</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 106-108, who thinks that Aias here, with his reference to Briseis, is also invoking the ascending scale of affections motif: he questions Akhilleus' high estimation of Briseis and attempts to substitute the ambassadors and other Akhaians as most intimate.

<sup>91</sup> Cf. Kim 2000: 101-102.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Bassett 1938: 200-201.

<sup>93</sup> According to Wilson 2002: 106-107, Akhilleus here acknowledges that Aias alone has recognized explicitly that Akhilleus deserves compensation (*poine*) for the insult that Agamemnon has rendered him: "Akhilleus can appropriate Aias' words so as to imply that he is open to compensation that is culturally acceptable."

<sup>94</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 107-108.

<sup>95</sup> See a summary in Griffin 1995: 145-46.

<sup>96</sup> Hainsworth 1993: 148.

but regards it with dreadful anticipation. That is, the audience recognizes that the satisfaction of its desire will require piteous events.<sup>97</sup> The embassy has reintroduced Akhilleus' desires to the narrative and Akhilleus' powerful speeches have demanded the audience's identification with those desires. But this episode has also foregrounded sympathetically the desire of the other Akhaians for Akhilleus' help in battle. Ultimately, the desires of Akhilleus, the Akhaians, and the audience all aim at the same result: Akhilleus' return to the Akhaian martial community. But Akhilleus' controlling plot requires death, i.e. loss, before these desires can be met, as the speeches in his tent have made clear. They have illustrated the inimical nature of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward the Akhaians and foreshadowed the mortal consequences of that desire. Book 9 entices the audience to plot out the deaths caused by Akhilleus' desire during the ensuing narrative of the Great Day of Battle, and to continue to await the satisfaction of his desires and the completion of the conflict-resolution narrative pattern established in book 1. Like book 8, book 9 is appropriate as either the end to the first day of the *Iliad's* performance or the beginning of its second day:<sup>98</sup> it reviews and elaborates on the desires driving the main plot and effectively re-stimulates the audience's desire to follow the evolution of the main plot as the *Iliad's* narrative continues.

#### 4. The Interlocking of the First and Second Movements of the Main Plot

The *Iliad's* main plot has so far been about Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon, about his desires for Briseis' return and for honor from the Akhaians. Patroklos' death in book 16, however, causes a new phase of the main plot. In this second movement, which properly begins when Akhilleus learns of Patroklos' death in book 18, Akhilleus' desires are redirected toward Patroklos and his killer Hektor, in another triangle predicated upon lack.<sup>99</sup> The second movement (books 18-24), which will be the subject of Chapter 4, is focused on satisfying Akhilleus' desire for revenge and resolving his grief over the loss of his friend. These two movements of the main plot are not isolated parts that have been paratactically conjoined; rather, the first movement causes the second and their narratives are interlocked,<sup>100</sup> in a replication of the narrative structure of book 1, where the conflict between Khryses and Agamemnon causes and interlocks with the conflict between Akhilleus and Agamemnon. Akhilleus' decision to let Patroklos fight on his behalf in book 16 is "the linchpin holding the poem's two halves together,"<sup>101</sup> and this scene will be the main focus of my analysis here. As I will argue, Homer explicitly links Akhilleus' desires in the first movement with Patroklos' death in order to explore the problem

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<sup>97</sup> Cf. Crotty 1994: 67.

<sup>98</sup> Wade-Gery 1952: 13-16, Schadewaldt 1975: 24, and Taplin 1992: 11-31 all argue that book 9 ends the first day of the *Iliad's* performance. Davison 1965 and Heiden 1996 and 2008 argue that it begins the second day.

<sup>99</sup> Cf. Bassett 1938: 185-86 on the transfer of Akhilleus' wrath from Agamemnon to Hektor; he explains that "two stories of wrath are welded together into one tragedy."

<sup>100</sup> Cf. Nagler 1974: 137-38.

<sup>101</sup> Janko 1992: 310.

represented by directing aggressive desire at one's friends, as well as to illustrate again the causal relationship between desire and death in the *Iliad*.

This narrative connection between Akhilleus' desire for honor and Patroklos' impending doom first appears in book 11. By this time the Great Day of Battle has begun and almost all of the Akhaian leaders have been injured. Akhilleus, of course, is waiting for the moment when the Akhaians are in such dire straits that they must acknowledge his indispensability and beg for his help in supplication.<sup>102</sup> When he sees Nestor's chariot go by with a wounded Akhaian, Akhilleus calls Patroklos and exclaims, "now I think that the Akhaians will stand at my knees supplicating; for a need has come that is no longer bearable" (νῦν οἶώ περὶ γούνατ' ἐμὰ στήσασθαι Ἀχαιοὺς/ λισσομένους· χρειῶ γὰρ ἰκάνεται οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτός 11.609-10). Akhilleus then commands Patroklos to go to Nestor and find out for him if the wounded man is Makhaon (11.611-15). As Akhilleus' initial words indicate, his interest is in whether the Akhaians are now prepared to actually supplicate him; his focus is on the possibility of satisfying his desire for honor.<sup>103</sup> I think that it is appropriate to interpret his curiosity about the identity of the wounded Akhaian within this framework: he wants to know if someone important has been injured, someone whose absence will further undermine the Akhaian chances of success against the Trojans without his help.

The potential loss of Makhaon would be particularly significant since he is a healer and thus, as Idomeneus says, "worth many other men" (πολλῶν ἀντάξιος ἄλλων 11.514). Makhaon's special value is the reason Nestor rescues him from battle on his chariot (11.511-18); he is implicitly more valuable than ever since so many of the Akhaian princes have been wounded and require medical care, as Nestor later narrates to Patroklos (11.658-64). Indeed, according to the narrator the wounding of Makhaon constitutes the definitive blow to the Akhaian battle line, initiating their retreat (11.504-505). In addition, Makhaon's injury makes Akhilleus himself all the more necessary and valuable, since Akhilleus is a healer (11.831-32) and healers are in short supply. Eurypylos' plea to Patroklos that he tend to his wounds with the remedies he learned from Akhilleus, since the other doctors Podaleirios and Makhaon are wounded (11.828-36), speaks to the Akhaians' extraordinary need for Akhilleus, or at the very least for his surrogate, given their situation.<sup>104</sup>

<sup>102</sup> Cf. Lynn-George 1988: 167, who writes "The rift between Achilles and the Achaians shapes the narrative that follows with its prolonged divergence between Achilles' continuing expectation, after book IX, of an Achaian supplication, and the Achaian estimation that such an approach has already been made, rejected, and therefore abandoned."

<sup>103</sup> Thornton 1984: 133 and Wilson 2002: 111. Cf. 9.197, when Akhilleus greets the embassy with a similar statement about their "need" (χρειῶ) and a similar hope that the Akhaians are ready to offer a true supplication.

<sup>104</sup> Here I expand upon Hainsworth 1993: 289, who similarly interprets Akhilleus' curiosity as a "selfish concern" regarding his own honor. As Hainsworth notes, "Nestor's opening remarks at 656-68 provide a gloss to Akhilleus' words." On Patroklos' arrival, Nestor rather sarcastically asks him why Akhilleus is "lamenting" (ὀλοφύρεται) for the Akhaians (11.656), with the implication that Akhilleus is at least partly responsible for the situation. He later remarks that Akhilleus "neither cares for nor pities the Danaans" (Δαναῶν οὐ κήδεται οὐδ' ἐλεαίρει 11.665). Pace Schein 1984: 117 and Kim 2000: 106, who argue that it is Akhilleus' concern for Makhaon's health and for the Akhaian welfare that inspires him to send out Patroklos.

When Patroklos first responds to Akhilleus' command, the narrator ominously remarks, "and indeed it was for him the beginning of evil" (κακοῦ δ' ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή 11.604). With these words, the narrator alludes to Patroklos' future death, prophesied by Zeus in 8.476. Here the poet clearly makes Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward the Akhaians initiate Patroklos' doom. At this moment, the audience can finally identify Patroklos as the specific representative of the Akhaian destruction that Akhilleus' desire is to bring about, after the many more indefinite indications of its problematic consequences in book 9. Besides the narrator, the audience is the only party privy to this future event, and this dramatic irony heightens the audience's pitiful anticipation of Patroklos' demise.

The audience gains more clues about how Patroklos' destruction will come about during Patroklos' conversation with Nestor. He detains Patroklos with a long speech and an exhortation for him to persuade Akhilleus to re-enter battle or, failing that, to lead the Myrmidons into battle himself, dressed in Akhilleus' armor, in order to gain a respite for the Akhaians. The narrator comments on how Nestor's words affect Patroklos: "thus he spoke, and incited his heart (*thumos*) in his breast" (ὥς φάτο, τῶ δ' ἄρα θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι ῥοιε 11.804). In book 3, the narrator uses this same formula to express the effect of Aphrodite's words on Helen when Aphrodite describes Paris in Helen's bedchamber and urges her to join him (3.390-95). I argued that this formula in book 3 indicates the arousal of Helen's desires, both her sexual desire for Paris and her competitive desire to best Aphrodite.<sup>105</sup> By analogy with this earlier appearance of the formula, here I suggest that Nestor stirs up in Patroklos a desire for Akhilleus, i.e., he makes Patroklos empathize with the other Akhaians' desire for Akhilleus' return. At the same time, Nestor's suggestion for Patroklos to fight in Akhilleus' stead may also inspire in Patroklos a desire to attain *kleos* himself in combat against the Trojans.<sup>106</sup>

In any case, the formula indicates that Nestor has convinced Patroklos to go to Akhilleus and supplicate him on behalf of the Akhaians.<sup>107</sup> Patroklos sets off for Akhilleus' tent, but is detained again by the wounded Eurypylos, who further arouses Patroklos' pity for the Akhaians (11.809-36).<sup>108</sup> Patroklos accedes to Eurypylos' request for healing and does not immediately return to Akhilleus. The narrative then turns to the battle between Trojans and Akhaians for four long books. This delay in the satisfaction of the audience's desire<sup>109</sup> prolongs the poem's narrative and focuses attention on the battle itself and the deaths of both Akhaians and Trojans.<sup>110</sup>

<sup>105</sup> Chapter 2, sec. 4.

<sup>106</sup> Nestor's lengthy account of his own youthful exploits in battle earlier in his speech (11.671-761) may contribute to Patroklos' desire for glory, and, in fact, be crafted for this very purpose.

<sup>107</sup> This formula appears five times in the *Iliad* (2.142, 3.395, 4.208, 11.804, 13.468) and in every case it indicates how an exhortation literally moves the speech's recipient: following this formula, the listener always (eventually) goes wherever directed by the speaker.

<sup>108</sup> Crotty 1994: 57.

<sup>109</sup> Scholars have traditionally termed it a "retardation" (cf. Hainsworth 1993: 288).

<sup>110</sup> Akhaian losses during the Great Day of Battle are the disastrous result of Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon, and may be conceived as a greatly expanded parallel to the Akhaian plague in book 1, which is the destructive result of Khryses' paradigmatic conflict with Agamemnon.

Finally, near the beginning of book 15, Zeus redirects the audience's desire again toward Akhilleus and Patroklos in his most far-reaching prophecy of the *Iliad* (15.59-77). He confirms his intention to fulfill his promise to satisfy Akhilleus' desire for honor by making the Trojans ascendant—the main plot's first movement—but he also specifies more exactly the initiation and shape of the main plot's second movement. According to Zeus, when the Akhaians are falling among the ships of Akhilleus, Akhilleus will rouse Patroklos to action; however, after Patroklos has killed many Trojans, Hektor himself will kill Patroklos before Troy (15.61-67). Zeus' prophecy suggests to the audience that Patroklos will 1) fail to convince Akhilleus to re-enter the fighting, and 2) ask Akhilleus to let him fight in his place (as per Nestor's suggestion). In fact, Zeus directly identifies Akhilleus as responsible for sending Patroklos to his death. In this way, Zeus links together the first and second movements of the main plot. In addition, Zeus foretells explicitly for the first time Akhilleus' killing of Hektor and attributes it to Akhilleus' anger over Patroklos' death, thus describing the climactic event of the second movement and the dynamics of desire behind it (15.68).

Zeus' words provide a blueprint for the audience and arouse its desire to experience the prophecy realized in the narrative, to plot out its exact contours in real time. The audience's desire can once again be described as dreadful anticipation since, in its identification with Akhilleus, the audience must look forward with sadness to the death of Akhilleus' closest friend, particularly when that death occurs through Akhilleus' own agency. The poet thus creates a conflict between narrative desire and sympathetic desire for Patroklos' (and Akhilleus') welfare. This conflict, I think, rather than compromising the audience's narrative desire, increases its investment in the narrative's progress and thus the strength of its desire. In admiration of Zeus' prophecy, Richard Janko asserts that "Homer derives his finest effects from the agony of expectation."<sup>111</sup>

In books 15-16, the poet turns again to the battle to narrate the accomplishment of Zeus' promise to Thetis (cf. 15.598-600) and the satisfaction of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward his own men: Hektor's triumph over the Akhaians and his firing of the ships. But the narrative's progress toward this goal is punctuated by two scenes dealing with Patroklos and Akhilleus that mark the intersection of the main plot's first and second movements. In the first scene, Patroklos is still in Eurypylos' tent. When he perceives the increasingly dire straits of the Akhaians, Patroklos is alarmed. He declares his intention to immediately return to Akhilleus and convince him to rejoin the battle, and then sets off for Akhilleus' tent (15.395-404). Patroklos is motivated to ask Akhilleus for help by his perception of the Akhaians' need, which is itself a product of Akhilleus' desire, accomplished by the hand of Zeus. With this first scene, therefore, the poet begins to explore two interrelated chains of causality: 1) Patroklos acts on behalf of the beleaguered Akhaians; 2) Akhilleus' desires are responsible for the Akhaians' distress and thus for Patroklos' actions.

The second scene, Patroklos' fateful encounter with Akhilleus at the beginning of book 16, expands upon and further clarifies these connections for the audience. The poet narrates Patroklos' meeting with Akhilleus (16.2-100) at a moment of even greater need for the Akhaians: just after Hektor begins his attempt to set the Akhaian ships on fire

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<sup>111</sup> Janko 1992: 234.

(15.716-46) and just before Hektor actually accomplishes this feat (16.114-124). This scene is therefore juxtaposed with the moment of crisis in a narrative arrangement that reflects how it constitutes at once a response to the crisis as well as a recapitulation of its origin.

As the scene begins, Patroklos confronts Akhilleus, “weeping hot tears” (δάκρυα θερμὰ χέων 16.3). His weeping is compared to a dark stream pouring water down a cliff in an exact repetition of the simile that had characterized Agamemnon’s crying near the start of book 9 (9.14-15 = 16.3-4).<sup>112</sup> This repetition immediately characterizes Patroklos in the audience’s mind as a representative of Agamemnon and the Akhaian army.<sup>113</sup> I argued earlier that Agamemnon’s tears indicated his desire for the absent Akhilleus in the face of catastrophe; likewise, Patroklos here expresses the desire of all the Akhaians for Akhilleus’ return as they are beset by the Trojans.<sup>114</sup> Patroklos himself makes clear that he is channeling the feelings of the Akhaians when he explains that “grief” (*akhos*) has overcome the army because of the wounding of many princes (16.22-29).<sup>115</sup> This grief is parallel to the suffering that Agamemnon and the Akhaians felt in 9.3-13, which motivated them to send the embassy to Akhilleus; in both cases, grief is a symptom of their need, their desire, for Akhilleus. Akhilleus’ comparison of the weeping Patroklos to a girl begging to be picked up by her mother (16.7-10) acknowledges Patroklos’ implicit desire for Akhilleus; Akhilleus has the capacity to provide safety and security to the Akhaians, as a parent can for a needy child.

Akhilleus starts the conversation by asking Patroklos why he is crying, but he both knows and dislikes the answer.<sup>116</sup> He at first offers what he considers an appropriate rationale for tears and grief—news of the death of either of their fathers (16.12-16)—before guessing that Patroklos is in fact weeping for the Akhaians, “how they are perishing beside the hollow ships on account of their own transgression” (ὡς ὀλέκονται/ νηυσὶν ἐπὶ γλαφυρῆσιν ὑπερβασίης ἔνεκα σφῆς 16.17-18). Akhilleus’ disingenuous question reveals his lack of empathy with the Akhaians’ plight. He does not think they deserve pity and he blames them, through their dishonoring of him, for their current troubles. Yet this is also a tacit acknowledgment of his own agency in their defeat by virtue of his withdrawal combined with his plea to Zeus to make the Trojans triumphant. It is yet another expression of his aggressive desire toward the Akhaians.

Once the beginning of the scene has established the positions of Patroklos (advocating for the Akhaian army) and Akhilleus (opposing the Akhaians), Patroklos

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<sup>112</sup> Janko 1992: 315.

<sup>113</sup> Lynn-George 1988: 168. *Pace* Hainsworth 1993: 60, who writes “No other connexion between the passages is made explicit and it is hard to imagine that an *audience* would make one, unless it were well trained in the nuances of the epic style.” I counter that the implied audience is *de facto* “trained in the nuances of the epic style.” Moreover, the openings of book 16 and 9 both respond to a situation of mortal danger for the Akhaians. This book 16 scene in fact makes repeated reference to book 9, as Schadewaldt 1966: 128-30 has shown.

<sup>114</sup> As Halperin 1990: 84 observes, “Achilles’s wrath, in fact, reduces his dearest friend to the emotional predicament of his most hated enemy.”

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 89-90.

<sup>116</sup> Janko 1992: 316.



makes his request of Akhilleus. Patroklos implores Akhilleus to relent and ward off destruction from the Akhaians or else to let him lead the Myrmidons into battle as Akhilleus' surrogate (16.31-45). The fact that Patroklos follows Nestor's instructions precisely shows how Patroklos has been assimilated into the Akhaian army while he was visiting Nestor and Eurypylos. Before, when Patroklos was isolated in Akhilleus' tent, he remained in a complete and exclusive *philotēs* with Akhilleus; he existed in a symbiotic but totally subordinate relation to Akhilleus, an agent in accomplishing Akhilleus' desires.<sup>117</sup> But now Patroklos' physical separation from Akhilleus has resulted in a psychical disconnect. Patroklos' desires are aligned with the desires of the Akhaians. His offer to join the Akhaians on the battlefield, while Akhilleus remains in his tent, represents his identification with an Akhaian army that Akhilleus would like to see defeated. The narrator announces that Patroklos was "greatly foolish, for he was at the point of praying for his own evil death and fate" (μέγα νήπιος· ἢ γὰρ ἔμελλεν/ οἱ αὐτῶ θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα λιτέσθαι 16.46-47). Once again, the narrator explicitly foreshadows Patroklos' death in connection with the Akhaians' dire straits and Akhilleus' refusal to negate his aggressive desire, and arouses the audience's dreadful anticipation of that event as it becomes more and more imminent.

The narrator also says that Patroklos was "supplicating" (λίσσόμενος 16.46): Patroklos finally offers the requisite supplication for Akhilleus to re-enter battle that the embassy of book 9 had failed to provide.<sup>118</sup> This puts Akhilleus in a complicated situation. Akhilleus has received the supplication that he was waiting for, but the identity of the suppliant is wrong. Akhilleus wanted the Akhaians to supplicate him (11.609), but instead it is Patroklos, whom he considers his own *philos*, a member of his family group. Akhilleus' *philos* is not only currently acting as a *philos* to the Akhaians—whom he is treating as his enemies—but also desires Akhilleus to rejoin the team, to act directly as the Akhaians' *philos* by fighting on their side or indirectly by allowing Patroklos and the Myrmidons to re-enter the war.<sup>119</sup> So, even though the Akhaians have *not* satisfied Akhilleus' desire for honor, Patroklos has put Akhilleus in the position of having either to refuse the Akhaians *and* his intimate companion or to accept both of them in a relation of *philotēs*.

Finding himself in this bind, Akhilleus seizes on Patroklos' offer to fight in his place as a middle way.<sup>120</sup> Akhilleus interprets this as a means for him to accept Patroklos' supplication and act in solidarity with him while holding out for the satisfaction of his

<sup>117</sup> Cf. Fantuzzi 2012: 206-207. This relation is emblemized by the formula used repeatedly to describe Patroklos' subservience: "thus he [Akhilleus] spoke and Patroklos obeyed his intimate companion" (ὥς φάτο, Πάτροκλος δὲ φίλῳ ἔπεπειθεθ' ἑταίρῳ 1.345 = 9.205 = 11.616).

<sup>118</sup> Lynn-George 1988: 168.

<sup>119</sup> Patroklos' stance here is almost parallel to Phoinix's in book 9, yet Phoinix does not actually supplicate Akhilleus nor offer himself as a surrogate. Thus Akhilleus can ignore Phoinix's plea and force Phoinix to take sides definitely with him instead of with the Akhaians (9.612-19).

<sup>120</sup> The narrator describes Akhilleus as "greatly troubled" (μέγ' ὀχθήσας 16.48) after Patroklos' supplicating speech. Cf. Macleod 1982: 24 on Akhilleus' "mental conflict" and Schein 1984: 118-119 on how Akhilleus' language reflects his "tortured feelings."

own aggressive desire for honor.<sup>121</sup> Akhilleus orders Patroklos to lead the Myrmidons as his surrogate (16.64-65), but with limitations: he is to ward off destruction from the ships, but then to come back, and to allow the two armies to contend on the plain of Troy (16.87, 95-96). He imposes these restrictions “so that you may win great honor and glory for me from the Danaans, and so that they send back the very beautiful girl and give many shining gifts in addition” (ὡς ἄν μοι τιμὴν μεγάλην καὶ κῦδος ἄρηαι/πρὸς πάντων Δαναῶν, ἀτὰρ οἱ περικαλλέα κούρη/ ἄψ ἀπονάσσωσιν, ποτὶ δ’ ἀγλαὰ δῶρα πόρωσιν 16.83-86). Akhilleus worries that if Patroklos does too much, he will be further dishonored (16.90), i.e. the Akhaians will not desire his return. He intends Patroklos and the Myrmidons to help the Akhaians up to a point, but not enough to render him superfluous; that is, to give the Akhaians a taste of himself through Patroklos, but leave them wanting the real thing.<sup>122</sup>

This is a major change in Akhilleus’ tactics, and it does represent a mitigation of the degree of his aggressive desire, yet his goal of being honored remains the same.<sup>123</sup> That is, Akhilleus’ willingness to let Patroklos help the army represents a delay or partial renunciation of his aggressive desire for the Akhaians’ *physical* defeat. He acknowledges that it is impossible to be unremittingly angry (16.60-61), which suggests that his anger toward the Akhaians—a symptom of his extreme aggressive desire—is diminishing. But he also says that he promised he would not fully renounce his “wrath” (μηνιθμὸν) until the war came to his ships (16.61-62). That Akhilleus feels bound to respect his earlier statement indicates that he cares about holding his position, that his desire for status supersedes any competing desire he might (or might not) have for the army’s welfare.<sup>124</sup> Indeed, he reiterates his unsatisfied desires to Patroklos, saying that he feels “anguish” (ἄχος) and “pains” (ἄλγεα) because Agamemnon has taken away “the girl” (κούρη), his *geras* that the army selected for him (16.55-59).<sup>125</sup> He repeats exactly his early assessment of Agamemnon’s action, saying that Agamemnon has treated him “as if I were some dishonored vagabond” (ὡς εἴ τιν’ ἀτίμητον μετανάστην 16.59 = 9.648). He asserts that if Agamemnon should be well disposed to him (ἤπια εἰδείη), he would kill many Trojans, but that he will not himself fight without such deference (16.70-73).<sup>126</sup> These repetitions of his grievances and his stubborn refusal to enter battle except on his own terms show that he still desires honor, *symbolic* dominance over the Akhaians. He also still wants the Akhaians to suffer in his absence.

Akhilleus’ decision to seek honor through new and different means, by sending Patroklos into battle, is motivated by a desire to reclaim Patroklos as his *philos*. The unity

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Nimis 1987: 40-41, who finds Akhilleus’ strategy contradictory to his aim for honor.

<sup>122</sup> Devereux 1978: 5. Cf. Crotty 1994: 56-59 and Wilson 2002: 113.

<sup>123</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 112, who writes that Akhilleus “does not abandon his objective of taking *poine* and gifts or his struggle for domination.”

<sup>124</sup> Cf. Whitman 1958: 198; Schein 1984: 118-19; Lynn-George 1988: 168; Redfield 1994: 17-18. Pace Bassett 1938: 200 and Schadewaldt 1966: 136, I do not see Akhilleus’ concession to Patroklos as a demonstration of his care for the welfare of the Akhaians; I see any steps he takes on their behalf as acts of solidarity with Patroklos.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 79.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Schadewaldt 1966 [1944]: 129 and Motzkus 1964: 127-28.

of Akhilleus and Patroklos, and, even more, Akhilleus' complete control of Patroklos have been contested by Patroklos' supplication on the Akhaians' behalf.<sup>127</sup> By granting Patroklos' request, but imposing strict limitations and establishing the attainment of his own honor as the aim, Akhilleus asserts both his *philotēs* with Patroklos and Patroklos' submission to him. He reconstructs Patroklos as an agent of his will, rather than as a *philos* to the Akhaians. Dressing Patroklos in his own armor symbolizes this relation. In Akhilleus' armor, Patroklos goes into battle not as himself, but as Akhilleus; he becomes Akhilleus' alter ego.<sup>128</sup> Akhilleus' armor literally and metaphorically encompasses Patroklos, erases his individual identity, dominates him.

At the end of his reply to Patroklos, Akhilleus enunciates how he imagines himself and Patroklos as a unified pair in opposition to both Trojans *and* Greeks, in an "us against the world" scenario. Calling on Zeus, Athene, and Apollo, he wishes for every Trojan and Akhaian to die except for the two of them; he wishes that he and Patroklos alone might conquer Troy (16.97-100). Akhilleus' use of the dual pronoun (νῶϊν) positions Patroklos as his second self. He situates Patroklos on his side and expresses aggressive desire toward everyone else.<sup>129</sup> He negates Patroklos' *philotēs* with the Akhaians, and preempts Patroklos' and the Akhaians' desire for his help with his own desire for total domination. With these words, Akhilleus coopts Patroklos; he asserts exclusive ownership over his companion. He also confirms that he does not really care about the welfare of the Akhaian army, that he only cares about himself, about satisfying his desires.<sup>130</sup> Akhilleus' wish is self-defeating, since there would be no one to honor him, at least in the world of mortals, if everyone else were dead. But this is, of course, the logical end-point of viewing one's friends as enemies, of wishing destruction on one's own community. Akhilleus' actions, however, including his decision to send Patroklos into battle, show that he does not actually want *all* the Akhaians to die, since he does want to be reintegrated into the society as its most honored member. But the scenario that Akhilleus has conjured up points to the problem of controlling the extent of the damage he has wrought. Once Akhilleus has unleashed his aggressive desire, where will it stop?<sup>131</sup>

When Akhilleus agrees to send Patroklos into the fighting, he orders him, "do not desire apart from me to make war with the war-loving Trojans" (μὴ σὺ γ' ἀνευθεν ἐμεῖο λιλαίεσθαι πολεμίζειν/ Τρωσὶ φιλοπτολέμοισιν 16.89-90). These words again represent Akhilleus' attempt to control Patroklos, specifically to control Patroklos' desires. Akhilleus would like Patroklos' desires to align with his own. He does not want him to conceive an aggressive desire toward the Trojans independent of himself, a desire

<sup>127</sup> Akhilleus' first words to the weeping Patroklos in book 16, likening him to a needy little girl asking to be picked up by her mother (16.7-10), are already an attempt to reposition Patroklos as his dependent. In this simile, Akhilleus implicitly sets himself up as the protective mother, with Patroklos as the child who is not yet detached psychologically or physically from the mother.

<sup>128</sup> Whitman 1958: 200-201; Nagy 1979: 33-34, 292-95; Sinos 1980: 35.

<sup>129</sup> Fantuzzi 2012: 207-209.

<sup>130</sup> Cf. Schein 1984: 120. These desires now include a desire for the *kleos* of sacking Troy.

<sup>131</sup> Cf. Nagler 1974: 145, 155.

that would inspire Patroklos to overstep and thus to subvert Akhilleus' plot for honor.<sup>132</sup> Moreover, he does not want Patroklos—whom he values as a second self—to be hurt. He warns him here to beware of the gods on the side of the Trojans, especially Apollo (16.91-94), and later he prays to Zeus for Patroklos' safety and the safety of the Myrmidons (16.247-48).

The problem, however, with Akhilleus' attempt to curtail Patroklos' desires is that Patroklos and the Myrmidons *are going into battle without him against the Trojans as part of the Akhaian collective*. In so doing, they are aligning themselves with the Akhaians and their desires, most especially with their aggressive desire to defeat the Trojans. In fact, this aggressive desire is necessary for their participation in combat. Akhilleus himself recognizes this fact when he takes it on himself to “rouse” (ὀτρύνων 16.67) the Myrmidons, as the narrator describes it. Before the Myrmidons go into battle, Akhilleus tells them to remember their earlier desire to fight, a desire that they had expressed when he was keeping them back although they were “unwilling” (ἀέκοντας 16.204). He explicitly invokes their *eros* for war: “now is manifest the great work of battle, which before you desired” (νῦν δὲ πέφανται/ φυλόπιδος μέγα ἔργον, ἔης τὸ πρὶν γ' ἐράσθε 16.207-08). After his admonitory words, the narrator says that he “roused the spirit and heart of each” (ὄτρυνε μένος καὶ θυμὸν ἐκάστου 16.210), testifying to his success in inspiring their aggressive desire.

Despite this, as long as Patroklos is within Akhilleus' sphere of influence he continues to operate as Akhilleus' surrogate. Building on the work of Nadia Van Brock, Dale Sinos has observed how Patroklos' designation as Akhilleus' *therapōn* ('attendant') indicates his subservience or subordination to Akhilleus, who is the primary figure.<sup>133</sup> The narrator calls Patroklos Akhilleus' *therapōn* after he has put on Akhilleus' armor and is preparing to lead the Myrmidons into battle (16.165) and Akhilleus himself names Patroklos his *therapōn* as he prays for his success and safe return from battle (16.244). Patroklos' words of exhortation to the Myrmidons before battle show that he has taken on Akhilleus' desires as his own. He tells them to be courageous:

so that we may honor the son of Peleus, who is much the best  
of the Argives beside the ships, even as attendants who fight in close combat,  
and so that the wide-ruling son of Atreus, Agamemnon, may recognize  
his delusion, that he did not honor the best of the Akhaians.

ὥς ἂν Πηλεΐδην τιμήσομεν, ὃς μέγ' ἄριστος  
Ἀργείων παρὰ νηυσὶ καὶ ἀγχέμαχοι θεράποντες,  
γνώδ' καὶ Ἀτρείδης εὐρὺ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων  
ἦν ἄτην, ὃ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτισεν (16.271-74).

<sup>132</sup> Cf. MacCary 1982: 142.

<sup>133</sup> Sinos 1980: 30-33. As Van Wees 1992: 42-43 explains, in general *therapontes* are those who serve a social superior, performing “personal services for him, such as preparing and serving his food or grooming and driving his horses; and they follow him to war.” This service relationship can be permanent or a temporary arrangement during a military campaign.

Patroklos here indicates that he wants to satisfy Akhilleus' desires, that he is in alignment with his friend and superior. In fact, the last two lines are an exact repetition of Akhilleus' own words to Thetis explaining his desires in 1.411-12.<sup>134</sup> The narrator also describes the success of his exhortation in the same language used earlier to characterize the success of Akhilleus' exhortation (16.275 = 16.210). Patroklos is so closely identified with Akhilleus at first that when he actually enters battle, he is indeed mistaken for Akhilleus by the Trojans (16.278-83). Seeing Patroklos, they initially think that Akhilleus has "thrown off his wrath and chosen *philotēs*" (μηνιθμὸν μὲν ἄπορριψαι, φιλότητα δ' ἐλέσθαι 16.282) and they scatter in retreat.

Sinos has importantly discerned that Patroklos ceases to be called a *therapōn* during his *aristeia*. He argues that Patroklos "becomes the substitute for Achilles, and takes on the identity of his counterpart, eradicating his status as subordinate to the primary figure."<sup>135</sup> More specifically, Sinos identifies Patroklos as Akhilleus' 'ritual substitute,' who enters battle and dies on his behalf, with the result that Akhilleus again becomes *philos* to the Akhaians and realizes his own heroic role vis-à-vis Hektor.<sup>136</sup> I agree with Sinos on many points: Patroklos does take on a new and powerful identity during his *aristeia*; he is the linchpin that connects the first movement of the plot to the second; and, finally, he is a substitute for Akhilleus on the mythopoetic level. That is, Patroklos' death stands in for and evokes Akhilleus' own death at Troy in the mythological tradition, but beyond the bounds of the *Iliad*'s narrative, as the Neoanalysts have shown.<sup>137</sup>

All the same, on a psychological level, the disappearance of Patroklos' characterization as Akhilleus' *therapōn* marks not his identity with Akhilleus, but instead his disassociation from him.<sup>138</sup> That is, as soon as Patroklos is separated from Akhilleus and truly integrated into the Akhaian army, he moves beyond Akhilleus' control. He disappoints Akhilleus' expectation that he will be merely a surrogate and instead identifies with the Akhaians and pursues his own desires, independent of Akhilleus. After Patroklos has led the Akhaians to reverse the tide of battle in a first successful round of kills, the narrator clearly groups Patroklos with the other Akhaian fore-fighters in his summation: "these leaders of the Danaans, each of them, took a man" (οὔτοι ἄρ' ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν ἔλον ἄνδρα ἕκαστος 16.351). This marks the shift of Patroklos' identification from Akhilleus to the Akhaians. After this reversal, Hektor in his chariot crosses back over the ditch and flees toward Troy (16.367-69), and Patroklos follows him. This is the moment when Patroklos first pursues the Trojans beyond the Akhaian camp, which is surrounded by the defensive ditch, thus transgressing Akhilleus' command that he only drive the Trojans away from the ships. Here, pointedly, the

<sup>134</sup> Cf. Janko 1992: 353.

<sup>135</sup> Sinos 1980: 35.

<sup>136</sup> Sinos 1980: 29-37, 42-45.

<sup>137</sup> Kakridis 1949: 65-95 represents an early and comprehensive example of this argument.

<sup>138</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 293-95, who notes that Patroklos is compared to Ares when he fatally attacks Apollo (16.784), as well as when he first leaves Akhilleus' tent to go to Nestor's (11.604). Nagy suggests that Patroklos, in his death, ceases to be Akhilleus' *therapōn* and becomes the *therapōn* of Ares, that is, a victim of the war-god.

narrator describes the aggressive desire of both Patroklos and the immortal horses pulling his chariot. The horses surge across the ditch, “desiring [to go] forwards” (πρόσσω ἰέμενοι 16.382). At the same time, Patroklos’ “heart urged him against Hektor, for he desired to strike him” (ἐπὶ δ’ Ἔκτορι κέκλετο θυμός· / ἴετο γὰρ βαλέειν 16.382-83). At this juncture, the narrative depicts Patroklos acting on his own and on behalf of the Akhaians, spurred by aggressive desire to destroy Hektor. Although Patroklos does not kill Hektor, he satisfies his first bout of aggressive desire by killing the Lykian champion Sarpedon.

Patroklos’ independent desires are stimulated once again when Hektor kills one of the Myrmidons, Epigeus, as the Lykians and Trojans rally to rescue Sarpedon’s corpse (16.570-80). The narrator says that “anguish came to Patroklos because of the death of his companion” (Πατρόκλω δ’ ἄρ’ ἄχος γένετο φθιμένου ἑτάριοιο 16.581) and then continues, “thus straight at the Lykians, horse-riding Patroklos, you sped, and at the Trojans, and you were angered at the doom of your companion” (ὥς ἰθὺς Λυκίων, Πατρόκλεες ἵπποκέλευθε, / ἔσσο καὶ Τρώων, κεχόλωσο δὲ κῆρ ἑτάριοιο 16.585). Here the narrative presents the familiar erotic triangle in which the subject (here Patroklos) feels *akhos* because of his desire for his lost companion and *kholos* toward those who have deprived him of his friend, in an expression of aggressive desire directed at his rival.<sup>139</sup> As the narrator recounts, this aggression continues to carry him forward to engage with the Akhaians’ enemies.

Here also the narrator apostrophizes Patroklos, the second of eight times that he does so throughout the course of book 16.<sup>140</sup> As Homeric critics have recognized, beginning with the scholiasts, these apostrophes create the impression that the narrator sympathizes with Patroklos and feels compassion for him as he moves inexorably toward his death.<sup>141</sup> The apostrophe also draws the audience’s attention to Patroklos,<sup>142</sup> and the narrator’s attitude “develops and confirms an answering sympathy in the audience.”<sup>143</sup> Thus this rhetorical effect focuses and intensifies the audience’s piteous desire for Patroklos’ death.<sup>144</sup>

Zeus’ deliberation over the timing of Patroklos’ death mirrors the narrator’s and audience’s special concern for Patroklos’ fate. Soon after Patroklos attacks his foes, Zeus wonders whether he should have Hektor kill Patroklos in the fight over Sarpedon’s body, or else first let Patroklos pursue Hektor to the city and kill more Trojans (16.647-55).<sup>145</sup>

<sup>139</sup> Shay 1994: 87-88 also flags the death of Patroklos’ Myrmidon companion as a trigger point that alters his psychology, propelling him into a “berserk” state in which he ignores Akhilleus’ restraints and attempts to storm Troy. Cf. Wilson 2002: 114, who similarly notes that Patroklos “loses his own sense of limits.”

<sup>140</sup> The eight apostrophes are at 16.20, 584, 692f., 744, 754, 787, 812, 843.

<sup>141</sup> E.g. scholion ad 16.787; Parry 1972: 9; Block 1982: 16-17; and, most recently, Allen-Hornblower 2015.

<sup>142</sup> Frontisi-Ducroux 1986: 21.

<sup>143</sup> Block 1982: 16.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. De Jong 2009: 95, who argues that apostrophe increases the vividness (*enargeia*) of the narrative, bringing it alive for the audience. On the apostrophizing of Patroklos, see also Chapter 4, sec. 3.

<sup>145</sup> Departing from the narrator’s practice during Patroklos’ *aristeia*, Zeus here calls Patroklos “*therapōn* of Akhilleus, the son of Peleus” (16.653). I suggest that this indicates Zeus’ general alignment with Akhilleus

Zeus' internal debate shows again that it is his "will" (βουλή) for Patroklos to die and indicates that his death is imminent, but it also suggests some degree of sympathy for the doomed hero.

Indeed, Zeus decides to delay Patroklos' death until he has driven the Trojans back to Troy, thus granting Patroklos greater glory while also explicitly linking his aggressive impulse to his death. When Patroklos pursues his enemies, the narrator calls Patroklos "greatly deluded" (μέγ' ἄσθη 16.685) and "foolish" (νήπιος 16.686), asserting that if Patroklos had obeyed Akhilleus, he would have avoided death, but that the mind of Zeus is stronger than that of men when he urges them on to fight (16.686-91). The poet here explains that Patroklos' decision to attack Troy causes his death, and that this decision is in accordance with Zeus' "mind" (νόος), in the mode of double determination.<sup>146</sup>

Patroklos' aggressive desire explains why Zeus, a partisan of Akhilleus, determines that Patroklos must die in contravention of Akhilleus' wishes. Invoking Zeus' accomplishment of his desires up to that point, Akhilleus had prayed for Patroklos' success in battle and safe return (16.233-48). Zeus had granted his first request, but refused his second (16.250-52). Here he confirms Patroklos' death. Apart from any personal motive he might have to avenge Patroklos' killing of his son Sarpedon, Zeus' move is, I think, conditioned by the fact that Patroklos asserts his own will, abandoning Akhilleus' limitations and desiring to kill Hektor. Patroklos' aggressive desire subverts Akhilleus' desires and his plot to regain honor. Patroklos' success would garner him the honor that Akhilleus himself desires to attain; Patroklos' aggression threatens to make him Akhilleus' substitute in life, not death. Zeus, by ordaining Patroklos' death, keeps him from entirely wrecking Akhilleus' plot, from usurping Akhilleus' traditional role as preeminent Akhaian hero at Troy. Zeus' refusal to grant Akhilleus' prayer for Patroklos' safety is thus in the service of fulfilling Akhilleus' earlier prayer for honor<sup>147</sup> (the fulfillment of which seems to be in accord with Zeus' greater purpose, whatever that may be).

Patroklos is finally killed by the combined efforts of Apollo, Euphorbos, and Hektor while charging the Trojans furiously, in an attack that recalls Diomedes' encounter with Apollo in the superplot. He rushes the Trojans three times, killing nine men each time, and on his fourth attack Apollo strikes him and knocks off his helmet (16.784-93).<sup>148</sup> This same type scene had described Patroklos' failed sally against the Troy itself a few lines earlier, which was similarly foiled by Apollo (16.698-711). It first appeared in book 5 to describe Diomedes' futile attack on Aineas and Apollo (5.436-44).

and his desires, how he works in the *Iliad* to accomplish Akhilleus' will, even when it seems that he is not doing so (see below).

<sup>146</sup> Janko 1992: 397.

<sup>147</sup> Nimis 1987: 87-93 tracks how Akhilleus' second prayer to Zeus is in opposition to his original prayer and thus creates textual confusion.

<sup>148</sup> The narrator introduces this final attack by saying that Patroklos was "intending dire things for the Trojans" (Τρωσὶ κακὰ φρονέων 16.783). The narrator uses this same phrase to describe Patroklos' state of mind in 16.373, just before he crosses the ditch in pursuit of Hektor. I read this formula as a narrative indicator employed at critical junctures to express Patroklos' aggressive desire.

As I discussed in Chapter 2, Diomedes acts as Akhilleus' battlefield surrogate in the superplot, but he does not actually fulfill Akhilleus' role with regard to the Trojans: he does not kill Hektor.<sup>149</sup> Patroklos' fatal quadruple attack indicates that his *aristeia* repeats Diomedes' unsuccessful attempt to replace Akhilleus, to substitute his own plot for Akhilleus' plot.

The death of Patroklos thus represents the triumph of Akhilleus' plot, but also its limitations and devastating repercussions. Akhilleus is not omnipotent and omniscient. Although he would like to, he cannot completely control Patroklos' desires and actions in battle, and he fails to foresee Patroklos' doom. Akhilleus does not understand that when Patroklos fights with the Akhaians, recognizing them as his *philoï*, he becomes a member of the Akhaian collective and thus a victim of the aggressive desire that Akhilleus had directed toward the Akhaians. Apollo is the agent of destruction here, just as he also visited the plague on the Akhaians in Agamemnon's paradigmatic conflict with Khryses. Agamemnon's egotism, combined with a lack of foresight regarding the consequences of his actions, caused the plague in book 1. Similarly, when Akhilleus, obsessed with his own gratification, treats his community as the enemy, wishing the Akhaians worsted in battle or dead, his best friend dies.<sup>150</sup> His refusal of *philotēs* with the Akhaians causes the ultimate disruption of his *philotēs* with Patroklos. He has unwittingly desired the death of his most intimate companion.

## 5. The Incomplete Resolution of Book 19 and Akhilleus' New Desires

While book 16 leads to a second movement of the main plot, the first movement is definitively concluded only in book 19 with the long-awaited reconciliation of Akhilleus and Agamemnon. This reconciliation resolves the book 1 conflict hitherto driving the action of the main plot. As many scholars have observed, the poet marks this turnaround by making book 19 repeat in reverse the events of book 1.<sup>151</sup> Akhilleus and Agamemnon quarrel during the Akhaian assembly in book 1, but make peace during the parallel assembly in book 19, both of which are called by Akhilleus; afterwards, Agamemnon sends a delegation to take Briseis from Akhilleus' tent in book 1, and a delegation to bring her back to the tent in book 19.

In addition to these reversals, the book 19 reconciliation represents a variation on another section of book 1's narrative, the Akhaian delegation to Khryse, during which the Akhaians return Khryseis to her father Khryses and propitiate the god Apollo with sacrifice and feasting (1.430-87). While the embassy to Akhilleus in book 9 did not replicate this conflict-resolution pattern, instead recalling Agamemnon's insulting

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, sec. 6.

<sup>150</sup> Thornton 1984: 135-36 observes this parallelism, but interprets the book 1 plague as punishment for Agamemnon's rejection of Khryses' supplication, and Patroklos' death as Zeus' and Apollo's punishment for Akhilleus' improper rejection of the embassy in book 9. Whereas Apollo sends the plague as retribution at Khryses' request, there is no indication that Agamemnon is being punished for a moral crime. Likewise, Zeus does not frame Patroklos' death as a punitive measure.

<sup>151</sup> Lohmann 1970: 173-74; Edwards 1991: 239; Loudon 2006: 120-25; Rabel 1997: 178-79. Cf. Arend 1933: 117, who notes that the book 19 assembly is an "augmentation" (Steigerung) of the book 1 assembly.



delegation to Akhilleus' tent, the successful reconciliation of book 19 is accompanied by a repetition of many elements (*mutatis mutandis*) from the book 1 delegation to Khryse.<sup>152</sup> These repeated elements satisfy the audience's desire for closure of the main plot's first movement, but the elements of the paradigm that are lacking indicate the incompleteness of the narrative resolution and entice the audience to continue plotting out Akhilleus' new desires in the second movement of the main plot.

The correspondences are many between the resolution of Agamemnon and Akhilleus' conflict in book 19 and the successful appeasement of Khryses and Apollo in book 1. During the assembly, Agamemnon arranges recompense for Akhilleus with an order to Odysseus to choose excellent Akhaian young men, so that they might bring gifts and women (including Briseis) from his ship (19.192-95). Similarly, during the book 1 assembly, Agamemnon announces his intentions to send a hecatomb together with the girl Khryseis to Khryse, in order to gratify Khryses and propitiate Apollo (1.141-47), and the narrator records the actual formation of the delegation after the assembly, with Odysseus, significantly, as its leader (1.308-312).<sup>153</sup> Later we learn that the delegation to Khryse, like the book 19 group, includes Akhaian young men who perform the important functions of helping with the sacrifice, pouring wine, and singing a paean to Apollo (1.463-76). In book 19, after gathering the gifts and women from Agamemnon's tent, Odysseus and his helpers place them in the middle of the *agora*, the heart of the Akhaian community (19.238-49); this is a secular variation of the way that Odysseus leads the hecatomb and Khryseis from the ship to the altar, the centerpoint of Apollo's cult in Khryse (1.430-40).

This last parallel points to the different circumstances of Agamemnon's two conflicts, which require altered, if corresponding, remedies. When Agamemnon withholds Khryseis from Khryses, he insults a foreign priest of Apollo, and, by extension the god himself, who rains destruction on the Akhaian army. By taking away Briseis, however, Agamemnon angers Akhilleus, a mortal Akhaian. Although Akhilleus likewise has the support of the gods (Thetis and Zeus), Akhilleus by himself can resolve the problem that the quarrel has created, namely, his absence from battle. Khryses by contrast acts as a middle-man: he cannot reverse the plague alone, but must ask Apollo to abandon his wrath. Therefore, while the first conflict requires reparation for a man and propitiation of a god, the second requires only the giving of compensation to Akhilleus.

Nevertheless, at their core both reconciliation scenes rest on the performance of appropriate ritual.<sup>154</sup> In book 19, the herald Talthybios brings a boar and Agamemnon cuts off ritual hairs before swearing an oath—with the gods as witness—that he never laid a hand on Briseis. Afterwards, Agamemnon sacrifices the boar and Talthybios throws its stomach into the sea (19.250-68). Akhilleus responds formally to absolve Agamemnon of wrongdoing and bids the Akhaian army to eat in preparation for battle

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<sup>152</sup> Edwards 1991: 263 and Loudon 2006: 123-25 remark on the similarities of the two episodes (Louden does this in some detail), but Edwards does not explore their narrative implications and Loudon interprets them along different lines.

<sup>153</sup> In book 1, after carrying out these preparations, Agamemnon orders Briseis to be taken away (1.320-25), while in book 19, the preparations are themselves for the return of Briseis.

<sup>154</sup> Coray 2009: 91 compares these two episodes as instances of the "sacrifice" type scene.

(19.268-75). This is a variation of the climactic moments of the book 1 episode. There Odysseus brings the girl and the hecatomb to Khryses at the altar, and explains Agamemnon's intention to return Khryseis and make good to Apollo (1.442-445). After reunion with Khryseis, Khryses together with Odysseus begins the ritual, arranging the hecatomb, washing hands, and throwing barley-groats (1.447-49). Then Khryses prays to Apollo to end the plague (1.450-56), now representing Akhaian interests and playing the role that Agamemnon himself takes on in book 19. Apollo does not respond directly, but the narrator indicates his assent—in parallel to Akhilleus in book 19—with the statement that he “heard” the prayer (1.457). Khryses and the Akhaians then proceed to sacrifice, cook, and eat the hecatomb (1.459-66), just as Agamemnon sacrifices the boar and Akhilleus sends the Akhaians to their meal in book 19.<sup>155</sup>

Earlier in this chapter I pointed out the ways that Agamemnon's ill-conceived embassy to Akhilleus in book 9 *fails* to conform to the Khryses reconciliation pattern. Book 19, by contrast, in its repetition of the book 1 paradigm, represents the “correct” and therefore successful version of the earlier embassy.<sup>156</sup> In fact, the book 19 episode revises many of the divergences from the paradigm that indicated the problematic nature of the book 9 embassy. In book 19, Agamemnon dispatches the delegation, not Nestor, whose interferences in books 1 and 9 do more harm than good. Agamemnon confronts Akhilleus himself in book 19 and actually performs the speech-act (the oath that he did not have sex with Briseis) that was only promised second-hand in book 9. While Agamemnon was not present at the delegation to Khryse, the priest Khryses, once appeased, prayed in his stead, and this address to the gods—either prayer or oath—seems to be an important part of the reconciliation scene. In book 19, Agamemnon provides the sacrifice, just as he did in book 1, instead of Akhilleus offering the sacrifice and hospitality in his tent, as he does in book 9.

Although Akhilleus does reconcile with Agamemnon and the Akhaians in book 19, the reason for this reconciliation is clearly *not* the satisfaction of Akhilleus' desires for Briseis and honor. Earlier Akhilleus had refused to re-enter battle without an Akhaian supplication that satisfied these desires. But in book 19 Akhilleus calls an assembly of the whole camp and announces the renunciation of his wrath and his intention to fight the Trojans (19.40-73) *before* Agamemnon and the Akhaians have begun to repeat the Khryses reconciliation paradigm. Indeed, Akhilleus' initiation of the reconciliation represents a violation of the Khryses-pattern, in which Agamemnon, not Khryses, made the first move of sending the delegation. This violation is an indicator that the book 19 reconciliation does not represent the expected narrative resolution.<sup>157</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> The throwing in the sea of the boar's stomach perhaps references the similar action of the Akhaian army at the Trojan camp after the delegation leaves for Khryse. The army washes itself in a purification ritual and throws the dirty water into the sea, before themselves sacrificing another hecatomb to Apollo (1.313-317). Cf. Louden 2006: 124.

<sup>156</sup> Schadewaldt 1966: 131-34 argued for the intimate connection between books 9 and 19 in opposition to the analytical view that book 9 was a late interpolation. Louden 2006: 124 suggests that book 19 presents the ideal because most efficacious version of a delegation motif exhibited in books 1, 9, and 19.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Scully 1986: 142.

When he seeks reconciliation, Akhilleus looks not for the satisfaction of his original desires but rather repents of the damages they have caused. He wonders aloud whether it was a good idea for him and Agamemnon to quarrel “for the sake of a girl” (εἵνεκα κόουρης) and says that he wishes Artemis had killed Briseis when he first took her as his slave; then so many Akhaians would not have died while he was angry (19.56-62). Akhilleus does not declare that Briseis is an unworthy erotic object, but he does say that she is not worth the deaths of Akhaian men; that is, Akhilleus does not gainsay his relationship with Briseis or his quarrel with Agamemnon *per se*, but he does regret their consequences and so he wishes that Briseis had never lived to become an Akhaian captive.<sup>158</sup>

While Akhilleus’ triangular desires have not gone away, he now clearly considers them to be irrelevant. Akhilleus says to Agamemnon, “but let us allow these things to be over and done with, although we are [still] grieved, having subdued our own hearts in our breasts by necessity” (ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι ἐάομεν ἀχνύμενοί περ, / θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλον δαμάσαντες ἀνάγκη 18.112-13). With these words, Akhilleus acknowledges the persistence of *akhos* and the desire that it signifies, but indicates that he is willing to forego satisfaction. He does not even ask for the return of Briseis or recompense for the injury as conditions of his reconciliation with Agamemnon. He is unperturbed when Agamemnon’s answering “apology” is really no apology at all, but rather a shifting of blame to *Atē* combined with implicit self-aggrandizement, as Agamemnon compares himself to Zeus (19.86-136).<sup>159</sup> When Agamemnon, unprompted, offers Akhilleus both Briseis and the many gifts promised by the book 9 embassy (19.138-144), Akhilleus says that he does not care whether Agamemnon gives him the gifts or not (19.147-48). In fact, Odysseus has to coax Akhilleus (19.155-83) into going through with the formal steps of reconciliation, i.e. into fulfilling the Khryses paradigm.<sup>160</sup>

Akhilleus is no longer concerned with satisfying his original desires because new, more powerful desires have eclipsed them. When Akhilleus speaks generally of dead Akhaians in his opening speech, his comrade Patroklos is the implicit, if unnamed referent. We first glimpse Akhilleus at the beginning of book 19 “embracing Patroklos...weeping piercingly” (Πατρόκλω περικείμενον.../κλαίοντα λιγέως 19.4-5). When Antilokhos had informed Akhilleus of Patroklos’ death at the start of book 18, “a black cloud of grief covered him” (τὸν δ’ ἄχεος νεφέλη ἐκάλυψε μέλαινα 18.22). This *akhos* symptomizes the desire that Akhilleus conceived for reunion with his friend once he was made aware of their mortal separation, a desire never to be satisfied. Akhilleus and his household mourn for this irrevocable loss, and Thetis arrives with her

<sup>158</sup> Taplin 1992: 216. Akhilleus’ wish that Briseis had died before arriving at the Akhaian camp recalls Helen’s wish that she had died before coming to Troy (3.173-75; 6.345-48). In both cases the regret is for the unanticipated outcome of the women’s movements, not for the movements themselves.

<sup>159</sup> Cf. Edwards 1991: 244. *Contra* Thornton 1984: 128-30, who understands Agamemnon’s speech as a humble supplication during which he abases himself before Akhilleus.

<sup>160</sup> Cf. Wilson 2002: 118-20, who argues that Akhilleus never actually accepts the gifts, because he does not want to “accept a dependent position in relation to Agamemnon.” He does, however, get the gifts, and according to Wilson, their receipt restores his status without rendering him subordinate to the giver.

Nereid sisters in order to discover the source of her son's distress (18.23-69). This scenario of Akhilleus grieving and Thetis coming to his aid evokes the similar situation in book 1. Indeed, Thetis addresses Akhilleus with the same question concerning the cause of his grief that she posed in book 1,<sup>161</sup> and the narrator describes Akhilleus' answer with the same formula,<sup>162</sup> thereby indicating how Akhilleus' painful desire for Patroklos both parallels and supersedes his original desires. In his book 1 speech to Thetis, Akhilleus describes his loss of Briseis at the hands of Agamemnon, and in the book 18 speech, he recounts Hektor's killing and stripping of Patroklos (18.80-83). Akhilleus furthermore proclaims that he does not want to continue living unless he kills Hektor and thus revenges the despoiling of Patroklos' body (18.91-93). With these words, Akhilleus clearly enunciates his aggressive desire to destroy Hektor as a counterpart to his grief-stricken desire for Patroklos, marking the beginning of the main plot's second movement.<sup>163</sup> Akhilleus is now desiring subject in a second, exclusively homosocial triangle with Patroklos as desired object and Hektor in the position of rival who has, in this case, permanently separated subject and object of desire.

In his second speech to Thetis,<sup>164</sup> Akhilleus brings up his original rivalry with Agamemnon, only to regret its consequences and dismiss it in favor of his new desire to avenge himself on Hektor, thereby anticipating his declaration before the assembly in book 19. In the beginning of his speech, Akhilleus dwells on the death of Patroklos and other Akhaian men while he sat idle despite his superior fighting abilities (18.98-105). He then connects his withdrawal from battle with the destructive strife (*eris*) and anger (*kholos*)—he wishes they would disappear from the earth—between himself and Agamemnon (18.107-111). Akhilleus' following two-line statement of his intention to abandon his conflict with Agamemnon is repeated exactly during the book 19 assembly (18.112-13 = 19.65-66).<sup>165</sup> Finally, Akhilleus spends the rest of the speech describing how he will kill Hektor, bringing lamentation to Trojan women and winning fame (*kleos*) for himself, even though it will mean his own future death (18.114-125). Sheila Murnaghan observes that Akhilleus intends to transfer his own suffering (the pain of loss) to a Trojan woman.<sup>166</sup> This parallels and replaces Akhilleus' vow in book 1, when, after

<sup>161</sup> Both times Thetis begins by asking, “child, why do you weep? What pain has come to your heart? Speak it out, do not hide it in your mind” (τέκνον, τί κλαίεις; τί δέ σε φρένας ἵκετο πένθος;/ ἐξαύδα, μὴ κεῦτε νόῳ 1.362-63 = 18.73-74). Reinhardt 1961: 368-73 recognizes Thetis' second appearance before Akhilleus as a key narrative moment that draws attention to the price of Zeus' fulfillment of Akhilleus' book 1 prayer. He also notes that each of the Thetis-scenes mark Akhilleus' bereavement (of honor and his dear friend) and each are turning points, the first unleashing Akhilleus' wrath on the Akhaians and the second on Hektor. Cf. Edwards 1991: 153 and Taplin 1992: 194.

<sup>162</sup> “Then swift-footed Akhilleus addressed her, groaning heavily” (τὴν δὲ βαρὺ στενάχων προσέφη πόδας ὠκύς Ἀχιλλεύς 1.364 = 18.78).

<sup>163</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 211 notes that Akhilleus, as a male warrior, transforms the female mourner's typical wish to die—because of her own suffering—into a desire for revenge, which, however, is, in his case, actually identical with a death-wish (see below).

<sup>164</sup> Cf. Lohmann 1970: 141-45 for a discussion of the parallel structures and thematics of Akhilleus' two book 18 speeches.

<sup>165</sup> Edwards 1991: 161 and Coray 2009: 40.

<sup>166</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 211.

he experienced the desire and pain of Agamemnon's plan to dishonor him by removing Briseis, he promised that the Akhaian army would experience *pothē* and *akhos* during his withdrawal from battle (1.240-44). Akhilleus' words here thus express how he has shifted the direction of his aggressive desire from Akhaians to Trojans, and the reorientation within the speech's progression from his conflict with Agamemnon toward revenge against Hektor represents how his new desires replace his former desires within the larger narrative structure.<sup>167</sup>

These concluding remarks also explicitly recall Akhilleus' speech to the embassy in book 9, when he cited Thetis' prophecy of his twin fates: either short life and imperishable *kleos* or a long, but obscure life (9.410-416). While Akhilleus' earlier alienation from the Akhaians and their war effort had left his choice between these destinies ambiguous, here Akhilleus explicitly chooses death and glory, driven by his newfound aggressive desire to destroy his Trojan enemy.<sup>168</sup> In book 1, Thetis helps Akhilleus pursue the satisfaction of his desires for Briseis and honor by appealing to Zeus for aid; similarly, in book 18, Thetis goes to Hephaistos on her son's behalf to procure new armor so that Akhilleus can successfully accomplish his desire for revenge.<sup>169</sup>

This brief survey of book 18 explains why Akhilleus initiates reconciliation in book 19, *before* and *despite* any moves that Agamemnon makes to satisfy his previous desires for Briseis and honor among the Akhaians. Akhilleus reconciles with Agamemnon and the Akhaians because he needs their support to defeat a common enemy, rather than from any sense of renewed solidarity (*philotēs*); he is motivated by his desire to avenge Patroklos' death, not to occupy a place of honor in the Akhaian community.<sup>170</sup> Once Thetis arrives with the freshly-fashioned armor at the beginning of book 19, Akhilleus is ready and eager to fight, especially after Thetis promises that she will preserve Patroklos' body from decay in Akhilleus' absence (19.24-33). Thetis tells Akhilleus to call the assembly and publicly repudiate his anger against Agamemnon as a precondition for re-entering the battle (19.34-36). Indeed, during the assembly, Akhilleus is fixated on attacking the Trojans as soon as possible. His opening speech, like the book 18 speech, ends with a desire to make war and subdue the Trojans (19.68-73), and his response to Agamemnon's subsequent "apology" returns to this theme (19.146-153). Indeed, he chafes at the delay constituted by the formal oath, presentation of recompense, and Akhaian meal proposed by Odysseus and agreed upon by Agamemnon (19.199-208).<sup>171</sup> While in book 9.387 Akhilleus asserted that he wanted *Agamemnon* to make good his "outrage" (λώβην), in 19.208 Akhilleus cannot wait to pay back *Hektor*'s

<sup>167</sup> Taplin 1992: 199-200 recognizes that Akhilleus transfers his anger from Agamemnon to Hektor in this speech.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 194-97. He writes that Akhilleus' book 18 encounter with Thetis "is crucial to the entire poem, and marks his irrevocable turning toward death" (194).

<sup>169</sup> Reinhardt 1961: 370.

<sup>170</sup> Sinos 1980: 42-44; Schein 1984: 139-40; Nimis 1987: 35; Coray 2009: 40-41. *Contra* Suzuki 1989: 26, who misinterprets Akhilleus' wish that Briseis had died: "In order to reaffirm their male community, both Achilles and Agamemnon scapegoat the female Other."

<sup>171</sup> Cf. Coray 2009: 41.

“outrage” (λώβην); he substitutes this new aggressive desire for the old in the same line-end position.

Homer marks the preoccupying and driving force of Akhilleus’ new desires—longing for Patroklos and aggressive desire for revenge—by significantly varying the original reconciliation paradigm in its book 19 instantiation. In book 1, after the sacrificial feast, the Akhaian youths celebrate and propiate Apollo with dance and song (1.472-74). In book 19, although the Akhaians do “rejoice” (ἐχάρησαν 19.74) when Akhilleus first renounces his wrath,<sup>172</sup> after Agamemnon’s sacrifice and their meal, the Akhaians arm for battle and muster brilliantly before the ships (19.351-64). Here preparation for fighting (in the service of Akhilleus’ revenge) takes the place of peaceful festivities. In book 1, Apollo “takes pleasure” (τέρπετ’) hearing the Akhaians’ music (1.474). After the assembly in book 19, Nestor, Idomeneus, and Phoinix similarly try to “pleasure” (τέρποντες 19.312) Akhilleus, but they are unsuccessful: “*in no way* was he pleased in his heart before entering the mouth of bloody war” (οὐδέ τι θυμῶ/τέρπετο, πρὶν πολέμου στόμα δύμεναι αἱματόεντος 19.313). Instead of enjoying himself after the reconciliation, Akhilleus turns to grief and focuses on his desire (*pothē*) for Patroklos in a speech of lamentation (19.305-339).<sup>173</sup> Then he joins the Akhaians in arming (19.364-98) to pursue his desire for revenge and the pleasure that only this aggression can provide.

Besides experiencing grief instead of pleasure, Akhilleus’ failure in book 19 to complete additional components of the reconciliation paradigm further highlights his continuing dissatisfaction in light of his new desires, even as Agamemnon finally satisfies his original desires. First of all, Akhilleus diverges from the pattern in his treatment of Briseis. In book 1, Khryses joyfully receives his daughter Khryseis into his hands (1.446-447), but Akhilleus refrains from personally receiving or acknowledging Briseis in book 19. She is brought with the other gifts to the assembly (19.243-49) and then led by Myrmidons to Akhilleus’ tent (19.278-80) without interaction with Akhilleus himself. Even more significantly, Akhilleus does not have sex with Briseis despite her return. He sleeps with her again only at the moment of his narrative exit just before the end of the *Iliad* (24.675-76) after he has ransomed Hektor’s body to Priam.

Akhilleus’ second and most obvious rejection of the paradigm comes in his refusal to eat. In book 1, Khryses participates fully in the sacrifice, including the cooking of the meat (1.462), and there is no reason to suspect that he does not also eat the meal; the narrator seems to include everyone present as subjects of the third-person verb denoting the sharing and eating of the feast (δαίνυτ’ 1.468). In contrast to this commensality, Akhilleus pointedly declines to eat in book 19. In fact, the narrative thematizes his refusal of food through repetition of his own denial (19.209-10, 305-08), repeated efforts of Odysseus (and others) to induce him both to eat himself and allow

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<sup>172</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 92.

<sup>173</sup> Akhilleus says “terrible grief has come to me” (μ’ ἄχος αἰνὸν ἰκάνει 19.307) and the narrator describes him “constantly grieving” (πυκινῶς ἀκαχήμενον 19.312). Akhilleus addresses the dead Patroklos, testifying to a “longing for you” (σῆ ποθῆ 19.321). He says that he could not suffer any worse loss, even if his father or son died (19.321-27).

others to eat (19.155-72, 179-80, 225-33, 303-304), and his subsequent ambrosial fortification by concerned gods (19.340-54).

Akhilleus connects abstinence from food both with his desire for revenge and his mourning over Patroklos. At first he does not want anyone to eat because he can tolerate no delay to the resumption of battle and the avenging of the dead Akhaians (19.200-208) and can think of nothing but warfare (19.213-14). Although he eventually encourages the other Akhaians to eat so that they are ready and able to fight (19.275), Akhilleus rejects Odysseus' admonition for him to take a meal in Agamemnon's tent as part of their reconciliation (19.179-80). He vows that he will not eat while Patroklos' body lies in his tent and connects fasting with the pain and desire of his loss (19.209-13, 306-308, 319-21). Akhilleus does not touch food until he has returned to the camp after killing Hektor (23.55-57), but even then he calls the feast "hateful" (στρυγερῆ 48) and he continues to mourn Patroklos (23.59ff.). Akhilleus willingly consumes a proper meal with Priam (24.621-28) only after he has buried Patroklos, celebrated his funeral games, and come to terms with his death, indicated by his agreement to release Hektor's body.

Homer's narrative emphasis on Akhilleus' refusal to enjoy food from book 19 until book 24 suggests the symbolic importance of this act of self-denial. A meal is a typical aspect of an army's preparation for battle in the *Iliad*, as we see in books 2, 8, and 19.<sup>174</sup> Stephen Nimis has argued that "sharing a meal functions as an expression of social harmony, the physical and spiritual continuity of a group which is dedicated to some concerted action."<sup>175</sup> Nimis further explains: "sharing a meal reaffirms one's commitment to a community against the claims of some other attachment which conflicts with the best interests of the group (attachment to the dead, Achilles' attachment to his private wrath)."<sup>176</sup> Thus Nimis interprets Akhilleus' "refusal to share a meal" in book 19 as a rejection of Akhaian cultural language, a sign of his continuing alienation from the Akhaian community and its cultural norms as he isolates himself in both mourning and revenge.

While Nimis' explanation is convincing, I believe that he teases out only part of the symbolic power of Akhilleus' abstinence. A flaw in Nimis' approach is his failure to account for Akhilleus' refusal of sex, which, as I observed above, coincides almost exactly with his refusal of food within the narrative arc of books 19-24. In fact, when Thetis comes to order Akhilleus to release Hektor's body near the beginning of book 24, she mentions *both* these self-denials in one phrase and connects them to his continued mourning. She gently chides Akhilleus for his excessive "grieving" (ἀχεύων), commenting that he "remembers neither food nor the bed at all" (μνησθένος οὔτε τι σίτου/ οὔτ' εὐνής 24.129-30). I think it would be difficult to interpret sex, like food, as symbolic of Akhilleus' connection, or lack thereof, to the Akhaian military community. Indeed, sex is inherently isolating from the larger (and especially male homosocial) community, in that it creates an exclusive unit of man and woman. Others, beginning with Michael Nagler, have more plausibly suggested that food and sex are basic human needs and that Akhilleus' abstentions are indications of his inhumanity or superhumanity, his abnegation of normal "life-cycle" events, including funerary rites for

<sup>174</sup> Nimis 1987: 33; Edwards 1991: 253; Loudon 2006: 144-45.

<sup>175</sup> Nimis 1987: 33. Cf. Schein 1984: 139, who calls a meal "a shared social ritual."

<sup>176</sup> Nimis 1987: 39.

the dead, in his inconsolable grief over Patroklos' death.<sup>177</sup> While I think that this reading is correct, scholars have not done justice to the way that Akhilleus' physical asceticism—and the ultimate reversal of that self-denial—contributes importantly to the larger thematics of desire and satisfaction structuring the *Iliad*.<sup>178</sup>

Homer repeatedly connects sex and the consumption of food with the satisfaction of desire in the *Iliad*. For example, Paris and Zeus both propose (and then achieve) sex (*philotēs*) in response to their overwhelming desire (*eros*) (3.441-46; 16.314-28). The same erotic language appears in a formula that commonly concludes the description of a Homeric meal: “but after they put away their desire for drink and food...” (αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο).<sup>179</sup> This formula expresses how eating satisfies—or, more specifically, negates—desire (*eros*).

The poet also links desires for sex and food (as well as sleep) with desires for war and lamentation. The clearest instance is Menelaos' speech in book 13 on the Trojans' insatiable desire for war:

Of all things there is satiety—of sleep and sex  
and sweet celebration and blameless dancing—  
for which one certainly hopes to put away desire  
more than for war; but the Trojans are insatiate of battle.

πάντων μὲν κόρος ἐστὶ καὶ ὕπνου καὶ φιλότητος  
μολπῆς τε γλυκερῆς καὶ ἀμύμονος ὀρχηθμοῖο,  
τῶν πέρ τις καὶ μᾶλλον ἐέλδεται ἐξ ἔρον εἶναι  
ἢ πολέμου· Τρῶες δὲ μάχης ἀκόρητοι ἕασιν (13.634-39).

Here Menelaos favorably compares satisfying desire for sex, *inter alia*, with satisfying desire for war. And yet, he says, the Trojans persist in their (unpleasant) desire to fight; they are never satisfied. He uses the same phrase in the same line-end position to describe the satisfaction of desire—ἐξ ἔρον εἶναι (“to put away”)—that appears in the formula for satisfying desire for food, thus linking all of these desires together.<sup>180</sup> In addition, Nimis has traced how the poet describes the Akhaian desire to fight in book 11, as well as the satisfaction of that desire, with both human and bestial similes about satisfying

<sup>177</sup> Schein 1984: 139-40 links Akhilleus' refusal to eat in book 19 with his superhuman characterization in books 18ff. Nagler 1974: 174-180 specifically connects Akhilleus' rejection of food and sex (along with sleep and bathing) to his grief-stricken denial of life-cycle processes. Edwards 1987: 58 suggests that Akhilleus' eventual retirement to bed with Briseis in book 24 shows “that he has accepted the normal standards of human behavior, urged on him by his dotting mother.” Taplin 1992: 80 interprets this same moment as Akhilleus' assertion of “life in the teeth of imminent death.”

<sup>178</sup> Nagler 1974: 178-97 observes that Akhilleus' acceptance and fulfillment of “creatural” needs corresponds with the end of his grief, but interprets this as part of a *consolatio* motif that dominates book 24 rather than in terms of a thematics of desire.

<sup>179</sup> The line-formula appears seven times in the *Iliad* (1.469, 2.432, 7.323, 9.92, 9.222, 23.57, 24.628).

<sup>180</sup> Cf. MacCary 1982: 143-48.



alimentary appetite.<sup>181</sup> Both Nagler and Thomas MacCary have also remarked on how the poet treats mourning in these same terms of desire and satiety. Nagler observes Akhilleus' locution, "after we have taken satisfaction of dreadful lamentation" (ἐπεὶ κ' ὀλοοῖο τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο 23.10) as well as Priam's similar phrase, "after I have put away my desire for lamentation" (ἐπὴν γόου ἐξ ἔρον εἶην 24.227). MacCary cites Priam's words to Hekabe about Hektor's body: "we two would have satiated ourselves in crying and weeping" (τῶ κε κορεσσάμεθα κλαίοντε τε μυρομένω τε 22.427).<sup>182</sup> I would add to this complex the repeated formula "[he/she] roused up a desire for lamentation" (γούου ἴμερον ὤρσε οἱ ὑφ' ἴμερον ὤρσε γόοιο 23.14, 23.108, 23.153, 24.507).<sup>183</sup>

In light of these semantic associations, I suggest that Akhilleus' refusals of food and sex in book 19 function as narrative indicators of his persistent desires for revenge and lamentation. That is, unsatisfied desires for food and sex are symbolic counterparts to Akhilleus' other, central, unsatisfied desires. The formula for "putting away desire for drink and food" first appears at the end of the Khryses reconciliation scene in book 1. However, in book 19, Akhilleus pointedly does not "put away" his desires. As mentioned above, Akhilleus specifically connects his fasting with his desire (*pothē*) for Patroklos (19.320-21) and Thetis later makes the same link between his mourning and bodily abstinence (24.128-31). Although the reconciliation scene of book 19 invites the audience to expect the satisfaction of Akhilleus' desires, these deviations from the paradigm, this lack of satiety in food or sex, signal narrative irresolution. They encourage the audience to continue plotting out Akhilleus' desires in the main plot's second movement.

## 6. Epilogue: Briseis Speaks

Although Akhilleus does not acknowledge Briseis in book 19, Homer emphasizes her narrative appearance by giving her a voice for the first time.<sup>184</sup> Briseis' return to Akhilleus' tent and her words of lamentation over Patroklos' body once again bring female subjectivity to the fore. Briseis reminds the audience of the powerful female presences of the superplot, particularly Helen and Andromakhe. Thus she serves as a link connecting Akhilleus' plot with the superplot, drawing attention to the destructive consequences of Akhilleus' first erotic triangle and anticipating the thematics of Trojan loss and suffering that will resurface in the main plot's second movement. But Briseis' speech, despite its evocative and sympathetic power, marks her exit from the narrative; in this scene and in the rest of the poem, Patroklos firmly replaces her as object of narrative desire.

<sup>181</sup> Nimis 1987: 42-57 discusses the woodsman simile that compares the end of a woodcutter's workday, when he is desirous of dinner, with the moment when the Akhaians turn the tide of battle (11.84-90), and two other similes comparing Aias to a hungry lion (11.548-57) and a hungry donkey (11.558-62).

<sup>182</sup> MacCary 1982: 145-46.

<sup>183</sup> In Chapter 4, sec. 2, I will discuss at length this formula and the concept of mourning itself as a form of desire.

<sup>184</sup> Cf. de Jong 1987: 110-113 and Coray 2009: 123.

The narrator's description of Briseis' entrance to Akhilleus' tent suggests her narrative equivalence to Helen. The narrator says that she is "like to golden Aphrodite" (ικέλη χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη 19.282), associating Briseis with Helen of the superplot both in her divine beauty and in her connection to Aphrodite.<sup>185</sup> Akhilleus had already primed the audience to consider the analogy between Briseis and Helen when he compared Agamemnon's seizure of Briseis to Paris' seizure of Helen during the book 9 embassy (9.335-43). Both women have been objects of desire contested by men, and Briseis' evocation of Helen here reminds the audience of the death and devastation wrought by the parallel triangular conflicts.<sup>186</sup> The narrator brings this point home in the next line recounting Briseis' sight of Patroklos' corpse "torn by the sharp bronze" (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξεί χαλκῷ 19.283). Patroklos is the prime casualty of Akhilleus' quarrel with Agamemnon over Briseis.<sup>187</sup>

Briseis' words, however, link her subjectivity with Andromakhe's rather than with Helen's.<sup>188</sup> Instead of being an agent who causes the suffering of others, like Helen, Briseis positions herself as a victim of war. She laments Patroklos' death and asserts that it is just one more evil among many that she has experienced (19.287-90). She goes on to describe how she saw her husband and three brothers killed when her city was sacked, and she specifies Akhilleus as the killer of her husband (19.291-96). As many critics have observed, this autobiographical narrative echoes Andromakhe's own tale of how Akhilleus slew her father and seven brothers when he sacked Thebe (6.414-23).<sup>189</sup> The only real difference in Briseis' and Andromakhe's life-stories is that Akhilleus killed Briseis' *husband*, but Andromakhe's *father*. Yet this discrepancy serves to remind the audience of Andromakhe's fear for her *husband* Hektor's safety and her proleptic mourning for him in book 6, along with Zeus' subsequent prophecy of Hektor's death at the hands of Akhilleus (15.68). Briseis thus evokes Akhilleus' own recently expressed desire to avenge himself on Hektor and heightens the audience's dreadful anticipation of this event.

Along with Hektor's death, Briseis also reminds the audience of Andromakhe's future slavery as it was imagined by Hektor in book 6. Briseis is the living embodiment

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<sup>185</sup> Cf. Helen's divine appearance (3.154-58) and her encounter with Aphrodite (3.383-425). The description of Briseis a few lines later at "similar to goddesses" (ἐϊκυῖα θεῆσι 19.286) echoes the Trojan elders' description of Helen as "terribly similar to the immortal goddesses in her face" (αἰνῶς ἀθανάτησι θεῆς εἰς ὤψα ἔοικεν 3.158). Dué 2002: 74 notes that this description connects Briseis to "the quintessential epic wife" Penelope, who shares the same epithet in the *Odyssey* (17.36-37; 19.53-54), and to Andromakhe in book 22, who throws off the veil given to her by Aphrodite at the news of Hektor's death. Dué suggests that Briseis' comparison to Aphrodite references her positionings as past and prospective wife during the lament.

<sup>186</sup> Cf. sec. 2 above on the parallelism of Briseis and Helen.

<sup>187</sup> Coray 2009: 123.

<sup>188</sup> This is true in terms of diachronic narrative progression, although from a synoptic perspective Briseis' lament for Patroklos as an ally who was going to facilitate her marriage with his closest comrade Akhilleus anticipates Helen's lament over Hektor as her friend who helped protect her second marriage to his brother Paris (cf. Reinhardt 1961: 52, Taplin 1992: 213, 282; Dué 2002: 15).

<sup>189</sup> Reinhardt 1961: 52; MacCary 1982: 108; Dué 2002: 12-14, 67-72; Tsagalis 2004: 141-42; Coray 2009: 128.

of that fate in her role as concubine to Akhilleus.<sup>190</sup> In fact, Briseis' position may recall for the audience the extra-Iliadic tradition in which Andromakhe becomes the concubine of Akhilleus' son, Neoptolemos.<sup>191</sup> Thus Briseis here in the main plot represents, as did Andromakhe in the superplot, war's cost for women.<sup>192</sup> She causes the audience to expect the reappearance of Andromakhe as a mourning widow in books 22 and 24.

Even more specifically, Briseis signifies Akhilleus' destructiveness, both past and future.<sup>193</sup> Akhilleus has killed many men, and Briseis reminds the audience that he will kill many more, most significantly, Hektor. Briseis' words also communicate implicitly that the men dead by Akhilleus' agency include Patroklos himself. The narrator says that Briseis saw Patroklos' corpse "torn by the sharp bronze" (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξεῖ χαλκῶ 19.283) and then Briseis describes seeing her own husband similarly "torn by the sharp bronze" (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξεῖ χαλκῶ 19.292). Irene de Jong has argued that the description of Patroklos reflects Briseis' focalization, and that "the sight of Patroclus evokes memories of her own dead husband, and in the ensuing speech Briseis' grief for the husband she lost is integrated into her lament over Patroclus."<sup>194</sup> In addition to elucidating Briseis' psychology, the repetition of this formula within only ten lines is a narrative means to connect Briseis' dead husband with the dead Patroklos in the mind of the audience. With this formula, Homer signifies again that Akhilleus is responsible for Patroklos' death in analogy to his killing of Briseis' husband. It also securely takes agency for the quarrel and its consequences away from Briseis: she is no Helen, cause of conflict, but an Andromakhe, war's female casualty.

This innocent but powerless position clarifies Briseis' personal irrelevance to the main plot's second movement, despite her paradigmatic significance here. Helen in all her moral ambiguity remains a crucial, if underlying, presence in the whole *Iliad*, as the stakes of the Trojan War. No one, however, is still quarreling over Briseis in the second movement. Moreover, Akhilleus has signaled in book 19 that he no longer values her highly or cares about her intensely (in contrast with book 9, where he calls her "wife"), repudiating their relationship and ignoring her return to the tent. From this perspective, Briseis' lament over Akhilleus' *best friend* Patroklos could be interpreted as a tactical decision meant to attract Akhilleus' attention and re-endorse her to him.<sup>195</sup> Briseis' citation of Patroklos' promise to arrange her legitimate marriage to Akhilleus (19.297-99) would

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<sup>190</sup> Suzuki 1989: 29.

<sup>191</sup> MacCary 1982: 108.

<sup>192</sup> Arthur 1981: 24; Suzuki 1989: 29; Dué 2002: 6. Briseis' lament is followed by an image of other unnamed women in Akhilleus' tent (presumably also captives) who join in mourning Patroklos, although each is truly weeping for her own troubles (19.301-302). This scene, which suggests that Briseis is only one example of many, emphasizes her symbolic status as victim of war.

<sup>193</sup> Cf. Dué 2002: 6, 12.

<sup>194</sup> De Jong 1987: 112-13. Dué 2002: 11 similarly suggests that Briseis is re-performing for Patroklos the original lament for her dead husband.

<sup>195</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 81.

be the climax of this attempt.<sup>196</sup> Briseis, by invoking the wishes of the dead Patroklos, positions herself again as an object of Akhilleus' affection, so that he protects her, at the very least, or at best guarantees her security through marriage.<sup>197</sup>

The preceding discussion illustrates how Akhilleus and Patroklos, from both poetic and psychological perspectives, dictate and dominate the content of Briseis' only speech, just as they have controlled the direction of her life. In many ways, then, Briseis' lament serves to amplify Akhilleus' and Patroklos' positions as desiring subject and desired object, articulating her own marginalization as Akhilleus' desires for mourning and revenge consume the narrative. The narrator enunciates this movement of narrative desire away from Briseis even as he introduces her speaking subjectivity: her name "Briseis" is replaced by "Patroklos" in the next line (19.282-83), the object of her vision and lamentation. Briseis' lament anticipates and is followed closely by Akhilleus' lament over Patroklos (19.325-37). Akhilleus' antiphonal lament not only corresponds structurally and thematically to Briseis' lament,<sup>198</sup> but also coopts, answers, and overwhelms Briseis' voice and subjectivity.<sup>199</sup> If we expand our narrative perspective, Akhilleus' lament here actually represents a return to his posture at the beginning of book 19, when he lay weeping over Patroklos' body. In this view, Akhilleus' focus on Patroklos, and his corresponding desire for revenge, envelope and determine the narrative of Briseis' return as well as her lament. Thus Homer persistently maintains Akhilleus as narrative focalizer, except for the proleptic reminder of Andromakhe's anxious suffering and therefore Hektor's impending death through the person of Briseis. Book 19 closes off the first movement of the main plot and dismisses Briseis as desired object while firmly redirecting audience desire, in parallel to Akhilleus' own new desires, toward the mourning and avenging of Patroklos.

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<sup>196</sup> If this is the passage's argument function, its key function may be to emphasize for the audience the present distance between Briseis and Akhilleus by contrast with Akhilleus' former marital intentions (Coray 2009: 130).

<sup>197</sup> Dué 2002: 71-78. Briseis' (practical) desire to marry Akhilleus—if this can be assumed from her words—is in the mode of Andromakhe, who desires her husband as sole protector and companion, a source of security, status, and emotional comfort. The scholia seem to recognize this, exclusively calling both Andromakhe and Briseis *philandros*, "husband-loving" (Fantuzzi 2012: 116-123). By contrast, Helen's desire is disruptive of marital ties and the patriarchal status quo.

<sup>198</sup> Lohmann 1988: 13-21; Pucci 1993; Tsagalis 2004: 49-50, 149-50. Tsagalis 2004: 87 makes the point that both Briseis' and Akhilleus' laments over Patroklos focus on Akhilleus himself, which leads him to suggest that lamentation for Akhilleus' own death is the mythic model as well as subtext for these laments. On slightly different grounds, Dué 2002: 74-81 makes this same argument that Patroklos' death and lamentation over him are Iliadic substitutes for Akhilleus' death and funeral, which occur outside the bounds of the poem's narrative. While not strictly relevant to my reading of the poem's plot, the concept of Patroklos as mythic alter-ego of Akhilleus (cf. sec. 4 above) does crystalize the near-absolute narrative dominance of Akhilleus.

<sup>199</sup> Lohmann 1988:19 describes Akhilleus' lament as "more fully dynamic, more active, more dramatic" (voller Dynamik, aktiver, dramatischer) than Briseis' speech. He argues that Akhilleus appears to want to "one-up" (übertrumpfen) Briseis' lament (20). Murnaghan 1999: 210, however, prefers to regard Akhilleus' lamentation as an echo of Briseis', and an expression of his feminization in his withdrawal from the male homosocial world of the battlefield.

## CHAPTER 4

### The Erotics of Revenge and Mourning

In this chapter, I will show how Akhilleus' desires to exact revenge against Hektor and to lament Patroklos generate and shape books 20-24, where the *Iliad* builds to its climax and then conclusion. These books constitute the heart of the main plot's second movement, which, as I argued in Chapter 3, began in books 18 and 19 after Akhilleus' realization of Patroklos' death caused him to redirect his triangular desires toward Patroklos and Hektor. In books 20-22, as I will demonstrate, Homer presents Akhilleus' desire to kill Hektor as the force driving the plot—which now peaks with his heroic *aristeia*—by focusing the narrative on Akhilleus and by using a language of desire to signify his motivation for fighting. Akhilleus' aggressive desire is activated by Hektor's killing of Patroklos and structurally parallels his earlier desire to dominate Agamemnon after the Akhaian leader deprived him of Briseis. While previously I have interpreted this male competition for preeminence—negotiated over control of a third party—as a social phenomenon, in this chapter I will suggest that it can also be understood as a psychological phenomenon. I will argue that Akhilleus fixates on Hektor as a substitute libidinal object after his irrevocable separation from Patroklos.

This reading is based in a psychoanalytic approach to Akhilleus' mourning for Patroklos. Drawing especially on Freud's work and its elaboration by Melanie Klein, I explore how Akhilleus expresses and processes his unsatisfiable desire for Patroklos (which is termed *pothē*) not only through grieving and lament, but also through melancholic identification and introjection, which is then displaced externally in the form of manic violence toward Hektor. The ambivalence of Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos is an important factor in this psychological response. In addition, I argue that the “desire for lamentation” (*himeros gooio*), a formula that appears repeatedly in the poem's final books, denotes the desire for the lost object that is at the center of mourning. Consequently, the satisfaction of “the desire for lamentation” represents the completion of mourning.

I will also make the case that books 18-24 present the bereaved Akhilleus as a queer subject of desire in the excessiveness and femininity of his mourning, which departs from the norm for Iliadic heroes. I will show how the special relationship of Akhilleus and Patroklos resembles other types of pair-bonding in the poem, but also deviates from and overshadows these comparanda in its intensity and narrative impact. Thus, building on my analysis of Helen's role in the superplot, I will further theorize the heroic and poetic productivity of queer desire in the *Iliad*.

While Akhilleus remains the primary narrative focalizer and demands the audience's identification in most of the second movement, at times Homer changes this perspectival orientation. Akhilleus' merciless violence makes Trojan warriors and their

allies sympathetic victims, but even more compelling are the anguished desiring subjectivities of the bereaved Trojan royal family members as they mourn Hektor's death. Their powerful desire invites a shifting or widening of the audience's identification, causing the audience to conceive a narrative desire for successful resolution of both Akhilleus' and the Trojans' losses.

Book 24, I argue, achieves the desired resolutions. Priam supplicates Akhilleus and brings him a ransom that appeases his aggressive desire, leading him to release Hektor's corpse. Thus Akhilleus is able to complete his mourning over Patroklos and attain a psychic equilibrium. In turn, regaining Hektor's body allows Priam and the Trojans to lament Hektor properly and give him funeral rites, thereby completing their mourning and achieving closure for their desire. Priam's visit also offers the audience satisfaction on a formal level by finally repeating in all its necessary elements the reconciliation paradigm between Agamemnon-the Akhaians and Khryses-Apollo in book 1 and by reversing Agamemnon's original refusal of supplication that had set in motion the poem's action. I will end by considering how fully the *Iliad's* conclusion satisfies the audience's narrative desire, given the continuation of the Trojan War story beyond the bounds of the epic.

### 1. Akhilleus' Erotic *Aristeia*

Homer prepares the audience for Akhilleus' climactic *aristeia* by prominently distinguishing him as the Akhaian army gets ready for renewed battle in book 19. While the narrator describes the Akhaians' arming in just six metra (αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ/ αὐτίκα θωρήσονται κατὰ στρατόν 19.351-52), the following arming scene of Akhilleus occupies twenty-six lines (19.364-91). Then the poet ends the book with another thirty-two line passage describing the yoking of Akhilleus' chariot and his conversation with his divine horses (19.392-424). This focusing of narrative vision on Akhilleus anticipates the way that he will eclipse the other Akhaians as he leads the attack in books 20-22.

In fact, book 20 opens with a description of the Akhaians massed around Akhilleus, whose narrative centrality and importance is emphasized through word order and apostrophe: "Thus they beside the curved ships armed around you, son of Peleus, insatiate of battle, the Akhaians" ("ὡς οἱ μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσι θωρήσονται/ ἀμφὶ σέ, Πηλέος υἱέ, μάχης ἀκόρητον Ἀχαιοὶ 20.1-2). First, the poet puts Akhilleus in the middle between the article and proper name of the Akhaians, textually expressing his physical and symbolic position. In addition, the narrator addresses Akhilleus in the second person, for a moment abandoning his usual third person universalizing perspective that views all the narrative players equally from a distance and instead actualizing only two characters: the narrator's "I" and the immediate "you" of Akhilleus. This apostrophe creates a closed and intimate channel between the narrator and the hero, isolating Akhilleus from the rest and marking his significance and affinity to the narrator. It draws the audience's attention to Akhilleus and suggests the way that he—like a god and like the poet himself—will direct the course of the upcoming narrative as lead

warrior.<sup>1</sup> Third, the narrator specifically constructs Akhilleus as a subject of aggressive desire with the descriptor “insatiate of battle.”<sup>2</sup> At the beginning of book 20, Akhilleus already emerges as the only articulated figure in the Akhaian army and he is characterized by his desire to fight.

After the gods have descended to the battlefield and dramatically brought the two armies together in conflict (20.32-74), the poet once more focuses on Akhilleus as a desiring subject. The narrator declares:

But Akhilleus  
especially desired to enter the throng against Hektor  
son of Priam; for especially his heart bid him  
to sate the shield-enduring warrior Ares with blood

αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς  
Ἕκτορος ἄντα μάλιστα λιλαίετο δῦναι ὄμιλον  
Πριαμίδεω· τοῦ γάρ ῥα μάλιστα ἐθυμὸς ἄνώγει  
αἵματος ἄσαι Ἄρηα ταλαύρινον πολεμιστὴν (20.75-78).

The verb λιλαίωμα is a fairly rare and thus notable expression of desire in the *Iliad* that takes both war and sex as its objects,<sup>3</sup> here it draws attention to Akhilleus’ aggressive desire to engage with Hektor, whose name and patronymic both appear emphatically in line-opening position. Satisfying this desire involves entering the “throng” (ὄμιλον) of warriors, that is, joining in the violent (homosocial) union of the battlefield, which, as we shall see below, the poet describes with the same language of physical mixing used for sexual intercourse. In this passage, the poet also highlights Akhilleus’ desire with figurative and graphic language. The idea of satiating Ares contributes to the passage’s erotic semantics, conflating Akhilleus’ desire—expressed here metonymically through his *thumos*—with the war-god’s blood-thirstiness and establishing Hektor’s injury or death as the circumstances of desire’s satisfaction. Thus these lines, just before Akhilleus begins fighting, emphasize desire to kill Hektor as the basis of the hero’s *aristeia* and also definitively establish Akhilleus as the primary narrative focalizer in the upcoming scenes. By both ignoring the rest of the Akhaian heroes and first presenting Akhilleus’ subjectivity instead of a Trojan perspective, the poet asks the audience to see the action through Akhilleus’ eyes and to identify with his desire.

If Akhilleus were to meet and defeat Hektor immediately, however, his *aristeia* would be unacceptably brief and the two men’s mortal combat would lack climactic

<sup>1</sup> Frontisi-Ducroux 1986: 23. Patroklos is the character most frequently apostrophized in the *Iliad* (cf. Chapter 3, sec. 4), and so this apostrophe may also connect Akhilleus with his intimate companion Patroklos. Both men are objects of special interest and concern to the narrator.

<sup>2</sup> The textual variant ἀκόρητοι makes the Akhaians “insatiate of battle” instead, taking some of the emphasis away from Akhilleus.

<sup>3</sup> It appears only nine times in the *Iliad*. For war or fighting as objects of λιλαίωμα, see also 3.133, 13.253, 16.89. For its use in sexual contexts, see 3.399 and 14.331. In addition, the verb’s participle appears three times in a formulaic phrase that metaphorically describes a spear’s desire to sate itself with flesh (11.574, 15.317, 21.168).

effect. Therefore Homer delays their ultimate encounter, enabling further heroic feats and heightening the audience's desire for this culminating event. The poet accomplishes this delay via two means: Akhilleus' initial attempt to engage Hektor is foiled several times by Apollo in book 20, and he is forced to fight other foreign adversaries in book 21 before finding Hektor again in book 22. As Akhilleus faces these obstacles, his narrative and martial dominance becomes more and more pronounced, and the poet continues to stress the driving force of his aggressive desire.

Just after the narrator has informed the audience of Akhilleus' desire to kill Hektor, Apollo thwarts the audience's expectation that they will engage in battle at once. His first tactic is to introduce an impediment: Aineas. Disguised as Lykaon, Apollo goads Aineas into attacking Akhilleus (20.79-110). During their encounter, the poet introduces into Akhilleus' *aristeia* (with reference to Akhilleus himself) several important signifiers of aggressive desire. The narrator records that the two men "came together desirous to fight" (συνίτην μεμαῶτε μάχεσθαι 20.159). The dual verb συνίτην points toward the violent joining of two bodies that is the goal of aggressive desire. The participle μεμαῶς (here in dual) is a common expression for desire in the *Iliad*, almost always denoting an aggressive desire to make war or to fight, wound, or strip an enemy combatant.<sup>4</sup> Here and elsewhere it reminds the audience that notable Homeric warriors are driven by an active desire to dominate and destroy their enemy. More rare and thus marked, however, is the intensive ἐμμεμαῶς.<sup>5</sup> In books 20-22, it appears four key times, always with Akhilleus as its subject. The first instance is during Akhilleus' fight with Aineas. After Akhilleus has pinned Aineas' shield with his spear, he gets ready to finish the job. The narrator specifically makes note of Akhilleus' desire: "very desirously he rushed at him, having drawn his sharp sword" (ἐμμεμαῶς ἐπόρουσεν ἐρυσσάμενος ξίφος ὄξυ 20.284). But before Akhilleus can strike the fatal blow, Poseidon takes pity on Aineas and spirits him away (20.290-339).

Once he realizes what has happened, Akhilleus expresses his frustrated desire in yet another way: "I do not see at all the man whom I attacked, desiring to kill him" (οὐδέ τι φῶτα/ λεύσσω, τῶ ἐφέηκα κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων 20.345-46). The verb μενεαίνω, which is derived from μένος (vigor, force, drive, rage), can mean both to desire and to rage.<sup>6</sup> As such it is the perfect expression of aggressive desire, which, as I have argued, is characterized by anger. The narrator had already used this same participle to describe Akhilleus' rage toward the Trojans in the context of his arming for battle (ὁ δ' ἄρα Τρωσὶν μενεαίνων/ δύσετο δῶρα θεοῦ 19.367-68).<sup>7</sup> Now Akhilleus himself

<sup>4</sup> The participle appears 63 times in the poem. Only seven times does it *not* signify aggressive desire: it is used three times for a desire to protect (1.590, 3.9, 13.475), three times for a desire to supplicate (21.65, 22.413, 24.298), and once for a desire to row (9.361). Although μεμαῶς does not also refer to sexual desire, it contributes generally to the semantics of desire shared by war and sex.

<sup>5</sup> This intensive version appears only ten times (*Il.* 5.142, 5.240, 5.330, 13.785, 17.735, 17.746, 20.284, 20.442, 20.468, 22.143).

<sup>6</sup> *Lfgre* (R. Führer).

<sup>7</sup> Indeed the participle seems to be causal, expressing the motivation for his arming. μενεαίνων appears in the second half of line 19.367, whereas the first half of the line describes "unbearable grief" (ἄχος ἄτλητον) that is also afflicting Akhilleus. The poet thus pairs grief and rage, i.e. desire for Patroklos and



articulates the desire that drives his violence.

After this aborted encounter, Akhilleus and then Hektor rouse their troops to battle and the two armies begin fighting in a sequence that illustrates the mechanism of the *Iliad*'s battle erotics. Akhilleus exhorts the Akhaians to conceive aggressive desire to engage with the enemy in close quarters: "let man go against man, and let him be desirous to fight" (ἀλλ' ἄγ' ἀνὴρ ἄντ' ἀνδρὸς ἴτω, μεμάτω δὲ μάχεσθαι 20.355). After Hektor has similarly encouraged the Trojans, the narrator reports the joining of battle: "their might was mixed all together" (τῶν δ' ἄμυδις μίχθη μένος 20.374). As this passage demonstrates, Homeric warriors are impelled by an aggressive desire to fight and kill their enemies. One combatant satisfies his desire by physically dominating the other in hand-to-hand fighting. This aggressive *mixis* of bodies is analogous to the sexual *mixis*, which satisfies sexual desire.<sup>8</sup> This shared conceptualization and semantics of war and sex helps to show how fundamental desire is to the practice of heroic warfare. In addition, this description of the Greek and Trojan armies' erotic joining—inspired respectively by Akhilleus and Hektor—anticipates in collective terms the opposing leaders' individual encounters, and especially their final violent encounter, which will be represented as a sexual consummation (see below).

Finally, as Mark Edwards has observed, this passage contains the last significant mention of other Akhaians until after the death of Hektor.<sup>9</sup> The poet presents the Akhaians' general reentrance into battle in paradigmatic terms, and then abandons them to concentrate narrative attention exclusively on Akhilleus. Jonathan Shay argues that the narrative disappearance of the other Akhaians emphasizes Akhilleus' "social detachment" as he is entirely consumed by the desire to kill.<sup>10</sup> In addition to characterizing Akhilleus in this way, however, this narrowing of focus marks how Akhilleus' aggressive desire will shape the plot (on a mortal level) and how his heroic *aristeia* will completely take over the narrative through book 22.

After sending Aineas against Akhilleus, Apollo continues to delay the satisfaction of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward Hektor. First Apollo explicitly commands Hektor to stay out of the melee and avoid engaging with Akhilleus (20.375-78). Hektor obeys initially, but after Akhilleus has killed his brother Polydoros, Hektor's desire for revenge impels him to approach Akhilleus (20.419-23). Akhilleus jumps at the chance to engage Hektor, articulating how his desire for the lost Patroklos motivates his aggressive desire: "near is the man who especially affected my heart, who killed my honored companion" (ἐγγύς ἀνὴρ ὃς ἐμόν γε μάλιστ' ἔσεμάσσατο θυμόν, / ὅς μοι ἑταῖρον ἔπεφνε τετιμένον 20.425-26). Then, in the narrator's description of Akhilleus' attack, Homer doubly emphasizes Akhilleus' aggressive desire: "very desirously he rushed at him, desiring to kill him" (ἐμμεμαῶς ἐπόρουσε κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων 20.442). Here the poet

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desire for revenge, in one line and positions these two related desires as the reasons for Akhilleus' preparations for battle.

<sup>8</sup> Vermeule 1979: 101; MacCary 1982: 137-42; Monsacré 1984: 64-66; Vernant 1989: 138; Pironti 2007: 226-228.

<sup>9</sup> Edwards 1991: 330.

<sup>10</sup> Shay 1994: 86. Shay recognizes this single-minded indifference to others as characteristic of the berserk state into which he believes Akhilleus enters during his *aristeia* (1994: 77-99). Cf. sec. 2 below.

combines in one forceful and dynamic dactylic line two formulas for aggressive desire that had appeared separately during Akhilleus' fight with Aineas (ἐμμεμαώς ἐπόρουσε and κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων).

This combination highlights the exceptional intensity of Akhilleus' desire to kill Hektor, but it also signals to the audience that this attempt on Hektor's life is a doublet of his earlier, unsuccessful attempt on Aineas' life. Indeed, in the next lines Apollo snatches Hektor away and covers him in a mist (20.443-44). Nevertheless, Akhilleus fruitlessly rushes Hektor three times; on the fourth attempt, attacking "equal to a god" (δαίμονι ἴσος 20.447), he recognizes that Apollo has saved Hektor and verbally derides his opponent, promising that he will finish him off when they meet again (20.445-54). This quadruple attack is the final instance of a significant type scene that appeared once during Diomedes' *aristeia* (5.436-44) and twice during Patroklos' *aristeia* (16.698-711 and 16.784-93). In all three earlier occurrences, it demarcated the outward limit of a hero's martial achievement on the Trojan battlefield; in every case Apollo enforces that limit. Previously, I argued that this type scene indicated the other heroes' inability to inhabit fully Akhilleus' heroic role.<sup>11</sup> Here the type scene communicates to the audience that Akhilleus has finally taken over his rightful position as the "best of the Akhaians," for which Diomedes and Patroklos were insufficient placeholders in the poem; but it also shows that Apollo is still protecting Hektor,<sup>12</sup> that Akhilleus has not yet reached the climax of his *aristeia* and of the *Iliad*'s narrative. This scene is a tease, strengthening the audience's desire for the definitive battle between Akhilleus and Hektor.<sup>13</sup>

Book 20 ends with a gruesome actualization of Akhilleus' aggression as he slaughters a series of Trojans. When Tros grasps Akhilleus' knees in supplication, the narrator remarks on the futility of his plea for mercy, given Akhilleus' psychology: "for he [Akhilleus] was in no way a sweet-hearted man nor kindly, but extremely desirous" (οὐ γάρ τι γλυκύθυμος ἀνὴρ ἦν οὐδ' ἀγανόφρων, / ἀλλὰ μάλ' ἐμμεμαώς 20.467-68). This is the third application of the participle ἐμμεμαώς to Akhilleus, and here the narrator's gloss makes it very clear that the term signifies murderous desire and that this mental state is an intractable characteristic of Akhilleus during his *aristeia*. Later the narrator calls Akhilleus "equal to a god" (δαίμονι ἴσος 20.493) a second time; this descriptor, applied only to Diomedes and Patroklos previously, seems to indicate an extreme state of heroic aggression. The book concludes with an assertion that Akhilleus "was desiring to gain *kudos*" (ὁ δὲ ἔετο κῦδος ἀρέσθαι 20.502). Benveniste has explained that *kudos* means not glory, but rather a magical power or supremacy that is necessary for victory.<sup>14</sup> Akhilleus wants martial preeminence, triumphal domination over his rival

<sup>11</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, sec. 6 and Chapter 3, sec. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Akhilleus' taunting words at Hektor's disappearance repeat exactly Diomedes' speech when Hektor also escapes his attack in book 11 (11.362-67 = 20.499-54). In addition, Akhilleus' address to Hektor as "dog" (κύον 20.449) evokes his book 1 invocation of Agamemnon as "dog-eyed" (κυνῶπα 1.159), inviting the audience to see the parallelism between Akhilleus' subsequent aggressive desires. Just as the first insult preceded the more extreme expression of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward Agamemnon (i.e. his withdrawal from battle), the second also precedes and anticipates Akhilleus' later violence toward Hektor.

<sup>13</sup> Cf. Edwards 1991: 336.

<sup>14</sup> Benveniste 1973: 346-56. Cf. *Lfgre* (R. Führer).

warriors.

In book 21, the poet further defers Akhilleus' second meeting with Hektor by delaying the hero with several other adversaries, including the river Xanthos himself, while continuing to remark upon Akhilleus' aggressive desire. When Akhilleus pursues the fleeing Trojans into the river's waters, the narrator again describes him as "equal to a god" (δαίμονι ἴσος 21.18) and also comments that he was "plotting dire deeds in his mind" (κακὰ δὲ φρεσὶ μῆδετο ἔργα 21.19).<sup>15</sup> He kills unnamed Trojans and then takes twelve young men alive to be sacrificed as retribution for Patroklos' death (21.26-28). This pause from general slaughter is only a preparation for more savagery and reminds the audience of the acute loss that is inspiring his aggressive desire. Akhilleus then rushes back "desiring to injure" (δαϊζέμεναι μενεαίνων 21.33).

Akhilleus' next two encounters are with Hektor's half-brother Lykaon and the Paionian Asteropaios. While Lykaon misguidedly attempts supplication, "desirous to grasp his knees" (γούνων ἄψασθαι μεμῶς 21.65), Akhilleus is "desirous to strike him" (οὐτάμεναι μεμῶς 21.68). Akhilleus' spear flies over Lykaon, however, and fixes in the earth, "desiring to sate itself with human flesh" (ιέμένη χροὸς ἄμεναι ἀνδρομέοιο 21.70). Here Akhilleus' spear metonymically expresses the hero's own desire; its phallic shape evokes the similarity between aggressive and sexual desires.<sup>16</sup> After refusing Lykaon's supplication, Akhilleus kills him with his sword and throws him to the fishes (21.114-121). Although Asteropaios bravely attacks Akhilleus, he meets the same fate. This time Asteropaios' spear misses and fixes in the earth, "desiring to sate itself with flesh" (λιλαιομένη χροὸς ἄσαι 21.168). In turn, Akhilleus hurls his spear, "desiring to kill him" (κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων 21.170). When that misses as well, Akhilleus draws his sword and jumps at him "desirous" (μεμῶς 21.174). While Asteropaios "desires" (μενεαίνων 21.176) to draw Akhilleus' own spear from the river bank and "wished in his heart" (ἤθελε θυμῷ 21.77) to break it, Akhilleus kills him before he is able to do so. In both of these fights, Akhilleus' aggressive desire overwhelms his opponent's desire.

Akhilleus ultimately rouses the anger of Xanthos because he is choking the river with the dead bodies of his victims. When Xanthos tells Akhilleus to stop killing Trojans in the river, Akhilleus agrees to fight the Trojans on the plain but promises that he will not leave off his slaughter until he has "hemmed them into the city and made a trial of Hektor in hand to hand combat" (21.225-26). Xanthos then attacks Akhilleus himself in an attempt to "ward off destruction from the Trojans" (Τρώεσσι δὲ λοιγὸν ἀλάλκοι 21.138 = 21.250). Akhilleus is threatening the Trojans with the same destruction (*loigos*) that the Akhaians suffered when he withheld himself from battle in his earlier expression of aggressive desire.<sup>17</sup> By using the identical term to describe the damage to both Akhaians and Trojans because of Akhilleus' desires, the poet asserts the parallelism of Akhilleus' conflicts with Agamemnon and with Hektor. Akhilleus himself enunciates the analogy, but conceives the killing of Trojans as a way to make good the earlier

<sup>15</sup> Cf. 16.373 and 16.783, where the narrator uses the similar phrase "intending dire things for the Trojans" (Τρώσι κακὰ φρονέων) to draw attention to Patroklos' aggressive desire at critical moments during his *aristeia*.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. Vermeule 1979: 157 and Vernant 1989: 138.

<sup>17</sup> Cf. *Il.* 9.495, 13.426, 16.32, 16.75, 16.80, 18.450 and Nagy 1979: 74-76 on the Akhaians' *loigos*.

devastation, for which he does not here take responsibility. After executing Lykaon, he proclaims that the Trojans will perish until they have paid back “the slaughter of Patroklos and the destruction of the Akhaians” (Πατρόκλοιο φόνον καὶ λοιγὸν Ἀχαιῶν 21.134). With Akhilleus’ words, Homer helps the audience to comprehend the similarities between the first and second movements of the main plot, to remember how they are tied together by Patroklos’ death, and to understand Akhilleus’ aggressive desire toward the Trojans as a function of his loss, in a triangulation of desire.

Once Akhilleus has escaped Xanthos with the help of the gods, he continues to kill Trojans as he pursues them toward the city of Troy (21.520ff). The narrator again draws attention to Akhilleus’ desire: “a powerful madness was continually gripping his heart, and he desired to gain *kudos*” (λύσσα δέ οἱ κῆρ/ αἰὲν ἔχε κρατερή, μενέαινε δὲ κῦδος ἀρέσθαι 21.542-43). Priam, watching from the walls, predicts “destruction” (λοίγι’ 21.533) and indeed Apollo must hinder Akhilleus a final time “in order to keep destruction from the Trojans” (Τρώων ἵνα λοιγὸν ἀλάλκοι 21.539).<sup>18</sup> First Apollo gives Agenor courage so that he stands firm and throws a spear at Akhilleus (21.545-94). Then Apollo disguises himself as Agenor (having rescued the real man) and leads Akhilleus away from Troy, so that the Trojan warriors can escape to safety (21.599-611). This not only spares the Trojans but is the last delaying tactic before Akhilleus finally attains the object of his aggressive desire.

Homer alerts the audience of the approaching climax by ominously reintroducing Hektor to the narrative and differentiating him from the other Trojans: “but his accursed fate bound Hektor to remain there before Ilion and the Skaian Gates” (22.5-6). Despite the entreaties of his panicked parents, Hektor is “resolutely desirous to fight with Akhilleus” (ἄμοτον μεμαῶς Ἀχιλῆϊ μάχεσθαι 22.36).<sup>19</sup> However, Hektor’s aggressive desire is different from Akhilleus’. As Hektor himself articulates (22.104-110), he is motivated by shame, i.e. the fear of a tarnished reputation, and this is consistent with his psychology in book 6.<sup>20</sup> This socialized aggressive desire does not seem to be as powerful as vengeful desire predicated on loss. It is essentially defensive rather than offensive. While Akhilleus’ desire drives him forward relentlessly to ever greater feats of violent heroism, Hektor’s desire is merely sufficient to inspire his final confrontation with Akhilleus, albeit hesitatingly.

Hektor’s soliloquy, in which he weighs his options, thematizes for the audience the erotics behind this culminating contest. First of all, he considers approaching Akhilleus unarmed to offer a peace treaty: to end the war, the Trojans will return Helen and the possessions stolen by Paris and will also give to the Akhaians half the wealth of Troy (22.111-21). This idea reminds the audience of the erotic triangle at the root of the Trojan War, and connects it—as first cause—to the upcoming fight.<sup>21</sup> Hektor imagines

<sup>18</sup> While Apollo saves the Trojans from Akhilleus’ destruction here, in book 1 he causes the Akhaians destruction through the plague.

<sup>19</sup> The narrator also notes his aggressive desire with a simile comparing Hektor to a snake with “terrible anger” (χόλος αἰνός 22.94). Later, Athene calls Hektor “insatiate of battle” (μάχης ἄατόν 22.218).

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 2, sec. 7. Cf. Arieti 1985: 202 and Redfield 1994: 115-19, 157-58.

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Owen 1946: 220-21. Hektor’s description of Troy as the “lovely city” (πτολίεθρον ἐπήρατον) characterizes it as an object of (Akhaian) desire, since ἐπήρατον derives from *eros*.

that if he could negate the desires of Paris and Helen, then he could similarly void Akhilleus' aggressive desire and escape a violent confrontation.

But he immediately discounts the feasibility of this plan, realizing that Akhilleus "will kill me all the same while I am naked like a woman" (κτενέει δέ με γυμνὸν ἔοντα/ αὐτῶς ὡς τε γυναῖκα 22.124-25). This alternative scenario simultaneously constructs Hektor as a target of Akhilleus' aggressive *and* sexual desire. It acknowledges fatally violent domination as Akhilleus' aim, but substitutes for male victim a naked woman, who is implicitly a sexual object. This image positions Akhilleus as active subject of desire, drawing attention to the aggressive desire motivating Akhilleus by conflating it with sexual desire, the most familiar and identifiable of desires. It also positions Hektor as vulnerable and passive object, whose own desire is irrelevant.

But then Hektor introduces another image of desire that he identifies as a site of difference. He reflects that it is *not* possible for him to converse intimately with Akhilleus, "such as a maiden and youth/ a maiden and youth conversing intimately with one another" (ἄ τε παρθένος ἠΐθεός τε/ παρθένος ἠΐθεός τ' ὀαρίζετον ἀλλήλοιν 22.127-28). Again Hektor imagines himself as a female, but now she is a maiden, not a mature woman, and she appears in a courtship scene, not a sexual encounter. His vision suggests an equality, mutuality, and reciprocity between maiden and youth, who are both subjects of the dual verb. E. T. Owen understands Hektor's words to evoke for the audience his conversation with Andromakhe in book 6, and indeed to represent his own subconscious memory of that event; there the narrator says that Hektor "was conversing intimately with his wife" (ἦ ὀαρίζε γυναϊκί 6.516).<sup>22</sup> Oliver Taplin connects this image with the scene of innocent maidens and youths picking grapes and dancing on the Shield of Akhilleus (18.567-72).<sup>23</sup> These passages associate Hektor's young couple with the legitimate social and sexual *philotēs* of marriage rather than with the rapacious sexual *philotēs* that conquerors inflict upon captured women. The repetition of "maiden and youth" draws special attention to this simile and suggests a wistfulness on Hektor's part. Whereas Hektor might wish for this kind of peaceful and companionable rather than destructive and dominating relation between Akhilleus and himself, he realizes that this is impossible.<sup>24</sup> This passage once again reminds the audience of the erotic dynamic motivating fighting, but encourages the audience to reflect on the subjugating nature of aggressive desire in contrast with this romantic scene.<sup>25</sup>

Finally allowed the opportunity to attack Hektor again, Akhilleus' aggressive desire reaches its highest pitch. He advances not only "equal to a god" but equal to the war-god himself (ἴσος Ἐνυαλίῳ κορυθαίκι πτολεμιστῆ 22.132). Hektor can only flee, and Akhilleus "rushes" (ἐπόρουσε 22.138) to pursue him; like a hawk hunting a dove,

<sup>22</sup> Owen 1946: 221-22.

<sup>23</sup> Taplin 2001: 352-53.

<sup>24</sup> As Vermeule 1979: 157, Monsacré 1984: 65, and Vernant 1989: 137-38 have noted, the metaphor of warriors on the front line of battle being engaged in "intimate converse" (ὀαριστύς) is evoked twice before this by Idomeneus (13.291) and Hektor himself (17.228). In those cases, which perhaps anticipate the actual dynamic between Akhilleus and Hektor, ὀαριστύς seems to have aggressive valence, perhaps suggesting the competitive boasting and threatening that often precedes physical violence.

<sup>25</sup> Cf. Vernant 1989: 137-38.

whose “heart bids him to seize her” (ἐλέειν τέ ἐ θυμὸς ἀνώγει 22.142), he is “very desirous” (ἐμμεμαῶς 22.143). Again Akhilleus is male aggressor and Hektor is female victim. Akhilleus’ powerful desire to kill Hektor is emphasized anew once Athene stops Hektor’s flight and deceitfully leads him to his final confrontation with Akhilleus. Akhilleus refuses to make any burial agreement with Hektor until one of them “sates Ares with blood” (αἵματος ἄσαι Ἄρηα 22.267). Akhilleus throws his spear first (22.273). When he misses and Hektor’s spear throw is also ineffectual, the two attack each other again (Akhilleus with his miraculously returned ash spear, and Hektor with a sword). The narrator describes how Akhilleus “was filled in his heart with savage *menos*” (μένεος δ’ ἐμπλήσατο θυμὸν/ ἀγρίου 22.312-13). As Akhilleus plots where to strike, the narrator characterizes him “intending a dire thing for godly Hektor” (φρονέων κακὸν Ἑκτορι δίω 22.320).<sup>26</sup>

The long-desired death of Hektor evokes a sexual consummation.<sup>27</sup> Akhilleus’ spear-point “passes through” Hektor’s neck,<sup>28</sup> which is described as “tender” (ἀπαλοῖο 22.327). After Hektor breathes out his last (22.361-63),<sup>29</sup> Akhilleus’ withdraws his spear and strips the body naked (22.367-68). In this martial *mixis*, divestment follows rather than precedes intercourse. When Akhilleus is done with the body, other Akhaians marvel at its “stature and shining appearance” (φυὴν δὲ εἶδος ἀγητὸν 22.370) and remark on its softness (22.372). Then, as if it were a gang-rape, they proceed to have their way with the corpse, each striking and penetrating it (22.371-75).

Yet, unexpectedly, killing Hektor does *not* satisfy Akhilleus’ aggressive desire. After mortally wounding his opponent, Akhilleus reaffirms his continuing desire to destroy Hektor with words that again link Agamemnon and Hektor as parallel desired objects in the main plot’s first and second movements. Even though Hektor has now “sated Ares with blood,” Akhilleus refuses again Hektor’s dying request for the ransom of his body and instead promises that dogs and birds will feast on it—as an alternative to his fantasized desire to eat it raw himself (22.345-54). Indeed, Akhilleus tells Hektor that no one could keep the dogs from his head,

not even if ten times and twentyfold ransom  
they should bring and weigh out here, and also promise other things,  
and not even if he should bid you yourself to be redeemed against gold,  
Dardanian Priam.

οὐδ’ εἴ κεν δεκάκις τε καὶ εἰκοσινήριτ’ ἄποινα  
στήσωσ’ ἐνθάδ’ ἄγοντες, ὑπόσχωνται δὲ καὶ ἄλλα,

<sup>26</sup> Cf. n. 15 above for a nearly identical phrase used to describe Patroklos’ aggressive mindset.

<sup>27</sup> This reading builds on the analyses of Monsacré 1984: 72-73 and Vernant 1989: 138, which identify the eroticization and feminization of Hektor’s body. Cf. Rabel 1997: 194.

<sup>28</sup> The mouth leading to the throat is an orifice analogous to the vagina.

<sup>29</sup> Is it significant that Hektor, in his moment of death, is again figured as female through the feminine gender of his *psychē* who “laments her fate” (ὄν πότμον γοόωσα 22.363), reflexively enacting the role of a female mourner? Cf. Patroklos’ identical last breath (16.855-57 = 22.361-63) and Akhilleus’ description of Patroklos’ *psychē* “lamenting and weeping” (γοόωσά τε μυρομένη τε 23.106).

οὐδ' εἴ κέν σ' αὐτὸν χρυσῶ ἔρύσασθαι ἀνώγοι  
 Δαρδανίδης Πρίαμος (22.348-52).

This refusal of putative future ransom (*apoina*) for Hektor's body recalls Akhilleus' earlier refusal of Agamemnon's *apoina* in book 9.<sup>30</sup> There Akhilleus says in nearly identical language that he would not accept Agamemnon's gifts even if he offered "ten times and twenty times so many" (οὐδ' εἴ μοι δεκάκις τε καὶ εἰκοσάκις τόσσα δοίη 9.379). In book 9 this refusal indicates both the strength of Akhilleus' aggressive desire toward Agamemnon and his unwillingness to give up that desire; here it indicates the same with regard to Hektor. In addition, Akhilleus derisively calls the wounded Hektor "dog" (κύον 22.345), as in their first encounter in book 20; this insult also evokes Akhilleus' address to Agamemnon as "dog-eyed" (κυνῶπα) in book 1.<sup>31</sup> These repetitions indicate to the audience the homology of Akhilleus' aggressive desires in the first and second movements, and the perpetuation of that desire, even when the circumstances for its fulfillment seem to be at hand. The question of why Akhilleus holds on to his aggressive desire, despite finally getting his revenge against Hektor, leads me to the next section of this chapter, where I will analyze Akhilleus' desire for Hektor as a psychological mechanism for coping with his unsatisfiable desire for Patroklos.

## 2. Desire, Mourning, and Psychoanalysis

To better understand Akhilleus' aggressive desire it is necessary to map further the contours and expression of his desire for Patroklos, which I first introduced in Chapter 3 as a successive parallel to his earlier desire for Briseis. In the following two sections, however, I would like to explore how Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos is special and different, generating the poem's heroic climax and even afterwards continuing to drive the *Iliad's* narrative, delaying resolution.

Homer draws attention to the desire for Patroklos and characterizes its particular nature by repeatedly naming it. Before Akhilleus has even learned of Patroklos' death, Menelaos articulates the effect that this event will have on the entire Akhaian army: "the best of the Akhaians, Patroklos, has been slain, and a great desire has been caused among the Danaans" (πέφαται δ' ὄριστος Ἀχαιῶν/ Πάτροκλος, μεγάλη δὲ ποθὴ Δαναοῖσι τέτυκται 17.689-90). Later Akhilleus himself explains his refusal to eat or drink on the basis of his "desire" (ποθῆ) for the dead Patroklos (19.319-21). After Hektor's death, the narrator notes how greatly the Myrmidons "were desiring the bringer of rout" (πόθειον μῆστωρα φόβοιο 23.16). Finally, the narrator describes Akhilleus, during the night after Patroklos' funeral games, "desiring the vigor and fair might of Patroklos" (Πατρόκλου ποθέων ἀδροτητά τε καὶ μένος ἠΰ 24.6).<sup>32</sup> Unlike Akhilleus' desire for Briseis, which

<sup>30</sup> Macleod 1982: 20-21; Seaford 1994: 69; Wilson 2002: 122.

<sup>31</sup> See n. 12 above.

<sup>32</sup> I have chosen to read ἀδροτητά in place of the metrically impossible ἀνδροτητά, which appears in the MSS. Bozzone 2015 has convincingly argued that, in the similar formula γόωσα λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτητά καὶ ἦβην (*Il.* 16.858 = 22.364), ἀνδροτητά is a error of early textual transmission, and that ἀδροτητά was

remains unnamed, in each of these cases desire for Patroklos is directly acknowledged and termed *pothē*.

This naming highlights, first of all, Akhilleus' agency in creating this second movement of the plot. In book 1, Akhilleus promises that the Akhaians will experience *pothē* for him when he is refraining from fighting (1.240, cf. 14.368). The *pothē* that Akhilleus intentionally afflicts on his comrades rebounds reciprocally back on himself when it results—because Patroklos tries to relieve that desire by fighting in his place—in his own *pothē* for Patroklos. Thus this term, when applied to Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos, lays bare the ironic causality of that desire.<sup>33</sup>

Secondly, Iliadic *pothē* seems to have particular associations with male homosociality and with heroic death. In this poem, the object of *pothē* is always a man, if it is a person at all, and generally the desiring subject(s) are also male. Most often it refers to the desire of a group of warriors for a leader who is absent or dead.<sup>34</sup> The seventh-century BCE elegiac poets Callinus and Tyrtaeus similarly use *pothos* (a post-Iliadic form) to describe the desire of a people (*dēmos*), army (*laos*), or city (*polis*) for a warrior who has died gloriously in battle.<sup>35</sup> Tyrtaeus writes, “him they bewail, young men the same as old, and the whole city is distressed with troublesome desire” (τόνδ' ὀλοφύρονται μὲν ὁμῶς νέοι ἠδὲ γέροντες/ ἀργαλέω τε πόθω πᾶσα κέκηδε πόλις 9.27-28).

Tyrtaeus' passage points to lamentation as the characteristic expression of *pothē* for a dead hero, and we see this amply displayed in Akhilleus' case. True lamentation—a demonstration of the extreme grief that accompanies *pothē*—goes far beyond the tears that Akhilleus sheds for Briseis (1.349, 357, 360). Akhilleus' lamentation for Patroklos includes physical gestures such as defilement of the head, face, and clothing with dust and ash, and the tearing of hair (18.23-27), inarticulate vocalizations such as wailing, groaning, and crying (e.g. σμερδαλέον δ' ᾤμωξεν 18.35, βαρὺ στενάχων 18.78, κλαίοντα λιγέως 19.5, μυρομένους 19.340, ὀδύρεται 23.224),<sup>36</sup> and spoken lament (18.79-93, 98-105; 19.315-37; 23.19-23, 103-107). The personal laments spoken by Akhilleus as well as by Thetis, Andromakhe, Hekabe, and Helen are sometimes designated by the term *goos*,<sup>37</sup> but this word also seems to have broader application as a general signifier for lamentation (often communal).

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likely the original. For the suspect authenticity of these lines, see n. 43 below. Cf. Davidson 2007: 258 on how μένος can mean “semen” as well as “might” or “courage,” and thus may imply that Akhilleus desires Patroklos sexually.

<sup>33</sup> Akhilleus' desire for Briseis, however, is directly related to *Agamemnon*'s desire for Khryseis (see Chapter 1, sec. 3). It is not a self-inflicted wound, and perhaps this contributes to it being less powerful.

<sup>34</sup> Cf. Introduction, sec. 4.

<sup>35</sup> Callinus 1.16-19 and Tyrtaeus 9.28. In *Odyssey* 12.110, the verb προθέω is used to indicate the desire of Odysseus' crew for the men taken by Skylla, but *pothē* and its derivatives have a larger semantic range in that poem, which is probably a function of generic difference.

<sup>36</sup> Cf. Tsagalis 2004: 66 on this plethora of terms.

<sup>37</sup> *Il.* 18.51, 18.316, 22.430, 23.17, 24.723, 24.747, 24.761. Cf. Alexious 1974: 13, 103 and Tsagalis 2004: 2-6.



Homer presents *goos*, which expresses desire for the deceased, as itself an object of desire. When, after the killing of Hektor, Akhilleus and his Myrmidons turn their attention back to the dead Patroklos, the narrator reports that “Thetis roused up a desire for lamentation among them” (μετὰ δέ σφι Θέτις γόου ἴμερον ὤρσε 23.14). Later Akhilleus himself twice rouses this “desire for lamentation” (*himeros gooio*) in all those present (23.108, 23.153), and then Priam rouses a “desire for lamentation” in Akhilleus during their meeting in the poem’s final book (24.507). This repeated formula is, on one level, just another way of indicating characters’ lamentations, but, notably, it does so with reference to an erotic psychology. This interest in the mourners’ desire suggests that the formula *himeros gooio* communicates the desire for Patroklos that underlies these lamentations. That is, “desire” (*himeros*) for lamentation signifies “desire” (*pothē*) for the dead hero. It also corresponds, in this second movement, to the audience’s narrative desire,<sup>38</sup> which parallels the characters’, and especially Akhilleus’, desire.

The desire of the living for the dead is unsatisfiable, since reunion (above the ground) is impossible. Yet it is also impracticable to grieve and lament without end. Desiring subjects must find a way to mitigate or lay aside their desire, so that they can participate in the world of the living. The (dis)solution of desire is also a narrative necessity, if the *Iliad* is ever to reach a satisfactory conclusion, since, as I argue, Akhilleus’ desires drive and structure both the narrative and its audience reception.

This erotic closure means an end to lamentation, and Homer expresses these internal and external events simultaneously as a satisfaction or satiation of the “desire for lamentation.” Akhilleus says to his Myrmidons, “when we have taken satisfaction of woeful lamentation, we will all unbridle our horses and take a meal there” (ἐπεὶ κ’ ὀλοοῖο τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο, / ἵππους λυσάμενοι δορπήσομεν ἐνθάδε πάντες 23.10-11). Here and elsewhere, Homer expresses the idea of satisfaction using the past tense and middle voice of the verb τέρω, “to pleasure,” in an indication of how satisfying (or putting aside) desire substitutes pleasure for the pain that characterizes desire.<sup>39</sup> With these words, Akhilleus looks forward to a time when he and his companions are no longer afflicted with desire so grievous that it requires lamentation, to a time when they can return to the characteristically human and life-sustaining activity of eating. In fact, once Patroklos’ body has been set on the pyre, he sanctions the end of lamentation for the other Akhaians, sending them to their meal and proclaiming “it is possible even to be sated of lamentation” (γόοιο μὲν ἔστι καὶ ἄσαι 23.157).

Yet Akhilleus’ own desire for Patroklos persists, prolonging the *Iliad*’s narrative and delaying its conclusion until book 24. When Patroklos’ *psychē* visits him in a dream, Akhilleus tries to satisfy his desire by physically reuniting with his comrade. He says to Patroklos, “even if it is only for a little while, let us, by embracing each other, take satisfaction of woeful lamentation” (μίνυθὰ περ ἀμφιβαλόντε / ἀλλήλους ὀλοοῖο τεταρπώμεσθα γόοιο 23.97-98). His desire, however, remains unfulfilled, as his hands reach through empty air (23.99-101). At the beginning of book 24, Akhilleus is still crying over Patroklos (24.4; 9) and “desiring” (ποθέων 24.6) him. It is only during his

<sup>38</sup> Flatt 2015 also connects the formula *himeros gooio* with the audience’s narrative desire, although on somewhat different grounds.

<sup>39</sup> Cf. Shay 1994: 65.

audience with Priam in book 24 that Akhilleus finally puts aside his desire. The narrator reports that he “took satisfaction of lamentation” (γόοιο τετάρπετο 24.513) and that “the desire went from his heart and limbs” (οἱ ἀπὸ πραπίδων ἤλθ’ ἴμερος ἠδ’ ἀπὸ γυίων 24.514). The narrative can now approach its end.

What does it take for Akhilleus to reach this point? What must he go through to accomplish this erotic resolution? In his 1916 essay, “Mourning and Melancholia,” Freud identifies the subject’s gradual detachment of libido from the lost love object as the psychological mechanism constituting mourning.<sup>40</sup> He acknowledges that mourning is difficult and involves “a great expense of time and cathectic energy.” During the process,

the existence of the lost object is psychically prolonged. Each single one of the memories and expectations in which the libido is bound to the object is brought up and hypercathected, and detachment of the libido is accomplished in respect of it.<sup>41</sup>

That is, the mourner calls to mind and re-experiences his relationship with the deceased, and then finally dismisses it. When mourning is completed, ideally “the ego becomes free and uninhibited again.”<sup>42</sup>

As Akhilleus confronts the loss of Patroklos, Homer presents him conjuring up and dwelling on “memories and expectations” associated with Patroklos, in accordance with Freud’s paradigm of mourning. In his speech of lament in book 19, Akhilleus recalls how Patroklos used to prepare their meal before battle (19.316-18), and cites his vain hope that, after his own death in Troy, Patroklos would bring his son Neoptolemos from Skyros and show him his inheritance in Phthia (19.328-33). In book 23, as mentioned above, Akhilleus remembers Patroklos in a dream; the specter of Patroklos recounts how he arrived in Phthia and was brought up by Peleus as Akhilleus’ companion (23.84-90). Still later, the narrator describes Akhilleus, in his “desire” (ποθέων) for Patroklos, “recalling” (μυνησκόμενος) everything they dared and suffered together while waging war or crossing the sea (24.6-9).<sup>43</sup> This last instance bears witness, however, to the perseverance of Akhilleus’ libidinal attachment to Patroklos, as noted above. Akhilleus may bring up and “hypercathect” his relationship with Patroklos, but instead of giving up that relationship, he maintains his desire for his lost friend into book 24.<sup>44</sup>

Freud himself, along with other psychoanalytic theorists, acknowledged how ambivalence toward the lost object as well as the complex relation between self and other

<sup>40</sup> Freud 1957 [1916]: 244-45, 256-57.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid. 245.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid.

<sup>43</sup> Aristophanes and Aristarchus athetized 24.6-9, and Macleod 1982: 85 pronounces their case “strong” because these lines elaborate on line 4, “he cried, remembering his intimate companion” (κλαῖε φίλου ἑτάρου μνησόμενος), and because the sense “runs smoothly from line 5 to line 10.” I do not consider this elaboration superfluous, as it creates a vivid and typically heroic image of the two men’s life together, and emphasizes Akhilleus’ desire. However, even if lines 6-9 are spurious, line 4 figures Akhilleus remembering Patroklos. Cf. Clarke 1978: 385.

<sup>44</sup> Redfield 1994: 211 notes that, at the beginning of book 24, “for Achilles nothing has changed.”

inform and complicate the process of mourning. Besides detachment from the lost object, these theorists have suggested several psychological strategies employed by the ego to cope with loss: internalization of the lost object within the self, displacement of the libido onto a substitute object, violence, and mania. In the following discussion of Akhilleus' mourning, I test these psychoanalytic models against the events of the *Iliad's* second movement, including Akhilleus' destructive *aristeia*, which I interpret as a function and indeed expression of Akhilleus' long process of undoing his desire for Patroklos,<sup>45</sup> a process that is finally concluded in book 24.

In "Mourning and Melancholia," Freud remarks on the potential for ambivalence to define the desire for the lost object.<sup>46</sup> He observes that ambivalence may be either a constitutional element of the original relationship or a result of the experiences surrounding the loss of the loved one.<sup>47</sup> Freud recognized this ambivalence as a basic feature of melancholy, which he first identified as a pathological response to the loss of a living person comparable to the normal mourning of a dead person. In melancholy, the ego simultaneously loves and hates the lost object; therefore, the ego clings to the lost object, identifying with it, but also directs hostility toward the object. Since love has caused the object to be internalized in the ego, this hostility is intrapsychic and manifests in self-abuse or even suicide.<sup>48</sup> Thus Freud's melancholy is characterized by the ego's narcissistic identification with the lost object and redirection of aggressive libido internally toward the self (introjection).

While Freud originally assigned this process only to the pathological subject, he later recognized that this internalization of lost objects and introjection of libido is a regular part of ego formation for all people, from infancy to adulthood.<sup>49</sup> In addition, aggression always seems to be a factor in the subject's relation to the lost object.<sup>50</sup> Thus melancholy becomes a universal human reaction to loss, and the psychological distinction between melancholy and mourning is collapsed. All mourning is played out through narcissistic identification and informed by ambivalence;<sup>51</sup> already Freud recognized the possibility of melancholic mourning, characterized by self-reproach for the loved one's death.<sup>52</sup> What may ultimately set apart the normal person from the pathological subject is the capacity to neutralize or, at least, to manage the aggression toward the lost object. Karl Abraham and Melanie Klein considered the successful establishment of the lost

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<sup>45</sup> Laplanche 1999: 251-54 identifies Penelope's nightly unraveling of Laertes' shroud in the *Odyssey* as a figure for her mourning of Odysseus, her gradual libidinal detachment from this lost object, and a metaphor for the psychoanalytic treatment itself. The last books of the *Iliad* represent, I believe, another Homeric dramatization of the complexity of mourning.

<sup>46</sup> Freud 1957: 250-51.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid. 251, 256.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid. 252.

<sup>49</sup> Freud 1960 [1923]: 23-25. Cf. Butler 1999: 74-91 for discussion of Freud's ideas and their implications for the psychological construction of gender.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Lagache 1993 [1938]: 25-26.

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Lagache 1993: 18-19; Butler 1999: 79; Laplanche 1999: 249.

<sup>52</sup> Freud 1957: 251.

object in the person's ego as a positive (rather than negative) figure to represent the completion of mourning. This psychic accomplishment both preserves the lost object and creates a harmonious inner world for the subject, rehabilitating a mind that had been injured by the painful loss.<sup>53</sup>

If we return to Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos, we can see how Homer characterizes Akhilleus' experience of this loss as ambivalent. As I showed in Chapter 3, Patroklos' supplication of Akhilleus on behalf of the Akhaians represents a rupture of the two men's relationship, since Patroklos takes the side of Akhilleus' adversaries.<sup>54</sup> Akhilleus expresses his discomfort with Patroklos' stance by mocking his tears (16.7-19). After Patroklos speaks, the narrator describes Akhilleus as "greatly troubled" (μέγ' ὀχθήσας 16.48). Elsewhere this formulaic phrase indicates Akhilleus' frustration when he has encountered a statement that is unpleasant and unwelcome to him.<sup>55</sup> Despite his apparent displeasure at Patroklos' intervention, Akhilleus shows his deep love for Patroklos with a formal and ritualistic prayer to Zeus for his safety in battle (16.233-48). But again, the fact that Patroklos dies because he has ignored Akhilleus' instructions makes the circumstance of his loss an ambivalent event from Akhilleus' perspective.

At the root of this ambivalence is what Laplanche calls "the otherness of the other."<sup>56</sup> While Akhilleus tries to assimilate the living Patroklos to himself by dressing him in his armor and using him to achieve his own desires, Patroklos asserts his difference, his autonomy, by pursuing other desires.<sup>57</sup> In so doing, Patroklos dies, effecting an absolute separation between himself and Akhilleus. Patroklos' death confronts Akhilleus with the unknowability of the other, "the enigma in mourning" that is the other person's desire, and the relation of that desire to the self.<sup>58</sup> This enigma is unresolvable and a source of ambivalence exactly because the lost object is no longer there, because the lines of communication are closed.<sup>59</sup>

Akhilleus' early laments for Patroklos and his dream of his companion suggest that he has a melancholic reaction to his death, both identifying with Patroklos and introjecting the anger that he feels toward him. In his extreme gestures of mourning, "tearing" (δαίζων) and defiling his hair and clothing, and lying on the ground (18.23-27), Akhilleus mimics the situation of Patroklos' corpse, fallen to the ground (16.822)

<sup>53</sup> Abraham 1988 [1924]: 435-38 and Klein 1986 [1940]: 165-67. See sec. 5 below for further discussion of Klein's theory.

<sup>54</sup> Chapter 3, sec. 4.

<sup>55</sup> *Il.* 18.97 (Thetis warns of his death if he kills Hektor), 19.419 (the horse Xanthos prophesizes his death), 22.14 (Apollo reveals that he has tricked him). Cf. *Il.* 20.343, 21.53, 23.143, where the appearance of ὀχθήσας alone at the beginning of the line describes Akhilleus' reaction to a circumstance that is both unwelcome and unexpected (e.g. a divine intervention that rescues his adversary).

<sup>56</sup> Laplanche 1999: 255.

<sup>57</sup> Chapter 3, sec. 4.

<sup>58</sup> Laplanche 1999: 255.

<sup>59</sup> Laplanche *ibid.* also connects this unknowability of the other to the unknowability of the other in the self, i.e. the unconscious. Patroklos' death also represents Akhilleus' lack of self-knowledge, his ignorance of the meaning and consequences of his aggressive desire toward Agamemnon and the Akhaians, as I explored in Chapter 3, sec. 4.

and “torn by the sharp bronze” (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξεί χαλκῷ 18.235, 19.283). Later Akhilleus physically unites with the dead Patroklos, embracing his body in his lamentation (19.4-5). As many scholars have observed, Akhilleus’ subsequent refusal to eat, wash, sleep, or have sex marks his affinity with his dead companion rather than with the community of the living.<sup>60</sup> These expressions of solidarity constitute a kind of self-abuse.<sup>61</sup> He seems to blame himself (not entirely without warrant) for Patroklos’ death, asserting “I have destroyed him” (τὸν ἀπώλεσα 18.83)<sup>62</sup> and lamenting that he was no “light” (φάος) to Patroklos or the other Akhaians because of his strife with Agamemnon (18.102-11).<sup>63</sup> The dream appearance of Patroklos’ *psychē* gently chastising Akhilleus for not yet affording his body funeral rites (23.69-79) is yet another indication of Akhilleus’ identification with his lost friend and internalization of this ambivalent libidinal attachment.

Akhilleus’ acceptance of and even desire for his own future death builds on his guilt as a more severe manifestation of internalized hostility.<sup>64</sup> When Akhilleus first learns that he has lost Patroklos, Antilokhos restrains him in the fear that he will cut his own throat (18.33-34). Antilokhos understands that Patroklos’ death has made Akhilleus suicidal.<sup>65</sup> Whereas Thetis presents Akhilleus’ future death as the inevitable and undesirable consequence of his choice to avenge himself on Hektor (18.95-96), Akhilleus clearly says that, regardless of Hektor, he wishes to die immediately because he has failed to save Patroklos: “may I die at once, since I was not of the mind to protect my companion from being killed” (αὐτίκα τεθναίην, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρ’ ἔμελλον ἐταίρω/ κτεινομένῳ ἐπαμῦναι 18.98-99).<sup>66</sup> A few lines earlier he suggests that the only circumstances under which he could desire to live would be if he killed Hektor: “my heart does not bid me to live nor to remain among men, unless first Hektor loses his life,

<sup>60</sup> Segal 1971c: 49; Nagler 1974: 176-80; Redfield 1994: 181; Nimis 1987: 39. Cf. Chapter 3, sec. 5. See also Seaford 1994: 166-172, 176 who catalogues all the ways that Akhilleus’ mourning is death-like. He interprets this from a neoanalytic standpoint as an incorporation of the tradition of Akhilleus’ own death and an indication in the *Iliad* itself of the hero’s inevitable mortality, his liminal state between life and death. Shay 1994: 51-53, on the other hand, argues that Akhilleus’ morbidity represents the feeling of being already dead typical of soldiers who suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder, often after being bereaved of a friend-in-arms.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. Shay 1994: 50.

<sup>62</sup> As Edwards 1991: 155 explains, τὸν ἀπώλεσα could also mean “I have lost him”—with no admission of guilt—and scholars have been divided over how to understand this phrase.

<sup>63</sup> MacCary 1982: 260 sees in this passage “an admission of responsibility, but no conception of guilt.” In his comments on this passage and its relation to the experience of Vietnam veterans, Shay 1994: 70 suggests that survivor’s guilt arises primarily not from what might have prevented a friend’s death but rather “from the twinlike closeness that the two soldiers shared, a closeness that allowed them to feel that each was the other’s double.” This analysis supports the idea that guilt reflects identification with the lost other.

<sup>64</sup> Cf. Arieti 1985: 201-203.

<sup>65</sup> Shay 1994: 50.

<sup>66</sup> Alexiou 1974: 178 and especially Tsagalis 2004: 42-44 identify the death-wish as a typical feature of lament speeches. As Tsagalis 2004: 42 explains, this is “a peculiar form of revenge and punishment, not directed not toward others but toward one’s own self.”

struck by my spear” (88.90-93).

This last passage introduces Akhilleus’ primary psychological mechanism for coping with his friend’s loss: displacement of desire onto a substitute object closely associated with Patroklos. Instead of internalizing all of his libidinal energy, he redirects a large portion of it toward Hektor; I have already traced the contours of this aggressive desire.<sup>67</sup> In fact, Akhilleus’ words seem to signify that this redirection is what allows him to stop punishing himself and eventually to rejoin the world of the living near the end of the *Iliad* (his fated death occurs beyond the bounds of the poem’s narrative).<sup>68</sup> In accordance with this interpretation, Judith Butler has suggested that violence against others is an attempt to reconstitute a self injured by loss. The subject denies his own vulnerability to suffering by imposing that pain and vulnerability on others, he tries to repair himself by undoing another.<sup>69</sup> Akhilleus’ violent *aristeia* seems to function in this way: while he rages against others, he does not suffer or lament, and his entry into battle reconstitutes him as an epic hero of the Iliadic type. Now, instead of internalizing his anger at Patroklos, he identifies positively with Patroklos’ heroic masculinity, his martial prowess. Homer indicates this identification in the moments when Akhilleus’ *aristeia* recalls Patroklos’ *aristeia*.<sup>70</sup>

Both men are compared to a god, but Akhilleus especially appears to transgress the bounds of humanity as well as sanity during his *aristeia*. Scholars have observed the daemonic aspect of his furious heroism,<sup>71</sup> and when he attacks Troy, the narrator comments on the “powerful madness continually gripping his heart” (λύσσα δέ οἱ κῆρ/αἰὲν ἔχε κρατερή 21.542-43). Indeed, based on these and other indications, Shay argues that Akhilleus departs from his normal mental state and goes “berserk.” This means he acts without restraint, ignoring human physical and moral limitations and committing extreme cruelty against others, in a parallel to the unhinged American soldiers on reckless killing sprees in Vietnam who later became Shay’s clinical patients.<sup>72</sup> Shay observes that the grievous loss of a friend-in-arms is most often the trigger for this “berserking,” as it is in Akhilleus’ case.<sup>73</sup>

<sup>67</sup> It is, of course, conventional to avenge a companion’s death in battle (see sec. 3 below). With the extreme case of Akhilleus, however, Homer more explicitly and thoroughly explores the motivation for this convention, i.e., the psychological relation between bereavement and vengeance.

<sup>68</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 211 writes, “With Achilles, the mourner’s characteristic wish to die is modified into a resolution to avenge his loss.” Devereux 1978: 9 declares that “the *only* way Achilles could cope with his guilt feelings over the death of Patroclus (in which he had connived ‘accidentally on purpose’) was to put *all* the blame on Hector.” Devereux goes on to argue, however, that killing Hektor—who wears his armor—is a symbolic suicide, expressing his guilt: “Achilles punitively slaughters Hector, *so as not to slay himself for the wrong he himself had done to his alter-ego Patroclus*” (10, his italics).

<sup>69</sup> Butler 2004: 41.

<sup>70</sup> Like Patroklos, Akhilleus launches a quadruple attack, only to be beaten back by Apollo, and he also tries (unsuccessfully) to storm Troy (cf. sec. 1 above).

<sup>71</sup> Nagler 1974: 131-166 and Schein 1984: 128-53.

<sup>72</sup> Shay 1994: 77-94.

<sup>73</sup> Shay 1994 *passim*. Shay 1994: 3-38 also identifies Agamemnon’s seizure of Briseis, which he interprets as a radical violation of Akhilleus’ sense of rightness in the world, as an initial injury that prepares for Akhilleus’ entrance into the berserk state.

From a psychoanalytic viewpoint, Akhilleus' "berserk" *aristeia* can be characterized as a kind of mania. Freud identifies mania as a response to loss alternative to melancholia, and suggests that in mania the ego has "mastered" or "pushed aside" the complex of mourning, releasing energy and "seeking like a ravenously hungry man for new object-cathexes."<sup>74</sup> During his *aristeia*, Akhilleus temporarily pushes aside his grief and channels most of his desire into aggression, with Hektor as its particular object. Only sparingly does he think of Patroklos' death, and always as a motivation for further violence.<sup>75</sup> Klein has associated with the manic state this denial of psychic pain and guilt, along with idealization of what the ego identifies as the "good" lost object and feelings of omnipotence and triumph over "bad" objects.<sup>76</sup> When Akhilleus has killed Lykaon, he boasts of Lykaon's defeat and declares that the river Skamandros will not save the Trojans, but that he will pursue and kill *all* of them (21.122-35). After Hektor's death, Akhilleus articulates his triumph, saying, "now come, while the Akhaian youths sing a Paion, let us return to the hollow ships, and let us bring him [Hektor's corpse]. We have achieved great victory (*kudos*)" (22.391-93).

Freud considers the displacement of libido onto a new object an indication of the successful completion of mourning, a sign of how the libido had become free from the lost object.<sup>77</sup> For Akhilleus, however, this new libidinal fixation clearly does not represent a liberation. He is still bound up with his desire for Patroklos during and, especially, after his *aristeia*, as I have shown above. Homer depicts Hektor not as a new object of desire, but rather as another Patroklos, one who is (at first) alive, and one whom Akhilleus can hate.

The most explicit indication of this identification of Hektor and Patroklos within the narrative and also within the mind of Akhilleus is the crucial moment in book 22 when the poet draws to our attention the fact that Hektor is wearing Patroklos' armor. Just before Akhilleus strikes the fatal blow against Hektor, the narrator describes Akhilleus scrutinizing Hektor to find a weak spot in his "beautiful bronze armor, which he stripped after he destroyed the strength of Patroklos" (χάλκεα τεύχεα/ καλά, τὰ Πατρόκλοιο βίην ἐνάριξε κατακτάς 22.322-23). Not only does this passage remind the audience that Hektor has donned Patroklos' martial identity—which itself represents Patroklos' intimate connection to Akhilleus, since it was Akhilleus' armor that Patroklos wore into battle (yet the poet refrains from mentioning this here)—but also it seems to be a case of embedded focalization, representing the way that Akhilleus perceives Hektor.<sup>78</sup> Akhilleus' vaunt over the dying Hektor strengthens this interpretation, since his opening reference to Hektor "stripping Patroklos" (Πατροκλή' ἐξεναρίζων 22.331) indicates that he is thinking about their shared armor. The intimate association between Hektor and Patroklos is confirmed a little later on at the narrative level, at least, by a description of Hektor's *psychē* leaving his body identical to the earlier description of Patroklos' death

<sup>74</sup> Freud 1957: 254-55.

<sup>75</sup> See *Il.* 21.27-28, 21.133-36, 22.271-72.

<sup>76</sup> Klein 1986: 151-58.

<sup>77</sup> Freud 1957: 249.

<sup>78</sup> Cf. Devereux 1978: 8-9 and Arieti 1985: 202.

(22.361-63 = 16.855-57). In addition, both men die prophesizing the future doom of their killers.<sup>79</sup>

Directing aggressive desire toward Hektor is the perfect expression of Akhilleus' ambivalent feelings with regard to Patroklos. Akhilleus' anger toward Hektor represents his love for Patroklos in that Hektor is responsible for taking away his dear friend. But, insofar as Hektor stands in the place of Patroklos, Akhilleus' anger at Hektor also represents his frustration with Patroklos for disobeying him, asserting his otherness and thereby getting himself killed.

The conflation of Hektor and Patroklos as objects of desire also explains why Akhilleus still directs aggressive desire toward the dead Hektor, mutilating his body and refusing (at first) to part with the corpse. Segal has remarked how book 23 develops a contrast between the treatment of Hektor's and Patroklos' corpses, the first mutilated and the second granted extravagant funerary rites.<sup>80</sup> Yet it also connects the two bodies as objects of Akhilleus' obsessional tendance.<sup>81</sup> Indeed, Akhilleus stretches out Hektor's corpse prone in the dust right beside the bier of Patroklos (23.25-26), joining together the two dead men. And, as Nagler has observed, Homer paratactically juxtaposes Akhilleus' failure to treat Hektor's corpse properly with his initial failure to set Patroklos' funeral pyre on fire, "which he unconsciously does not want."<sup>82</sup>

Desiring and keeping Hektor close enacts Akhilleus' libidinal attachment to Patroklos, which continues even after Patroklos' body has been consumed on the pyre and his funeral games have been celebrated. Akhilleus could have burned Hektor's corpse as an offering on Patroklos' pyre together with the bodies of the twelve sacrificed Trojans, as he himself acknowledges, but instead chooses to preserve the corpse, professedly so that the dogs will eat it (23.181-83). But Aphrodite and Apollo keep Hektor's body pristine (23.184-91), and this action ultimately seems to accord with Akhilleus' own desire. Thus Akhilleus is able to drag Hektor's corpse around Patroklos' tomb—again linking spatially these two objects of desire—at the opening of book 24 "in aggressive desire" (μενεαίνων) (14-18, 22).<sup>83</sup> This psychoanalytic reading of Akhilleus' desires helps to elucidate the origin, mechanism, and function of his fixation on Hektor. It expands upon my previous social interpretation of his aggressive desire as an expression of male homosocial status competition that is negotiated through control of others, in this case activated by Hektor's permanent removal of Patroklos from Akhilleus' sphere of influence.

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<sup>79</sup> Devereux 1978: 7. Cf. Taplin 1992: 243-44. The narrative also connects the two men's deaths through the footrace for Hektor's life (22.136-225), which is in turn compared to a horse-race for the prize of a tripod or a woman (22.162-64). These images are repeated with inverted emphasis during Patroklos' funeral games, where the horse-race is the main event (23.271-611), but a footrace also takes place (23.740-97). In these contests, tripods and women are actually offered as prizes by Akhilleus (23.259-70).

<sup>80</sup> Segal 1971c: 48.

<sup>81</sup> Vermeule 1979: 103 and Monsacré 1984: 72 have observed the structural analogy between women in their care of a corpse and vultures as they devour it: they both 'love' the man.

<sup>82</sup> Nagler 1974: 165-66.

<sup>83</sup> Cf. Redfield 1994: 211.



### 3. The Queerness of Akhilleus' Desire for Patroklos

The preceding psychoanalytic reading of Akhilleus' mourning poses the question of how Akhilleus' psychological response to the loss of Patroklos relates to his reaction to the earlier loss of Briseis. Akhilleus also seems to have a melancholic response to Briseis' removal, identifying with her and internalizing her passive femininity in his withdrawal from battle. His ambivalence in her loss is partially directed inward, in that his withdrawal is a kind of self-injury: the narrator says that he "was withering (φθινύθεσκε) his heart, remaining there, and was desiring (ποθέεσκε) the battle-cry and war" (1.491-92).<sup>84</sup> However, as he does in his mourning for Patroklos, Akhilleus directs most of his hostility externally toward the man who has effected his loss.<sup>85</sup>

Yet there is an important difference in this redirection of desire toward Agamemnon. There is no narrative indication that Agamemnon and Briseis should be viewed as equivalent objects, as are Hektor and Patroklos. It seems that the libidinal energy Akhilleus once devoted to Briseis becomes largely displaced onto Agamemnon. That is, Akhilleus seems to internalize Briseis and thus accept her external loss, and to fixate instead on Agamemnon.<sup>86</sup> With Patroklos, on the other hand, Akhilleus maintains their external libidinal attachment through a substitute object. This difficulty of detachment demonstrates how the two men's original relationship was stronger than that of Akhilleus and Briseis. Certainly Akhilleus feels the loss of Patroklos more greatly, as is evidenced by his more severe lamentation.<sup>87</sup> Indeed, Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos is so powerful that it obviates and supplants his previous desires for both Briseis and Agamemnon, as I showed in Chapter 3, sec. 5.

How are we to interpret the fact that Akhilleus' extreme desire for a lost male companion supersedes his desire for a female concubine? How does Homer ask us to conceive of Akhilleus' special relationship with Patroklos and its narrative effects? I would like to suggest that Homer portrays Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos as 'queer,' but also as ideal in its relation to the economy of *kleos*. That is, Akhilleus deviates from the norm, but this deviation is the source of his heroic fame and the poetry that commemorates it for all time, just as Helen's transgressive desire is at the root of the Trojan War and thus of the *Iliad* itself.

Akhilleus' relationship with Patroklos is marked as queer, first of all, because it differs from the male-female sexual relationships that have been previously established as the norm for pair-bonding whose breakage or threatened fracture is significant to the plot. Book 1 of the *Iliad* introduces this norm with three disrupted heterosexual relationships:

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<sup>84</sup> Muellner 1996: 138.

<sup>85</sup> Although he does not personally enact his aggressive desire toward Agamemnon, that desire is no less deadly in its violent consequences than the aggressive desire toward Hektor that motivates his *aristeia*.

<sup>86</sup> Akhilleus' displacement of libido from Briseis to Agamemnon may help to explain why he does not find the possibility of receiving Briseis back in book 9 particularly compelling.

<sup>87</sup> His more powerful reaction may also be determined by the fact that Patroklos has been killed, while Briseis is only taken away. Mourning is an appropriate response to heroic death, not to the removal of a living concubine. Briseis' loss can be and is actually reversed, while Patroklos' is irremediable. Nevertheless, the narrative does demand the comparison of these two losses.

Agamemnon and Khryseis, Akhilleus and Briseis, and Zeus and Hera. During the superplot of books 3-7, this norm is confirmed with the thematization of Helen's broken marriage with Menelaos (and also her uncertain second marriage to Paris) as well as the threatened marriage of Hektor and Andromakhe. Book 9 brings back Akhilleus' severed relation with Briseis as the main narrative problem, and Phoinix hopes that he can solve this problem by highlighting the spousal relation between Meleagros and Kleopatre as an important *exemplum*. Therefore, once the severing of the relationship between Akhilleus and Patroklos begins to impact the plot in book 18, it can be perceived by the audience as a deviation from the opposite-gender norm.

This is particularly the case because the two men's bond functions similarly to some of these earlier relationships in both its character and its influence over the narrative's direction. Patroklos performs for Akhilleus domestic duties, like serving food and directing the preparation of Phoinix' bed, that might normally be the responsibility of a wife.<sup>88</sup> The poet invites the audience to recognize a structural equivalency between Akhilleus and Patroklos', Meleagros and Kleopatre's,<sup>89</sup> and especially, as I have shown, Akhilleus and Briseis' relations in the way that they impact the plot.

This is not to say that male-male relationships *per se* are queer in the *Iliad*. As Thomas MacCary has recognized, men in pairs are a typical feature of the battlefield landscape. A hero generally relies on a companion while fighting, whether that companion is an subordinate attendant (*therapōn*) driving his chariot or a peer providing much-needed support.<sup>90</sup> Before his night-raid against the Trojans, Diomedes remarks that two heads are better than one and chooses Odysseus to accompany him, rather than go alone (10.222-46). A hero especially honors the friend who provides help and camaraderie.<sup>91</sup>

The paradigm for cooperative male pair-bonding seems to be the fraternal relation,<sup>92</sup> and particularly that of the two sons of Atreus, Agamemnon and Menelaos, who are the first cooperative pair of men introduced in the poem. In their opening appearance, the narrator connects them closely by referring to them in the dual, and also demarcates them among "all the Akhaians" as the special objects of Khryses' supplication (1.15-16). Agamemnon has convened the army and waged war for Menelaos' sake, to win back Helen. As Akhilleus explains, the Akhaians are fighting the Trojans on behalf of the two brothers' honor (1.159-60). In a sense, the two brothers are thus a metonymy for the cooperative male homosociality of the Akhaians as a whole. On the Trojan side, often the pairs of men fighting together on the battlefield are actually brothers, as when Agamemnon kills a series of three brother-pairs during his *aristeia* (11.91-263).<sup>93</sup> Perhaps most emblematic of this pattern are the siamese twins, the

<sup>88</sup> Cf. Clarke 1978: 390 and Halperin 1990: 84. Also compare *Il.* 22.442-44, where Andromakhe orders her maidservants to prepare a bath for Hektor, unaware that he will never return again alive.

<sup>89</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, sec. 3 for the connection between Kleopatre, Patroklos, and Briseis.

<sup>90</sup> MacCary 1982: 129-34. See Chapter 3, sec. 4 for the meaning of *therapōn* and discussion of his subordinate status relative to the hero he supports.

<sup>91</sup> Sthenelos and Deipylos (5.325f.) and Hektor and Deiphobos (22.233-35). Cf. Clarke 1978: 389.

<sup>92</sup> Cf. Shay 1994: 40-41 for the continuance of this metaphor for relations between soldiers in Vietnam.

<sup>93</sup> MacCary 1982: 131 draws attention to this sequence.

Aktorione (or Molione), whom Nestor encountered in his youth during the war between Epeians and Pylians (11.709-53; 23.638-42). According to Nestor, the Aktorione are “double” (δίδυμοι) and they ride the same chariot, one of them holding the reins and the other cracking the whip (23.641-42). Their very embodiment literalizes the principle of martial male pair-bonding.<sup>94</sup>

The relationship of Akhilleus and Patroklos resembles these models, but seems to exceed them in degree of both intimacy and narrative importance. Patroklos is Akhilleus’ *therapōn* and is accustomed to fight with him in battle (16.240-45). In addition, the two men were reared to maturity together in Peleus’ household (23.84-90), and so their relation is almost, but not quite fraternal. W. M. Clarke has shown, however, that Akhilleus and Patroklos are presented as closer than any other pair of men in the *Iliad*, and also that other characters in the poem recognize them as such.<sup>95</sup> Clarke has even made a convincing case that Homer implies a sexual (but not paederastic) relationship between Akhilleus and Patroklos.<sup>96</sup> This implication helps to differentiate their bond from blood-kinship, and to assert its similarity to male-female sexual relationships, as argued above. And no other male pair-bonding, or disruption of that relation, creates a major plot development.

Indeed, the poet thematizes the queerness of the two men’s relationship exactly when the fatal disruption of that relationship propels the plot in a new direction. That is, Homer clearly marks as queer Akhilleus’ powerful *pothē* for his deceased friend and the mourning that expresses this new desire. First of all, it is queer that Akhilleus speaks personal laments (*gooi*) over Patroklos. He is the only man in the *Iliad* to make a lament speech that is specifically termed *goos* (18.316, 23.17);<sup>97</sup> elsewhere it is women who “begin the lament” (ἐξῆρχε γόοιο).<sup>98</sup> Thus Akhilleus seems to transgress gender norms with his *gooi*, taking on a female role of mother (Thetis/Hekabe),<sup>99</sup> wife (Andromakhe), or sister-in-law (Helen) in the textual enunciation of desire for a lost loved one. As Clarke notes, “excepting Achilles and Patroclus, Homer treats emotional attachment and its expression as the province of women.”<sup>100</sup> When Patroklos is alive, Homer figures him as

<sup>94</sup> In early Greek vase painting from the 8<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries, we repeatedly encounter a figure with two heads, four arms, and four legs, which represents either two closely associated warriors or conjoined twins whom some scholars identify as the Aktorione (cf. Snodgrass 1998: 26-32). Whether or not this figure is a representation of the Aktorione, I suggest that it is a paradigmatic image pointing to the importance of paired fighters in heroic warfare.

<sup>95</sup> Clarke 1978: 389-96.

<sup>96</sup> Ibid. 384-88. Cf. Davidson 2007: 258-71, for a similar take on their relationship in the *Iliad* and a survey of later Greek treatments of Akhilleus and Patroklos in literature, art, and cult, and of ancient opinions on their representation in Homer.

<sup>97</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 210 and Tsagalis 2004: 61.

<sup>98</sup> *Il.* 18.51, 22.430, 24.723, 24.747, 24.761. Cf. *Il.* 6.500 and 22.476 for Andromakhe’s spoken laments described with the verb γόοω.

<sup>99</sup> In book 16, when Patroklos comes to him in tears, Akhilleus compares him to a young girl asking to be picked up by her mother (16.7-10), which implicitly sets himself up as the maternal figure.

<sup>100</sup> Clarke 1978: 389. Cf. Tsagalis 2004: 68, who calls the lament “a female-dominated genre.”

the “wife” in his relationship with Akhilleus, but once Patroklos is dead, Akhilleus appears to act the womanly part.

Moreover, as the mourners cited above demonstrate, personal laments in the *Iliad* are normally delivered by blood or marital kin of the deceased. Besides Akhilleus’ laments, the only other exception is Briseis’ spoken lament for Patroklos. Therefore Briseis’ and Akhilleus’ antiphonal book 19 laments (neither of which, perhaps significantly, are termed *gooi*) represent a deviation from the norm, and both speakers seem to acknowledge the strangeness of being a non-kin mourner by connecting Patroklos to actual kin and constructing him as a pseudo-family member. Briseis’ lament for Patroklos is also a lament over her parents, brothers, and husband killed in battle. In addition, she suggests that Patroklos is a kind of brother-in-law by nature of the fact that he (an adoptive sibling to Akhilleus) was going to arrange her marriage to Akhilleus.<sup>101</sup> Akhilleus, for his part, says that he could suffer no worse event than Patroklos’ death, even if his father or son should die (19.321-27), thus making Patroklos equivalent to or even more intimate than blood-kin. He also expresses his unrealized hope that Patroklos would see to Neoptolemos’ future after his own death, thereby positioning Patroklos as a kind of brother to himself and uncle to Neoptolemos. Akhilleus’ suggestion that he laments Patroklos as a brother recalls Agamemnon’s spoken lament for Menelaos (also not called a *goos*) when he fears that Menelaos has been mortally wounded by Pandaros (4.155-182).<sup>102</sup> Agamemnon is the only male warrior to deliver a lament speech besides Akhilleus.<sup>103</sup> This again implies that the fraternal bond is the closest model for Akhilleus’ relationship with Patroklos.

In addition to the basic queerness of Akhilleus as a mourner, other characters within the poem remark on the queerness of his mourning practices. In response to Akhilleus’ assertion that he will not eat after Patroklos’ death, Odysseus states that “it is not in any way feasible for the Akhaians to grieve a corpse with their belly” (γαστέρι δ’ οὐ πῶς ἔστι νέκυν πενθῆσαι Ἀχαιοῦς 19.225). He says that, given the number who die constantly in battle, the Akhaians must cry and bury the body on that same day, and then remember food and drink so that they can continue fighting the enemy (19.226-33).

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, sec. 6. Tsagalis 2004: 57 suggests that the fact that Briseis is here called a *gynē* (19.286) positions her “as a wife both former and future.” The mourning Briseis, having lost her first husband and being in a new quasi-marital relationship with Akhilleus, is in nearly the same relation to Patroklos as Helen is to Hektor when she laments him in book 24. It may be the case, in fact, that both these laments by in-law figures fall outside the norm. Helen is only sister-in-law to Hektor by virtue of her second (somewhat illegitimate) marriage to Paris. Moreover, sisters-in-law are rather more removed from the deceased than wives or blood relations.

<sup>102</sup> Menelaos and Patroklos—as the subordinate and weaker members of these male pairs—are further linked in that they are the only characters who received multiple apostrophes from the narrator. Allen-Hornblower 2015 observes that these apostrophes appear at the moments of their endangerment and, building on Mueller 1984: 55-56 and Martin 1989: 235-36, suggests that they represent Agamemnon’s and Akhilleus’ focalizations respectively; the narrator’s voice merges with that of the heroes, each concerned for the welfare of his male *philos*. I prefer to understand the narrator anticipating, rather than expressing, the responses of Agamemnon and Akhilleus.

<sup>103</sup> The old king Priam’s lament for his son Hektor (22.416-28) is the only other lament speech by a male character. Homer also compares Akhilleus mourning for Patroklos to a lion groaning over cubs stolen from its den (18.318-20) and to a father crying over his dead son (23.222-25), as Halperin 1990: 85 has noted.

Odysseus' words express disapproval of Akhilleus' fasting. Others apparently have the same reaction, as Akhilleus later begs the princes, "do not bid me to sate (ἄσασθαι) my dear heart with food and drink" (19.306-307). The Atreidai, Odysseus, Nestor, Idomeneus, and Phoinix then try to "cheer him up as he grieved thickly" (τέρποντες πυκινῶς ἀκαχήμενον 19.312), which suggests that they think he has mourned enough.

Gods as well as mortals perceive Akhilleus' mourning to be excessive. When Akhilleus continues to abuse Hektor's body after Patroklos' funeral games, Apollo criticizes the strength and persistence of Akhilleus' mourning.<sup>104</sup> He says that Akhilleus' mind is not "right" (ἐνάσιμοι 24.40) and compares him to a ravenous lion (24.41-43). He asserts that Akhilleus has lost his "pity" (ἔλεον) and has no "respect" (αἰδῶς) (24.44). Indeed, Apollo says that even he who has "lost someone more intimate, either a brother from the same womb or a son" (φίλτερον ἄλλον ὀλέσσαι/ ἢ ἐκασίγνητον ὁμογάστριον ἢ ἐκὰὶ υἱόν) is able to let go of the deceased after crying and weeping (24.46-48). Here Apollo explicitly notes the queerness of Akhilleus' extreme mourning for someone who is not his kin (in fact he exceeds normal mourning for even a relative), and he also suggests that Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos approximates first of all brotherly love.<sup>105</sup> Apollo ends his speech on Akhilleus' excess with the claim that Akhilleus is even "abusing the mute earth in his anger" (κωφὴν γὰρ δὴ γαῖαν ἀεικίζει μενεαίνων 24.54). Here he uses the familiar term μενεαίνων to name Akhilleus' aggressive desire and connects this desire with his outsized mourning for Patroklos. As Segal observes, Apollo's evaluation of the extremity of Akhilleus' savagery is validated by Zeus' judgment that Akhilleus must give up Hektor's body for ransom.<sup>106</sup>

In fact, Akhilleus' own mother seems to agree with the other Akhaians, Apollo, and Zeus. While Thetis acts as a messenger from Zeus when she comes to Akhilleus and bids him release Hektor (24.133), on her own she begins her speech with a gentle rebuke of the extent and nature of his mourning. She asks him, "up to what point will you eat out your heart with weeping and grieving, remembering neither food nor bed in any way?" (τέο μέχρις ὀδυρόμενος καὶ ἀχεύων/ σὴν ἔδεια κραδίην μεμνημένος οὔτε τι σίτου/ οὔτ' εὐνής 24.128-30). Thetis goes on to say that it is good to have sex with a woman, implying that Akhilleus ought to let go of his desire for Patroklos and the abstinence from eating and heterosexual intercourse that characterizes it.<sup>107</sup>

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Seaford 1994: 165-66.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. Halperin 1990: 84. Apollo's words also seem to echo Aias' critique of Akhilleus in book 9, when Aias says that "someone would even accept recompense from the murderer of his brother or for his dead child" (καὶ μὲν τίς τε κασιγνήτοιο φονῆος/ ποιήνῃ ἢ οὐ παιδὸς ἐδέξατο τεθνηῶτος 9.632-33). In that case, Aias suggests that Akhilleus rates the loss of Briseis more highly than the death of a brother or child, although he is more directly commenting on Akhilleus' continued hostility toward Agamemnon and his unwillingness to reconcile with him. Apollo, while similarly concerned at Akhilleus' persistent hostility toward Hektor, focuses with his kinship analogy on Akhilleus' unusual attachment to Patroklos. Despite these differences of emphasis, the two passages again tie together as roughly parallel events Akhilleus' conflict with Agamemnon over Briseis and his conflict with Hektor over Patroklos. Macleod 1982: 35 and Seaford 1994: 165 also connect these two passages.

<sup>106</sup> Segal 1971c: 60.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. Clarke 1978: 386-87, who here interprets Thetis' words as an exhortation that Akhilleus give up his sexual relationship with a man (Patroklos) in favor of a sexual relationship with a woman.

While all of this evidence points to the queerness of Akhilleus' relationship with Patroklos, Homer also exalts this unusual male-male tie as an inevitable and all-encompassing ideal. First of all, the poet presents Patroklos as always already the most intimate companion of Akhilleus. Patroklos first appears in book 1 as the only named member of Akhilleus' retinue, where he is unceremoniously introduced with a patronymic alone (1.307). This implies the traditionality of his prominent place in Akhilleus' household,<sup>108</sup> and he remains a consistent, if background, presence during the scenes in Akhilleus' tent in book 1 and book 9. Later the audience learns that he has been with Akhilleus since his youth, growing up in Phthia and sharing all of Akhilleus' adventures. It is as if the relationship of the two men were a fact of nature within the *Iliad's* environment. Moreover, since their story closely resembles earlier Near Eastern narratives, particularly the Mesopotamian epic of Gilgamesh and Enkidu, whose relationship is of a similar nature and trajectory,<sup>109</sup> Akhilleus and Patroklos as an heroic pair are traditional in a larger sense.

Secondly, their relationship is not only similar to kinship (especially fraternal) and conjugal bonds, but it also combines and then displaces these other relational models in its singularity and narrative dominance. Halperin, who recognized this effect, argues that it makes "their friendship into a paradigm case of human sociality."<sup>110</sup> The relationship of Akhilleus and Patroklos is thus marked as the most important and ideal tie in the epic.

This is only truly realized when the two men are irrevocably separated.<sup>111</sup> For Patroklos' death is what arouses Akhilleus' acute desire for his lost friend, which in turn causes Akhilleus to direct extreme aggressive desire toward Hektor, as I showed in the preceding section. And this aggressive desire is what propels Akhilleus back into combat, which gains him *kleos*, as he himself predicts in book 9 (κλέος ἄφθιτον 413) and book 18 (κλέος ἐσθλὸν 121). Thus this loss of Patroklos is what makes Akhilleus not just an Iliadic hero, but the greatest of heroes in the epic.<sup>112</sup> Although it is the norm for a warrior to avenge the death of his companion,<sup>113</sup> the special intensity of Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos—its queerness—produces heroic feats that far outstrip the standard vengeance. Insofar as these feats constitute the *Iliad's* climax, Akhilleus' queer loss makes him a co-creator of the poem, an internal poet, and he is thus identified again with Homer himself.<sup>114</sup> This generation of the subject matter of heroic poetry explains the *Iliad's*

<sup>108</sup> Kirk 1985: 84.

<sup>109</sup> Halperin 1990: 76-81 and West 1997: 336-401 (esp. 336-47). Cf. Haubold 2013:18-72 for a recent treatment of the methodological problems and possibilities in interpreting the relation of Homeric and Hesiodic poetry to Near Eastern mythology.

<sup>110</sup> Halperin 1990: 85.

<sup>111</sup> As Greene 2004: 327 writes, "the essence of friendship...can be found in the anticipation as well as in the experience of mourning."

<sup>112</sup> Cf. Murnaghan 1999: 211-17 for the connections between vengeance, heroic glory, and the suffering of others.

<sup>113</sup> Van Wees 1990: 6, n. 20.

<sup>114</sup> Eng and Kazanjian 2003: 5 draw attention to the creative potential of loss, which "can produce a world of remains as a world of new representations and alternative meanings." Greene 2004, Haggerty 2004, and Moore 2011: 107-110 have all observed how real-life loss of a same-sex friend or beloved has inspired

thematization and idealization of the relationship between Akhilleus and Patroklos. It also demonstrates the functional parallelism of Akhilleus in the main plot and Helen in the superplot: both through their queer desires cause battlefield heroism and the epic poetry that preserves and disseminates it.

#### 4. Audience Identification and Trojan Desire

The preceding sections of this chapter have focused on the power and significance of Akhilleus' subjectivity, which make him the primary narrative focalizer in the main plot's second movement, and especially during his *aristeia*, as I have shown above. Akhilleus is also, arguably, a sympathetic character because of his profound suffering over the loss of Patroklos as well as his impressive heroic prowess.<sup>115</sup> For these reasons, I suggest that the implied audience is meant to identify with Akhilleus for most of the second movement, and, generally, to align its desire for narrative satisfaction with Akhilleus' ardent desires.

Homer complicates and undermines this primary identification, however, by also presenting the Trojans and their allies as sympathetic characters, and by portraying Akhilleus as overly savage toward his enemy victims. This begins when Akhilleus kills Polydoros, who is given a touching description as Priam's youngest and favorite son, and a great runner (20.407-18).<sup>116</sup> Akhilleus goes on to ignore the supplication of Tros, striking him fatally in the liver (20.464-69), which anticipates his even more marked and vicious refusal of the supplication of Lykaon (21.34-135).<sup>117</sup> As with his full brother Polydoros, the narrator presents Lykaon's personal history, evoking pathos,<sup>118</sup> but the poet makes him even more sympathetically compelling than Polydoros or Tros by having him tell his own story and beg (rather hopelessly) for his life. Akhilleus not only verbally rejects this plea and then kills him with his sword, but also throws him into the river to be food for the fishes. The Trojan ally Asteropaios, whom Akhilleus meets next, also receives a backstory and a speaking part, and he bravely resists Akhilleus, in a testament to his heroic character (21.139-78). But Akhilleus also kills him, then boasts over him, leaving him dead in the water, and the narrator records pathetically how Asteropaios' body is eaten by eels and fishes (21.179-204).

Hektor himself is, of course, the ultimate and most pitiable warrior victim of Akhilleus' powerful and violent mourning.<sup>119</sup> The whole sequence of his final encounter

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production of prose and poetry. They have emphasized how this literary mourning may be the only way to express publicly mourning for a queer relationship whose importance is not recognized within the conventions of a social world that privileges blood or marital kinship. Sappho's poetic laments for the loss of her beloved girls to marriage can, perhaps, also be understood in this way.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. Owen 1946: 216-17, who calls Akhilleus during his *aristeia* "an object of awed admiration."

<sup>116</sup> Ironically, however, Polydoros has finally met the man he cannot outrun. As Akhilleus strikes the deadly blow, he is awarded his characteristic epithet "swift-footed" (ποδάρκης 20.413)

<sup>117</sup> Edwards 1991: 340 and N. Richardson 1993: 56.

<sup>118</sup> N. Richardson 1993: 57-58.

<sup>119</sup> For James Redfield, the *Iliad* is in fact "The Tragedy of Hector."

with Akhilleus in book 22 evokes the audience's sympathy for Hektor: his brave, but foolhardy compulsion to remain outside Troy, his vain wish that he could make a peaceful agreement with his enemy, his panicked attempt to outrun Akhilleus, his unrealistic and short-lived hope that he might defeat Akhilleus, his deluded belief that Deiphobos would come to his rescue, his dying supplication that his body might be returned to his family, and, finally, the beauty of his corpse.<sup>120</sup> Akhilleus, on the other hand, is least sympathetic in his absolute denial of Hektor's plea, his impulse to eat Hektor's body,<sup>121</sup> and especially his subsequent mutilation of the corpse (22.395-405), which continues through the beginning of book 24.<sup>122</sup>

Although Hektor and the other victims of Akhilleus invite the audience's sympathy, the anguished desiring subjectivities of Trojan civilians are even more compelling. Segal has observed how Homer often depicts a warrior's death and the maltreatment of his corpse from the perspective of bereaved family members, focusing on their grief and suffering.<sup>123</sup> This practice is most fully realized in book 22, where Homer represents the initial reactions of Priam, Hekabe, and Andromakhe to Hektor's endangerment and then death. The poet thematizes their painful desire for a son and husband who will never return by describing their anxiety and subsequent mourning and, especially, by allowing them to voice fear of Hektor's death and then to lament when their fears have been actualized. I suggest that the experiences and speeches of Priam, Hekabe, and Andromakhe demand not only the audience's sympathy, but also its identification, so that the implied audience channels the Trojans' desire for Hektor. Thus the audience's narrative desire can be satisfied only by resolution of the Trojans' mourning for Hektor as well as Akhilleus' mourning for Patroklos.

The poet begins to widen the audience's identification by portraying the acute desire of Priam and Hekabe for Hektor as they perceive how he is separated from them by the walls of Troy, waiting to face Akhilleus. The narrator introduces and closes the parents' direct speeches of supplication with descriptions of desire's symptom: grief. Before Priam speaks, the narrator twice says that he cries out in distress (ζῆμῶξεν, οἰμῶξας) and recounts him striking his head (22.33-34). Similarly, before Hekabe speaks, the narrator twice describes her "pouring forth a tear" (δάκρυ χέουσα 22.79, 81). After his speech, Priam tears out his hair (22.77-78) and the narrator describes both parents "crying" (κλαίοντε 90).

The parents' actual supplications beg Hektor to rejoin them in Troy and elaborate on the suffering and desire of the speaker and others whose well-being is at stake. After entreating Hektor not to remain outside the walls and explaining how Akhilleus stands in the way of Hektor's safe return (22.38-41), Priam says that "grief" (*akhos*) will depart from his mind only if Akhilleus should die (22.41-43). Akhilleus separates Priam from his son, and has the dreadful capacity to create, by killing Hektor, lasting and

<sup>120</sup> Cf. Owen 1946: 217-230. See my discussion of Akhilleus' encounter with Hektor in sec. 1 above.

<sup>121</sup> Cf. Redfield 1994: 196-99 and Shay 1994: 82-84 on the sub-human bestiality of Akhilleus during this scene.

<sup>122</sup> Cf. Segal 1971c: 13-16, 34-42.

<sup>123</sup> Segal 1971c: 17, 43.



unsatisfiable desire for the hero. Priam elaborates on the threat Akhilleus poses by remembering how Akhilleus has already made him bereft of many sons, and by wondering whether Lykaon and Polydoros have survived the battle (22.44-53). The dramatic irony of this speculation—Priam is woefully ignorant of what the audience knows to be true, namely their deaths at the hand of Akhilleus—makes Priam an object of the audience’s pity, as the bT scholia observe.<sup>124</sup> Priam then elevates Hektor above his brothers as supreme object of desire: the one whom all the Trojans (male and female) need to avoid death and enslavement at the hands of the Akhaians (22.54-65). He emphasizes the point by imagining at length the gruesome fate of his own corpse, devoured by the palace dogs (22.66-76). Priam’s anguished paternal perspective elicits the audience’s identification and the pathetic image of the mutilation of his corpse makes him even more pitiable than Hektor (even as his corpse would be more pitiable than Hektor’s youthful form, as he testifies).

Hekabe begins her supplication by baring a breast and holding it out to Hektor (22.79-80). She tells him to respect what it represents and to pity her, to remember how she nursed him at the breast and to come back inside Troy away from Akhilleus (22.82-85). This gesture and plea seem, first of all, meant to remind Hektor of their former intimacy as mother and infant<sup>125</sup> and, second, to emphasize, like Priam, her vulnerability, in this case as a mature woman. The implication is that she needs her son back with her, and it is a strong expression of her desire for their reunion. She also warns that, should Hektor die, she and Andromakhe will not even be able to reunite with and mourn Hektor’s body. She emphasizes the current and prospective distance between the two women and Hektor, the distance which shapes their desire: “very far apart from the two of us, swift dogs will eat you beside the ships of the Akhaians” (ἄνευθε δέ σε μέγα νῶϊν/ Ἀργείων παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνες ταχέες κατέδονται 22.88-89). Hekabe—as a female parallel to Priam—invites the audience to identify with her maternal desire.

Hekabe’s mention of Andromakhe here—as her partner in mourning—functions importantly to remind the audience of Hektor’s wife and of her fear and desire for her husband, which were vividly portrayed in book 6.<sup>126</sup> Since Andromakhe’s subjectivity was introduced at length earlier, she does not supplicate Hektor here: it would be redundant and anticlimactic. Hekabe’s words, however, bring her back into the audience’s ken and prepare for her dramatic reaction to Hektor’s death later in book 22.

Homer deepens the audience’s sympathy and identification with the Trojans in his portrayal of their grief and lamentation over Hektor’s death and mutilation, mourning which expresses their now unsatisfiable desire for the hero. As Owen says, their sorrow “drowns out all other feeling. The voice of lamentation fills the poem.”<sup>127</sup> When Hekabe sees her dead son, she tears her hair, throws off her veil and “wails” (κῶκυσεν) (22.405-07). Priam “cries in distress” (ζῶμωξεν 22.408), repeating his earlier response to Hektor’s endangerment. The Trojan people echo both queen and king with “wailing” (κῶκυτῶ)

<sup>124</sup> “The ignorance of the father is very pitiable” (ἐλεεινὴ λίαν ἡ ἄγνοια τοῦ πατρός bT ad 22.49).

<sup>125</sup> Crotty 1994: 74-75.

<sup>126</sup> Cf. Chapter 2, sec. 7

<sup>127</sup> Owen 1946: 231.

and “crying” (οἰμωγή) that makes it sound as if the entire city were burning (22.408-11), in a prevision of what the lack of Hektor will mean for Troy.<sup>128</sup>

As before, Homer treats in detail Priam’s and Hekabe’s desires, beginning with the bereaved father. Priam further expresses his suffering by rolling in the dung (22.414) and verbally enunciating his extreme “grief” (*akhos*) at the death of Hektor, which he says exceeds his grieving over other lost sons (22.423-25). According to the narrator, the Trojans can scarcely hold Priam back in his impatience as he “desires to exit the Dardanian gates” (ἐξελεθεῖν μεμαῶτα πυλάων Δαρδανιάων 22.413). The goal of his desire becomes clear when Priam berates his subjects for keeping him from supplicating Akhilleus (22.416-420): he wants to recover his son’s body from his killer. If Priam is able to claim Hektor’s corpse, this will mitigate his longing for his son and allow him and others to process their desire through formal mourning. Priam elucidates this at the end of his speech with an impossible wish: “would that he had died in my hands; then the two of us would sate ourselves with weeping and bewailing” (ὥς ὄφελεν θανέειν ἐν χερσὶν ἐμῆσι / τῷ κε κορεσσάμεθα κλαίοντέ τε μυρομένω τε 22.426-27). Priam’s words suggest that if he and Hekabe are physically reunited with Hektor’s body, then they will be able to satisfy their desire for lamentation, which stands in a metonymical relationship, as I have argued, to desire for a lost loved one.<sup>129</sup>

In his concern over mourning Hektor’s body in person, Priam’s speech actually echoes Hekabe’s earlier fears that she and Andromakhe would not be able to tend to Hektor’s corpse. In turn, Hekabe’s lament (*goos*) picks up on the central theme of Priam’s first speech: Hektor’s status as Troy’s preeminent hero, who guarantees the citizens’ well-being. She says that Hektor, while alive, was a “boast” (εὐχωλή) throughout the city, a “benefit” (ὄνειαρ) to all the Trojans (male and female), and a “great victory-talisman” (μέγα κῦδος) (22.433-36). In a variation on Priam’s prediction of his future death without Hektor’s protection, Hekabe wonders why, “after having suffered dreadful things” (αἰνὰ παθοῦσα), she is alive, when Hektor is dead (22.431-32). Thus Priam’s and Hekabe’s desiring subjectivities, which circumscribe and emotionally overwhelm Hektor’s fatal encounter with Akhilleus, present the male and female manifestations of the bereaved and mourning parent. In fact, they merge as a paradigm not only for personal but also for public loss, a unified voice for the Trojan citizens as a whole, who groan in antiphonal response (22.429). Together they provide a locus of sympathetic identification for the dual-gender collective of the implied audience.

While Priam and Hekabe express a general bereavement and communal desire for Hektor, Andromakhe offers the narrative capstone—the subjectivity that most powerfully attracts the audience through the particularity of her suffering and desire as “wife” (ἄλοχος) of Hektor.<sup>130</sup> When she is finally reintroduced after Hekabe’s lament, she receives a full 78 lines of narrative attention: first the poet portrays her ignorance of Hektor’s fate (22.437-46), then Homer presents her gradual and devastating discovery of his death (22.447-76), and last she herself speaks a lengthy lament (22.477-515).

<sup>128</sup> N. Richardson 1993: 150.

<sup>129</sup> Cf. sec. 2 above.

<sup>130</sup> Segal 1971c: 37-38 observes how Andromakhe is introduced as “wife” (22.437) and how this status defines her mourning.

Just as Priam's and Hekabe's reactions to Hektor's death echo their earlier desirous supplications for him to save himself, Andromakhe's appearance in book 22 echoes her previous search for and meeting with Hektor in book 6, where she expressed her need of him and vainly begged him to stay out of harm's way.<sup>131</sup> This encourages the audience to remember Andromakhe's fierce attachment to Hektor and her proleptic desire and grief in book 6, making her suffering after Hektor's death more meaningful and poignant. In fact, in his opening description here, the poet elaborates on her earlier characterization as devoted wife by portraying Andromakhe obediently weaving<sup>132</sup> and preparing bathwater for Hektor's return (22.440-445). With dramatic irony, the narrator reminds the audience that Andromakhe "did not perceive" (οὐδ' ἐνοήσεν) that Hektor had already been killed "far from the baths" (τῆλε λοετρῶν), emphasizing both her final separation from Hektor and ignorance of that fact. Like Priam's earlier ignorance of the deaths of Polydoros and Lykaon, this depiction of Andromakhe's unawareness skillfully evokes the audience's sympathy, as the scholia have observed.<sup>133</sup>

The poet dramatizes Andromakhe's "anagnorisis" of Hektor's death and gestures toward the painful desire for him that it arouses with physical symptoms that anticipate Sappho's description of desire's effects on the subject in Fragment 31. When Andromakhe first hears the wailing of the Trojans, her "limbs are shaken" (ἐλελίχθη γυῖα 22.448), and she herself describes how her "heart in her chest is shaken right up into her mouth" (στήθεσι πάλλεται ἦτορ ἀνά στόμα 452) and her "knees are stuck" (γοῦνα/ πῆγνυται 452-53). Similarly, Sappho's persona describes how the sight of her inaccessible beloved "sets a-flutter the heart in her chest" (καρδίαν ἐν στήθεσιν ἐπτόαισεν 6); later "trembling seized all of her" (τρόμος δὲ/ παῖσαν ἄγρει 13-14).

This resemblance between Homer and Sappho's poetry grows even stronger after Andromakhe has rushed to the walls, confirmed Hektor's death with her own eyes, and perceived the mutilation of his corpse. In response to this terrible sight, she immediately falls down fainting: "dark night covered over her eyes, and she fell backwards, and she breathed out her *psychē*" (τὴν δὲ κατ' ὀφθαλμῶν ἐρεβεννὴ νύξ ἐκάλυπεν,/ ἤριπε δ' ἐξοπίσω, ἀπὸ δὲ ψυχῆν ἐκάπυσσε 466-67). Sappho's assertion, "my tongue breaks in silence... and I do not see with my eyes" (ἄκαν μὲν γλῶσσα ἔαγε... ὀππάτεσσι δ' οὐδ' ἐν ὄρημ' 9-11) echoes Andromakhe's silent but climactic reaction, which is specifically characterized by loss of sight. Furthermore, the same formulas used to describe

<sup>131</sup> Segal 1971c *passim*, Lohmann 1988: 63-69, and N. Richardson 1993: 152-53 catalogue the correspondences.

<sup>132</sup> As Segal 1971c: 40 observes, Hektor had commanded her to busy herself with weaving. Segal and Lohmann 1988: 59-62 have recognized how the description of Andromakhe's tapestry as "double-folded and purple" (δίπλακα πορφυρέην 22.441) recalls Helen's tapestry from book 3, although Andromakhe weaves in innocuous designs while Helen portays the Trojan War itself. Following Lohmann, who also notes further parallels between the book 3 and book 22 scenes, I think that this formulaic link between the two women asks the audience to compare and then contrast the loyal and soon-to-be grief-stricken Andromakhe with the faithless, destructive, and relatively carefree Helen. These two women are also juxtaposed as opposites in book 6, as I discussed in Chapter 2, sec. 7.

<sup>133</sup> AbT scholia ad 22.445 note that the narratorial comment "increases *pathos*" (αὔξει τὸ πάθος). The scholiasts also say that the poet himself speaks here "sympathetically" (συμπαθῶς), "as if pitying her ignorance" (ὥσπερ ἐλεῶν τὴν ἄγνοιαν αὐτῆς).

Andromakhe's faint elsewhere refer to a warrior's death in battle;<sup>134</sup> Tsagalis calls this moment "a figurative death."<sup>135</sup> Correspondingly, Sappho's poem climaxes with the speaker's statement that she "seems to be little short of dying" (τεθνάκην δ' ὀλίγω ἔπιδούης/ φαίνομαι 15-16). Thus this scene of Andromakhe's recognition suggests the acute and self-destructive desire that loss (or separation) evokes,<sup>136</sup> whether Homer employs here a traditional characterization of the force of loss that is most famously exemplified in Sappho's Fragment 31, or whether Sappho was inspired specifically by this passage to write her erotic verses.

Andromakhe's symbolic death also associates her with her dead husband, and her following lament speech asserts her ambivalent identification with and internalization of her lost love object. She says that she shares the same evil fate as Hektor (22.477-78), and then she wishes that she had never been born (22.481). These sentiments express in sequence her identification with Hektor and internalization of the anger she feels with regard to his death. She articulates this hostile ambivalence at several points during this scene, beginning when she first fears that Akhilleus has killed Hektor. There she comments on how Hektor's courage defined him, "since he never remained in the mob of men, but rushed forth many times, yielding to no one in his strength" (τὸ δὲ μένος οὐδενὶ εἴκων) (22.458-59). While Nicholas Richardson interprets Andromakhe's words as an unproblematic expression of admiration for her husband,<sup>137</sup> to me it seems tinged with complaint that he does not take better care of his wellbeing, which is also Andromakhe's concern in book 6, when she warns with similar language, "your strength will destroy you" (φθίσει σε τὸ σὸν μένος 6.459).<sup>138</sup>

The same ambivalence toward Hektor's fatal heroism seems evident throughout Andromakhe's lament in book 22. She describes her own painful bereavement as if it were actively caused by Hektor: "you leave me behind in hateful sorrow" (ἐμὲ στρυγερῶ ἐνὶ πένθεϊ λείπεις 483).<sup>139</sup> She focuses on her son's need for his father and the difficult life (if he survives at all) that awaits him without Hektor, which contrasts with his easy living while Hektor was with them (484-507). She ends with the bitter observation that Hektor cannot wear the lovely clothes that have been made for him, but instead is a "glory" (*kleos*) before the Trojan men and women (510-514). As Andromakhe realizes,

<sup>134</sup> Segal 1971c: 48 and N. Richardson 1993: 156. Cf. Segal 1971c: 43-46 for several other words or formulas in this passage that are appropriated from the world of war.

<sup>135</sup> Tsagalis 2004: 57.

<sup>136</sup> The irrevocable breakage of Andromakhe's sexual and emotional union (*philotēs*) with Hektor is emphasized at this same moment of symbolic death when she throws off her headdress and veil that Aphrodite—the goddess of sexual *philotēs*—had given her on her wedding day (22.468-72). Cf. Nagler 1974: 48-49, who observes that the throwing off of Andromakhe's veil also symbolizes her susceptibility to sexual violation without Hektor's protection. It particularly suggests the forced concubinage that will befall her after the sack of Troy.

<sup>137</sup> N. Richardson 1993: 156.

<sup>138</sup> With this same fear in mind, she warns him that the Akhaians will kill him by attacking en masse (6.409-410) and advises him to station the army near the walls of the city (6.433-34).

<sup>139</sup> With this passage as her prime example, Alexiou 1974: 183 identifies reproach or blame of the dead—which reverses the standard praise speech—as a traditional feature of lament.

she and Astyanax are victims of Hektor's quest for *kleos*.<sup>140</sup> While Hektor achieves *kleos* by facing Akhilleus, Andromakhe (in her own person and acting as a proxy for Astyanax) is left with unsatisfiable desire because he is killed in pursuit of that fame. She therefore emerges as the most pitiable Trojan of all, who demands the audience's utmost sympathy and strongest identification.

The strength and ambivalence of Andromakhe's libidinal attachment to Hektor, along with the desire, suffering, and lamentation of Priam, Hekabe, and the Trojan people, all echo Akhilleus' own mourning for Patroklos. This reverberation reminds the audience that Akhilleus—through displacement of his desire for Patroklos—has caused this answering Trojan desire for Hektor. Sheila Murnaghan has observed how Akhilleus articulates in book 18 his intention to transfer his own suffering over Patroklos' loss to a Trojan woman (18.121-25),<sup>141</sup> and he achieves this plan by killing Hektor in book 22 and bringing grief to Andromakhe. The Trojans' lamentation functions, within the second movement's larger structure, as an antiphonal refrain responding to Akhilleus' lamentation and created by Akhilleus for this very purpose. The spiraling, retributive chain of loss and desire that began in book 1, when Agamemnon's loss of Khryseis led to Akhilleus' loss of Briseis, reaches its climax with the Trojans' loss of Hektor.<sup>142</sup> But while Akhilleus denies Hektor's humanity<sup>143</sup> and therefore his worthiness to be grieved by abusing his body and refusing him a funeral, the Trojans' lament speeches restore Hektor's personhood and begin to memorialize him, like a modern obituary.<sup>144</sup>

Since Homer makes the implied audience identify with the Trojans' desire by portraying the Trojans sympathetically and giving voice to their anguished subjectivities, this desire, along with Akhilleus' desire, must be resolved for the audience to achieve narrative satisfaction.<sup>145</sup> Andromakhe grimly predicts that dogs are the ones who will "sate themselves" (κορέσωνται 509) on Hektor's body, but the audience's investment in Trojan mourning demands that the *Iliad's* conclusion satisfy the Trojans' desire for lamentation as well as Akhilleus'. The final section of this chapter will examine how Homer crafts this dual resolution in book 24 in order to fulfill the audience's narrative desire.

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<sup>140</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 212-214.

<sup>141</sup> Murnaghan 1999: 211.

<sup>142</sup> Cf. Chapter 1, sec. 4. The Trojans' desire for Hektor seems to be a type of *pothē*, but Homer reserves this term in the second movement to refer exclusively to Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos, which helps to mark Akhilleus' desire as primary.

<sup>143</sup> Akhilleus suggests that he and Hektor belong to two different and radically antagonistic species by comparing the two of them to wolves and sheep, among whom there can be no *philotēs* (22.262-66). Cf. Redfield 1994: 198.

<sup>144</sup> Cf. Butler 2004: 32-37 on the way that the absence of obituary contributes to the "dehumanization or derealization of the Other."

<sup>145</sup> Kim 2000: 139-43 makes a related point when she argues that Andromakhe's, Priam's, and Hekabe's pleas for pity, which both Hektor (directly) and Akhilleus (indirectly) reject in book 22, "create a need for a resolution of the theme of pity."

## 5. Resolutions of Desire

What is keeping Akhilleus and his Trojan enemies from completing their mourning processes, that is, what stands in the way of these narrative resolutions? For the Trojans, the answer is clear: they must reclaim Hektor's body. This will afford them the opportunity not only to give Hektor appropriate funeral rites, but also to lament him fully. In a speech to Hekabe, Priam suggests that taking Hektor in his arms—physically reuniting with his son—would allow him to “put away the desire for lamentation” (γούου ἐξ ἔρον εἶην 24.227).<sup>146</sup> The solution to Akhilleus' enduring mourning over Patroklos, however, is not so obvious. Akhilleus has already lamented over Patroklos' body and given him a lavish funeral, complete with funeral games, in book 23. He has also avenged Patroklos by killing Hektor in book 22. And yet at the beginning of book 24 he continues to lament his friend and to mutilate the body of Hektor. I argued above that both of these actions constitute features of Akhilleus' mourning, as he expresses his ambivalent desire (*pothē*) for Patroklos by grieving and also by directing aggression at Hektor, whom he identifies with Patroklos as a libidinal object.

Melanie Klein's theory of mourning offers an explanation of Akhilleus' impasse. She has contended that manic aggression, which expresses the desire to control, humiliate, and triumph over the object, can impede successful mourning.<sup>147</sup> She writes,

When hatred of the lost love object in its various manifestations gets the upper hand in the mourner, this not only turns the loved lost person into a persecutor, but shakes the mourner's belief in his good inner objects as well. The shaken belief in the good objects disturbs most painfully the process of idealization, which is an essential intermediate step in mental development.<sup>148</sup>

Klein here argues that aggression toward the lost object keeps the mourner from idealizing the dead loved one and internalizing him or her as a “good” object. This idealization is a prerequisite for repairing the mourner's inner world and re-establishing its harmony after the destruction caused by loss. Working from this model, I suggest that Akhilleus' continued abuse of Hektor as a “bad” object—which represents a hostile attitude toward Patroklos—prevents Akhilleus from achieving mental peace and sustains his mourning. This means that giving up Hektor is necessary for the completion of Akhilleus' mourning, in a complementary inverse of the Trojans' need to recover him. Hektor's body must change hands for the central characters' mirroring desires to be resolved.

Homer introduces the gods as catalysts of this exchange, but their influence is comprehensible as an external representation or confirmation of Akhilleus' and Priam's mental processes, in the standard mode of double determination. Segal has convincingly

<sup>146</sup> Nagler 1974: 192 writes in reference to this passage: “the poet has explicitly said that Priam and his people need Hector's physical body in order to ‘sate themselves’ with grieving.”

<sup>147</sup> Klein 1986: 153-58. Cf. Shay 1994: 115-19, who argues that restoring honor to the enemy (especially after disrespecting the dead adversary) is essential to recovering from combat PTSD.

<sup>148</sup> Klein 1986: 157.

argued that Akhilleus' mourning has lessened in intensity by the opening of book 24, and that when Thetis arrives with Zeus' command to ransom Hektor's body, "he is ready to relinquish the object of his hate, just as he has relinquished to the flames and to Hades the object of his love."<sup>149</sup> In psychoanalytic terms, we can explain Akhilleus' progression as the result of the ego's determination to survive when it has tested and confirmed the reality of the loved one's death. After this reality-testing, the ego "is persuaded by the sum of its narcissistic satisfactions in being alive to sever its attachment to the non-existent object."<sup>150</sup> Thus after burning Patroklos' body, gathering his bones, and building his memorial mound (23.215-57), Akhilleus participates again in Akhaian male homosociality—in its most benign and pleasurable manifestation<sup>151</sup>—when he arranges and judges the funeral games. Thetis, when she comes to Akhilleus with Zeus' directive, seems to personify Akhilleus' conception of life's pleasure (i.e. the pleasure principle), which motivates his ego's decision to remain in the world of the living. She begins by reminding him of food, the goodness of sex, and the brevity of his life (24.130-32), and only then tells him to relinquish Hektor (24.134-37). When Akhilleus assents obediently (24.138-40), this can be understood as his ego's responsiveness to the pleasure principle, his psychological devotion to survival as he emerges from the depths of mourning.

Zeus' double message to Priam (through Iris and the eagle portent), which orders him to ransom Hektor from Akhilleus, also accords with Priam's intrinsic motivation. As I discussed above, Priam already desires to reclaim Hektor from Akhilleus in book 22, before Zeus' intervention. This justifies Priam's later assertion to Hekabe: "my spirit and heart bid me terribly to go near the ships to the wide camp of the Akhaians" (24.198-99).<sup>152</sup> The gods merely affirm Priam's own desire, and give him the encouragement and practical wherewithal (through Hermes' guidance) to put it into action.

The importance of Priam's desire here in driving the plot toward a resolution points to the way that Priam takes on the role of emblematic Trojan mourner in book 24. Iris comes to Priam, who is at the center of the mourning Trojan royal family, veiled in his cloak and covered in dung (24.160-65). He is immediately surrounded by his weeping sons (161-62), and his daughters and daughters-in-law make a larger circle around him as they lament throughout the house (166-68). As the focal point of Trojan mourning and then as the agent who goes forth to ransom Hektor, Priam replaces Andromakhe as the main focalizer of Trojan desire. He also takes over her death-like mode of mourning, which, in her case, included her symbolic death through fainting and wish that she had never been born. As I argued above, this reaction expressed her identification with Hektor and the introjection of her ambivalence toward his death. Similarly, Priam expresses his willingness to be killed by Akhilleus, provided that he can hold his son's body (24.224-27), which represents a suicidal identification with Hektor. Homer thematizes this psychological state by also figuring Priam's journey to Akhilleus' tent as

<sup>149</sup> Segal 1971c: 52-61. Cf. Crotty 1994: 71.

<sup>150</sup> Freud 1957: 255.

<sup>151</sup> Macleod 1982: 30-31 shows how the funeral games replay aspects of the book 1 conflict within the Akhaian army, but in a corrective mode, in which quarrels are peacefully resolved and everyone is gratified. Cf. Taplin 1992: 253-59 and Redfield 1994: 204-210.

<sup>152</sup> Macleod 1982: 22.

a symbolic death, complete with the lamentation of his household “as if he were going to his death” (24.328), a descent in darkness, and the guidance of the traditional psychopomp Hermes.<sup>153</sup> Priam’s mourning contrasts with Hekabe’s, in that Hekabe, instead of internalizing her aggression, has displaced it externally onto Akhilleus, whom she desires to eat raw (24.212-14). The fact that Priam does *not* share her desire for vengeance allows him to approach Akhilleus in supplication and move toward the completion of mourning.<sup>154</sup>

Although Akhilleus may feel the pull of life even before Priam arrives,<sup>155</sup> Priam’s supplication and his gifts of ransom are essential for convincing Akhilleus to give up Hektor and complete his mourning over Patroklos, just as they are key to fulfilling the audience’s narrative desire. First of all, although Akhilleus was unable to satisfy his aggressive desire by killing or mutilating Hektor, Priam’s supplication seems to offer a deeper satisfaction of Akhilleus’ desire to dominate that transcends his attachment to Hektor. Akhilleus, ever since Agamemnon removed Briseis, had been expecting a supplication that would restore his status as preeminent hero.<sup>156</sup> He did not receive that supplication from the embassy of book 9 (despite Phoinix’s attempts to construct their visit as such), nor from Agamemnon in book 19. Priam, however, finally gives Akhilleus what he wants, grasping his knees and kissing his hands (24.478);<sup>157</sup> the narrator explains that he spoke “in supplication” (λίσσόμενος 24.485). In so doing, he utterly humbles himself and acknowledges Akhilleus’ dominance. He ends his speech by drawing attention to his extraordinary self-abasement when he proclaims, “I dared what no other mortal yet has done, to bring to my mouth the hand of the man who killed my son” (24.505-506). Priam’s kingly status makes this act even more powerful. As Kevin Crotty writes, “there could scarcely be a more extravagant proof of Achilles’ victory.”<sup>158</sup>

Crotty sees this as the fulfillment of Zeus’ earlier statement in book 24 that he would give Akhilleus more honor than Hektor (24.66-76) and Wilson connects it to Zeus’ assertion that he would award Akhilleus *kudos* (24.110).<sup>159</sup> Beyond that, however, this can be construed as the final bestowal of the honor that Akhilleus desired and Zeus promised in book 1. Akhilleus later makes clear that he is impressed by Priam’s supplication when he wonders how Priam dared to come “into the sight of the man who killed many good sons of yours” (24.520-21).

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<sup>153</sup> Whitman 1958: 217-18; Nagler 1974: 184-85; Redfield 1994: 214.

<sup>154</sup> Hekabe, unlike Priam, cannot imagine satisfying her desire for lamentation by holding Hektor in her arms. Instead, she suggests that they “weep apart sitting in the hall” (κλαίωμεν ἀνευθεν/ ἤμενοι ἐν μεγάρω 24.208-09) and visualizes Hektor’s body “sating the swift dogs far apart from his parents” (ἀργίποδας κύνας ἄσαι ἐὼν ἀπάνευθε τοκήων 24.211).

<sup>155</sup> Priam finds Akhilleus having just finished eating and drinking with his companions Automedon and Alkimos (24.474-76).

<sup>156</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, sections 2-4.

<sup>157</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 270, who writes that this action “satisfies the condition that Achilles missed at 9.387,” where he demands that Agamemnon pay him back the “heart-grieving outrage” (θυμαλγέα λῶβην).

<sup>158</sup> Crotty 1994: 71 (see also 90-91).

<sup>159</sup> Ibid. and Wilson 2002: 127.



Secondly, in addition to the supplication, Priam brings gifts of ransom that propitiate Akhilleus, in a fulfillment of the Khryses-Apollo reconciliation paradigm of book 1. In that paradigm, Agamemnon sends Khryseis along with a hecatomb to Khryse, successfully satisfying Khryses and propitiating Apollo. In book 9, Agamemnon promises gifts, but does not send them, and he only reconciles with Akhilleus when he actually produces the gifts in book 19. Yet, as I argued, Akhilleus' desires are already redirected toward Hektor at this point, and so these gifts do not satisfy him. Now Priam comes bearing a ransom, which he explicitly mentions in his speech (24.502). He does this in accordance with Zeus' plan for him "to bring gifts to Akhilleus that will warm his heart" (δῶρα δ' Ἀχιλλῆϊ φερέμεν, τὰ κε θυμὸν ἰήνη 24.119). This formulaic line is repeated four times, by Zeus, Iris, and Priam himself (119 = 147 = 176 = 196), in a testimony to the importance of the gifts as both a vehicle for alleviating Akhilleus' aggressive desire<sup>160</sup> and a marker of this episode's repetition of the book 1 resolution paradigm. As Wilson has explained, this ransom, like Priam's supplication, represents the *timē* that Akhilleus has won by killing Hektor.<sup>161</sup> It is a substitute for Hektor's body that allows Akhilleus to maintain his symbolic dominance while letting go of his detrimental psychological and physical attachment to Hektor. Akhilleus in fact says as much when he later asks Patroklos' forgiveness for returning Hektor on the basis that Priam has given him "not unseemly ransom" (οὐ...ἀεικέα...ἄποινα 24.594).

Besides appeasing Akhilleus with his gifts and supplication, Priam tries in his speech to gain Akhilleus' pity by comparing himself to Akhilleus' own father in his age and bereavement (24.486-501). The idea seems to be that Akhilleus, by remembering and pitying the situation of Peleus in his absence, will similarly pity Priam, whose situation is much worse, with his favorite son and protector actually dead. Or, even if Akhilleus does not pity him by analogy, Priam perhaps hopes to evoke pity for Peleus that will extend to him as well.

While Priam does eventually inspire Akhilleus' pity, this outcome seems to be a side effect of the immediate result of his actions and words: the completion of Akhilleus' own mourning. Priam's speech seems to loosen Akhilleus' negative fixation on Hektor, and to refocus him on the truer objects of his desire. The narrator reports that Priam "roused up in him a desire for lamentation of his father" (τῷ δ' ἄρα πατρός ὑφ' ἕμερον ῥῶσε γόοιο 24.507). While lamenting, Akhilleus is not interested in Priam, pushing him away (508). Akhilleus cries both for his father and for Patroklos (511-512). Eventually, the narrator reports that he "has taken satisfaction of lamentation" (γόοιο τετάρπετο) and that the "desire" (ἕμερος) has left his body (24.513-514): Akhilleus' (acute) mourning is over. But what does Peleus have to do with Patroklos, and why does the mention of him have such a powerful effect on Akhilleus and his mourning process?

Once again, Klein's work on the psychology of mourning can help us to answer these questions. Klein argues that a person's inner world

<sup>160</sup> Priam's gifts recall Agamemnon's gifts to Akhilleus in book 19, but they are more efficacious. Odysseus says that the public bestowal of Agamemnon's gifts will cause Akhilleus to be "warmed in his mind" (φρεσὶ σῆσιν ἰανθῆς 19.174), but Akhilleus never acknowledges these gifts, as Donlan 1993: 170 and Wilson 2002: 118-20 observe, and his aggressive desire is merely redirected from Agamemnon to Hektor.

<sup>161</sup> Wilson 2002: 129.

consists of innumerable objects taken into the ego, corresponding partly to the multitude of varying aspects, good and bad, in which the parents (and other people) appeared in the child's unconscious mind throughout various stages of his development...all these objects are in the inner world in an infinitely complex relation both with each other and with the self.<sup>162</sup>

According to Klein, when a person experiences loss, this carefully constructed and balanced inner world is destroyed. For her, the work of mourning is not only to internalize the lost person as a "good" object, but also to rebuild this inner world, reinstating "all his loved *internal* objects which he feels that he has lost. He is therefore *recovering* what he had already attained in childhood."<sup>163</sup> As the first passage above suggests, the parents are the primary and most important objects internalized within the ego, and therefore successful mourning restores the parents as "good" inner objects.<sup>164</sup>

I would like to suggest that Priam's reminder of Peleus jumpstarts this process for Akhilleus. Patroklos' death threw Akhilleus' positive identification with his father into crisis. In his first speech to Thetis after learning of Patroklos' death, Akhilleus draws attention to the fact that Hektor stripped from Patroklos the armor that the gods gave to Peleus, and then he wishes that Peleus had never married Thetis (18.82-87). Again in his book 19 lament speech, he connects Patroklos' death with the prospective death of Peleus (19.321-22, 334-35) and also with the rupture of his relationship with his father caused by his own absence and future death (19.336-37). Patroklos' *psychē* also mentions Peleus (23.89-90) and Akhilleus dedicates a lock of hair to Patroklos that Peleus had promised to dedicate to the river Sperkheios on Akhilleus' safe return home (23.143-49). Akhilleus' identification with his father is absolutely central to his own identity, as his frequent naming by patronymic makes clear, starting in the first line of the *Iliad* (Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος). Now in book 24 Akhilleus remembers his absent father, finally mourns the loss of him, and thereby re-introjects him into his ego.<sup>165</sup> This helps to reconstitute his shattered inner world. At the same time, Akhilleus desires and laments Patroklos, and he is able, at last, to internalize him positively within his rebuilt ego.

Homer indicates this successful completion of mourning not only with the satisfaction of Akhilleus' "desire for lamentation," but also with his following gentleness toward Priam. After Akhilleus is done with lamentation, he raises Priam from his

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<sup>162</sup> Klein 1986: 166. The assembly of these internalized objects can be termed the super-ego.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. (her italics).

<sup>164</sup> Klein's theory that the mourning subject must reinstate his parents in order to restore his inner world represents her major innovation on Freud's and Abraham's understanding of mourning, as she herself observes (Klein 1986: 165-67).

<sup>165</sup> Given Klein's model, one might well ask how Akhilleus' mother, Thetis, fits into this picture. As MacCary 1982, esp. 78, 81, 126, has observed, Thetis is ever-present for Akhilleus in the *Iliad*, and so he does not have to process separation from her, i.e. she is not an object of desire. She appears whenever he is suffering and watches over his interests carefully; in book 24, Zeus comments that it would be impossible to steal Hektor's body from Akhilleus since "his mother always attends him, day and night alike" (24.72-73).

suppliant position and “pities (οἰκτίρων) his grey head and grey chin” (24.515-16). This act of kindness and sympathetic feeling recall the gentleness and concern for his fellows that defined Patroklos. These traits were particularly manifested in his profound sympathy with the Akhaian army’s suffering, which motivated his entrance into battle.<sup>166</sup> Indeed, Menelaos says of Patroklos that “he was known to all to be sweet while he was alive” (πᾶσιν γὰρ ἐπίστατο μείλιχος εἶναι/ ζῶδς ἐών 17.670-71).<sup>167</sup> Akhilleus’ treatment of Priam suggests that he has internalized Patroklos as a “good” object and is acting out an identification with his characteristic kindness.

Akhilleus’ speech to Priam, in which he repudiates lamentation, also indicates the end of his intense mourning. He tells Priam, “let us allow the pains to lie at rest in our hearts, although grieving; for there is no point in chilly lamentation” (ἄλγεα δ’ ἔμπης/ ἐν θυμῷ κατακεῖσθαι ἐάσομεν ἀχνύμενοί περ·/ οὐ γὰρ τις πρῆξις πέλεται κρυεροῖο γόοιο 24.522-24). These words acknowledge that both men’s desires will never be satisfied (they are still “grieving”), but also show that Akhilleus is ready to internalize both the desire and its object, to put it aside (inside).<sup>168</sup> He is done with mourning and so lamentation has outlived its “point” for him. The second hemistich of line 523 repeats exactly the formula with which Akhilleus’ dismissed his aggressive desire toward Agamemnon (18.112 = 19.65),<sup>169</sup> ending their conflict and the poem’s first movement. Here it indicates to the audience the resolution of Akhilleus’ driving desires for both Patroklos and Hektor as he peaceably receives Priam.

Akhilleus’ speech(es) to Priam may also represent a transformation of Patroklos’ loss into the realm of the symbolic, with language replacing the lost object. Nicolas Abraham and Maria Torok have argued that introjection is actually the expression of the lost object in words; language fills the empty space left by the object. It is a productive acceptance of loss that differs in their conception from the denial of loss expressed through “incorporation” and characteristic of the melancholic, when the lost object is taken into the self in the subject’s fantasy. Introjection thus represents “the successful replacement of the object’s presence with the self’s cognizance of its absence.”<sup>170</sup> Akhilleus’ discussion of the inevitable evil allotted by Zeus to mortals, as evidenced by both Peleus’ and Priam’s misfortune (24.525-48), constitutes a religious or philosophical reflection on grief as a shared human experience. As Crotty has recognized, it represents

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<sup>166</sup> Cf. Chapter 3, sec. 4.

<sup>167</sup> For Patroklos’ kindness, see also *Il.* 23.280-81 and Taplin 1992: 192. Cf. Shay 1994: 44-49, who argues that gentleness is a common feature of soldiers whose loss is felt particularly strongly by comrades-in-arms; Patroklos’ characterization thus helps to establish the conditions for Akhilleus’ extreme revenge and mourning.

<sup>168</sup> Akhilleus is aware, however, of the fragility of his mental rehabilitation. He realizes that the danger persists of his aggressive desire erupting again toward Priam as he reclaims Hektor (24.560, 568-70, 584-86).

<sup>169</sup> N. Richardson 1993: 329 notes the connection.

<sup>170</sup> Abraham and Torok 1994 [1972]: 126-28. Cf. Butler 1999: 86.

something new, a cognitive response to loss.<sup>171</sup> It is different from the mourner's inarticulate vocalizations or even from lament speeches, which are full of emotion, personal and specific, which "hypercathect" the relationship with the lost object. Here, and later with his mythological exemplum of Niobe (24.602-16), Akhilleus generalizes loss in language instead of dwelling on Patroklos.

With this generalization he also acknowledges a mortal commonality with Priam, as scholars have observed.<sup>172</sup> Moreover, Homer has already presented the two men as united in their mourning, with the dual participle of remembering (μνησάμενω 509) and the parallelism of their "crying" (κλαῖν 510, κλαῖεν 511) for their lost loved ones.<sup>173</sup> The merging of Akhilleus' and Priam's desiring subjectivities resolves the audience's conflict of identification, which was created in books 22-24. No longer must the audience struggle to choose sides, vacillating between alignment with Akhilleus or the Trojans; rather, it can comfortably identify with both parties at once.

Homer brings the audience's narrative desire close to satisfaction, while also emphasizing the climactic resolution of Akhilleus' desires, by completing this episode's repetition of the Akhaians' paradigmatic reconciliation with Khryses and Apollo in book 1.<sup>174</sup> As I argued above, Priam offers Akhilleus gifts and supplication, just as the Akhaians had returned Khryseis to Khryses and sacrificed a hecatomb to Apollo. In book 1, Khryses reconciles with the Akhaians and Apollo is propitiated by their sacrifice, ending the destructive plague. Similarly, in book 24, Akhilleus accepts the ransom gifts for Hektor's body (24.572-90), which marks the end of his aggression toward him, and he later agrees to a cessation of hostilities with the Trojans for eleven days (24.656-670). Just as Khryses and the Akhaians share the sacrificial feast, Priam and Akhilleus share a meal together, which is described with formulaic lines repeated (with slight variation) from the book 1 paradigm (24.623-34 ~ 1.465-66). In both cases, the participants "put aside their desire for drink and food" (πόσιος καὶ ἐδητύος ἐξ ἔρον ἔντο 24.628 = 1.469), in a resolution of physical desire—which Akhilleus significantly deferred until this point, as discussed in Chapter 3<sup>175</sup>—with further-reaching psychological resonance. Apollo "takes pleasure" (τέρπετο 1.474) in the Akhaians' ensuing song and dance, while Akhilleus and Priam "take (pleasureable) satisfaction" (τάρπησαν 24.633) in beholding one another.<sup>176</sup> Then Priam suggests that they also "take satisfaction" (ταρπώμεθα

<sup>171</sup> Crotty 1994: 77. Akhilleus does not articulate the universality of grief before this moment, but he does recognize the universality of death during his rejection of Lykaon's supplication (21.106-113). His words then reflect his antisocial fixation on killing and death during his *aristeia*.

<sup>172</sup> Muellner 1990: 174 and Crotty 1994: 80-88.

<sup>173</sup> Nagler 1974: 189. See also Macleod 1982: 26 for other narrative indications of the parallelism of their grief; Redfield 1994: 215 for the way that the murderer-suppliant simile (24.477-83) confuses Akhilleus and Priam with one another; and Seaford 1994: 10 for their shared participation in "death ritual."

<sup>174</sup> Rabel 1997: 200 also observes how "Achilleus gives up his wrath in a passage marked by repetition of the four type-scenes that brought an end to the wrath of Apollo." Cf. Crotty 1994: 87-88 who likewise draws a connection between the *philotēs* of Akhilleus and Priam in this scene and the "reconciliatory friendship" of Khryses and the Akhaians.

<sup>175</sup> Chapter 3, sec. 5.

<sup>176</sup> Rabel 1997: 205. Cf. Edwards 1980: 21-22 on how both scenes diverge from the typical pattern of after-dinner conversation.

24.636) in sleep, again using language that marks this scene as a moment that resolves desire.<sup>177</sup> Indeed, just as the Akhaians take their rest after the celebration (1.475-76), Priam and Akhilleus also sleep when they have concluded their agreement (24.673-76); significantly, Akhilleus finally reunites in bed with his favorite concubine and sexual partner, Briseis. This is Akhilleus' narrative exit, and he leaves with all his desires satisfied or put aside, with all his conflicts resolved (for the time being).

This culminating episode, however, also represents a resolution that reaches beyond Akhilleus' personal conflicts. By repeating the reconciliation between Agamemnon-the Akhaians and Khryses-Apollo, it effects that reconciliation a second time, and thus solves (again) the problem that initiated the poem's action and Akhilleus' plot. But it resolves this conflict in another way by symbolically correcting, or reversing, Agamemnon's original insult to Khryses. As scholars have recognized, Priam's supplication of Akhilleus recalls in many respects Khryses' supplication of Agamemnon, with which the *Iliad's* primary fabula began.<sup>178</sup> But while Agamemnon refused Khryses' supplication and his ransom, Akhilleus accepts the ransom and returns the child.<sup>179</sup> Whitman has shown how all of book 24 represents a large-scale reversal of book 1 on both thematic and formal levels.<sup>180</sup> The audience's desire is (almost) satisfied by a resolution of conflict that is also a negation in its transformation of the circumstances that created narrative desire in the first place.

But before the audience's narrative desire can be fully satisfied, the Trojans' desire must also be resolved, their mourning must be completed. And so Hermes does not let Priam take satisfaction of sleep (he is not yet done with desire), but rather wakes him up in the middle of the night and shepherds him back, with Hektor's body, to Troy (24.682-94). Indeed, Priam had already resisted Akhilleus' attempt to make him end his mourning prematurely, before he had recovered Hektor and given him funeral rites (24.553-55). On his way back to Troy, Priam resumes his lamentation (696) and he is soon joined outside the wall by all the Trojan men and women, who feel "uncontrollable sorrow" (ἀσχετον...πένθος 708). Finally Andromakhe and Hekabe physically reunite with Hektor's body, touching his head (711-12). Now that all can properly lament, there is a kind of boundless indulgence in lamentation—a stasis—that threatens to impede the Trojans' progress in mourning (712-14) until Priam intervenes to bring Hektor's corpse into the house for the prothesis. He promises, "then you will sate yourself of weeping" (ἔπειτα / ἄσεσθε κλαυθμοῖο 716-17).

This initiates Hektor's formal funeral rites, which bring to an end the Trojans' mourning and satisfy the audience's desire for its successful completion. Hektor is laid out, and professional mourners sing *thrēnoi* (24.719-22). Then Andromakhe, Hekabe, and Helen each deliver personal lament speeches (*gooi*), which are followed by group antiphonal refrains (723-776). Helen's closing lament is in fact answered by the groaning of the "boundless community" (δῆμος ἀπείρων 776), which perhaps extends beyond the

<sup>177</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 277-78.

<sup>178</sup> E.g. Macleod 1982: 33-34 catalogues the resemblances.

<sup>179</sup> Murnaghan 1997: 38; Wilson 2002: 128, 132.

<sup>180</sup> Whitman 1958: 259-60.

Trojan citizenry to include the external audience itself, in its identification with and investment in Trojan mourning.<sup>181</sup> Finally the Trojans gather wood, build the funeral pyre, and burn Hektor's body (782-87). Homer describes the following dawn with a formula that has only appeared once before in the *Iliad* to mark the breaking of day after the reconciliation and sacrificial feast at Khryse (24.788 = 1.477).<sup>182</sup> It connects both moments as resolutions and new beginnings. The Trojans ritually snuff out the pyre, gather Hektor's bones in a burial chest, shed a final tear, and build his memorial mound (789-801). Then they enjoy a funeral feast (802-804), finishing their mourning and concluding the narrative.

## 6. Audience Satisfaction and the *Iliad's* Ending

Throughout this study I have argued that Akhilleus' desires drive the *Iliad's* main plot. His desires to reclaim Briseis and dominate Agamemnon engender and determine the main plot's first movement, and his consequent desires to reunite with Patroklos and destroy Hektor produce and direct the course of the second movement. I have suggested that an implied audience identifies primarily with Akhilleus, and that its own narrative desire for resolution of Akhilleus' plot along the lines of the paradigmatic reconciliation between Agamemnon-the Akhaians and Khryses-Apollo motivates and structures its engagement with the poem. In this last chapter, I have also shown how Homer sympathetically foregrounds the Trojan desire for Hektor, which introduces a competing claim on the audience's identification. I have contended that book 24 provides narrative satisfaction for the audience by resolving Akhilleus' desires through Priam's supplication—in accordance with the book 1 conflict-resolution model—and the Trojans' desires through the funeral of Hektor.

But just how much closure and audience satisfaction does this ending provide? As I have acknowledged, Akhilleus' desire for Patroklos and the Trojans' desire for Hektor are ultimately unsatisfiable since death creates an irrevocable separation between subject and object. The best they can do is to mitigate the intensity of their desire, put aside their desire, or internalize their desire through mourning. Completing mourning may constitute a kind of resolution for the desiring subject, but does not satisfy the deeper desire lying behind the more obviously satisfiable "desire for lamentation." However, I think that the long-awaited repetition of the Khryses-Apollo reconciliation paradigm in book 24, as well as the ritual closures represented by Akhilleus' acceptance of Priam's supplication and by the celebration of Hektor's funeral,<sup>183</sup> offer a high level of narrative satisfaction for the audience. James Redfield argues that the *Iliad's* conclusion provides the audience with closure on the aesthetic level through its formal echoes, although he denies that it truly resolves the poem's action from the perspective of the internal characters.<sup>184</sup>

Even if we allow, against Redfield, that the completion of the characters'

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<sup>181</sup> Cf. Tsagalis 2004: 65.

<sup>182</sup> Rabel 1997: 200-201.

<sup>183</sup> Seaford 1994: 70-72.

<sup>184</sup> Redfield 1994: 219-222.

mourning to some degree resolves the *Iliad*'s main plot, the poem's ending leaves the larger Trojan War story distinctly unfinished. I have shown how Homer elliptically portrays for the audience the origin and conclusion of the war during the *Iliad*'s superplot in books 3-7. In the last books of the poem, elements of the superplot reappear and are integrated into the main plot, thereby reminding the audience that the story begins before the poem's opening and continues beyond the bounds of its narrative. For example, in their lament speeches, Helen again draws attention to her destructive second marriage to Paris (24.763-66), and Andromakhe prophesies anew her own and Astyanax's fates once Troy falls (24.725-35). In addition, Taplin has suggested that the appearance of the beautiful Cassandra, "like to golden Aphrodite" (ικέλη χρυσέη Ἀφροδίτη), as the first Trojan to perceive and announce Priam's return with Hektor's body (24.699-706), is meant to evoke her future concubinage to Agamemnon, and indeed the enslavement of all the Trojan women after the city is sacked.<sup>185</sup>

In fact, the main plot's second movement actually expands on the superplot's treatment of the larger Trojan War story. Akhilleus' own future death, mentioned already in book 1, becomes an abiding theme of books 18-24. Hektor, in the moment of his death, prophesies the exact contours of Akhilleus' doom: Paris and Apollo will kill him near the Skaian Gates (22.359-60). Even as the *Iliad* itself moves toward an ending, book 24 emphasizes Paris' key and continuing role in the Trojan cycle. Here the narrator finally explains that Hera and Athena hate the Trojans because of the insult Paris delivered to them when he judged Aphrodite the most beautiful (24.25-30). For this, Aphrodite gave him "painful satisfaction of lust" (μαχλοσύνην ἀλεγεινήν 24.30), i.e. Helen, the *casus belli*. Paris is also mentioned again as one of the sons whom Priam verbally abuses as cheating, dancing, good-for-nothings (24.248-62). While Hektor, protector of Troy, is dead, Paris survives, reminding the audience not only of his instigation of the war as a subject of desire, but also of his future role as Akhilleus' killer.<sup>186</sup>

These references, particularly those alluding to events postdating the *Iliad*'s end, preclude full satisfaction of the audience's narrative desire. While Paris and Helen remain safe and sound, united by transgressive desire, the war will go on. The end of Hektor's funeral also marks the end of the truce. Akhilleus must still die.<sup>187</sup> Ultimately, the desire of the *Iliad*'s audience continues to mirror the desire of its hero, resolved by the poem's conclusion, but never to be fulfilled.

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<sup>185</sup> Taplin 1992: 280-81.

<sup>186</sup> However, in the *Iliad*'s culminating scene between Priam and Akhilleus, where poetic closure is most fully achieved, Paris' survival is suppressed. Priam recalls only the deaths of many of his fifty sons, most especially Hektor (24.493-501).

<sup>187</sup> Cf. Taplin 1992: 283, who remarks, "All these events, insistently foreseen within the *Iliad*, hang over its closure."

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