Homer

Homer

His Art and His World

Joachim Latacz

Translated by James P. Holoka

Ann Arbor

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN PRESS

Foreword for English edition and English translation
copyright © by the University of Michigan 1996
Originally published in German by Artemis Verlag
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Published in the United States of America by
The University of Michigan Press
Manufactured in the United States of America
⊗ Printed on acid-free paper

1999 1998 1997 1996 4 3 2 1

A CIP catalog record for this book is available from the British Library

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Latacz, Joachim.
[Erste Dichter des Abandlands. English]
Homer, his art and his world / Joachim Latacz ; translated by
James P. Holoka.
p. cm.
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 0-472-10657-0 (hardcover : alk. paper) — ISBN 0-472-08353-8
(pbk. : alk. paper)
1. Homer—Criticism and interpretation. 2. Epic poetry, Greek—
History and criticism. 3. Civilization, Homeric. I. Title.
PA4037.L436 1996
883'.01—dc20 95-42481
CIP

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Foreword

The First German Edition, 1985

A few years ago, the following comment appeared in a professional journal for teachers of ancient languages at the high school level: "In the scholarly bibliographies of recent years, there is hardly to be found a publication on Homer's *Iliad* or *Odyssey* that offers a synopsis of the actual epic and provides a comprehensive appreciation" (W. Klug in *Anregung* 27, no. 1 [1981]: 30). In fact, Homeric scholarship for about the last three decades has been so preoccupied with working up new theories and discoveries—among others, the sensational decipherment of Linear B—that there was hardly time to catch one's breath and sum up. But if even teachers of Greek are complaining, perhaps a short guide to current perspectives on Homer will be of yet more interest to a wider public. Thus this book is directed less to my colleagues than to all who are lovers of Homer generally and to all who would like to be. For them, I will try to bring Homer out of the preserve of specialists. For that reason, many narrowly philological questions are deliberately avoided. Also the whole vast area of so-called Homeric realia (that is, the particulars of social structure, economics, commerce, warfare, religion, and so on) has been excluded. Its systematic treatment would have required at least another whole volume (as the citations in the selected bibliography make abundantly clear). The chief emphasis here lies on the delineation of Homer's historical background (on developments of the Homeric era) and on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as poems.

Underlying this selectivity is a desire to bring Homer closer to the modern audience as a poet and not as a historical source. This desire is sustained by the conviction that whoever sees Homer as representative of his epoch—that restless eighth century B.C., when the Greek people, after a long dormancy, gradually shifted to an ever accelerating dynamism—will most readily understand how to appreciate the sagacity, the artistry, and the charm of the poet.

It is impossible in an introductory work to offer a thorough explica-

tion of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* with their approximately 28,000 lines. Nothing more than a foundation can be given. Perhaps it may awaken in the reader a yearning to make for himself or herself a deeper journey of discovery into Homer, armed with the outline provided here. The needed translations and other sources that might prove useful are listed in the selected bibliography.

To all the colleagues who were helpful to me in various ways (especially my colleague at Basel, Josef Delz, as well as the archaeologists Professor Sakellarakis in Iraklion and Professor Korfmann in Tübingen) I am deeply indebted. A special thanks is owed to my assistant Edzard Visser and to my student aides in the Basel Seminar für Klassische Philologie, Martha Spiro and Renate Müller. May a little of our delight in Homer be transmitted to others!

The Second German Edition, 1989

I am delighted that the title of my first chapter, "The New Relevance of Homer," has found confirmation in the surprisingly strong response that my book has drawn from the general public as well as from students and teachers in academia. For this new edition, I have corrected minor misprints and oversights and updated the citations of scholarship in both the text proper and the selected bibliography.

The English Edition, 1996

It is a special joy to me that, following translations of this book into Italian (1990) and Dutch (1991), my views on Homer and his superb poems will now reach an English-speaking readership as well. Since 1928, Homeric scholarship in the United States and Great Britain—specifically, Milman Parry's theory of oral composition and Michael Ventris' decipherment of the Linear B script—has lent a decisive impetus to the quest for a better appreciation of Homer's epics. With this book, I hope on the one hand to demonstrate that German-speaking Homer scholars have been grateful for that impetus and have even here and there contributed to it a bit. On the other hand, I would be gratified if my exposition were to furnish proof that German-speaking scholars have left behind the era of stultifying disputes between Analysts and Unitarians; that they are now able to integrate appropriately an array of critical methodologies to make significant contributions precisely to the inter-

pretation of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. A few years ago, I spoke of the "reservations" that "American (and to an extent British) Homer scholars [have] with regard to the traditional European interpretation of Homer" (Latacz 1991b, ix). It would be a source of particular satisfaction to me if the present book were to dismantle some of those reservations.

I must thank the University of Michigan Press and especially Dr. Ellen Bauerle for the confidence they showed in me by undertaking to publish this book. I also thank a number of American friends for the encouragement they have shown me—above all, my old friend Ludwig Koenen, for the unstinting and selfless manner in which he has fostered cooperation between the Classics Departments at the Universities of Michigan and Basel; he also had a hand in the realization of this translation. Especially warm thanks go to James P. Holoka for his devotion to the project; with incredible efficiency and in cordial cooperation with me, he rendered the German original into a finely nuanced and, in my opinion, quite elegant English version. I am also thankful to him for helping to update citations of Homeric scholarship to 1994 and for expanding the bibliography to accommodate the needs of English-speaking readers.

No one who writes about Homer can expect that his view of the origins of the poems or his understanding of their meaning will convince all readers. That has not been my intent here. Rather, my goal has been to make modern readers so familiar with a great poetic work of the past that they might better understand their own lives. Nietzsche was surely correct to say that learning as an end in itself is incomplete. To be complete, learning must serve life.

Joachim Latacz

The Greek World, 800 B.C.

Introduction

The Immediacy of Homer

For more than twenty-five hundred years—first in Greece, then in the Roman and Byzantine Empires, and, since the Renaissance, in the culture of all European nations—the name *Homer* was synonymous with great poetry. Today, especially among the younger generation, it conjures up very few specific images. Since the Second World War, the number of students and lovers of literature who have read Homer in the original Greek has fallen off dramatically. Among the thousands who have become familiar with him through translations, those who have read his lengthy works in their entirety are probably in the minority.

The general public still associates with Homer the following essential elements (often acquired in a diluted form from secondhand sources): endless heroic combats with sword, shield, and spear, between Greeks and Trojans, in a war at Troy that lasted ten years—that is, the *Iliad*—and a long series of folkloric adventures experienced by the Trojan War veteran Odysseus during his homeward sea journey to the island of Ithaca, where his faithful wife Penelope awaited him for twenty years—that is, the *Odyssey*. To these may be added vaguely recalled bits, mostly of uncertain source and hard to localize: the Trojan horse, the beautiful Helen, the Cassandra story, the Achilles heel—these from the *Iliad;* the song of the Sirens, the Cyclops, the choice between Scylla and Charybdis, the temptation by Circe (the sorceress who turns men into swine)—these from the *Odyssey*. And over all this, finally, stands Olympus, with its strangely imminent gods, who speak with mortals, actively helping them but also cruelly deceiving them, gods who in the end have only "Homeric laughter" for these mortals: Zeus and Poseidon, Ares, Apollo, Hermes; Hera, Athena, Aphrodite, Artemis; the Muses, Nymphs, and Graces.

This list of such associations could be lengthened. What they make

clear, despite their superficiality and sparsity, is ultimately something quite reassuring: how deeply rooted Homer still is in our language and our imaginations despite the decline in direct acquaintance with his work. It is nearly impossible to assess just how influential his position is in our literature and art. A glance at the small handbooks of Herbert Hunger (1988) and Betty Radice (1973) under, say, "Homer," "Helen," "Odysseus," and "Troy" reveals hundreds of works from the Middle Ages down to the present that revolve around themes from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—paintings, dramas, stories, novels; cantatas, operas, ballets; and nowadays films and television programs. Among them are masterworks by Rubens, Tiepolo, Picasso, Joyce, Giraudoux, and Sartre; the most recent offspring is Christa Wolf's *Kassandra*. In reality, Homer's influence is much more pervasive, and all these individual works are only crystallization points within a broad tradition that has for centuries repeatedly given new stimulus to Western sculpture, painting, music, and literature. In regard to the history of Homer's influence, George Finsler's compendious reference work, *Homer in der Neuzeit von Dante bis Goethe* (1912), clarifies the mass of associations, which, in their number and their ramifications, are quite extraordinary. Nonetheless, Finsler's work is admittedly only a first attempt. The true history of Homer's influence remains to be written.

The present book has a different aim. It is intended to show not whom Homer influenced or how but by what means he did so. It aims to make Homer's epics speak directly to present-day readers. This is particularly necessary because the twenty-seven hundred years between Homer and ourselves have witnessed the evolution of literary conventions quite alien to those of Homer and his public.

Homer's Language

Homer's language poses the greatest obstacle for the modern reader. Homer speaks the language of early Greek epic—he speaks in verse. His verse is unrhymed but has a fixed meter. Each line must conform to the hexameter pattern, that is, it must consist of six dactyls (— uu), each replaceable by a spondee (— —):

1	2	3	4	5	6
— uu	— uu	— uu	— uu	— uu	— —

All the forms of speech that Homer chooses to use—narrative, description, direct address, dialogue, and so on—all that he wishes to express in every nuance of feeling must be transformed into this six-dactyl rhythm. This was a rigid restriction, which Homer certainly did not invent. When he began to compose verse, it had already existed for several centuries. Generations of freely improvising singers (in Greek, ἀοιδοί, *aoidoi*) had learned, practiced, and refined this style of speaking, or more precisely, of composing spontaneously, without any copy of a text, and of accompanying themselves on the *phorminx*, a four-stringed instrument. An art (τέχνη, *tekhnē*) thus originated that, like all arts, had a solid craftlike basis. Because of this art, the singer did not seek for new words each time he had to sing extempore to his audience of the routine matters, the actions, processes, and situations of life and the world. That would have been not only too difficult but much too risky. One could not have found instant-by-instant just the metrically correct words and word combinations for a given meaning. The flow of the narrative would have been arrested and—more damaging still—creativity would have been impeded. For how could one have spoken of the extraordinary and the unique if one had to search for a new expression even to recount the commonplace? One was relieved of that burden insofar as one retained in memory metrically suitable (that is, dactylic and spondaic) words, word forms and combinations, and even verses and verse groups. These convenient elements would be joined in a common fund, stored in the mind and extended from one generation of singers to the next, constituting a reservoir of prefabricated formulas. Whenever one had to speak of a person, situation, circumstance, or event for which a formula was available in the stock of prefabrications, this formula could be used (but did not have to be: Visser 1987, 1988; Latacz 1992b).

This technique, which first made possible sustained, regular hexameter improvisation, engendered a language in which the same structural elements were repeated much more frequently than in everyday speech (or in any post-Homeric literary language). Thus we hear again and again of "hollow ships," "the shining of the sun," "the shepherd of the people," "brilliant Hektor," "tall Olympos," "all (my, his, their, etc.) days," and so on. Speeches are repeatedly introduced with "and he spoke winged words," and responses are announced with "he spoke in answer to him." Wonderment is expressed with "what sort of word has

escaped the barrier of your teeth?" The beginning of a meal is signaled with "and they raised their hands to the deliciously prepared meal."

These repetitions strike the typical reader as odd; their rendering in translation is often somewhat comic. Do not composition courses in school inculcate the practice of avoiding the repetition of words and of expressing oneself in general with as much variation of phraseology as possible? Against such an ideal, Homer's style seems childish, awkward, naive, even primitive. Can there be anything worthy of reflection behind this formulaic rigidity of a language that, vis-à-vis modern variation of expression, sounds like a call from a distant primitive era? Must not the inflexibility of the language imply a concomitant lack of discrimination in the thought expressed by it and therefore also in Homeric people and their problems? It is understandable that for many basically interested readers, and especially for the young, even when only turning over the pages of Homer for the first time, there is a sense of alienation and an inclination to turn away.

Against this reaction, I shall attempt to show that the linguistic/stylistic distance is merely a superficial phenomenon, though it demands a bit of effort to overcome it. The regular workings of the Homeric language must be understood, penetrated, and assimilated. How much effort we expend on learning the rules of games whose mastery brings much less gratification than does mastery of the rules of Homer! Once the linguistic/stylistic barrier has been hurdled, Homer's poetic world, with its really very distinct personalities and its (in essence) permanently relevant conflicts, can provide modern readers with a profound literary and human experience even in translation.

The introductory chapters attempt not only to rehearse but also to document briefly the current state of research into the historical background of Homer. The intent of this deliberately detailed exposition is to free Homer's poetry as much as possible from the still present odium of an indulgently recognized primitive origin. As long as Homer is seen under such categories as "still undeveloped, simplistic, archaic, clumsy," and so forth, the proper explication of his art is not possible, for in light of the supposed inception of this poetry, any sensitive interpretation may be suspected as a projection. To counteract this tendency, the findings of recent research in archaeology and cultural history had to be combined to provide a clearer image, one that reveals the work of the singer Homeros as a literary product of the last full flowering of a centuries-old aristocratic culture. This clarity was not achieved

by reference to the Greek song tradition alone; the whole historical development had to be taken into account.

A Historical Sketch of Homeric Scholarship

Homer's works have been analyzed with scientific methods in modern times for roughly two hundred years. The research has gone down many dead ends and has often wasted energy. To review this extensive history of scholarship in a separate segment seemed inappropriate to the purpose of this book. The very perceptive Homer scholar Albin Lesky passed this judgment on modern Homeric scholarship over forty years ago: "the treatment of the Homeric question since F.A. Wolf may be labeled the most dubious chapter of philological research" (Lesky 1954, 1). That sounds harsh, but it is justified. Nonprofessional readers who would like to get to know Homer the poet may be spared a questionable body of research that would only distance them from their goal. A brief sketch of the most significant phases and tendencies of scholarship may serve them better.

The first phase of reflective concern with and not just enjoyment of Homer extends from the "publication" of the epics toward the end of the eighth century down to the beginning of the systematically conducted philology in Alexandria in the third century B.C. This period of roughly four hundred years was marked by the first intensive engagement of Greek intellectuals (poets, philosophers, statesmen) with the Homeric conception of the world, with his image of humans and gods, with his view of human existence and human society, and not least with his poetic art. In the course of this dialogue of minds, which reached its acme in the fourth century with Plato and Aristotle, a practical necessity first made itself felt: to have a common starting point for debate, one had to have more than mere familiarity with the text—which could be achieved in school, for Homer was the nation's primer from the very beginning. One also had to have a deeper understanding of the language and of the motivation for statements. Even a century later, many of the words, usages, and even inflectional forms of the old language of song in which Homer had versified were obsolete or misunderstood. Moreover, the stylistic peculiarities of this poetry often required explication. In the beginning no one was more adept in providing such explication than those who continually recited Homer's poems, in most cases as professionals—namely, the rhapsodes, particu-

larly the *Homeridae*. In their circles originated, already in the sixth century, the first word inventories (γλῶσσαι, "glosses") to meet the needs of the classroom and of performance; there were also commentaries, and biographical essays, of which traces have survived even up to the present in the form of explanatory notes for students (σχόλια, *scholia*) and *Vitae* or "Lives" (see chap. 1, "Homer as the Founder of Western Textuality").

The tendency toward text normalization should also be seen in this context. We may fix a very important moment in this process in the culturally and politically significant directive of the Athenian head of state Peisistratos (or one of his sons, in the second half of the sixth century), who mandated that a team of alternating rhapsodes publicly perform the Homeric epics *in their entirety* at the Athenian state festival known as the Panathenaia. The obvious conclusion is that an authorized unified text must have been created, which could take the place of what had up to then been freely circulating copies. This was a significant stage in the process of text fixation. On the basis of this text, the first specialized studies of Homer were produced already during the fifth-century enlightenment associated with the Sophists. These studies dealt with his language, his homeland, his life, and so on (cf. Alkidamas and Hippias of Elis, among others). While these sophistic writers on Homer were deeply preoccupied with language in general as the fundamental tool for the motivation of men, they gave rise to an independent specialized Homeric scholarship by the fourth century. So far as we know, Antimakhos of Kolophon (ca. 400 B.C.) was the first Homer scholar to prepare an edition of the text, including an introduction and glossary (Pfeiffer 1968–76, 1:94).

The second phase of work on Homer may be labeled scientific. It began in the third century in the research institute known as the *Museion* (Μουσεῖον) established in Alexandria by the successors of Alexander the Great. It extended through the Greek and Roman Homer scholars of the Roman Republic and Empire up to the great Homer commentators of the Byzantine Empire in the twelfth century. In Alexandria there were available in the library of the *Museion* both privately and publicly owned Homer manuscripts; these were accessed, collected, ordered, and compared. On this basis was conducted the extremely productive textual, editorial, and explicatory work on which all of Homeric scholarship for fifteen hundred years (ca. 200 B.C.–A.D. 1300) was to feed by either appropriation or polemic and to which it

only seldom added anything of significance. Famous Alexandrian Homer scholars included Aristophanes of Byzantium (third century) and Aristarkhos of Samothrace (second century). During the principate of Augustus, Didymus of Alexandria made a name for himself as an epitomizer of Alexandrian Homer studies. Among Byzantine Homer scholars at least the two most industrious savants may be mentioned: Johannes Tzetzes, for his *Commentary on Homer's Iliad* (1143) and *Homeric Allegories* (1145), and Eustathios (ca. 1110–92), the bishop of Thessalonika, for his voluminous commentaries on the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (these are extant in autograph manuscripts). Real progress in understanding the epics, beyond the insights of the Alexandrians, was scarcely achieved in this fifteen-hundred-year phase; the great service of the epoch was the preservation of the heritage of the original Alexandrian research.

The third phase is the reception of Homer in western Europe (Italy, France, England, Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland) in late medieval and early modern times. It began with Petrarch (1304–74), who, at a time when no one in the West knew Greek, commissioned the first translation of Homer into Latin (by Leonzio Pilato in 1360), and it ended with the establishment of modern Homeric scholarship by Friedrich August Wolf (1759–1824). This phase is distinguished for

1. the learning of the Greek language in the West: Manuel Chrysoloras taught Greek in Florence beginning in 1396 and published the first Greek grammar;
2. the production of printed texts of Homer (the editio princeps in 1488, by Demetrios Chalkondyles in Florence; the first Aldine edition in 1504)—Homer became the common possession of educated people;
3. the devising of a first, independent, modern theory of poetry (as one of the foundations of intellectual reanimation) by reference to Horace, and later to Aristotle, on the basis especially of the comparison of Homer and Vergil (Vida's *Poetica*, 1527; J.C. Scaliger's *Poetice*, 1561; Boileau's *L'Art poétique*, 1674; Gottsched's *Critische Dichtkunst*, 1730; among others);
4. the appropriation of Homer in the form of the production of individual national epics in his footsteps (Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, 1575; Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, 1590–96; Desmaret's *Clovis ou la France chrétienne*, 1657; Milton's *Paradise Lost*, 1667,

and *Paradise Regained*, 1671; Klopstock's *Messias*, 1748–51; among others);

5. the entry onto the scene of historical and philological Homeric criticism and the first formulation of the "Homeric Question" (Bentley's rediscovery of the letter *vau*, or *digamma*, in Homer around 1730; Blackwell's *Enquiry into the Life and Writings of Homer*, 1735; Lessing's *Laocoön*, 1766; Wood's *Essay on the Original Genius of Homer*, 1769; the *Conjectures académiques ou Dissertation sur l'Iliade* of the Abbé d'Aubignac, written by 1664, but not published until 1715 [which argues that Homer never lived and that there is no plan in the *Iliad*]).

In addition, there appeared toward the end of the eighteenth century the very insightful studies of Homer from the vantage point of poetic theory by Herder, Goethe, Schiller, W. von Humboldt, and Friedrich Schlegel.

At the end of this phase came a breakthrough that inaugurated the new era of Homeric scholarship—the discovery and publication of the tenth-century Homer manuscript known as *Venetus A* by de Villoison (first published in 1788): the manuscript's margins and interlinear spaces are filled with textual commentary of every sort that go back to the Alexandrians. This made possible for the first time an extension of knowledge beyond what had been attained already in antiquity. (The most recent and best edition of these so-called A-scholia, together with all the remaining *Iliad* scholia, is Erbse 1969–88.)

The fourth and, for the moment, last phase is that of systematic philological (historical, archaeological, linguistic) textual analysis and literary criticism of Homer's works in connection with comparative epic studies and, most recently, modern narrative theory. It begins with F.A. Wolf's *Prolegomena ad Homerum* (1795), enters a new phase with Milman Parry's Paris dissertation *L'Epithète traditionnelle dans Homère* of 1928, and reaches its newest stage following Michael Ventris' decipherment of the Greek Linear B script in 1952 (see Chadwick 1967). This phase is distinguished for the protracted scholarly struggle that is known even to a wider public by the designation "the Homeric Question" and for the gradual supersession of this struggle in the past two decades or so.

The Homeric Question, after various preliminary stages (d'Aubignac, Heyne), was newly formulated by a professor of philology at Halle—Friedrich August Wolf—in the subsequently famous 1795 prologue to his 1794 edition of Homer (*Prolegomena ad Homerum*). The Question consisted in the uncertainty produced by certain logical incongruities in the narrative of both epics as to whether one or more than one storyteller had composed them. It went overlooked until very recently that this formulation of the Question arose from quite specific historical conditions of knowledge vis-à-vis Homer and literature generally. Therefore, it really ought to be repeatedly reexamined for validity with every significant change, broadening or deepening, of knowledge of literature in general and of Homer in particular. This reexamination did not happen for a long while, so that an independent branch of research—concerned with the Homeric Question—was able to evolve. In the quest to carry off the prize for discernment, scholars still strove industriously to arrive at a solution even when the changing state of literary knowledge and thus of the intellectual landscape had rendered the Question obsolete. The formulation of the Question had itself issued from a conception of literature current in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, according to which a literary work was always, from beginning to end, the creation of a single individual. Already by the mid-nineteenth century, it had been established that a literary work could only very conditionally be seen as the creation of a single individual from beginning to end; in particular, the early, preliterate national epics were the product of the handing on, with very slight changes, of preexisting material rather than of original invention. So actually, the question whether Homer had invented the *Iliad* from verse 1 of book 1 to verse 804 of book 24 had already been superseded. It nonetheless continued to be debated. The result was wholly unprofitable as regards the quest for a "solution"; however, as regards knowledge of the epics themselves, the repeated plowing of the same fields had its benefits.

By the doctrine of individual creativity, the incontestable existence of logical inconsistencies was a definite indication that the *Iliad* (like the *Odyssey*) was a work of several, or at least two, poets. One of these poets was "authentic" (that is, "good"), the others (or other) "secondary" (that is, "inferior"). The complete work could have come about in two ways: (1) later poets had enlarged a primal (or kernel or basic) story by new additions; (2) a single poet had at some point collected together—

or, according to one's aesthetic assessment of the final product, "patched together," "pieced together," "stitched together," "glued together," or "smelted together"—several smaller, self-contained stories. Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff sought a compromise between the two solutions in his 1916 book, *Die Ilias und Homer*: smaller stories in the beginning phase; collection in the middle phase (with Homer as the compiler); further additions in the later phase. The task for Homeric research, according to the champions of this Wolfian line of inquiry, consisted in discriminating, or "analyzing" (ἀναλύειν), the various poets (or "hands") active in the complete work handed down to us. Consequently, this line of inquiry is designated "Analysis," and its proponents "Analysts." The opponents of this "dissolution" of the epics incorporated under the title "Unitarians" ("Unitarianism"). Not wanting to let their unified Homer be eliminated, they sought to argue away the logical inconsistencies discovered by Analysts as only *apparent* inconsistencies.

The argument was fruitless, because, as even the disputants themselves often recognized, it was conducted with subjective criteria on the basis of individual scholars' preconceptions about logic, aesthetics, ethics, and so forth. Put succinctly, each scholar revealed by his treatment of Homer only the proportions of his own standards of logic, aesthetics, ethics, and so forth. This accounts for the often unforgiving sharpness of the debate. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as poetry receded ever further from view.

The impetus to a new conception of the whole issue came in 1928. In that year, Milman Parry verified something that had been foreshadowed in the work of many "outsiders" ever since Herder (Latacz 1979, 25–44)—namely, the realization that the language of the Homeric epics is a rigidly standardized poetic "secondary language." This language had been developed and used by generations of pre-Homeric singers to facilitate the free oral improvisation of hexameter songs before an actually present listening audience, not a reading public. The technique of such improvisation rested on the principle of the repetition of abundantly available metrical and semantic structural elements on all levels of composition from word to scene. Parry (and his collaborator Lord) in their day could most readily observe and study this technique in the still living improvisational epic tradition of modern Yugoslavia. (This tradition lives on even today in annual singer festivals supported by the state until recently as folk culture [Leuze 1986].) Improvisational

epics of the same type could also be recorded in Russia, in many African tribal societies, in Polynesia (*Oralità* 1985), and elsewhere.

These investigations, which are still in progress, have sharpened our awareness of the typical versus the atypical and the conventional versus the individual generally in improvised epics. They have facilitated the discrimination of traditional from nontraditional elements in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* also. The search for the "individual" poet, whom most Homer scholars today equate with Homer, has been relieved of a great deal of ballast. The individual poet, as he revealed himself and continues still to reveal himself, is to be sought less in the mostly normalized sphere of language and style than in outlook and organization of the whole construction (by the use of prefabricated structural elements and patterns). With this conclusion, oral poetry research (the Parryist line of inquiry) supported at the outset the results of two other lines of inquiry that later evolved quite independently of it: (1) neo-unitarian analysis of composition (Schadewaldt 1938; Reinhardt 1961), and (2) so-called neo-Analysis or *Motivforschung* (Pestalozzi 1945; Kakridis 1949; Kullmann 1981, 1991; Clark 1986).

More recently, the initially restrictive standpoint of oral poetry theory has gradually been overcome (Finnegan 1977). By applying the procedures of modern narrative theory to the Homeric epics, scholars have sought to reconcile the difference between oral and written compositional methods. They have paved the way to the insight that Homer, even within the parameters of his oral technique, followed universal norms of narration. In view of this, the very plausible supposition presents itself that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are in fact the well-planned monumental compositions of a single hand (Griffin 1980; Latacz 1981a, 1981b; de Jong 1987; Richardson 1990; Schwinge 1991).

The Homeric Question in its original form no longer exists. It had been possible only under the assumption of the comparability of Homer and Vergil as epic poets at the same stage of poetic technique; that is, the Homeric Question was asked ultimately from the perspective of the poetic technique of Vergil. From the perspective of Homer's (now adequately understood) poetic technique, the Homeric Question must be otherwise formulated. What did Homer do with the oral poetry of his predecessors and contemporary singer colleagues, poetry that he knew and mastered so thoroughly (Latacz 1984b)? In short, just what in Homer is Homeric? The answer to this question as it is now understood is to be sought not in ingenious argumentation but in

patient interpretation. To this end, the findings of all the phases of Homeric scholarship down to the present are of great use.

The translations in this book do not attempt to follow the meter of the original, but where possible they do hint at the rhythm. Insofar as the style of Homer is concerned, all efforts to modernize it seem misguided. The strange must remain strange and should not be assimilated to what is already familiar. Otherwise a broadening of outlook is impossible.

All proper names are transcribed in their original Greek forms, not Latinized (*Akhilleus*, not *Achilles; Kirke*, not *Circe;* and so on). The name of the poet himself (Ὅμηρος) was originally pronounced *Homēros;* the Romans Latinized it to *Homērus*, whence the French made *Homère*, which has become *Homḗr* in German; English, following Latin rules of accentuation, stresses the first syllable (and lengthens its vowel)—*Hṓmer*.

The belligerents in the *Iliad* are always indicated in this book as Trojans and *Akhaians*, never as Trojans and *Greeks*. This is only to adopt Homer's own usage, since Homer speaks of the non-Trojan side exclusively as Akhaians, Danaans, and Argeioi. In this regard, he no doubt adhered to the practice of the old tradition of saga and song. The substitution for these earlier ethnic names of the later ethnic label preferred by inhabitants of Italy—namely, *Greeks* (from Γραικοί, a west Greek tribe)—persists for no better reason than that it easily connects with the associations of a national (or even nationalistic) perspective (in the sense of a struggle between West and East, Europe and Asia, and so on). This notion was quite alien to Homer. He never refers to the inhabitants of Troy as *barbaroi* (βάρβαροι, "foreign speakers"); only the Trojans' allies in Asia Minor are remarked on as belonging to non-Greek-speaking communities (*Il.* 2.805, 4.437 f.). This hints that the saga of the Trojan War was originally conceived not as an international but as a national conflict, possibly between Mycenaean centers. The hypothesis of Carl Blegen, the American excavator of Troy, that the founders of the sixth settlement level of Troy (so-called Troy VI) around 1800 B.C. (a level lasting into the thirteenth century B.C.) may have been *Greeks*, in the context of a general southward migration of Greeks at that time, is not to be dismissed out of hand (Blegen 1963, 145 f.). That the eighth-century audience, in light of the intervening Greek colonization of Asia Minor, will have received the story rather as an *inter*national conflict remains unaffected by Blegen's hypothesis.

Greek literary scholars (φιλόλογοι, *philologoi*) of the third century B.C. divided the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* into twenty-four books and designated them by the twenty-four letters of the Greek alphabet. To simplify printing here, numerals are used in place of the Greek letters.

1

The New Relevance of Homer

The *Iliad* as the First Written Work of Art in the West

Homer is the first poet of the West whose work (or parts of whose work) has come down to us. According to our present state of information, he is at the same time the first author in Western culture whose works (or large segments of them) were created through the use of writing. For four hundred years before Homer, the poems of the Greeks—epic as well as lyric—were exclusively oral compositions. Still earlier, in the first flowering of Greek culture in the second millennium B.C. (the so-called Mycenaean era of Greek history, which had come to an end about four hundred years before Homer), there was certainly writing and poetry, but whether there was also written poetry is not clear on our current evidence. We must, therefore, proceed on the assumption that Homer's epics were the first Greek poems to be written down.

The momentous first transcription of poetry in western civilization occurred around twenty-seven hundred years ago. The exact moment cannot be specified, but it was in all likelihood in the second half of the eighth century B.C. The site was a city on (or an island along) the west coast of Asia Minor (which at that time—and down to 1922—was settled by Greeks). In antiquity, several works were attributed to Homer, among them the *Homeric Hymns*, the *Margites*, the *Batrakhomyomakhia* (*Battle of Frogs and Mice*) and the *Thebaid*. But of all the works ascribed to Homer, only two have a valid claim to be his authentic creations and thus to be the first poems in the West conceived in writing: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. (Some scholars even maintain that only the *Iliad* belongs to him.)

The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are extensive narratives in verse (monumental epics). The *Iliad* is about sixteen thousand hexameter lines, the *Odyssey* about twelve thousand. Both works belong as distinct variants to the genre of heroic poetry. In the context of this sort of poetry, which

is represented in the early eras of many peoples as the praise of the great deeds of a long-ago nobility (Bowra 1952), the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* stand out by reason of two specific functions: (1) in the West, literature—the composition by writing of texts with a higher purpose than mere practicality—begins with them; (2) they introduced an altogether new epoch in the history of Western culture—the epoch of textuality (that is, the regulation of social relations through fixed written texts).

According to our present state of knowledge, the Greeks, in a milieu of commercial interactions, adopted a consonant script from the Phoenicians in the first half of the eighth century, possibly before 776, the traditional beginning of the Olympic victor lists (Johnston 1983, 66; 1990). They improved it to fashion the complete phonemic script that we still use today (Heubeck 1979, 100; 1984, 549; Burkert 1992, 25–29). There immediately came into use the specific text types of everyday activity: merchandise lists, bills, and business correspondence, as well as private transactions of every sort, some in the form of inscriptions (Heubeck 1979, 94 f., 153 f.; 1984, 550). Indeed, writing had been adopted to meet just such practical requirements of communication. This does not mean, however, that all areas of life were instantaneously permeated by texts as a ubiquitous means of communication, record keeping, archiving, administration, education, and so on. Life was not yet "textualized." Though already making use of writing in specific areas, society was not at this point altogether dominated by it.

This slow evolution is quite understandable in terms of historical development: the Greeks at the moment of their adoption of the alphabet had behind them about four hundred years of illiteracy. Their first phase of literacy had broken off between 1200 and 1100 with the collapse of their highly developed system of central administration. The skills of reading and writing not only had been lost but in most areas were forgotten even as a cultural technique. In this long phase of illiteracy, the communicational and behavioral forms of an oral society had again developed (the so-called *condicio humana oralis*, "oral human condition"). These forms could not, of course, vanish instantly upon the revival of writing in the eighth century. First, the new, writing-determined styles of life had to evolve again; the many potential uses of the new medium had to be discovered. This process, contrary to earlier assumptions, seems to have gone on quite continuously (Heubeck

1979, 87) but should still be reckoned at a few decades (Burkert 1992, 27). A whole series of consistent speech forms (including noncommercial ones) typical of oral cultures will certainly have been transferred into written forms already during this period. Examples are the list—with its variants the catalog and the genealogy (Goody 1977, 74 ff.)—the prayer, and the proverb, among others. (It is improbable that Homer himself first brought such speech forms over into writing all at once.) These initially rather isolated usages do not seem, however, to have led to a regular *system* of text use (one of the first forms of intertextuality). This same conclusion can be reached on the basis of the nature of earlier examples of alphabetic writing. There has come down to us from this opening phase of literacy only what were originally marginal variants, mostly graffiti on potsherds (Heubeck 1979, 152). Clearly, in this period, writing was still "primarily an activity relevant only to the actual moment, whose products, in the usual course of things, could and even should disappear as soon as they had served their purpose" (Heubeck 1979, 152). Such a moment-to-moment function of literacy, however, does not yet provide the basis for textuality.

Homer as the Founder of Western Textuality

Textuality is achieved only with the institution of text use for the purposes of preservation: the notation and storing of data, occurrences, judgments, achievements, and so forth, in the form of records, registers, law codes and collections, chronicles, and so on. For these steps in literacy to be perceived, aspired to, and attained requires, psychologically speaking, a "will to recollection" through "compilation and preservation" (Wimmel 1981, 6, 9). This desire to preserve occurs sooner or later in all literate cultures. In the literate Near Eastern and Egyptian cultures, it expressed itself in, among other things, kings' inscriptions, reports of governmental acts, and the recording of old, often poetically framed saga traditions. It cannot be established just how and when it expressed itself for the first time in literate *Greek* culture. However, it seems certain that the *Iliad* and subsequently the *Odyssey* owed their notation in writing precisely to this will to preserve. For at least behind the *Iliad* there clearly exists the desire of the social stratum whose value system the poem portrays and propagates to erect itself a monument (Heubeck 1979, 159; Latacz 1984a). But once this notion of saving the

otherwise transient by fixing it in writing is born and visibly realized, it finds adherents and spreads by the proliferation of texts throughout all areas of social life suited to it: textuality begins.

The *Iliad* (and in its wake the *Odyssey*) played the role of harbingers in this process. This conclusion issues from a reliable indication: the beginning of textuality in early literate cultures can regularly be deduced from a sudden increase in the quantity of texts. This increase in texts is not the same as an (always chronologically preceding) increase in items that document the use of writing; the latter merely indicates the spreading of the mastery of script, that is, the mere facility in writing and reading. In Greece, this ensued already around 750 at the latest ("A cultural explosion has happened here," Burkert 1992, 28). By comparison, the moment of increase in the quantity of texts was apparently reached around 700. From that point forward, the quantity not only of literary texts (Hesiod, Kallinos, Tyrtaios, Arkhilokhos, Alkman [Latacz 1990, 237–39, with fig. 3 on 258]) but also of practical texts, such as statutes and decrees (Hölkeskamp 1992, esp. 97–102), grew by leaps and bounds. Now the period *after* ca. 700 was, by nearly all indications that we have (see chap. 2, "Homer's Work: When and How") demonstrably already post-Iliadic and, somewhat less certainly, post-Odyssean. The inference is that Homer first brought about the actual breakthrough of eighth-century Greek culture to textuality with his extensive body of work (or at least with the *Iliad*).

This significance of Homer—the foundation of Western textuality—secures a high degree of interest in his work today, especially among ethnologists, anthropologists, sociologists, cultural historians, and communication theorists. But even in the actual authorized fraternity of classical philology the first signs of this new interest in Homer are making themselves felt. Walter Wimmel, a philologist at Marburg, writes:

> because the basic themes of our intellectual household have been furnished by the record we associate with the name Homer, "Homer" has achieved a continuous preeminence in the development of the major text [western textuality]. . . . Our literature with all its emanations has remained "Homer-determined" right up to the present. (1981, 23)

Similarly, though with a somewhat different emphasis, the American Hellenist and oral theorist Eric A. Havelock had three years earlier put it as follows:

> [The writing out of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*] was something like a thunder-clap in human history. . . . It constituted an intrusion into culture, with results that proved irreversible. It laid the basis for the destruction of the oral way of life and the oral modes of thought. . . . What set in with the alphabetization of Homer was a process of erosion of "orality," extending over centuries of the European experience. (1978, 3–4)

The importance of the turning point in cultural history that Homer signifies can in fact hardly be overestimated. Since the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the culture of the West has been a writing and text culture, one that conserves in writing all its science, knowledge, and desire, constantly storing layer upon layer. It is thereby protected against forgetfulness but also condemned to supersession. The consequences of this textuality for the evolution, the present condition, and the outlooks of modern society are currently the subject of intensive debate, especially in the United States (Goody and Watt 1963; Havelock 1978, 1986; Wimmel 1981; Goody 1982, 1986, 1987; Ong 1982; Murray 1993, 92–101).

Naturally this newly established relevance of Homer as regards his function in cultural history has also provoked renewed interest in the individuality peculiar to his poetry. The trait profile and the course of development of a literate culture are often predetermined by the character of the text that stands at its beginning. In the case of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, a prior decision distinctively shaped the character of this text. When the Greeks in the eighth century B.C. established (unawares) the particular form of textuality and literary mentality that remains with us today, they did so by an act of choosing. Two literate cultures with more than two thousand years in development offered themselves for emulation—the Near Eastern and the Egyptian; each had produced literary texts of no mean quality. The existence of both literatures was quite well known to the Greeks at this time, as is evidenced in the importing of motifs from them into the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (Burkert 1992, 88–100). The Aramaic and Phoenician variants of these literate cultures in particular must have forced themselves on the attention of

the Greeks. For the Greeks took over from the Phoenicians the very instrument of literature—writing. The extent of Aramaic-Phoenician literature (mostly recorded on leather rolls) was already considerable in the eighth century (Burkert 1992, 30–31). The development of the literary mentality of the West might have followed another course, had the Greeks acted in the same manner as their Etruscan, Roman, and medieval successors later did; all these adopted the literature as well as the script of their respective schoolmasters. They thereby made possible the unified literary mentality of the West from Homer to the literature of the present. The Greeks alone decided otherwise. They isolated the instrument from its products and used it for the creation of a literature of their own. The works that they installed at the beginning of this new line of literary development were not foreign imports; they were the creations of their own genius: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

The Poetic Quality of the Homeric Epics

Of course, only the preconditions for Homer's influence were established by this decision. Homer's epics might have been specific to their time to such an extent that a generation or two later they would no longer have been perceived as relevant and attractive. That even today, twenty-seven hundred years later, one may speak of the "Homer-determined current of our literacy" (Wimmel 1981, 24) shows that just the reverse was true. Homer's influence, right from the start, had rested on his very freedom from direct time conditioning, that is, on time-independent qualities. The history of Homer reception among the Greeks themselves, the Romans, and modern readers is proof of Homer's obvious quality for all times, especially when an attempt was made to deny it. The decision of the Greeks of the eighth century appears less a stroke of luck than an inevitability.

But if the true basis for Homer's enduring power to impress is his poetic quality, then the real "Homeric Question" must address not the genesis of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* but what constitutes this quality. Accordingly, the work as poetic construct and aesthetic phenomenon is situated at the center of this book. The question of the manner in which the work originated is kept in the background. Thus, only that aesthetic attitude according to which Homer created in the beginning will be suggested to the modern reader.

Homer's Nearness

In recent years, much time has been spent, especially in Germany, explaining how distant Homer is from us. The talk was of the "alterity" or "otherness" of Homer, of his "nonrelevance," of the (for us) "last extremity of incomprehensible foreignness" of Homeric society (Wickert-Micknat 1982, 4). Behind such expressions lies above all an overestimation of our inherent uniqueness, which strikes one as absurd against the background of the six hundred thousand years of human history. The period that divides us from Homer amounts to not much more than eighty generations. The foreignness between Homer and ourselves, apparent chiefly in external forms, shrinks away in the face of the obvious constants taken together. Each reader will discover for herself or himself what is immutable in human thoughts, values, and aspirations (perhaps a striving for a high degree of achievement, success, beauty, pleasantness of social forms and fluent expression; perhaps a sense of pride and a consciousness of dignity and self-worth). In the chapters that follow, impressive parallels in the artistic sphere will, I hope, appear: the desire and ability to compose judiciously, to construct logically but not plainly or simplemindedly, to motivate rationally and yet with exquisite discrimination, to delineate complete characters of diverse complexity, to devise conflicts and to resolve them convincingly—in short, to reflect the world in all its characteristics in a work of verbal art and to explain it meaningfully.

Were Homer really foreign to us, then our present world could hardly be recognized in him so consistently as has occurred in the modern reflection of cultural history on the beginnings of our Western identity. The new interest in Homer thus finally reveals itself as a renewed awareness of a substantial proximity of the ancient and the modern, a proximity sometimes lost sight of in talk of irreversible historical alienation. It is a secondary aim of this book to enhance the awareness of this proximity.

2

The Person, Environment, Time, and Work of Homer

The Source Situation: Nothing Authentic

"Homerus caecus fuisse dicitur" [Homer is supposed to have been blind.] This insignificant little example sentence, accepted on faith by generations of students of Latin grammar, contains in a nutshell the crucial qualification that applies to all statements about Homer's person and career: he is *supposed* to have been blind. So even the ancients knew nothing for certain about the greatest of all poets. Modern research has hardly improved matters. Mostly we are dealing with guesswork.

The case of Homer in this regard has sometimes been compared to that of Shakespeare, but the comparison is not apt: some two hundred entirely contemporary original documents provide information about Shakespeare. These range from the entry in the baptismal registry in Stratford-on-Avon to the signature in his own hand on the pages of his will. The dates of his birth and death (1564 and 1616, respectively) have been handed down. Entries in church registries, records of sale and transfer of property, legal documents, letters, and public notices of the performances of Shakespeare's theater company inform the biographer about family relations, property ownership, and occupational circumstances.

About Homer's personal life, by contrast, there exists not a single contemporary document. Even the earliest extant sources that name Homer—references in poets and philosophers of the seventh and sixth centuries B.C.—speak of him as a man of a past era. Moreover, these sources themselves do not stand in a firm chronological order; there existed no absolute, consistent reckoning of time, so one did not date what one wrote. Thus we cannot say precisely when Homer lived. Understandably, this total lack of documentary evidence led to a tendency among nineteenth-century philologists, with their faith in

empirical data, to deny altogether the existence of a historical person Homer. Conjectures were rife: possibly the name *Homer* did not refer to an individual but was a collective designation, which indicated "only in a general way an arranger of old songs or a member of a singers guild" (Christ 1905, 32). The twentieth century has rejected such speculations and reestablished Homer as a historical personage. A mainstay in this rehabilitation of the historical Homer has been the ancient *vitae* (Latin *vita*, "life" or "biography"), despite their problematic value as documentary evidence.

The Homer Legend: A False Track

Seven Greek-language *Lives* of Homer have come down to us. In addition there is a substantial treatise known as the *Agon Homeri et Hesiodi* (*Contest of Homer and Hesiod*). To be sure, these narratives all originated in the era of the Roman Empire, more than five hundred years after Homer. Still, some scholars have thought that rigorous source criticism might enable one to determine the provenance and thus the original source of particular elements in these narratives. In fact, it has proven likely that parts of these texts—for example, the debate over Homer's birthplace—date back to the seventh century B.C. This likelihood has prompted renewed critical examination of the stories. Results have not as yet repaid the efforts expended in this direction. Essentially, there have been two, regarding Homer's name and regarding his home.

As for the name, inscriptional evidence for *Homāros* (an Aeolic dialect variant of *Homēros*) shows that Greek parents could in fact at one time name a male child "Surety" or "Pledge" (terms that comprise Aristotle's explanation of the meaning of *Homeros*). As for the place where the poet lived and worked, the region of Greek settlements along the coast of Asia Minor has emerged as most probable (see, most recently, West 1988, 172; Vogt 1991, 375), especially the zone where Ionian Greek and Aeolian Greek areas abut: Smyrna; Erythrai and the neighboring island of Khios; Phokaia; Kyme and the region of the Hermos River southward from Smyrna, perhaps along the whole coastal strip past Kolophon to Miletos. (This is the present-day area extending from Izmir, near Smyrna, about fifty kilometers north and about 100 kilometers south; from Izmir to the ruins of Kyme is no more than 40 kilometers along the coast road.) The celebrated quarrel of the seven cities, however, is most easily decided in favor of Smyrna. ("Seven

cities contended to be the home of Homer. Even those generally lacking in education know enough to adduce this as the flower of their erudition," Wilamowitz 1916, 367.) This was the conclusion achieved by the sum of the efforts of Ulrich von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, who made lasting contributions in this subcategory of Homeric scholarship also: "thus there can be no doubt of the existence of the poet Homaros or Homeros of Smyrna" (Wilamowitz 1916, 372). For the rest, however, Wilamowitz warned, in this area "confident answers can be given only if they overlook the unsatisfactory premises on which every conclusion rests" (Wilamowitz 1916, 376). Unfortunately, this warning was ignored and the material continued to be worked over.

In 1940, a far more important Homer scholar took an interest in this "chaos of the anecdotal" (Lesky 1967, 690 [3])—namely, Wolfgang Schadewaldt, in his *Legende von Homer dem fahrenden Sänger* ["Legend of Homer the Traveling Singer"], which appeared in 1942 and then reached a large public in a 1959 reprint (Artemis-Verlag). Schadewaldt undertook first of all to arrange the *Lives* in an at least somewhat meaningful totality and to link that reconstruction to the aforementioned *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*. He then translated the whole into German in a style that was consciously legendary. Finally, an appended "Commentary" sifted out the "Reality of the Legend." Schadewaldt's results, compared to those of Wilamowitz, were quite positive. They culminated in the conviction that "the image of Homer in the legend should not be held in contempt" (Schadewaldt 1959a, 61). Accordingly, Schadewaldt was inclined to accept as true not only the name and home but also the whole *manner of life* that the stories attribute to Homer: "If we willingly follow the deeds and sufferings of the blind itinerant, we may still ultimately glimpse the countenance of the poet between the lines of the legend" (Schadewaldt 1959a, 61).

That assessment was overly confident, as we see today. (In other works, furthermore, Schadewaldt himself reached other conclusions; see Schadewaldt 1943.) Whoever follows Schadewaldt in this opinion runs the risk of creating a false image of Homer. The "deeds and sufferings" of the blind itinerant, as more careful consideration quickly shows, cannot represent the experiences of the poet of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey;* the singer of the legend is not the singer of our epics. To recognize this is the essential precondition of a proper evaluation of Homer's location and perspective and, therefore, the prerequisite for a proper determination of the level and status of Homeric epic as

opposed to others. It is necessary, then, to provide an accurate rehearsal of the Homer legend, based here on the *Vita Herodotea* (Herodotean Life [of Homer]) (Wilamowitz 1929).

In Kyme, Melanopos and his wife have a daughter, Kretheïs, who, after her parents' death, grows up with a friend of the family; there, lacking proper supervision, she becomes pregnant by an unnamed man. Thereupon, because of the shame, her angry foster father sends her to a friend in the newly founded city of Smyrna. There, at a feast being held outside town by the river Meles, she brings Homer into the world, naming him Melesigenes, because he was "born at the Meles" River. Clearly discernible here are two of the principal tendencies of the legend: (1) to balance competing claims (if Kyme and Smyrna strove so intransigently for the honor of being Homer's birth city, this could have only one cause: Homer must have been born at both places—to wit, conceived in Kyme, delivered in Smyrna; here we see the razor-sharp logic of the Sophists and ask ourselves for the first time how seriously the inventor meant us to take this material); (2) to lower Homer's social status (his mother was a child of simple folk and grew up in irregular circumstances; his father was unknown and Homer was conceived out of wedlock, his birth rather a casual incident, like "dropping a litter").

The boy Melesigenes is certainly not blind. His mother, being quite destitute, hires out to do spinning and other housework for an unmarried schoolmaster named Phemios (this is the name of the singer at Odysseus' house in Ithaka; here we have a third basic tendency: to represent the poems of Homer as crudely autobiographical). Here the boy becomes an enthusiastic student and seizes the opportunity to learn reading and writing "and all the other arts of the Muses." He does this so well that, after the death of Phemios (who has of course married the boy's unattached mother in the meantime), he is able to take over the school and make it prosper even more. By this time he has become famous (we are not told how), and the merchants and sailors from the harbor of Smyrna often sit with him and listen to him in the evenings.

One day a certain Mentes from Leukas (again a character from the *Odyssey*) persuades him to go to sea with him, while he is still young, "to see lands and cities" (at the beginning of the *Odyssey*, it is said of Odysseus that "he saw the cities of many men" [*Od.* 1.3]). The young man agrees and goes along with him to sea. He "everywhere undertakes investigations" and "certainly makes himself written memoranda about everything." On his return journey from Etruria (!) and Spain,

they come to Ithaka also. There Melesigenes is afflicted by a disease of the eyes, so that Phemios must leave him behind with his friend, the Ithakan Mentor (still another character from the *Odyssey*): "There Melesigenes had the opportunity to make extensive researches and inquiries about Odysseus." One day Mentes comes to take him from Ithaka and he again sails around in the world with him.

Finally, Melesigenes stays in Kolophon, where he finally goes blind. Then he goes back to Smyrna and "takes up the poet's craft." But he soon falls into poverty and decides to move to Kyme. On the way, however, he stops in a settlement near Kyme at a shoemaker's workshop. There, he treats the shoemaker Tykhios (!) to poems about the Theban War and to hymns to the gods, and he wins a great reputation. But soon it goes badly for him again (we are not told why), and he sets out for Kyme. There he presents his poetry in a public hall in the marketplace where the elders spend time; he wins respect and ultimately asks for public maintenance. But the council of the city refuses him after a heated session: "if we choose to support the blind, we will soon have to deal with a great horde of useless people" (in the *Odyssey*, this is the reaction of the suitors to the concern that Penelope, Telemakhos, and Eumaios show for the strange beggar). Melesigenes thereafter bears the name Homeros, because the Kymeans allegedly call blind men by this name (a pure linguistic fabrication).

He curses Kyme and moves again, first to Phokaia, where he once more presents his poems in the public halls, and where he falls into the trap of a certain Thestorides, who offers him room and board in return for all his poems. After he has transcribed all of Homer's dictated poetry, he absconds with the manuscripts to Khios. Homer then journeys to Erythrai and from there with some fishermen to Khios, intending to call Thestorides to account. On Khios, however, he gets lost and ends up on the farm of a goatherd named Glaukos, where he is menaced by dogs (as in the scene of Odysseus with Eumaios in the fourteenth book of the *Odyssey*). Glaukos then leads Homer to his master at Bolissos, where he is engaged as tutor. He composes "light verses" for the two young charges he is to instruct; among these is the *Battle of Frogs and Mice.*

Finally, he moves to the capital city of the island (Thestorides vacates just in time!), opens a school, and teaches interested parties how to compose poetry. He takes a wife and has two daughters by her and also works on the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad* (while still serving as

schoolmaster!). Into the epics, he "inserts" all those who have done him kindness during his travels: Mentes, Mentor, Phemios, the shoemaker Tykhios, and finally—in anticipation, because he would like to visit Athens—even the Athenians. On the journey to Athens, he winters on Samos, where he spends his time among the people of the city, composes a song for some potters, and begs before the houses of the wealthy with a petition song of his own inventing. Finally, he comes to the mainland, where he visits Athens, Corinth, and Argos; he then recites his *Hymn to Apollo* at the great Ionian festival on Delos.

At length, he somehow arrives at the small island of Ios, where he falls ill on the seashore and becomes a "tourist attraction" for the people of the city. One day a few young fishermen come to him there. They pose him and the people standing around him on the beach the so-called Louse Riddle: "What we caught, we left behind; what we missed, we bring along." Thereupon, some say, he supposedly died out of chagrin at not being able to solve the riddle. The townspeople of Ios bury him and set up a tombstone with an epitaph that praises him as "divine Homer."

Obviously, most of this "biography" is woven out of material taken from the epics, especially the *Odyssey*. More important, the author who concocted the whole thing took no trouble to camouflage his intent. The enterprise actually tends toward the grotesque: we have the schoolmaster from Khios giving to the leather-worker who made Aias' shield (*Il.* 7.220) the name of his benefactor in the area of Kyme, Tykhios the shoemaker; and we have the author, in connection with the story of the Louse Riddle, expressing—in the formulaic style of the "poet's *Life*"—his doubts about the factual content in this particular case, with the apparently serious attitude of a scholar.

The whole "tradition" besides contains much that is laughable, as in the verses that are imputed to Homer as sporadic proofs of his ability, which brought Schadewaldt himself to a suspicion of "parody" (Schadewaldt 1959a, 57 f.), though he immediately rejected the notion. Possibly we have at work less of the people's naive delight in storytelling, as Schadewaldt envisages it, and more of the satire of an intelligent wag who is mischievously making fun of the conventional forms of the tradition of a poet's *Life* (and the credulity of the masses). Be that as it may, this is not a seriously meant biography. Such a work could serve for entertainment, not instruction (the term *folk book* has been

applied to it with justice and it has been compared to the *Till Eulenspiegel* [a medieval German tale of a merry prankster]).

This is the essential fact: the image of the poet sketched in the *Lives* has hardly anything in common with the one that confronts us in the epics. The Homer of this legend is a blind, begging singer who hangs around with little people: shoemakers, fishermen, potters, sailors, elderly men in the gathering places of harbor towns. Being a schoolteacher, who teaches reading and writing, he associates above all with children. He is a clever versifier, who amazes members of the middle class and only once, with the Khian in Bolissos, comes in touch with the upper classes, before whose homes he is accustomed to beg for handouts with original short poems. It has been observed quite correctly that all this "stands in peculiar opposition to the sphere in which we envisage the poet of the *Iliad*" (Lesky 1967, 692 [5]).

Whoever constructed this image of the poet—whether or not with parodic intent—had in mind a kind of verse maker who pursued his vocation on a relatively low social stratum. This vocation first emerged when business and trade, the state and the community, were in full flower, and when the culture of the nobility had been pushed to the periphery. It was a time when the middle class was trend setting and the spirit of enterprise counted for more than wealth (witness the founding of schools). This was the occupational situation of the rhapsodes, performing artists comparable to modern concert singers, who, then as now, gained fame by going "on tour"; they presented no original compositions, only reproducing the masterpieces of others. The Homer legend anachronistically depicts the greatest poet of an earlier time as such a rhapsode, since its inventors knew no other type of singer at their time. But they also had to depict the famous creator of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* as improvising, not merely reproducing, his verses. This involved the mixing of two incompatible modes of existence; even Schadewaldt fell afoul of this when he spoke of the "rhapsode Homer" who at the same time is supposed to have been "a much-admired virtuoso" and a "fast-thinking extemporaneous poet" (Schadewaldt 1959a, 65 f.).

On the whole, it is clear that the inventors of the legend had as little authentic information about the historical Homer as we do: "Antiquity knew nothing definite about the life and personality of Homer" (Kirk 1985, 1). The image substituted for the reality takes its complexion from

(1) the epics themselves and (2) the circumstances of a singer's life in the contemporary world. The latter were completely unsuitable. The former were much more appropriate in themselves, but, in their day, the inventors of the legend lacked the means and method to interpret them adequately.

Firm Ground: Homer's Indirect Self-Representation

Modern Homeric scholarship, armed with word indexes and concordances, makes deductions from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* altogether different from those made by the creators of the legendary Homer. In both epics, professional poets appear alongside many other occupation groups. They are called singers, *aoidoi*. It is obvious that, in depicting them, the poet of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* made use of his own experiences as a singer, mostly unconsciously, sometimes consciously. This has long since been recognized by such scholars as Wolfgang Schadewaldt (1943), Hermann Fränkel (1973; originally published in 1951), Walther Marg (1957), and Herwig Maehler (1963). From the manner in which the fictive singers are formed from the real singer, we may deduce a good deal about Homer's existence and self-conception.

Four singers appear in the *Odyssey*. All work at the courts of great lords and thus are court singers, not folksingers. The first is found at the court of Agamemnon in Argos: "the son of Atreus, when he set out for Troy, enjoined him to safeguard his wife" (*Od.* 3.267 f.); this singer thus functions as a confidant and almost as a proxy for the king. The second is found at the court of Menelaos at Sparta: when Menelaos celebrated the marriages of both his daughter and his son on the same day, "there sang among them the inspired singer, playing his lyre" (*Od.* 4.17). The third is found at the court of Alkinoös, the king of the Phaiakians; his name is Demodokos. The fourth is found at the court of Odysseus on Ithaka—namely, Phemios, the son of Terpios (that is, "Speaker," son of "Rejoicer").

All four are obviously well established in the service of a court, enjoy great respect (in the first case, even as a personal confidant of the prince himself), and have nothing whatever to do with shoemakers, potters, fishermen, and their kind. To be sure, the *Odyssey* does make mention once (in book 17) of a singer from another social stratum. It is an instructive case: the suitor Antinoös angrily demands of Eumaios the swineherd why he has brought in this beggar (Odysseus in disguise):

"do we not already have enough vagabonds and troublesome beggar folk hereabouts to spoil our feasting?" Eumaios responds: "Who would willingly invite a stranger into the land, unless he were one of those who work for the good of the whole people (*dēmioergoi*)—a seer or one who heals the sick or a wood-worker or even a blessed singer who can give pleasure with his song!" (*Od.* 17.375–85). Here the singer is grouped together with other "public workers," who place their skill at the disposal of everyone, not only of the court and the wealthy with their special needs. It is, of course, the swineherd who speaks of this type of singer. The poet himself never mentions such singers, nor do men of station in his poems. Concealed behind this is a sense of distance, perhaps not exactly arrogance, but a clear awareness of difference. Of course, that is hardly surprising in the world of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, where differences in achievement and gradations of rank are unfailingly significant. Just as warriors differ one from another, so too singers differ. Naturally, in this world there are competitions not only at the festival contests; in daily life, in every occupation, at every moment, it is a matter of winning out and excelling. Thus, the singer is tested and rated not only at official competitions but above all in the challenge of everyday life.

The testing and rating of singers are shown quite explicitly in the singer scene with Demodokos and the Phaiakians. There, the singer is unexpectedly called into the palace (*Od.* 8.43–45). After he is first permitted to sing a song of his own choosing (8.73–82), he is suddenly presented with two very dissimilar extempore requests: the king asks him for a dancing song (8.250–55), while the guest Odysseus wants a heroic song about the fall of Troy, more specifically, about the wooden horse (8.488–98). To begin with, this reflects the extreme demands on his repertoire to which the poet of this singer scene was accustomed. Demodokos meets both demands with bravura. Thereupon, the poet has Odysseus bestow the following words of praise: "Yes, indeed, it is good to listen to a singer of this sort, like this one, whose gift of song is godlike!" (9.3 f.).

This sharp differentiation of singers of unlike quality ("a singer like this one") is clearly a projection of the *Odyssey* poet's own professional experience. (The poet has proven himself a master singer by his poetic ability to create both such a "star" singer and his songs.) With the obvious localizing of the highest caliber singer at the prince's court, the poet furthermore lets it be known that he assumes a social scale of singers,

within which, for him, "the palace-singer" is the pinnacle. When one refers this projection back to Homer's own reality, it is clear whose horizon of expectations and level of demands he had in mind: those of an upper-class audience. This upper class, which was also the ruling elite, was, right into the fifth century, composed of aristocrats, that is, of people we call the nobility.

Further Clarifications: Homer's Identification with His Foremost Public, the Nobility

That Homer addressed himself to nobles is reflected not only in the criteria by which the creations of his fictional colleagues (and therefore also his own creations) are judged in the epics; it is reflected above all in the general themes of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, in the atmosphere of the events they narrate, and in the thoughts, feelings, and not least the manners of the poetic characters (Hohendahl-Zoetelief 1980). The world of social strata beneath the nobility, down to slaves and laborers, is of course included, but only as a background seen always through the eyes of the nobility. Thus, in the epics, the vulgar, the base, the banal, and the truly sordid are deliberately excluded; where ugliness does appear (for example, in the Thersites episode in *Iliad* 2), it is "dematerialized" through a kind of aesthetic of ugliness. This accords with the goal of this art, which by displaying beauty (in the broad sense of a manifestation of the reality of existence) seeks to captivate the susceptible listener in a pleasurable experience (Marg 1957, 16 ff.). The singer could find an appreciation for such an artistry only among those from whose manner of life it originated and of which it was now an indispensable element—among the nobles. Their freedom from the necessity to earn a living by the sweat of their brow had given them leisure time, which they had long used not only for dancing, games, hunting, and sport, but also for aesthetic delights associated with personal adornments, care of the body, cosmetics, and so on, and for the art of song.

The poet illustrates this link between art and nobility in the *Iliad*, even though the subject matter of the poem—warfare—did not lend itself to the presentation of a singer; in book 9, Akhilleus, the strongest warrior, a member of the highest nobility, and the son of the goddess Thetis, is shown as a singer:

they met [Akhilleus] as he was delighting his mind with the lyre, the clear-sounding,
beautiful, well-wrought lyre; and it had a bridge of silver.
He had chosen it for himself out of the spoils when he had destroyed the city of Eëtion.
With this he was trying to cheer himself, and he sang of the famous deeds of long-ago heroes.

(*Il.* 9.186–89)

The strongest warrior chooses from the booty not the best sword but the lyre; and with it he sings of the same things as the *Iliad* poet (with, of course, a shift in time frame): the famous deeds of long-ago heroes. This would be acceptable only to a public that saw its own ideal of the highest form of self-realization reflected in this combination of warrior and artist.

Homer could not have made clearer the natural link between nobility and heroic song, nor could he have declared more clearly his own membership in this social sphere. The self-identification of the poet of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* with the ideals of the nobility is more indispensable to an appreciation of his poems than most concrete biographical details might be. It makes the irreplicably high quality of the poems comprehensible and can only have originated from a total concentration and a consistent ends-oriented thinking typical of the aristocratic view of life and humankind (Latacz 1984a). This feature of Homer's poems explains in large part the constant fascination that the works have exerted over the ages on the most receptive minds. It also sets a standard for the comparisons commonly made in the past fifty years between Homeric epic and that of other peoples and cultures. While the results of such comparisons have repeatedly shown a startling similarity in the techniques of the singers, a no less startling dissimilarity in quality has also been revealed. The explanation for this dissimilarity lies precisely where it has least been sought: in the disparity of social status among the composers. Serbian coffeehouse singers, modern Greek farmers, shepherds, and water carriers (Kakridis 1971, 114), Russian fishermen (Bowra 1952, 417), and other, similar singers belong to an altogether different social stratum from Homer. They can continue the old heroic sagas in the old techniques of singers; they can, by sound basic training in the craft and by long practice, sometimes even

cast new material in the old style of song. But they can never imbue their productions with the spirit of the aristocratic mode of living. That spirit makes heroic poetry the living self-justification of a social class instead of mere storytelling. To this spirit belongs a type of singer who has much in common with the singing Akhilleus of the *Iliad*, a singer who can depict the milieu and lineaments of the characters he sketches with such flawless consistency and genuineness, because the poet himself so evidently thinks and feels in such terms.

Such mastery is attainable in two ways only: either (1) the poet himself belongs to the aristocracy (this is the oldest situation among the Greeks as among other peoples [Bowra 1952, 410 ff.; Schmid 1929, 59–60; Fränkel 1973, 9 f.]) and devotes himself to poetry on the strength of a special love for the art, a special talent for it, or a special situation in life—many researchers have in fact assumed this for Homer (Nestle 1942; Schadewaldt 1943, 63; Marg 1957, 16, 36); or (2) the poet lives permanently in the milieu of nobles. In support of the first interpretation one may refer to the aristocratic lineage of many post-Homeric ancient Greek poets (for example, Arkhilokhos, Alkaios, Pindar, Aiskhylos). In Homer's case, we lack the means to choose between the two alternatives, but it is clear in general that he did not belong to the category of singer that Wilhelm Schmid—based on the results of research in comparative epic—had characterized in his *History of Greek Literature* as "poor, old, blind, otherwise unemployable itinerant folk," who "carried the ideals of the aristocracy to a broader range of people and . . . yet, in so doing, were less hindered from making use of a certain criticism, because of their distance from the court" (1929, 60). By including Homer in just this category of individual, the Homer legend—as Schmid put it in the same place—proves itself to be false.

Even today the nobility's style of living jumps out with directness and vigor at the reader of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. To be sure, this vividness could only have been achieved by a singer who belonged to a time when that style of living was so dominant and prevalent that it could, so to say, disclose itself in the composition of the singer. Specific styles of life in works of art have an authentic effect only when their reflection proceeds from their time of flowering. Here we have the decisive criterion for the dating of Homer. Such other dating criteria as the mentioning (or not) of particular objects, customs, practices, institutions, stylistic features, and so on in the epics can have only a support-

ing function. The time of Homer's life and creative work is restricted to the era of the fullest flowering of the nobility in Greece.

Based on the results of current archaeological and historical research, this full efflorescence of the Greek aristocracy, as Homer sketches it, took place in the second half of the eighth century B.C. The eighth century is nowadays designated the time of the Greek Renaissance, and with good reason (Hägg 1983b). The parallels with the European Renaissance lie not in matters of economic and social structure but in the general character of an absolute resurgence of prosperity. More than fifty years ago, Wolfgang Schadewaldt, in his daring and trenchant essay "Homer und sein Jahrhundert," [Homer and His Century] (1942; cf. Heubeck 1974, 216), adduced specific phenomena to show how this renewal of prosperity manifested itself in the Greek world. Since that time, many new finds and discoveries have made the picture considerably clearer. The unique dynamism of this era can come to life, of course, only against the background of past developments. Therefore, a historical retrospective is necessary at this point.

An Approach to Homer's Audience: Prosperity, Collapse, and Resurrection of the Greek Aristocracy

The So-Called Mycenaean Era (Second Millennium B.C.)

The Indo-European ethnic group we call Greeks wandered into the Balkan Peninsula around 2000 B.C. It first experienced a period of rapid cultural improvement in the more highly developed Mediterranean environment under the influence of the advanced cultures of Sumerians, Babylonians, Hittites, Egyptians, and Minoan Cretans. Especially along the shores of the east coast of mainland Greece and in the Peloponnesos, this led to small "plain-states" with fortresslike administrative and distribution centers under the authority of a monarch ("king," "prince")—for example, eastern Thessaly with Iolkos; Boiotia with Orkhomenos, Gla, and Thebes; Attika with Athens; Argolis with Mycenae and Tiryns; Lakonia with Amyklai; Messenia with Pylos. In the fifteenth century, a first heyday was reached during a time of expansion that culminated in the conquest, annexation, and occupation of the Minoan royal seat of Knossos and of large parts of Crete. The Greeks took over many elements of Minoan culture, including its writing

system, which they used for the transcription of their own language. This script was the more recent of the two syllabaries that the excavations of Arthur Evans had brought to light on baked-clay tablets found at Knossos in 1900: the so-called Linear B script. After going unread for three thousand years, these tablets were deciphered in 1952 by the British amateur archaeologist Michael Ventris, who identified them as representing the Greek language. By their adoption of the writing system and of the Minoan administrative exactitude that went with it, the Greeks strengthened the central authority, which now held in its hands all the strings of economic life in a given area of jurisdiction. This central authority determined the conditions not only of economic but also of military, religious, and artistic life. All sorts of measures to promote trade, including the construction of a road network (as revealed by recent extensive excavations), facilitated a definite economic boom. In various types of commercial endeavor, especially pottery manufacture, the production of surpluses led to the development of a thriving foreign trade. The export trade necessitated the establishment of entrepôts (emporiums). At many places in the Mediterranean region, these succeeded Minoan installations.

Archaeology has had particular difficulty in the discovery of these settlements (Mellink 1971 is fundamental), not least because the sites have often been inhabited without interruption so that many and various modern accumulations lie over the ancient strata. Nonetheless, some trading settlements on the Aegean islands, Cyprus, Rhodes, and especially the west coast of Asia Minor have already been discovered and evaluated. These include Miletos (from 1400 at the latest), Iasos (north of Bodrum), Müskebi (near Bodrum, ancient name unknown), Bayrakli (Old Smyrna), and Liman Tepe (Klazomenai); there are definite traces also near Ephesos, Kolophon, Knidos, and some other coastal sites. Greek pottery of this period has been found throughout the Mediterranean area and, to some extent, at such inland locations as Sardis, Masat in the contemporary Hittite Empire, and Troy. Imported in exchange were copper and tin, precious metals (gold and silver not only in ingots but also in finished goods, especially jewelry and finery), textiles, spices and aromatics, ivory, and the like.

In the central palaces, this trading resulted not only in the amassing of extraordinary riches but also in a refinement in style of living, as evidenced most impressively in paintings (frescoes) from Knossos, Pylos, and Thera/Santorini. Many indications make it safe to assume that ver-

bal art, too, played its part (see "Heroic Song as Self-Validation"), at least in the form of oral heroic poetry, which was an ancient Indo-European inheritance (Schmitt 1968). Constituting the audience for such art were the members of the royal family and of the ruling elite. We encounter these individuals in various capacities and with various titles in the Linear B tablets; they are a court nobility but also apparently a landed aristocracy—a midlevel ruling class in the regional centers of a given "province." Whether and to what extent the individual monarchies or "principalities" cooperated with one another is impossible to say at present, since up to now, other than in the eastern area, no correspondence of any kind between the centers has been found. (It is likely that nondurable writing materials were used for this purpose.) That contacts existed is clear from the similar writing systems, administrative organizations, and so forth. It is hardly plausible that such ventures as the invasion of the Minoan kingdom of Crete, which at this point still possessed naval dominance in the Aegean, occurred without the formation of an alliance.

This first Greek "advanced civilization" reached its pinnacle in the thirteenth century. It has been designated Mycenaean ever since Schliemann's excavation of Mycenae, under the influence of the *Iliad*, in which Mycenae is the home of Agamemnon, the commander in chief of all the Greek leaders. This designation has been thought inappropriate, and of late it has increasingly been replaced by the term *Akhaian civilization*, especially among English-speaking scholars. The Greeks are called Akhaians (*Akhaioi*) in Homer; Aḫḫijawā appears to be named as their settlement area or at least a part of it in contemporary Hittite texts (Page 1959; Güterbock 1984); *Akhaiwijā* turns up in a Linear B tablet from Knossos as the destination for a delivery of cattle (Gschnitzer 1971, 95; 1983, 153); and *Aqaj(ja)waša* in an Egyptian royal inscription of ca. 1200 designates some three thousand men who make up half of an attack force of "northern warriors" (Lehmann 1985, 50–56; 1991, 112). *Akhaians* is likely to be the label that at least a portion of these early Greeks of the Bronze Age applied to themselves (Latacz 1994a). However, as long as this designation is not universal in English-language scholarship or yet very common in the German-language literature or elsewhere in the international scholarly community, *Mycenaean* must continue to be used.

Internal military conflicts among these Mycenaean principalities certainly occurred during the centuries-long life of this civilization; these

are reflected in later Greek myth, especially in the Theban War saga. Nevertheless, the overriding impression is one of peaceful coexistence. This situation came to a sudden end around 1200. Most of the royal establishments went up in flames. Since the destruction was more or less simultaneous everywhere, an invasion by outsiders must be assumed.

The identity of these invaders and destroyers is, however, still unknown, despite intensive research. More recent researchers no longer regard the so-called Dorian migration as the primary cause of the catastrophe of ca. 1200. (The migration was a sudden incursion of a culturally backward ethnic Greek subgroup, the Dorians, who had previously remained in the northern part of the Balkan Peninsula.) There was a striking synchronicity of destruction at Mycenaean sites, at widely dispersed centers of civilization outside the Greek world—such as Hattušas, capital of the Hittite Empire, and Ugarit, chief site of Hittite vassal principalities in the area of present-day Syria—at many centers in the Levant, and in Canaan as well as on Cyprus. This suggests a vast migratory movement, motivated by the extraordinary affluence of the civilizations of the eastern Mediterranean region; possibly, as the migrating people moved through a region, a variety of ethnic elements (including the Dorians in the Balkan area) traveled with them. The well-known historical phenomenon of "migration avalanche" has been cited in this connection (Dobesch 1983, 60). Contemporary Egyptian texts speak of a dangerous threat by the "Sea-Peoples," to whom they also ascribe the destruction of Hattušas. The Egyptians of the heartland itself were able to repulse the attackers, who arrived in two great waves before and after 1200. But they lost the Levant (to the Philistines, hence the later name *Palestine*) and suffered a considerable weakening. Although the Egyptian sources include some ten different names of individual groups under the general term "Sea-Peoples," a clear identification of these ethnic groups and determination of their origins remains elusive. In the present state of scholarly research, it is a plausible assumption that a more or less backward people from central Europe set the migration in motion. It is increasingly obvious that ethnic groups from the Italian Peninsula (especially in the area of the Adriatic) as well as (by sea) from Sardinia participated in the migration (Deger-Jalkotzy 1983a; Lehmann 1983, 1991); the people called Serds are clearly to be connected with the Sards—this would better account for the Egyptian terms "Sea-Peoples," "People of the Sea," and "People

of the Islands"; Linear B texts from Pylos also speak of a threat by sea (Hiller and Panagl 1976, 117 ff.).

Particulars of the development, course, duration, numerical size, striking power, manner of attack, and goals of the whole movement are still unclear. With respect to the part of the migration that affected Greece, we may have a case of a relatively quick, temporary devastation by a foreign horde in whose wake a northern Greek ethnic group moved into the Mycenaean homelands, or perhaps the northern Greeks, simply stimulated by the movement, flocked southward more or less on their own initiative. In any case, no settlement of a foreign people took place on Greek soil, and the continuity of Greek settlement was not interrupted.

Also scarcely apparent as yet are the internal relations of the Mycenaean principalities at the time of this occurrence. They suffered a total military defeat despite (on the evidence of Linear B texts) the enlargement of their military and naval forces and defensive installations in general, including a considerable strengthening of the fortifications of the Mycenaean citadels toward the end of the thirteenth century. This seems to presuppose a prior weakening, whose causes we cannot discern at present. Was it a case of internal strife or one of foreign expeditions that drained their strength? In our present state of knowledge, we can only conclude that around 1200 a concerted attack by "Sea Peoples" occurred over all the eastern Mediterranean civilizations and a portion of their hinterlands in Asia Minor. This thoroughly upset the relative stability of the region and so convulsed its international political and economic relations within a comparatively brief time that we must speak of the end of an entire era of cultural development.

The So-Called Dark Ages: (ca. 1200–800 B.C.)

For Greek, as well as for Hittite, civilization the effects of the catastrophe of ca. 1200 were especially far-reaching. The destruction of the palaces, which represented the nerve centers of a finely exfoliated system of operations, caused a sudden rupture in the highly evolved life cycle in the affected areas. This rupture was final: the palaces were never rebuilt (the ruins were first excavated in modern times). This complete abandonment of the palaces and the regions under their control was in sharp contrast to the reconstruction that usually occurred in the Mediterranean area after periods of occupation or natural disasters.

This clearly points to a dramatic decimation through death and expulsion of the palace dwellers in particular, that is, of the Mycenaean ruling elite.

In fact, archaeology has demonstrated the existence in the twelfth century of a rapidly increasing number of Mycenaean foundations (refugee settlements) outside the homeland, especially on Cyprus and on the west coast of Asia Minor, where there had already been Mycenaean footholds. That Athens, the only center remaining undestroyed, was a refuge would also have to be accepted on the basis of the historical probabilities of expulsion and flight, even if later Greek texts reported nothing about it. Other places of refuge were the mountains of Arkadia, the Ionian islands (Kephallenia, Zakynthos), and certain islands of the Cyclades (for example, Naxos). Future excavations will hopefully shed more light on this matter. In no instance, however, do the new settlements appear to have led to a restitution of the old structures. Instead, they were evidently founded by relatively small groups of refugees, who of course lacked in their new settlement areas the large-scale operational basis of the homeland.

In the homeland, the loss of the upper level of the ruling elite and the cessation of central planning led to a far-reaching disintegration of overall operational coherence and thereby to the separation and isolation of population elements on the regional and local levels. There were displacements owing to flight, immigration, emigration, and assimilation. In addition there was clearly a considerable decline in population generally as a consequence of defensive struggles and associated disturbances. All these things undoubtedly led to an immediate, severe deterioration in the scale and quality of economic life. A highly efficient, surplus-producing society became for a long period a merely primitive, self-reproducing society. The old conditions of land possession had been nullified owing to the death, flight, or expulsion of earlier owners, especially the upper aristocracy, who, to judge from the Linear B texts, had owned a high proportion of the land. Also, the population had shrunk too drastically for the now masterless estates to be cultivated to the same extent and degree as in earlier times. For these reasons, the agrarian economy apparently gave way to a pastoral economy. (This explains the retention of Mycenaean place-names, themselves often taken over from the pre-Greek population, even in some areas where there now no longer were settlements [Sarkady 1975, 121;

followed by Snodgrass 1980, 35]). The very distinctive crafts and decorative arts of Mycenaean times, designed to satisfy the tastes chiefly of landed aristocrats, now decayed or adapted themselves to new circumstances. In pottery, for example, the simple forms of the Geometric style took the place of the more extravagant earlier designs. Metallurgists responded to the cessation of imports of raw materials—copper and tin—and to the closing of armament- and chariot-producing facilities by opening more and more sources of the new raw material—iron. This brought the transition from the Bronze to the Iron Age also in Greece. All in all, then, the dominant image of the postcatastrophe era is one of a general social retrogression.

Along with the central governments, there disappeared, at least in the homeland, the most important administrative tool of those governments—writing (this was not the case on Cyprus, as is shown by the new find of a late eleventh-century specimen of Greek writing at Kouklia [Karageorghis 1980]). Since the archaeological finds bearing on this issue were relatively scant, the lines of development of the so-called sub-Mycenaean and proto-Geometric era long remained in darkness for modern researchers. Consequently, this period, some three hundred to four hundred years in duration, was given the designation "Dark Ages" (Tsountas and Manatt 1897, 363 ff.) Originally, this was meant as a subjective judgment—they were "dark" *for us;* but many historians, philologists, and archaeologists right up to the present have often used the term in an objective sense. They have used the label as if the Greeks, throughout their entire settlement area in these centuries, were hopelessly impoverished and benighted, if not extinct. Contributing to the prevalence of this misconception was an inexact formulation of the so-called problem of continuity. Thus, Oswyn Murray, even in 1993, wrote: "the result of the collapse of Mycenaean culture was a dark age, lasting for some three hundred years. Discontinuity with the past was virtually complete" (8). It would perhaps be more correct to speak, with Snodgrass, of a "profound economic, social and demographic recession" (1980, 31), because continuity is obviously the salient fact of the development. This is true of the basic configurations of ethnicity, language, settlement, sustenance, and so on, as well as in such spheres of higher culture as religion, where we find the same gods, and mythology, where we find the same subject matter, and very likely also in verbal artistry, where we find the same forms and techniques and the same

fundamental attitudes regarding values and reality. Rather than a matter of continuity versus discontinuity, the question is, How great is the degree of discontinuity in the elements of high culture?

Even assuming this more precise reformulation of the question, we find that spectacular archaeological finds of the past few years clearly show that answers given in the past have proceeded from a false sense of certainty and have been much too negative in character. In 1980, the Cambridge archaeologist Anthony Snodgrass, discussing the meagerness of the Greek settlements in the "Dark Ages," adduced as his prime example Lefkandi on Euboia. Based on the number of grave sites then known, he estimated the average number of inhabitants of Lefkandi between 1000 and 900 B.C. at some fifteen to twenty-five persons (Snodgrass 1980, 18). In the same year, at the very same site, excavators revealed a magnificent tomb of a lord in a monumental apsidal structure 45 meters by 10 meters in area with an enclosing colonnade, all clearly datable to between 1000 and 950 B.C. There were two graves. One held the skeletons of four horses, the other that of a woman adorned with gold and faience ornaments; beside her was the funerary urn of the cremated lord, a bronze amphora graced with pictorial decoration—a lion hunt. The numerous grave-gifts included pieces evidently imported from the Near East, Egypt, and Cyprus (Winter 1982). Judgments about Lefkandi and its significance had to be radically revised overnight: "there must have commenced in the later eleventh century a prosperity that for the next two centuries made Lefkandi, together with Athens, the richest state in Greece"; and, more to the point for us, "there existed here a princely court where destitution did not prevail and where merchants from the Levant were welcomed guests" (Blome 1984, 9, 12; see also 1991). This shed new light also on the importance of Euboia in the centuries between the Mycenaean collapse and the cultural resurgence of Greece: "in the tenth and ninth centuries, luxury goods from the Near East flowed into Euboia to an extent we could hardly have imagined during the seemingly 'dark ages'" (Blome 1984, 10; see also 1991; Latacz 1994a; Antonaccio, forthcoming).

Wolfgang Schadewaldt, already in 1942, brought about a general awareness of the preeminent role that Euboia, with its two principal ports, Khalkis and Eretria, played in the *eighth* century; he noted among other things its sea power and commercial influence in the hinterland of Boiotia, its founding of the first Greek colonies in Italy and Sicily, and its transmission of the alphabet to the Etruscans, the Romans, and

thereby to ourselves. That this prominent role extends back into the eleventh century was first revealed in the excavations of 1979/80. We had actually known nothing about Lefkandi.

It appears, as the finds of the next few years disclosed, that when we spoke of the "Dark Ages," we did not know what we were talking about. In 1982, the ephor of Crete and director of the Herakleion Museum, Professor Jannis Sakellarakis, made a discovery that could decisively alter our image of the era between 1200 and 800 in the Greek motherland. In the grotto of Zeus, famous in myth, on the edge of the Lassithi Plateau on Crete, with the aid of modern, high-intensity floodlights, he found in previously untouched strata thousands of votive offerings of all types and materials from all parts of the Greek world. Some 70 percent of the objects found in the campaigns of 1982 and 1983 derive from the period from 1100 to 725. Comparison of these objects with analogous contemporary items found previously on the Greek mainland will permit us to infer, among other things, the pilgrims' places of origin and thereby to provide data regarding distribution of population, commercial traffic between the mainland and Crete, the level of artistry on the mainland, and so forth (Winter 1984; Stock 1984; Sakellarakis 1988; and personal conversation with Professor Sakellarakis).

These and numerous other, less sensational but still informative discoveries (on the mainland as well, especially in Phokis, Macedonia, and Thrace), justify the hope that the "Dark Ages" will in the foreseeable future be so thoroughly illuminated that the whole concept may be consigned to the annals of the history of scholarship (Deger-Jalkotzy 1991; Latacz 1994a). At this point, it has been confirmed that Greece in the period between the collapse of its first (Mycenaean) efflorescence and the beginning of its second cannot possibly have been impoverished to the shattering degree previously supposed. As Lefkandi now shows, already by 1000 (if not before) in many sites in the motherland, a new prosperity, concentrated in the hands of aristocrats, had already been attained. This has lent welcome support to Sarkady's 1975 reconstruction (followed in part by Snodgrass 1980) of developments in the interval between 1200 and 800: after a temporary regression to simpler economic and social conditions, there was a gradual recuperation, driven by the Greek spirit of enterprise and spearheaded above all by the surviving members of the old aristocratic class. A lively sense of past greatness will have been a final stimulus. After a transitional

period of leveling in the distribution of wealth there was a renewal of the diversification of property ownership. However, there was no concomitant restoration of an overall royal authority, with easily explained exceptions in certain districts that for various reasons had experienced no sudden interruption in development, such as Athens and later the new Dorian foundation of Sparta. Instead, there was a desultory evolution of limited local aristocracies that furnished leadership in war and in peace and derived their authority from family lineage and property ownership. Replacing the absolute decision-making power of the earlier supraregional lord (*wanax*) was a kind of participatory administration, with a council of nobles and a communal assembly. After a temporary regression to isolated, nomadic modes of existence during the chaotic times of war and flight, there was a preference for resuming old customs by grouping homes together in relatively close proximity. The designation for these communities was "polis," a term encountered in related forms already in Linear B texts (cf. Mycenaean and Homeric πτόλις). Of course, the word at first carried only the superficial meaning "place of habitation." The meaning "city-state" evolved only later. The new foundations were sometimes situated on the remains of prewar settlements, but they were more frequently on new sites.

Using archaeological evidence, reconstructions like these attempt to bridge the gaps between well-known situation "A" (cultural heyday and collapse around 1200 B.C.) and well-known situation "B" (reflowering of culture in the eighth and seventh centuries) by a complex method of deduction, sometimes drawing on analogies from the history of other nations, in a manner that satisfies our desire for logical argument and synthesis. Of course treatments of particular developments in various regions of Greece will proceed differently depending on the current state of the data (Lehmann 1985, 62–66), and certain significant aspects may be overlooked, overemphasized, or misconstrued. So long as no outright contradictory evidence comes to light and, as in the case of Lefkandi, archaeology even provides corroboration, one must proceed from these reconstructions. In this regard, the position of the aristocracy is especially important for our purposes.

Nearly all attempts at reconstruction in recent scholarship assign the aristocracy a critical role in the recovery of Greece. In fact we see aristocrats in key positions in both the Mycenaean social system and, later, that of the eighth and seventh centuries. And now an unexpected find like the burial at Lefkandi demonstrates the aristocracy's key position

also between these two eras in the tenth century. It is unlikely that other social forces could have dislodged it from its leading role at any time between 1200 and 800 B.C. The forms of dominance within which it played this leading role during the time of anarchy and migration will have varied from place to place and case to case. There are hints that in some areas of Greece aristocrats were "overlords," whose supremacy was hereditary (somewhat as in the case of Odysseus on Ithaka in the *Odyssey*). Elsewhere, and possibly in a different stage of development, the aristocrats seem early on to have exercised a collective authority, which tolerated only a primus inter pares (like Alkinoös in the *Odyssey*'s description of Phaiakian political structures, though the episode is folkloric). There may have been a great abundance of manifestations and there are obvious distortions of actual conditions in the poetic renditions found in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Nonetheless, it remains clear that the aristocracy was the leading power (Deger 1970). This role is reflected also in the Greek tradition regarding the first (post-Mycenaean) colonization of the coastal areas of Asia Minor. According to the tradition, the new settlements both of the Ionian coastal region and offshore islands of Khios and Samos and of the Aeolian region, from the Kaïkos Plain in the north to the Gulf of Smyrna in the south (the offshore island of Lesbos constitutes a special case), were led by the sons or relatives of kings. Excavations have placed the beginning of these undertakings in the mid-eleventh century (Cook 1975). The names and genealogies of the individual expedition leaders may be uncertain, but that members of the aristocracy led these endeavors is suggested not only by the nature of the case but also by analogy with the second phase of Greek colonization, during the eighth and seventh centuries.

As the theory in fashion for a time—that the Greeks of the period after the catastrophe of ca. 1200 began at point-zero and gradually progressed from there—loses ground (see, for example, Sarkady 1975, 113; Gschnitzer 1981, 26), the pertinent question now becomes, Who were the actual carriers of tradition? The answer—the aristocrats—cannot be in doubt (Latacz 1994a). In many cases, there must have been continuity in family history, not only where excavations indicate it (for example, at Salamis on Cyprus), but precisely where they will never indicate it, because there was no continuous habitation at one location. It was precisely in the anarchy and migrations of the postcatastrophe period that the members of the old aristocracy proved their worth. That

the word βασιλεύς (*basileus;* Mycenaean *qa-si-re-u*), which had been the functional designation of the representative of central authority in individual Mycenaean sites, survived as the designation of the leading personalities in the ranks of "the best" or "nobles" (*aristoi, esthloi*), both in epic poetry and in reality, cannot be a matter of chance. The reuse of this term in most cases likely resulted from the identity of the persons rather than from any "logical choice" (Deger 1970, 179). Once again, we conclude that the interruption of the Mycenaean palace culture involved the ruin of administrative structures, not genocide. The Greeks survived the era of catastrophe. We would be very mistaken to assume that specifically the aristocratic elite was totally exterminated, especially in view of the relatively large area of Greece and the inaccessibility of many of its districts. Add to this the geographical knowledge and seafaring expertise of the longtime inhabitants, who undertook demonstrably successful emigrations even to places as distant as Cyprus. Also, we should not underestimate the tenacious cohesion of just this ruling elite across local and regional boundaries (Antonaccio, forthcoming). That a rich nobleman was buried around 1000 B.C. in Lefkandi with costly grave-gifts imported from Cyprus proves that the old connections—even by sea—had never been forgotten. One must presume that the seafaring of which the Greeks had been masters for centuries prior to the catastrophe was never altogether disrupted (Kurt 1979).

The importance of the aristocracy, the proven carrier of continuity and tradition, was doubtless considerably increased by its leadership of the colonization of the coast of Asia Minor. This effort amounted to the foundation of a "New Greece." (As usual in such undertakings, names from the old homeland were transferred to the new.) Based on what we know so far, this colonization was not the action of desperadoes but clearly a well-planned operation, requiring considerable matériel and intelligent preparations. If the colonists' ultimate motivation remains as yet undetermined, the immediate goal was clearly land acquisition and an increase of wealth. In large measure, this goal appears to have been reached. The cities that the colonists founded or refounded—Ephesos, Miletos, Kolophon, Klazomenai, Erythrai, Myus, and Priene, among others, as well as the settlements on the islands of Samos and Khios—were soon the richest in Greece. In Kolophon there even came about the extraordinary circumstance that, in the eighth century, the "wealthy and noble" (that is, the aristocrats) constituted a majority of

the population (as Aristotle noted even in the fourth century, at *Politics* 1290b15). This wealth was acquired through agriculture. The fertility of the land and the quantity of possessions and estates, which were probably cultivated with the help of the indigenous population, around 700 B.C. led to great surpluses, especially of wine (Khios and Samos) and olive oil (which acquired new importance as lamp fuel, in place of the old pine-torches and brands). The resulting export trade added a new dimension to pottery manufacturing in the sense of a package-production industry (excavators have spoken of "fragments of standard containers"; see Cook 1975, 801). Ship building, the expansion of harbor installations, the construction of associated buildings, and so on stimulated skilled crafts and professions (see in general Rostovtzeff 1930, 189–204).

The engine of this development was the aristocracy. It was an immigrant, not an autochthonous, nobility. That it had set out from Athens is attested in later sources that see in the first colonists the sons of the Athenian King Kodros (the historicity of this origin from the king is not relevant to our inquiry). The same origin is also suggested by close linguistic affinities: one speaks today of an Ionic-Attic dialect. Thucydides (1.6.3) states, toward the end of the fifth century, that there was a uniformity in the entire manner of living (including dress and hair style) among the "well-to-do" (εὐδαίμονες), owing to their "common ancestry" (κατὰ τὸ ξυγγενές). Athens was, as mentioned, the only undamaged principality remaining from the period prior to the catastrophe of ca. 1200, and like other undamaged or reconstructed Mycenaean centers (Cyprus, Naxos, possibly Lesbos), it served as a place of refuge for the Mycenaean upper class. Later eras of Greek history recalled that the refugees had come chiefly from the center at Pylos. A historical fact may underlie this reminiscence: at any rate the Pylian origin of certain Ionian nobles can hardly be doubted (Heubeck 1983, 1984). There were also connections early on from Athens to nearby Euboia, which, as we know from excavations, was likewise already settled in the Mycenaean era. After the catastrophe, new settlers also seem to have arrived there; in at least one case—Lefkandi—we now have confirmation of this (Themelis 1983, 152). These new arrivals were, from the beginning, in close contact with Cyprus, known to us as the other great refuge for Mycenaean displaced persons. It is improbable that this was a contact between peoples originally unfamiliar with each other. Furthermore, already around 1000, the pottery of Lefkandi shows such close connec-

tions with Thessaly, Boiotia (Delphi, Thebes), and Naxos that one of the excavators has spoken of a *koine* (Themelis 1983, 154). Already by 1000 at Lefkandi, a nobleman was buried with a splendor that previously seemed unthinkable. About fifty years earlier the resources seem to have been available in Athens to carry out so expensive an endeavor as the new settlement of an entire coastal area in Asia Minor.

The combination of all these individual data leads to the conclusion that the Greek aristocracy retained unbroken the will to survive, a spirit of enterprise, and the pluck to make a new beginning. These qualities led to the establishment of a new and differently structured cultural unity in eastern Greece, from Thessaly in the north through Boiotia, Euboia, and Attika, and farther across the Cyclades to Cyprus in the south, and across the Anatolian coastal islands Lesbos, Khios, and Samos to the newly settled areas of the north and west-central coasts of Asia Minor. Strictly excluded from this cultural unity were a people who had first immigrated *after* the catastrophe and who thus shared no part of the glorious past—the Dorians. They were intruders, misfits. The Peloponnesos, now the land of the Dorians, remained, in the idealizations of the nobles of eastern Greece, the land of their forefathers, of princes residing in splendor at Argos, Mycenae, Sparta, and Pylos. In their hearts, they could not accept the present reality, which was far different.

Heroic Song as Self-Validation

Such is the attitude toward past and present that we see reflected in Greek epic. Its language remained free from Doric influence over the centuries up to Homer's time. Its basis is Ionic, with strong traces of Aeolic. Its subject matter is the momentous deeds of ancestors—exclusively Ionian and Aeolian aristocrats—in that great era *before* the catastrophe of ca. 1200. The catastrophe itself was ignored; being a document of defeat, it was an unwelcome topic, as was the period that followed, when the upstarts from the north inundated the land of the forefathers. The singer was allowed at most to hint at a discussion of this. Our *Iliad* contains a reflection of it: at 4.52 ff., Hera offers Zeus, as recompense for the destruction of Troy that she is demanding, the destruction of "Argos and Sparta and Mycenae of the wide ways"—and Zeus accepts. This is a final reflex of an interpretation based on the principle of compensatory justice. The name *Dorian* appears only once

in the epics, clearly inadvertently, in a geographical detail in one of Odysseus' false stories (*Od.* 19.177). The singer should give delight and not spoil the mood ("and at the stately feast, there will be no pleasure if vile things prevail," *Il.* 1.575).

That is the mentality of an aristocracy that not only rediscovers itself in its heroic poetry but also wishes to feel validated and inspired by it. We must not underestimate the hortatory power of heroic poetry, whose sole theme is essentially achievement and honor, quite apart from its function as entertainment. This power is greatest in that type of epic poetry that C.M. Bowra, in his panoramic *Heroic Poetry*, placed at the top of the scale as "aristocratic" heroic poetry, above both "primitive" and "proletarian" heroic poetry, with Homer as the high point (1952, 476–81). It has rightly been stressed that such poetry must have accompanied and stimulated the Greek nobility as it recovered from the catastrophe and constructed a new aristocratic culture (Ritoók 1975). Milman Parry's theory of oral poetry and associated research in comparative epic have taught us that in language and meter, in form and content, Homer's epics had a centuries-long history as a genre. Heroic epics of the same form and the same or similar content (though not of the same magnitude and level of perfection) no doubt had been recited in the citadels of nobles on Euboia around 1000 (West 1988, 166 f.; Latacz 1994a, 361). (About 700, Hesiod, the second Greek epic poet whose works have survived, reports that he had won a tripod in a "contest" held at Khalkis on Euboia to honor the deceased Amphidamas, "skilled in warfare" [*Works and Days* 654 f.]; similar contests could have been held in honor of that great lord who was buried around 1000 at Lefkandi [Blome 1984, 21].) However, the history of heroic epic goes back further still: "there is every likelihood that the epic singer had an established place in Mycenaean strongholds" (Lesky 1967, 695); "almost everyone accepts that the Greek epic tradition goes back at least to late Mycenaean times" (West 1988, 151).

Also indicative of an early provenance for heroic epic was the fact that many elements contained even in *our* (very late) examples of the genre—the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*—refer back to the era before the catastrophe of ca. 1200; and these references were made at a time when events prior to the catastrophe could have been known only very sketchily (Nilsson 1950). When this era became better understood, with further excavations (at Pylos, Thera/Akrotiri, Cyprus) and with the recovery of its language (Linear B was deciphered in 1952), the evidence

accumulated for the existence of Greek heroic epic long before the fall of the Mycenaean centers. But the question could not be decided on the basis of external evidence, such as the so-called singer fresco from Pylos, which depicts a man dressed as a "musician," sitting on a rock and playing a large five-stringed lyre. Nor could it be decided on the strength of material objects and practices that were no longer produced or current after the catastrophe but that appear in our epics and are verified archaeologically for the time before the catastrophe. Examples are the so-called Nestor's cup, boar's-tusk helmets, metal-inlay work, man-sized convex rectangle shields, the military use of chariots, and so on (Webster 1958, 168–74; Kirk 1960; Lesky 1967, 744 ff. [58 ff.]). It is very likely that all such objects and practices were in fact current only before the catastrophe and must therefore have arrived in the poems of Homer from that time. But they could either have been transmitted in nonpoetic narratives from generation to generation or—in the case of objects—have been preserved as family heirlooms up to Homer's day.

Homer's mentioning of these things proves only that he is singing about the time before the catastrophe; they do not prove that there was at that time also a *poetry* of the same type as Homer's. This would be verified only if we were to find analogous texts, even a solitary heroic hexameter verse. Unfortunately, archaeology has not yet provided such a find. The Mycenaean Linear B texts inscribed on the tablets at the palaces are (so far) devoted exclusively to administrative and technical matters; here, too, we have only hints, of which a large number have been investigated. Scholars have discovered a series of linguistic phenomena in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* that were very probably current only in Mycenaean Greek and thereafter vanished from normal speech. These must have been transmitted to Homer via a linguistic medium that preserved archaic forms under stylistic constraints (cf. biblical language in German, which has continually led in recent times to "modernized Bibles"). In the nature of things, this linguistic medium can only have been epic poetry (Lesky 1967, 712 ff. [26 ff.]; West 1988, 156–59).

An instructive example is the famous bronze sword with silver nails on its hilt—in Homer, the φάσγανον ἀργυρόηλον (*phasganon argyroēlon*). Archaeology up to now has placed a weapon of such description only in the fifteenth century and then not again until the seventh. The word *phasganon* appears on a (fifteenth-century) Linear B tablet from Knossos as an everyday designation of a weapon. In post-Ho-

meric Greek literature it appears only as a poetic word, naturally in keeping with Homeric usage. The term for sword in common use then was *xiphos.* This can only mean that after the fifteenth century the weapon was no longer in use and therefore that the term designating it was no longer employed either. But the word combination *phasganon argyroēlon* comprises a metrical unit especially suited to the end of a hexameter line, and in fact, in both its Homeric occurrences, it stands at precisely this position in the verse (*Il.* 14.405, 23.807). The obvious conclusion is that we have here "a tiny piece of Mycenaean poetry" (Webster 1958, 92), which at least since the fifteenth century survived as a repeatedly used verse ending right up to Homer's time, even though the object so designated had long since passed out of use and, as a result, was unmentioned in normal language, apart from poetry.

The assumption of a tradition of Greek heroic poetry in the time of the first flowering of Greek culture, that is, long before the catastrophe of ca. 1200, recommends itself on many other grounds. One of the most telling is the linguistic similarity of expressions and concepts to those found in the poetries of other individual Indo-European languages (Old Indic, Old Persian, Slavic, Hittite, Italic). This hints at the presence of an "Indo-European poetic language" prior to the dispersal of the several language groups (Schmitt 1967, 1968; Risch 1969, 324; West 1988, 152–56). From the standpoint of the history of conditions *within* Greek culture, one final question has to be asked: How are we to explain the emergence of epic singers and the creation of a poetry highly distinctive in meter, style, and themes depicting long past events, legendary figures, remote objects, and so on, in geographically widely separated sites, precisely at a time of very severe recession? It is easier to believe in the creation and cultivation of an aristocratic, polished literary artistry, analogous to other, contemporary artistic productions, *prior* to the catastrophe, for it was then that "in the vicinity of the vast palaces a refined courtly society emerged and rose above the common folk" (Gschnitzer 1981, 18), not in the first decades *after* the catastrophe, when the society was thrown back to the level of bare subsistence.

Thus much suggests that the poetry of "the famous deeds of men" (κλέα ἀνδρῶν), as Akhilleus sings it to the accompaniment of his lyre in the *Iliad*, belonged among the small treasures that the Greek aristocracy had saved from the catastrophe and to which it clung with special affection. As long as external conditions were miserable, however, the

singer's old heroic songs only made his audience bitterly aware of the immense decline it had undergone, and epic poetry—subsisting only on memories—could merely repeat its familiar themes. It was able to take flight again only after the style of life that sustained it had once more become a reality.

The Renaissance of the Eighth Century

This stage appears to have been reached in Ionia in Asia Minor in the eighth century. On the basis of our reconstruction of general historical developments, let us grant that the new settlers had brought heroic song over from their old homeland to the new. The recently founded agricultural settlements enjoyed relative tranquillity in a colonial area of great extent and affluence. In this context, the arts and their patrons could proceed, as it were, hand in hand toward new prosperity. Early on, the wealth of the Ionians was well known throughout Greece. The author of the *Hymn to Delian Apollo* speaks of it in the seventh century (151–52): "a man might think that they were immortal and ageless were he to come among the Ionians when they gather together" (that is, for the athletic and musical games in honor of Apollo at Delos). Of course, the poet means by "Ionians" not only those of Asia Minor but also those of Attika, Euboia, the Cycladic islands, and so on; still, the communities in Asia Minor embraced the largest space in his enumeration of Ionian settlements in the Greek world.

Around 800 B.C. the originally much more numerous coastal settlements combined to form a *dodekapolis* (twelve-city union). They began a festival, the Panionia, at the site of the communal shrine of Poseidon Helikonios, the Panionion, at Mount Mykale, north of Priene. It is enough to list the names of the member cities, all of which commanded extensive territories in the fertile coastal plains and inland river valleys, to form a conception of the prosperity that prevailed in the region (from south to north): Miletos, Myus, Priene, Ephesos, Kolophon, Lebedos, Teos, Klazomenai, Erythrai, Phokaia, the large, rich islands of Samos and Khios, and, in a broader sense, also Magnesia on the Maiandros (Meander) and Smyrna. Here there evolved an upper class of wealthy landowners who managed their property from an estate house (οἶκος, *oikos;* cf. *economy*) with the help of farm laborers, stewards, herdsmen, and domestic servants. Since in these early days businessmen and merchants were regarded with contempt (see *Od.* 8.158–64) and craftsmen

worked mainly for the estate lords, the latter comprised the "aristocracy." In the political sphere, in the eighth century, this landed aristocracy also maintained an unchallenged position of leadership in the assembly and in the judicial system. The aristocrats were not untouched by the general changes and innovations that swept through Greece in this century, but their effects were only indirectly felt.

Euboia was the hotbed of innovation from the beginning of the eighth century. The city of Lefkandi (old Eretria?) on the island had been almost completely abandoned around 825 in favor of the new city of Eretria. Then Eretria and Khalkis, even before 800, started the maritime activities that triggered a whole chain reaction of alterations in the conditions of life. Apparently together with Cypriot Greeks and Phoenicians, they founded the commercial entrepôt Al Mina at the mouth of the Orontes River (near present-day Antakya in Turkey): "this was the main port for Greek trade with the east from about 800 until at least 600; and it remained important for a further 300 years" (Murray 1993, 73). The Greeks were exchanging pottery and possibly silver for iron, finished metal products, textiles, and wrought ivory. The imported wares point to specific needs in the homeland: a need for iron ore for weapons and armor and a need for luxury items. The consumers in both cases were the aristocrats, whose wealth must therefore have greatly increased.

These contacts with the east, facilitated by the Phoenicians, brought innovations of many kinds to Greece. Writing is perhaps the most significant development. Its adoption from the Phoenicians was likely prompted in the course of dealings at Al Mina by its obvious utility for matters of long-distance trade. It is unimaginable that Greek merchants looked on idly for thirty to fifty years while their Phoenician counterparts simplified their own work by the use of writing. The adoption of writing probably followed on the heels of the building of harbor warehouses and offices. At the same time appeared writing tablets and leather rolls, as well as instruction in writing (Burkert 1992, 29–30). Cyprus may have played the part of entrepôt in this process of adoption and perfection of the alphabet (Burkert 1992, 27; Heubeck 1979, 84–87). Contact with the Phoenicians had a further consequence in the Greek expansion to the west, where Phoenician merchants had long since felt at home. Around 775 the first settlers from Khalkis and Eretria appeared on the west coast of Italy and established themselves first on the small island of Pithekussai (present-day Iskhia in the Bay of

Naples). The purpose of the settlement here, too, was commerce, in this case with Etruria, which supplied metals but also served as entrepôt for trade in tin and amber from the north. Pithekussai was itself the center of extensive iron-smelting operations and, based on the evidence of grave-finds, was already a flourishing city around 750 (Murray 1993, 74–76). The famous "cup of Nestor" was found here in 1953. It bears an inscription in three verses, including two epic hexameters, datable to 735–720 B.C.; this has established the possibility that heroic verse could have been transcribed already in the middle of the eighth century (see below, "Homer's Work: When and How").

Further innovations whose penetration into Greece must be dated to the beginning of the eighth century include religious customs from Phoenicia and the east generally (for example, the cult of Adonis), eastern myths of the creation of the world and its development to the present (attested in epics written around 700 by Hesiod of Askra, by Mount Helikon in Boiotia), themes from ancient eastern and Egyptian literature, a familiarity with magic and eastern purification rites, many new words for previously unknown objects and practices, techniques of craftsmanship (thus, for example, the appearance of embossed metalwork and the changeover in Greece during the eighth century from the usual Geometric style of vase-painting to the Orientalizing style with lavish use of plant and animal forms), and a fundamental improvement in ship construction with the adoption of the Phoenician trireme (three banks of rowers arranged one above the other). All this has been extensively treated by Walter Burkert (1992).

At the moment it is not possible to date with precision the arrival of such innovations in Greece during the eighth century. It is, however, indisputable that the transferral of these things was feasible at any time after the commencement of regular long-distance trade via the route from Al Mina/Cyprus to Rhodes (to Crete) to Euboia (and Attika) to Corinth to Pithekussai. In another sense, this profusion of new experiences and new knowledge in Greece led not only to an extraordinary and dramatically rapid broadening of horizons but also to the emergence of the Greeks' awareness of their own identity.

Via Samos, the traditional intermediary, innovations and information that were transforming everyday life across mainland Greece soon reached Ionia in Asia Minor. At the sanctuary of Hera on Samos—the Heraion—the earliest "one-hundred-foot temple" (*hekatompedos*) in

Greece had been built at the beginning of the eighth century; it measured 32.86 meters (100 Samian feet) by 6.5 meters, and had a row of twelve roof-supporting wooden columns down the center of its interior (Coldstream 1977, 97; might this have been the first common undertaking of the Dodekapolis?). Objects of eighth-century provenance found at this site include, besides votive gifts of strongly Attic character, great masses of items from the east: wrought ivory from Egypt and the Levant, terracottas from Cyprus, and bronzes from Egypt, the Levant, north Syria, Cyprus, and Phrygia (Coldstream 1977, 267). Though not at the focal point of innovation, Ionia did take part in all the changes: "Levantine trade hardly touched the Greek cities of Asia Minor. For them the eighth century was a time of consolidation, punctuated by minor commotions. . . . These Greek cities were indeed fortunate, in that they were able to consolidate their power during this period without being threatened by any large and organized Anatolian state" (Coldstream 1977, 268). Unfortunately, excavation projects in Ionia at this time are still relatively scanty. Thus there is a particular dearth of archaeological indications vis-à-vis social structure. Nonetheless, two things do point to a firmly entrenched aristocracy: first, the extraordinarily strong city wall at old Smyrna, the earliest Geometric era example known to us (ca. 850); and second, the numerous votive gifts bearing horse motifs found in the Heraion (Coldstream 1977, 254 f.). Wall construction and horse breeding are evidence of military activity, which, at this early date, was the bailiwick of the aristocracy.

Archaeological material to date offers little testimony regarding the proportions of aristocratic land and livestock ownership or the conditions of daily life. Inferences drawn from conditions obtaining at settlements like Emporio on Khios and Zagora on Andros (Coldstream 1977, 304 ff.) may be misleading, since these are little villages having small populations. Still, even here, there is a discernible difference in the construction of the many "normal" and the rare aristocratic houses. The latter are relatively larger and more carefully built and have more rooms. The most important room was the *megaron*, equipped with a hearth and often featuring stone benches running along the walls. Systematic, well-designed excavations in the Ionian coastal cities may bring to light other dimensions, though unfortunately this is often impossible owing to continuous habitation up to the present day. Consider, for example, the discovery of a bathtub at Miletos: it is the

earliest known bathtub in the post-Mycenaean era, although "a separate bathroom, in the Geometric world, would have been an inconceivable luxury" (Coldstream 1977, 308).

Of very great interest is a proposition put forward by Oswyn Murray: that the dramatic increase in the number, size, and quality of kraters (mixing bowls) and drinking cups in the eighth century bespeaks the increasing importance of the never completely abandoned aristocratic institution of the symposium, which at this time constituted a kind of unofficial political steering committee (Murray 1983; on symposia generally, see also Murray 1990, 1991, and 1993, esp. 1993, 207–13; Latacz 1990). (Only in the seventh century did symposia begin to degenerate into more private drinking parties as the political influence of the nobility declined.) This interpretation of the finds accords perfectly with the relevant evidence of the Homeric poems and will have to be tested against the Ionian material (still largely unpublished).

Despite the unsatisfactory archaeological situation in Ionia, we are able to say that, from the very beginning, a population enjoying especially favorable and affluent living conditions achieved a continually increasing level of prosperity during the eighth century. That a general increase in population in Ionia took place concurrently follows in the first place from the construction projects in old Smyrna, where we may discern several eighth-century phases of additional construction as well as improvements to existing buildings (Coldstream 1977, 304 and passim). Moreover, Ionia in fact sent out no colonies at all until the middle of the seventh century, when Miletos began its expeditions to the Black Sea. By contrast, mainland Greece had been engaging in continuous colonizing operations since 734. So extensive were the territories and resources available in Ionia. We may therefore conjecture that here a well-to-do aristocracy, quite conservative in outlook, observed the innovations of the era with a certain complacency from its position of security.

Plausible Hypotheses: Homer's Time and Place

Homer grew up in this world in these years. Precisely when and at what location (or locations), we cannot say. That it was in an upper-class social milieu is clear from all his descriptions of beautiful objects, houses, and persons, and from the formulation of his speeches and dialogue ("some of the finer speeches display tact and comprehension of a

sort that even in a more sophisticated age would help make this vale of tears a pleasanter place to pass through," Cook 1975, 801).

Like every traditional singer, he no doubt from his youth followed with special fascination the heroic songs that accomplished *aoidoi* recited in the *megara* for audiences of aristocrats. An exceptional musical talent and an exceptional sensibility, combined with a lively intellect and an uncommon feel for proportion and organization, must very soon have led him onto the path of the artist. Much later, in the figure of Paris in the *Iliad*, he exhibited many of the difficulties entailed by the inescapability of an artistic gift in an aristocratic world where physical achievements were so highly valued. One could guess from the basic optimism of his view of the world and of humankind that his younger years fell in a time of renaissance and revitalization of ancient splendor and ancient ideals. This contrasts very distinctly with the distrustful pessimism of Hesiod. This difference in worldview helps us define Homer's era more exactly.

Homer and Hesiod confront us not only as two entirely different characters but also as representatives of two different stages of historical development. Hesiod's pessimism is less a personality trait than an expression of an age. Around 700, Hesiod in Boiotian Askra leveled bitter accusations against "gift-devouring lords" (δωροφάγοι βασιλῆες; *Works and Days* 39, 264). By this time, the aristocracy to which these "lords" belonged had already passed the apogee of its power. By its very leading role in opening new routes, the aristocracy had set in motion developments that worked to its own disadvantage. The advent of long-distance trade had accelerated the rise to social prominence of a new class of merchants, businessmen, and producers of export goods. The broadening of horizons generally and the adoption of writing had strengthened the capacity for autonomy and the self-reliance of non-aristocrats. Colonization, with its multifarious communal problems, had fostered public spiritedness through individual responsibility. Furthermore, under the conditions of a constantly growing population, the customary restriction of armed conflict to a nobility that possessed weapons and raised horses could no longer be maintained. A concomitant of the need to arm broader segments of the population was the technical perfection and institutionalizing of a new battle tactic. This was the phalanx, a massing together of infantrymen shoulder-to-shoulder in a thick wall of human bodies. The expansion of the phalanx from relatively small groups of nobles to large companies of men (Latacz

1977; cf. Raaflaub 1991, 226–30) led to a diffusion in the consciousness of individual duty, which had previously been delegated to nobles. Increasing self-confidence in turn brought serious demands for the abolition of aristocratic privileges, for justice, for equality, and ultimately for self-determination. The journey to democracy had begun.

This process in fact goes unmentioned in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Still, the epics survived. This indicates that they originated at a time when they could still be widely accepted and welcomed, a time when there was still no danger of their being discarded as the self-portrait of an incipiently marginal elite class. This time was the second half of the eighth century.

At that time, the negative results of aristocratic leadership either had not emerged or were not yet apparent. On the contrary, broad segments of the population appear to have acquiesced in the nobles' leading role at the time and to have sympathized with their efforts to revive the aristocratic mode of life. We nowadays cannot speak as easily as Wolfgang Schadewaldt did, over fifty years ago, about the "high aristocratic sensibility" and the "elevated spirit" of the eighth century. It seems to us overly idealistic to say that "Homer's century is the century of a wonderful second youth of his people, a time enlightened by memories, full of expectations, and still capable of high aspirations" (Schadewaldt 1959b, 127; first published in 1942). Nonetheless, the reasoned diagnosis that underlies such descriptions has frequently been confirmed since Schadewaldt wrote. It is true, for example, that at the great Panhellenic festivals that arose in the eighth century (at Olympia, Delphi, Delos) "the germ of an overarching Greek self-consciousness took shape" (Schadewaldt 1959b, 125; cf. Rolley 1983). It is true that at this time, because of "the fusion of ancient recollection with a vital outlook to the future, the first historical consciousness stirred beneath the surface" (Schadewaldt 1959b, 125; see also Hiller 1983; Hägg 1983a). Archaeological research in the past thirty years has in fact uncovered things that can be understood as typifying a revolutionary mentality in the culture as a whole, not exclusively in a specific social stratum. One example is the discovery of ancient graves and sanctuaries from former (Mycenaean) times and the widespread observance of a "cult of heroes" throughout Greece (Antonaccio 1987; Calligas 1988). Many phenomena of this kind have been summed up under the concept of "recollection of a heroic past" (Coldstream 1977, chap. 14). Homer has

been considered a catalyst of this trend (Coldstream 1977, 356 and passim).

Of course, this interpretation seems too neat and mechanistic. Homer did not set this process in motion with his poems. Rather the signs of renewed material and intellectual progress, which were becoming clear and palpable everywhere, had evoked a new, optimistic feeling for life, which displayed itself in all fields as creativity. It was manifest in the vigor of the old cults and the founding of new festivals, in the renewed veneration of ancestors (to whom people now again felt close), in the acquisition of new living space in foreign lands, in the stimulation of commerce, in the intensified construction activity in both religious and secular spheres (the first large temples were produced, and the Ionian cities were renovated), and also in the revival of the ancient heroic poetry in a spirit of understanding for which the prerequisites had been lacking during long centuries. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are a part of this general movement. On the other side of the coin, the poems stimulated and influenced the general movement. This process of mutual interaction distinguishes eras of such dynamism (Hiller 1983).

Homer's Work: When and How

These reflections place the birth of Homer's poems in the second half of the eighth century. The work of scholars over the past few decades has assembled a plethora of evidence for this date from various spheres of Greek cultural development before and after 700. The result has been a battery of corroborative arguments.

The earliest extant non-Homeric Greek epic and lyric clearly show the influence of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (and obviously in the very same form that both epics exhibit in our texts); at some points, we can identify direct citations. This influence is visible in Hesiod, who wrote around 700; in Kallinos of Ephesos (that is, one of Homer's Ionian "neighbors"), who may be dated by his mention of the invasions of Kimmerians in 652 and 645; in Arkhilokhos of Paros, who may be dated by his allusion to the eclipse of 6 April 648; and in Alkman, Alkaios, and Sappho, all firmly datable in the seventh century. There are quotations in Semonides of Amorgos (likewise seventh century), Alkaios of Mytilene on Lesbos (ca. 600), and Stesikhoros (ca. 600; see Burkert 1987,

51), among others. The quotation in Semonides, for example, runs as follows:

> one thing, however, the most lovely, the man from Khios said:
> "as is the generation of leaves, so too is that of humankind."

This is a verbatim quotation of line 146 from the sixth book of the *Iliad*. If Semonides knows the author of these verses as a "man from Khios" (Χῖος ἀνήρ), this means that around the mid-seventh century Homer was already known as a poet from the island of Khios, exactly the region of Ionia that other evidence identifies as the home of Homer. The reference by Alkaios (frag. 44 Voigt) does not quote a verse but alludes to a specific Homeric scene; it runs (in the reconstruction by Denys Page 1968):

> calling his mother by name, he summoned her, the highest of the Naiads,
> the nymph from the sea; and she, embracing the knees of Zeus,
> implored him [to avenge?] the anger of her beloved son.

This is a conflation of the scene in which Akhilleus on the seashore calls his mother Thetis, the highest of the nymphs (*Il.* 1.348–59) and the scene in which Thetis on her knees asks Zeus on Olympos to avenge her son on the Greeks (*Il.* 1.495–533). In Alkaios' day, this combination of scenes, as he cites them, could hardly have been found outside the first book of the *Iliad* as we know it (Meyerhoff 1984, 46–53; West 1988, 151 n. 5).

Toward the end of the eighth century, elements from Homeric epic begin to appear in Greek vase-painting, as pictorial art responded to poetry (Schefold 1975, 42). Because the earliest of these vase-paintings do not yet carry name labels for the depicted figures in them, we cannot be as certain as we are with literary allusions that they refer to already fixed texts of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Though they seem to our eyes to illustrate Homer's epics, they may actually be depicting scenes from heroic epic in general, which, as we have shown, was enjoying a vogue in this time of renewed interest in the great traditions of the past. Nonetheless, there can be only one explanation for the fact that, of the many different cycles of legend in circulation at the time, the heroic scenes on vases between 725 and 600 illustrate characters and incidents

drawn exclusively from the saga of the *Trojan War*: we must assume that the vase painters were dependent on a preeminent literary version of the subject matter then in vogue. Such a version can only have existed in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (Kannicht 1979). The earliest picture that relates to the *Iliad* may be a representation, on a late eighth-century *oinokhoe* (wine pitcher; Agora P 4885), of Siamese twins, shown standing in a chariot while fleeing before the attack of a hero. This illustrates *Iliad* 11.750–52, where Poseidon rescues Siamese twins, the Moliones, scions of Aktor, from the attack of Nestor (Coldstream 1977, 352). The earliest picture that relates to the *Odyssey* may be a representation of a hero who, with a warding-off gesture, holds out a plant toward a woman (fragment of a pot from Ithaka). This illustrates *Odyssey* 10.291 ff., where Hermes gives Odysseus the magical plant moly, to protect him against the sorceress Kirke (Brommer 1983, 70, 120). Beginning about 675, there appear the famous, widespread representations of the blinding of Polyphemos, which are generally seen as allusions to the Cyclops episode in the ninth book of the *Odyssey* (Andreae 1982, 27 f.). Still more important than these concrete signs of influence, as regards the dating of both epics, may be the "structural equivalencies between the Homeric epics and early Greek vase-painting" analyzed by the archaeologist Bernard Andreae and the Hellenist Hellmut Flashar. Both scholars are convinced that these structural similarities go back to a "craving for symmetry" underlying both literary and pictorial art in this era (Andreae and Flashar 1977).

Beginning probably around 650, at various locations in the Greek world, Troy epics written in an additive, episodic style ("and then . . . and then . . .") set down in hexameters all those parts of the Trojan Cycle that, in the chronology of the saga, either precede or follow the events narrated in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. These works include the *Kypria, Aithiopis, Iliupersis, Little Iliad, Nostoi,* and *Telegony*. On the one hand, these epics do not even in the smallest particular overlap the *Iliad* and *Odyssey;* on the other, they do refer to the smallest particulars of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to explain and justify them (Lesky 1966, 79–84). All this presupposes written versions of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (Kullmann 1981, 33); and, since Homer's epics present only parts of the Troy story, these later epics were intended to complement them by filling out the full cycle (*kyklos*) of the Trojan saga (hence the rubric *cyclic epics*).

In 1953, a potsherd bearing a three-line inscription in the alphabet of

Kalkhis—a single iambic verse followed by two hexameters—was discovered in an excavation at Pithekussai. In the first verse, a piece was unfortunately broken off, causing a gap of two or three letters. The remainder runs as follows (in a normalized transcription and reading left to right—the original read right to left):

> νεστορος : ẹ[2–3]ι̣ : ευποτ[ον] : ποτεριον
> hοcδαντοδεπιεcι : ποτερι[ο] : λυτιḳακον
> hιμεροchαιρεcει : καλλιcτẹ[φα]νọ : αφροδιτεc

The most tenable translation at this time reads:

> Nestor had a certain cup, good to drink from.
> But whoever drinks from *this* cup, will immediately
> be seized with desire for Aphrodite of the beautiful crown.

The cup and the inscription are at the present time generally dated to ca. 735–720 (Hansen 1983 and corrigenda). The inscription presupposes a certain level of cultural sophistication: only a person familiar with the story to which it alludes can appreciate the witticism. In the eleventh book of the *Iliad*, we read the following: Makhaon and Nestor are recuperating in Nestor's tent; the captive girl Hekamede prepares a potion for them consisting of wine, cheese, and barley meal in an obviously immense mixing bowl (*krater*):

> and next to it [she placed] the wonderfully beautiful cup, which
> the old man had brought from home
> fixed with golden nails; it had four eared handles
> on both sides of each a dove was pecking,
> made from gold, and beneath it were two firm legs:
> another man could only with effort have moved it a bit from the
> table,
> if it was full, but the old man Nestor lifted it on high effortlessly.
> (*Il.* 11.632–37)

As soon as both heroes drank from the potion, it goes on, they had "slaked their strong thirst" and they delighted in conversation.

The author of this verse inscription (not necessarily either the potter or the owner of the vase) in the first line calls to mind "Nestor's cup" to

set the stage for his joke. This reference would have made sense only if "Nestor's cup" was an object familiar to the reader of the inscription. But that could only happen if it appeared in a story known to everyone at the time the inscription was written and read. It also had to be a story in hexameter verse, since that would be the only point of continuing the inscription in hexameters after its iambic beginning. We deduce that this hexameter story was precisely that of our *Iliad* passage. To avoid this deduction, we would have to establish the existence of one (or more) widely known hexameter versions of the story apart from the *Iliad*. But since all the other indications of date that I have previously discussed suggest that no hexameter poetry was better known at that time than the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, an inscription like the one on the cup is highly unlikely to have referred to a poem other than the *Iliad*. Apart from the explanation of the point of this inscription (Heubeck 1979, 112 f.), it also represents a further corroboration of a date in the second half of the eighth century for the origin of the *Iliad*. It even contributes to a still more precise dating: if around 735–720 a reader of an inscription in remote Iskhia could be assumed to be familiar with a particular Iliadic passage, then the *Iliad* must have been a sort of "best-seller" at this time. It must therefore have been composed in the 730s or 720s.

This estimate of date, nowadays accepted as the most probable by the international community of Homeric scholars, raises new questions. The most important bear on the form of composition and method of distribution in the 730s and 720s and on the size of the *Iliad* (and also the *Odyssey*) at the time. These questions are closely linked.

The composition of a large epic poem in writing during the eighth century long seemed inconceivable, for the following reasons: literacy, it was said, did not yet exist; suitable writing materials were lacking; and there was no incentive to write. These doubts led to the assumption of a purely oral method of composition (and centuries-long verbatim oral transmission) and/or an originally very short work, which would have been expanded by a succession of later poets until it reached the dimensions of the canonical texts of the third-century Alexandrian philologists. The inscription on the Iskhia cup makes such assumptions unnecessary. It is apparent that both of the hexameters on the cup had been composed originally for this cup (or for this cup pattern—there are indications that a series was produced): "whoever drinks from *this* cup . . ."; that is, they emanated from a method of composition already based on writing. The object was from the first to realize at any moment

a concept that, thanks to writing, had become independent of the author in the act of reading, an act that already at the moment of composition was assumed to be the normal form of reception. It cannot be maintained that the cup inscription represents a first instance of a type of composition that assumes an "implied reader." Graffiti are a casual, secondary result of the ability to read and write, not the first form of its application. The composition of hexameters in writing (not their mere recording) was thus already in practice at the moment when the cup inscription was devised.

Facility in writing was very advanced already at the time of the inscription's composition. Here we have whole hexameters produced flawlessly and in a regular script, on a writing surface as unsuitable as the curvature of a ceramic vase. We must infer a more common dexterity in writing on the regular surfaces of standard writing materials (Jeffery 1990, 64 f.).

Our case entails a further special expertise in writing, resulting from the developed technique of verse notation. Both hexameters are (correctly) rhythmically articulated ("phrased") by two separation lines. A practice current at the time of the vase inscription and customary on another sort of writing material (to facilitate recitation or learning, like musical notation) has been unthinkingly adopted (Alpers 1970; Heubeck 1979, 115; Latacz 1990, 233–35).

Therefore, the question of the original size of the epics is no longer bedeviled by technical considerations about writing. If strictly internal analysis of the works leads to a recognition of an organic, large-scale structure and requires us to assume a quite expansive composition right from the outset, nothing from the standpoint of writing technique disallows that assumption. The number of the hexameters is irrelevant. It was possible around 725 to write two hexameters in a technically sophisticated special notation on the curved surface of a ceramic vase. It must then have been possible some time before this to produce any number of hexameters on a normal writing surface. From a technical point of view, it was simply a matter of diligence. Many a Greek merchant, in the course of his professional life, will have written business documents of a total quantity far exceeding that of our *Iliad*. The *Iliad* comprises about five hundred thousand letters; by comparison, Herodotus' history comprises about one million. It is certain that around 700 the Boiotian part-time singer Hesiod wrote at least three thousand hexameters (and very likely more than that). That the profes-

sional Ionian singer Homer could not have possessed a like facility in writing down hexameters only thirty years earlier can be ruled out thanks to available epigraphic evidence for such transcription.

The question of writing material also no longer obstructs the assumption of an earlier transcription of the *Iliad*. As Albin Lesky noted in 1967, "The state of our knowledge does not permit us to exclude the possibility that papyrus was known and used in the Homeric period" (708 [21]). Egyptian papyrus exports to Phoenicia are attested already around 1050 (five hundred papyrus rolls were exported to Byblos in exchange for lumber; see Pritchard 1969, 28; Heubeck 1979, 155 f.). It is extremely unlikely that Greek merchants in Al Mina, in connection with the adoption of the alphabet, would have persistently overlooked available writing materials (papyrus besides leather; see Heubeck 1979, 156).

All available indications lead to this conclusion: anyone in Greece around 730 (especially in the more developed area of eastern Greece) who wanted to transcribe or to compose in writing a hexameter poem—even a relatively long one—had at hand the basic technical prerequisites for such an undertaking.

The Homeric *Iliad* as the Poetry of Renewal and Self-Celebration

There remains the question of motive. The purely psychological motivations of an individual do not suffice to explain a phenomenon like the very first written composition of a monumental epic of the stature of the *Iliad*. Behind it there must lie something larger, specifically a social necessity. Parallels from the earlier history of other national literatures suggest this (Latacz 1984a, 18). Seen against the background of our reconstruction of the history of Greece and particularly of the Greek aristocratic class, the creation of the *Iliad* was certainly part of the general revolutionary trend of the eighth century; it met a pervasive need on the part of the nobility to celebrate its accomplishments. Growing prosperity, expanding geographical knowledge, increasing importation of luxury goods, refinements in manner of living, a renewal of ancient religious beliefs (seen in worship and in temple building), the overcoming of centuries-old territorial limits through colonial expansion—all this must have led to a new self-awareness and concomitantly prompted a need for self-justification. A method of satisfying this need

was at hand—heroic song. In the centuries following the catastrophe of ca. 1200, epic had survived rather than flourished as a celebration of the Greek upper class's noble origin and ancient tradition of leadership. Now once more the glorious contents of the epic poetry bore some resemblance to present realities, though in novel ways. For the aristocracy in the eighth century, the glorious past reflected in the mirror of epic was no longer so shamefully different from present reality. At the same time, the efficacy of this instrument of self-representation (as compared with local phenomena like symposia, games, festivals, etc.) was unsurpassed. Epic combined the widest distribution with the most lasting impression. Such early examples of influence as the "Nestor's cup" inscription confirm this.

Thus, many things attest that the creation of the *Iliad* may not have been an isolated or unique endeavor. Although we cannot speak of commissioned poetry, still the connections between the aristocracy and poetic art, as they can be traced from the earliest choral lyric of Terpander and Alkman through Simonides, Pindar, and Bakkhylides up to Attic drama, must have had their precedents. Literary master works have originated in this manner in all ages. We do Homer no disservice in thinking he was encouraged and patronized by an aristocratic clientele (to whose class he himself may have belonged; see Janko 1992, 38). This association was only natural in an undertaking that demanded not only talent but also much energy, time, material expense, and—not least—pioneer spirit.

Homer: A Feasible Portrait

It is risky to push on past these probabilities into the realm of more concrete details. Nevertheless, the place where the *Iliad* originated was most likely one of the Ionian coastal or island cities. That, among these cities, old Smyrna is so far the only one where writing is attested already in the eighth century (Johnston 1983, 65) may be put down to coincidence. It is very likely that, as many have conjectured (Dihle 1970; Kullmann 1981, 34 ff.), preliminary work in writing (notes, outlines, early drafts of particular sections of narrative) was indispensable. The actual writing down of the composition is to be attributed to Homer himself, not to a literate assistant, as Albert Lord (1953) romantically inferred from his own experiences in modern Yugoslavia (a notion still persuasive to some scholars [for example, see Powell 1990; Janko 1992,

37 f., 99 f.; Janko 1994]). (The supposed blindness of Homer, though some scholars even today think it worthy of consideration as a bit of tradition, is patently fanciful in light of the extraordinary visual sensitivity of Homer's depiction of the world and of human beings.)

The size of the *Iliad* that Homer composed can be deduced only indirectly and remains, in the last analysis, uncertain. The decisive criterion for the attribution of individual portions of the work is their indispensability to the structural harmony of the whole. Authentically Homeric then are the "weight-bearing" parts of the structure, namely, all those episodes that clearly forward the plan of action announced at the beginning and whose omission would leave rifts in the overall pattern. Conversely, *Iliad* 10 as a whole, the so-called Doloneia, which is not designed into the plan of the plot and is relatively superfluous in the overall structure, may have been added later by another hand. The same applies to shorter embellishments that here and there may have found their way into the poem still later on. Even Attic drama of the fifth century was still not secure from such interpolations (Page 1934; Lesky 1967, 831 [145]). As will be shown, however, all these instances count for little in the big picture. In essence, the *Iliad* as we have it may be labeled the work of Homer.

For the *Odyssey*, the question of authorship remains open. That the *Odyssey* as a whole is "more modern" need not entail different authorship. As will be shown, there are numerous structural correlations between the two epics. Moreover, it is hard to believe that in eighth-century Ionia two equally gifted geniuses composed monumental epics within one generation. So long as compelling contrary evidence is lacking, we, like the ancients, may see the work of Homer in the *Odyssey* also.

We cannot determine precisely how Homer's epics were disseminated in the earliest times. I have argued in chapter 1 that textuality in Greece began with the transcription of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. If this is correct, then there was no stage of purely oral dissemination reliant on memory alone in the absence of a fixed text. Rather, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* gave rise to a revolution in the traditional profession of the singer. The singer changed from improviser to reciter: in Greek terms, he changed from *aoidos* to *rhapsodos*. Repetition replaced free-form composition. For the first time in European intellectual history, the preservation of the original sequence of words became possible through the use of manuscripts. These were at first safeguarded by associations or

"guilds" of rhapsodes. It is likely that copies were soon made. It goes without saying that "in the early phases of the tradition, we need not think [these written exemplars] were very numerous" (Lesky 1967, 831 [145]). To procure a copy required considerable initiative and expense on the part of interested persons (aristocratic families or communities whose prehistory was glorified in the epics). The same was true of humanists during the European Renaissance prior to the invention of printing. Still, it would be a mistake to underestimate the extent of the dissemination of copies at this early stage. The absence of a regular book trade, which only the modern intellectual considers imperative, was no hindrance. Hesiod, also, and Alkman, Tyrtaios, Sappho, Alkaios, and many other early poets were preserved without benefit of a book trade. And it is out of the question that, for example, the nine books of Sappho's songs collected in the third century could possibly have been learned by heart (we know that the first book alone contained 1,320 lines).

In addition, school requirements will have played a part in the early dissemination of the Homeric epics. Xenophanes of Kolophon, another Ionian compatriot of Homer's, near the end of the sixth century indignantly remarked, "since from the beginning, all have learned in accord with Homer . . ." (frag. B 10). By this he undoubtedly meant Homer as a school text and, as "from the beginning" shows, a school text as long as one could remember. Even if only the teachers of aristocratic children in the larger settlement areas had written copies of the epics (or portions of them) at their disposal, the production of manuscripts must have begun early on.

Also to be considered is the political significance of the epics. The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* were recognized as masterpieces from the very beginning; their immediate effect on their contemporary audience proves this. Unlike early Greek lyric, with its personal quality and local impact, Homer's epics joined the Greeks together in a new, accelerating consciousness of their own identity. They did so through their embodiment of a common history, a common belief-system, a common morality, and a common set of great achievements. The wish to have these documents of a new national self-definition available not only sporadically in the recitations of rhapsodes must have prompted the procuring of copies in many locations in Greece. Here were the roots of those "city manuscripts" so often cited by third-century Greek philologists in their editions as "the manuscript of Marseilles," "the manuscript of Sinope,"

and so on (Kirk 1985, 38–43). Homer, unlike the early Greek lyric poets, appealed to *all* Greeks. From the beginning, his dissemination in written form extended to the whole of Greece.

Those who love sharp pictures may believe that Homer was born to a good home around 770 B.C. in a coastal or island city of Ionian Asia Minor. He listened to the old heroic songs from the mouths of *aoidoi* from an early age and soon made efforts of his own. His education was good. He learned to read and write perhaps as a youth, certainly by young manhood. His travels (facilitated by the far-reaching family connections of the nobility) took him far and wide in the Greek world. (Schadewaldt [1942] vividly characterized the smallness of the Greek world at the time and thus how easily it could be experienced: from Troy in the north to Crete in the south is a distance no greater than from Berlin to Munich [about 325 miles].) By 730, at around age forty, the singer Homer had become famous. In keeping with the general enthusiasm of the times, after various poetic experiments, he gave fresh expression to the new aristocratic self-consciousness by a timely revival of the ancient songs celebrating the Trojan War. It is not inconceivable that Homer, in about 710, at age sixty or so, encouraged by the unexpected success of the *Iliad* and struck by the swift pace of the further developments he witnessed around him, set down in words a second great interpretation of the world, the *Odyssey*, a poem that reflected traditional images of the world, of humankind, and of the ideals of the nobility, all of which were undergoing rapid transformation owing to colonization and commerce. The fame of Homer's works had spread so quickly throughout the Greek world even in his own lifetime that his name, when he died around 700, remained so closely linked to the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that it was never forgotten thereafter.

Many elements of the preceding portrait of Homer are only conjectural, but they are not simply plucked out of thin air.

3

The *Iliad*

The Theme: The Wrath of Akhilleus

The *Iliad* begins with an eleven-line *prooimion* (προοίμιον, "proem" or "prelude"). This component traditionally combines three functions: invocation, statement of theme, and exposition. Invocation and theme statement are regularly interwoven with each other. The singer asks the deity by whom he hopes to be inspired—the muse—to "sing" (or "tell" or "make known" or the like) a specific theme through his mouth. The audience by convention is construed to be witnessing this transfer rather than itself being addressed. From the singer's request for inspiration, it learns the narrative program and gains an initial, though still indistinct, notion of the poem's content and the planned course of the narrative. The singer tries to arouse the interest of the audience and generate suspense at the outset by emphasizing the originality of the tale he plans to tell. This technique of attracting and holding the attention of the audience was later consolidated as a literary topos—chiefly in rhetoric as the Greek prooimion and the Latin exordium (with its *captatio benevolentiae*), and in drama as the *prologos* (πρόλογος), or prologue. It survives to this day.

In the case of the *Iliad*, the form of the prooimion is plainly bipartite. The first seven verses, in the guise of an invocation of the muse, announce the theme and provoke interest in it by a first, still dim foreshadowing. The next four verses supply a transition to the narrative proper.

The theme is announced with the very first word of the poem (in the original Greek): *mēnin* (μῆνιν), "wrath." (The frequently encountered rendering "anger" does not convey the meaning of this thematic word. We are dealing not with a sudden emotion, an "access of anger," but with a lasting, festering, embittered hostility on account of an inflicted insult, the aftereffect of a "suppressed" anger. Thus, in English, "wrath" is the best rendering, even if it does sound somewhat archaic.)

After the announcement of the theme comes a long relative clause. This gradually particularizes the theme through a series of more and more specific details. At the same time, the general context is obscured (and unsettling questions are raised) by these very details.

> Sing the wrath, goddess of Akhilleus son of Peleus,
> the accursed wrath that brought infinite pain to the Akhaians
> and hurled many strong souls down to Hades—souls of
> heroes!—and left them to be booty for dogs
> and a banquet for the birds, but this was the will of Zeus being accomplished,
> from that moment when there stood against each other in opposition
> the son of Atreus, lord of men, and godlike Akhilleus.
> (*Il.* 1.1–7)

We see immediately that this theme sketch must stir more puzzlement than suspense in the modern reader lacking prior knowledge. Suspense cannot arise in an audience that lacks information presupposed in a text. Or if it does, it will be misdirected (in relation to the original auctorial intent). This confusion is, in general, precisely the problem today. The text evokes false questions for the modern reader: What is the setting of the action? What is the time of action? Who are the main characters? What does "Hades" refer to? What does "Zeus" refer to? Who is the "goddess" in the first line? These questions did not occur to the contemporary audience when it heard the opening of the epic, because it already knew the answers. By contrast, the modern reader, accustomed to the modern form of narrative—mainly fiction—is at risk of going astray right here at the outset. While preoccupied with the search for answers to these false questions, he or she falls into a fundamental misunderstanding of the recipient role intended for the reader by the author and begins to read the *Iliad* "falsely." He or she may, for example, believe that here is a so-called abrupt opening that will be set in an overall context by a later recapitulation of the argument. The modern reader might then focus on the expected resolution of a prologue kept fragmentary (supposedly) by design. Such a reader would then, of course, be a complete failure in his or her role as a recipient of the poem.

The purpose of a work of literary art is attainable only if its recipients rightly comprehend the work. In the case of an ancient work, accord-

ingly, the modern reader must reclaim the position of a member of the contemporary audience. The first prerequisite for this and thus for a "proper" understanding of the *Iliad*, beginning with its prooimion, is to realize that the epic, in its basic subject matter, was offering its public not a newly invented fiction but a treatment of a long since familiar topic; that is, the general background and the larger context of the tale announced in the prooimion were well known to the audience. The specific knowledge that the *Iliad* poet required of his public for a proper comprehension of his story was identified and elicited by the very elements of the prooimion that mean little or nothing to the modern reader—the proper names. "Akhilleus, son of Peleus," "the son of Atreus, lord of men," "the Akhaians," "Hades," "Zeus"—all these identifiers triggered definite associations for contemporary listeners. The names, together with the information that the son of Atreus and Akhilleus "had a falling out and quarreled," would resonate in them just as the names "Moses," "Aaron," and "the children of Israel," together with a mention of "dancing around the golden calf," strike a chord today in those who know the Bible: the curtain rises before the listener's eyes, the stage is the Sinai desert and the action is set in the time of the Exodus—all this the listener knows for himself or herself. In both cases, the narrator, with a few signals, guides the audience onto familiar ground: on the one hand, into the biblical story, on the other, into the myth of the war at Ilios, that is, into the Trojan saga.

The Troy saga was an indispensable common element in the education of Homer's public—the aristocracy; they had taken in the saga with their mother's milk. The story of the mighty Akhaian naval expedition against Ilios/Troy (the names derive from those of mythical kings of the city, Ilos and Tros), the bloody battles during the ten-year siege of the city on the Hellespont (present-day Dardanelles), the stubborn resistance of the city's inhabitants and their allies from neighboring regions, and finally the only stratagem by which the city could be taken in the tenth year of the war, the wooden horse—this story had been so often narrated and recounted in the songs of the *aoidoi* that its basic structure and the sequence of its narrative elements were known to contemporary Greeks from childhood in the way biblical stories are known to Christians today. Thus the principal characters of the story were also familiar. The most prominent of these could be identified merely by their father's name. (German heroic sagas are not comparable in this respect; Tolstoy's *War and Peace* is a possible analogue: for

aficionados, Nicholas Andréevich suffices to identify Prince Bolkónski.) Thus the two Atreidai (sons of Atreus) automatically called to mind Agamemnon and Menelaos, Peleiades (or Peleides) meant Akhilleus, Laertiades meant Odysseus, Tydeides meant Diomedes, Telamoniades (or Telamonian) meant Aias, and so on. The deeds and functions of these heroes in the story, as well as their respective personalities, were well known. If the singer began to sing of Akhilleus, son of Peleus, and Atreides, lord of men (of the two sons of Atreus, only the elder, Agamemnon, carried this honorific title), and of how these two quarreled in the Akhaian army, then the general locale, the scene of the action, and the historical moment would be instantly apparent. But that also means that the *Iliad*, with its opening words, identified itself to its contemporary audience (though not to its modern one) as the retelling of a story. But it would not have been identified as a verbatim repetition, because memorizing and reciting by heart were unknown for Greek epic before the introduction of writing. It was rather repetition of a known story in different words—that is, a rendition.

This sense of recognition that attended every hearing of epic renditions of the Troy saga (as well as other ancient sagas) evoked in the ancient audiences of the Greek *aoidoi* a sort of interest as the story unfolded that was quite different from that aroused in a modern reader of the *Iliad*. The ancient audience was concerned less with the facts and general shape of the story than with its distinctive style in any given immediate performance by a singer. (Two hundred years later, Attic drama held the same interest for its audience.) Because both the story itself and the medium in which it was presented (the formulaic language of hexameter verse) lacked for ancient listeners the charm of novelty that they hold for us, their interest could be roused and sustained only by the display of a very high level of narrative quality. Every narrator who reworked traditional stories (folk tales, sagas, myths) had to reach that level to be successful. The singer had to tell his story as beautifully as possible. So beautifully that an audience would be fascinated anew by an old tale and would find it more beautiful than any rendition it had ever heard. Now "beautiful" in this context could mean many things: a more nuanced and facile control of the formulaic language and the techniques of delivery, more compelling motivation of events, better structural organization, greater vividness, enhanced realism (since the stories were accepted as basically true accounts of actual events), and in general the creation of stronger suspense and

deeper enjoyment. All these criteria formed the basis for judging the quality of the singer and his song, as may be seen from the indirect literary criticism (the "immanent poetics") implied, for example, in the scenes involving the singer Demodokos in the *Odyssey* (cf. Kannicht 1980, 16–19).

Homer's *Iliad* surely met all these criteria in an especially high degree. In fact, many versions of the Troy saga must have been recited during the eighth century, but only the rendition represented by Homer's *Iliad* was found worthy to be set down in writing. This suggests to us that a further criterion may have decisively swayed the judgment of the audience of epic poetry—originality of perspective.

No other epic renditions of the Troy saga prior to or contemporary with Homer's version, that is, our *Iliad*, have come down to us. We cannot, then, say for certain whether or how the perspectives of these renditions differed from that of Homer's *Iliad*. Nevertheless, some likely conclusions can be drawn from the fact that these other renditions were not preserved. The most plausible explanation is that these other versions—allowing for individual variations in length, amount of ornamentation, and so on—never strayed far from a traditional framework, one that also dictated a standard perspective. Homer, however, exploded that framework with a spectacular revolution in perspective. We may support such a conclusion by examining the structure of some post-Homeric versions of the Troy saga written in hexameter verse and accessible in fragments and later prose summaries. These works, of the seventh and sixth centuries, responded to the tremendous popular success of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* by rounding them out with portions of the saga omitted from Homer's epics or only briefly alluded to. They provided a supplementary narrative or, as the Greeks saw it, a completed cycle of saga, of which Homer's *Iliad* covered only a relatively small portion. These are the so-called cyclic epics.

It is altogether unclear whether the perspective of these post-Homeric, written Troy epics in fact corresponded to that of the oral versions of pre-Homeric singers who dealt with the same subject matter. For the composers of the cyclic epics had the object of embedding the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the overall story of Troy. This may have led them to concentrate on the sheer chain of events and to ignore digressions, ornamentation, and even possible special perspectives that may have typified individual singers' recitations in pre-Homeric practice. The prose narratives, to which in the main we owe our knowledge of the

content and plot construction of the cyclic epics, made further adjustments for practical and pedagogical reasons (synopses of them were later attached to editions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to furnish essential introductory background). Nevertheless, it is likely that the cyclic epics tightened and compressed the material they used but still basically retained the standard perspective of the pre-Homeric song versions of the Troy saga. In this case, the cyclic epics offer us a means of arriving at the perspective of renditions made in and before Homer's time; this in turn enables us indirectly to compare these perspectives in the same way that Homer's first audience automatically did.

What then is the perspective of the cyclic epics? A good example is preserved for us in the extant beginning of one of these poems, which, in its original form, narrated in four books the events at Troy from the death of Akhilleus to the bringing of the wooden horse into the city. The title *Little Iliad* distinguishes it from Homer's (great) *Iliad*. The beginning runs as follows:

> I sing Ilios and the land of the Dardanians [= Trojans], good horse-land,
> for which the Danaans [= Akhaians, Greeks], followers of Ares [= strong warriors], suffered much grief.

Here, too, the first word, *Ilios*, states the theme and thereby fixes the perspective of this epic as relating to externals. Gross constituent units provide the points of departure for this narrative: city ("Ilios"), land ("land of the Dardanians"), two peoples ("Dardanians" and "Danaans"), and gruesome warfare. A large canvas spreads before the reader's eye, almost a tableau: there is a city in a wealthy foreign land, and the Akhaians are embroiled in a protracted war ("they suffered much grief") to gain possession of the city ("for which . . ."). The narrative begins here with the totality; it will thereafter proceed in its later development from the external to the internal, from the large-scale to the small-scale.

Numerous singers will have presented the Troy saga or segments of it to their listeners in this normal way of telling a tale. Homer chooses a different perspective. He begins his rendition of the saga thus:

> Sing the wrath, goddess, of the son of Peleus, Akhilleus!

The theme here is not the city and the struggle for it. The theme is, moreover, no external event at all. It is rather a process that takes place within an individual: a wrath. The narrative begins then not with major elements. Instead, it is restricted to the small-scale and—as it seems—the private, within the soul of an individual hero in the Akhaian army: the son of Peleus, Akhilleus. This perspective then is unlike that of the "normal" beginning. It offers a "view from within": the narrative gradually proceeds step-by-step from an internal point to the external. It embraces ever enlarging areas until the whole finally comes into view.

It is doubtful whether the mere reversal of perspective, that is, the change from an external to an internal perspective, was entirely new to Homer's audience. The presentation of large sequences of events from an individual's point of view is a very common narrative technique (seen in the form of direct discourse even in narratives told from an external perspective). Thus, we cannot go so far as to attribute its invention to Homer. What may be new, however, is the consistent "deepening" of this perspective, the shift "to a deeper level" within the individual hero.

Indeed, the *Iliad* commences not with the whole person "Akhilleus" but with the designation of a state of mind—to wit, "wrath." Homer does not begin, "Sing, goddess, of how the son of Peleus, Akhilleus, once grew wrathful"; rather, precisely the *mēnis*, or wrath, itself becomes an agent: "Sing the wrath, goddess, that brought pain to the Akhaians, sent many heroes' souls on the way to Hades, and made them the spoils of scavenging dogs and birds of prey!" The state of mind, too, not just the person, is valued here: "the wrath, accursed wrath!" (such translations as "the destructive wrath" or "the ruinous wrath" do not convey the sense of the word *mēnis* in the original [Kirk 1985, 53]). The wrath "does" something, it is to blame for something and is for that reason accursed. We see here an announcement of the story not of a noble hero and his deeds but of the inner condition of a human being and its effects. The interest is not so much in what the man does but in what transpires within him (and forms the basis for his action). It has rightly been suggested that we are witnessing a process of "internalizing" and a tendency to "psychologize the facts of the saga" (Kullmann 1981, 26). This tendency pervades the *Iliad*. It shifts the mythical incident to a deeper, interior level; and insofar as it deepens, it also clarifies. The *Iliad* becomes an interpretation of the Troy

saga. This is Homer's first innovation—an innovation in the *direction* of focus.

Constituting a second innovation is the *manner* in the *Iliad* of looking at things, one might even say of judging things. The wrath of a hero is accursed; it reveals itself not as a positive, praiseworthy thing but as a negative force:

> ... that brought infinite pain to the Akhaians
> and hurled many strong souls down to Hades—souls of
> heroes! ...

In the world of epic poetry, the anger of heroes is normally directed against the enemy and spurs the heroes to momentous deeds. Here, the wrath of Akhilleus is directed toward his own people and causes the death of his own comrades. The vector of action is thus reversed. What should be directed outward as a strength is directed inward as a weakness. The heroic appears not in its customary brilliance but bedimmed, even ominous. This impression is intensified by a further movement toward the negative—the death of the heroes is not merely stated but portrayed in horrific terms:

> ... and left them [viz., the heroes' bodies] to be booty for dogs
> and a banquet for the birds. ...

(The Greek *dais* [banquet], which denotes not a quick snack but a formal common meal, conjures up the macabre image of a festive dinner of birds of prey.) For a man of standing in Homer's time nothing was more disturbing than the prospect of lying dead and unburied in an open field to serve as food for dogs and vultures. Later in the *Iliad*, truces are regularly concluded for the sole purpose of recovering corpses. Therefore, this repulsively graphic image of dogs and birds ripping pieces from corpses stands at the beginning of our *Iliad* by design. It sends this message: so shockingly did the wrath of Akhilleus affect his comrades!

It is hard to imagine that this was the usual perspective on the heroes of the glorious Trojan expedition. The song of the war fought by noble ancestors around the citadel of Troy begins here with a profoundly repugnant image, void of any human dignity. This could hardly have failed to impress the audience. Emotions were stirred. Certainly an

ancient commentator on this passage was right to say, "the violent emotions that the prooimion triggers [in listeners] are quite exceptional" (BT scholia; see Griffin 1980, 118). Above all, indignation will have been aroused, indignation toward the responsible party—Akhilleus—and toward this "accursed wrath" of his. The audience's need for decorum was supplanted by revulsion—against perhaps not only the character but also his creator. From the author's point of view, this was an infallible method of building suspense. At this point, we recognize the motive for the novelty of the perspective adopted in the *Iliad:* what one was hearing in this rendition was no longer an old-fashioned heroic song. If it had taken only an individual as its subject, its beginning would have run: "I wish to praise Akhilleus and his great deeds (as well as sufferings)." Instead, we read: "I wish to sing of the wrath of Akhilleus, which caused horrible and unseemly death for many of his noble people." Let us grant that even before Homer, as some scholars have thought, Akhilleus may already have been the hero of a version of the Troy saga. Let us grant also that even before Homer there may have been an ancient "Akhilleid," in which perhaps even the motif of an insulted and angry hero boycotting his comrades played a roll. Nonetheless, it is very unlikely that a personal feeling and its public repercussions could ever previously have been so pointedly linked and announced as the theme of a heroic epic pertaining to the saga of Troy. An enormous dramatic energy informs the prooimion; it transmutes a feeling into a personage and with a few words raises it to an all-pervading active force with negative, indeed lethal, results. Although nothing can be proven beyond doubt in this matter, such things can scarcely have been typical of the traditional creations of epic singers.

As if this beginning, so out of character with the customary tone of saga, were not forceful enough, a further heightening of tension follows at this point:

> . . . but this was the will of Zeus being accomplished.

Was Akhilleus then ultimately not responsible for this extraordinary situation? Was he merely an instrument? Was the wrath of Akhilleus, with its shocking consequences, ultimately the contrivance of the supreme Greek god? The urgency of the question peaks at this point. How could it have come to this? Where did the cause lie? How did one

thing follow from another? And, above all, why had Zeus willed it so? What were the deeper interconnections among these things?

The poet consciously creates this tense atmosphere of concern and then immediately returns to his point of departure—the wrath. Up to the end of line 5, he has pushed ever forward into the future consequences of this wrath and allowed us to glimpse its always enlarging compass: first the Akhaian army, then the underworld ("Hades"), and finally, with the naming of Zeus as a prime mover, even Olympos. The poet has fostered the impression that the whole universe is filled with Akhilleus' wrath. From this "cosmic" view of the anticipated future field of play, the poet turns back in line 6 to the "present time," specifically to the precise moment when the wrath originated:

> from that moment when there stood against each other in
> opposition
> the son of Atreus, lord of men, and godlike Akhilleus.

The listener is transported to the mise-en-scène of the sharp quarrel during which the flashpoint was reached.

At this point, the poet redirects or channels the suspense of the audience over critical questions into paths of his choosing. By a clever stratagem he transfers to himself the feelings he has aroused in his audience. He himself asks the question that he has evoked in the listener:

> Who among the gods set these two into conflict with each other?
> (*Il.* 1.8)

This is the first question: how did this quarrel ever come to pass at all, this quarrel that caused such a wrath? It is the quintessential Greek inquiry into origins, into the *archē* (ἀρχῆ). With it, the poet guides the work and its audience from the wrath back into the past. The question elicits three answers, each of which, by clarifying an implied question, refers back before the preceding one and thus anchors the event to be described ever deeper in the past:

> The son of Leto and Zeus [= Apollo]!—who, full of anger at the
> king [= Agamemnon]
> caused a grievous pestilence to rage among the host, and the
> soldiers were perishing

because the son of Atreus had treated the priest Khryses
dishonorably.
This man had come beside the swift ships of the Akhaians,
to ransom his daughter. . . .

(*Il.* 1.9–13)

Here then are the three answers: (1) Apollo was the author of the quarrel (and therefore of Akhilleus' wrath). Why and how? (2) He was angry at the leader of the Greek army, Agamemnon, and for that reason inflicted a pestilence on the army, causing many deaths. Why did Apollo become so angry at Agamemnon? (3) Agamemnon had not respected Khryses, the priest of Apollo. The next question follows logically: how did this disrespect come about and what was its nature? The answer launches us finally into the narrative proper: Khryses enters the Akhaian camp, holding the insignia of his priestly status and bearing abundant ransom. Before the assembled host, he officially appeals to the two sons of Atreus to be allowed to purchase the freedom of his daughter, Khryseis, whom the Akhaians have taken captive. Agamemnon harshly rejects this humble request. The priest of Apollo asks the god for his assistance. Apollo becomes enraged, sends the pestilence, and so on.

The prooimion has thus fulfilled its function.

1. In the form of an invocation of the Muse, it has announced the theme: Akhilleus' wrath.
2. It has provided a preliminary narrative plan, with emphasis on three points: presentation of the events leading up to the wrath; the origin of the wrath itself—that is, the quarrel between Agamemnon and Akhilleus; the consequences of this wrath for the army.
3. It has created a transition to the beginning of the narrative.

But the prooimion has done even more than this. Significantly, it has not announced itself as a rendition of the whole Troy saga or of particular parts of it. Rather, it has concentrated on a singular point—the wrath of Akhilleus—which the audience cannot easily place within the overall framework of the saga. It has dramatically heightened the importance of that singular point by investing it with an emotional

charge, thereby reaching an extraordinary level of suspense. Modern readers can appreciate the unique and intense quality of that suspense only by bearing in mind the contemporary audience's horizons of knowledge and expectation in the realm of the epic of Troy.

The Framework of the Theme: The Troy Saga and the Trojan War (Myth and History)

For eighth-century audiences, the Troy saga was only a small portion of a large repertoire of saga, itself only part of an immense pool of stories of various kinds (folk tales, legends, short stories, adventure stories, etc.). Some of these stories originated in a common Indo-European heritage prior to the Greek migration to the Balkan Peninsula. Others originated after the migration either under the influence of the stories of the indigenous population or as a result of new experiences and adventures of the Greeks themselves. Saga as a narrative type formed its own category within the domain of storytelling. In their earliest forms, sagas about heroes and gods (besides other types of saga) were molded to the service of the elite class, that is, the warrior nobility. This is clear from the common Indo-European terminology of praise. By their transmission in the medium of a special (Indo-European) poetic language, these sagas became an instrument of ennobling self-representation. Later, in the new homeland of the Balkan Peninsula, much new material replaced the old, irrecoverable topics of the earlier common Indo-European heritage. This occurred during the years of independent cultural development between the immigration of the Greeks around 2000 and the catastrophe of around 1200. This new material was related to the sensational accomplishments of the new centers of civilization (Nilsson 1931; cf. Bowra 1952, 25). Thus there evolved a whole complex of saga in connection with the military conflicts around Thebes (the sagas of Oedipus and the Seven against Thebes, among others). Another complex related to the first voyages of discovery in the Black Sea, voyages evidently originating at Iolkos (the saga of the Argonauts, including the Golden Fleece, and the characters Jason and Medea). A third complex centered on the undertakings of the town of Pylos (the Neleus-Nestor sagas); a fourth centered on the hostilities between the towns of Tiryns and Mycenae (the Amphitryon-Alkmene-Herakles sagas). That other great centers like Argos/Mycenae or Athens likewise provided material for saga is evident from such reflexes as the Athenian Theseus saga

(annual tribute of Athens to Minoan Crete; the escape of Theseus from the labyrinth of the Minotaur, that is, the palace at Knossos, with the aid of Ariadne) or the Argive Atreus-Pelops saga ("Pelopon-nesos" = island [scil. peninsula] of Pelops).

Many of these stories, which became intricately interwoven myths as the original incident receded in time, must have been taken over into epic poetry or undergone epic transformation soon after the event (Ritoók 1975). The common notion that this epic transformation could have occurred only after the collapse of Mycenaean civilization proceeds from the tacit assumption that an exceedingly interesting event would have to become myth before it could form the subject matter of poetry. But, on the contrary, research in the field of comparative epic has adduced many examples to show that wherever a living tradition of epic poetry exists, important events are very quickly converted into song. Thus, for example, the famous Russian poetess Marfa Kryukova (b. 1876), a composer of *byliny* (heroic songs), felt compelled to compose a *bylina* about Lenin and Stalin very soon after the immense upheaval of the Russian Revolution of October 1917 (Bowra 1952, 116–17). Many comparable examples from modern Greek folk epic are cited in the works of James Notopoulos (Holoka 1973, 268–69, 282–83, 288; Latacz 1979, 606). Homer's *Odyssey* furnishes the explanation for this stress on the topical (in an era without mass media!): the singer Phemios at the house of Odysseus sings of the "unlucky homecoming of the Akhaians from Troy" (*Od.* 1.326 f.)—that is, a very recent event in the time frame of the *Odyssey* (at most nine years in the past). When Penelope tries to prevent his singing that particular song, her son Telemakhos objects on the grounds that "people always give the highest praise to the song that comes newest to their ears" (*Od.* 1.351–52). Of course, poets in times less abounding in noteworthy occurrences undoubtedly prefer to rework old tales in fresh variations as shining examples of past greatness. Thus the productive phase of many epic transformations—and also of sagas, for sagas do not always "presuppose ruins" (Lesky 1967, 756 [70]; 1981, 21), but only great events and deeds—is to be placed in the period prior to the catastrophe. The phase of the most intensive elaboration of epic came afterward (Latacz 1988c).

Not only "heroic sagas" but also Greek sagas and epic poems in general typically "announce a historical event" that, however, "they routinely conceive of in the light not of their historical reality but of 'fame,' of personal deeds and achievements, of sufferings, of the struggle with

destiny, and so on" (Schadewaldt 1970, 39 f.). Therefore, as historical sources, they are only indirectly useful: they reveal much that is authentic about the thought of the times they describe; they are less reliable regarding the actual events that underlie them. They are thus documents of intellectual and cultural history rather than factual records. Undoubtedly, the sagas and epics take their point of departure from historical incidents, because historicity is an integral ingredient of saga, as opposed to folktale (Schadewaldt 1970, 40; cf. Lesky 1967, 755 [69]). But by themselves they do not as a rule permit us to reconstruct the original shape and dimensions of the initiating event. The reason lies in the character of their intended effect: sagas—be they prose or verse—are not told with the object of fixing outstanding events in the consciousness of humankind as stages in "world history." Rather, they aim (not without pedagogical intent) to pass on such events to future generations as paradigms of extraordinary challenges and trials. They are thus highly susceptible to elaboration and transformation. Succeeding epochs see the ancient sagas as new at any given time, because they can only see them in light of their own experiences, needs, and value systems. Thus, they also variously estimate the significance of particular elements, characteristic traits, and correlations within a given saga. Consequently, in the course of a narrative tradition, sagas are reinterpreted, remotivated, abridged, expanded, condensed, diluted, interpolated, extrapolated, and regrouped to the point where their original form soon becomes indiscernible. Still, a saga remains identifiable, because its basic constellation of elements is not altered. Despite any changes in particulars, Oedipus still always comes to the same fate: he will kill his father and wed his mother, effecting, in the process, what he wants to avoid (Graf 1993, 7).

The original form of the Troy saga also is irrecoverable. This was doubtless the case already in Homer's day, too. Nonetheless, its basic premises and the pivotal events of the story were well known to the eighth-century public, as we can clearly see from internal allusions in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (Kullmann 1981). The "raw form" of the saga ran as follows:

In the prosperous citadel of Ilios/Troy, in Asia Minor near the Hellespont (present-day Dardanelles), there reigns a powerful king named Priam. One of his sons, Paris, sails on a friendly mission to the land of the Akhaians, specifically the Peloponnesos. He arrives at Sparta, where Menelaos, the son of Atreus (Atreides), rules. Paris abuses the hospitality shown to him there by abducting Helen, Menelaos' wife, to

Troy. Menelaos seeks the help of his brother Agamemnon of Argos/Mycenae. A delegation of Akhaians goes to Troy to demand Helen's return but is rejected. Thereupon, Menelaos and Agamemnon (the Atreidai) make the decision to force the release of Helen through a military operation. Agamemnon invites all the more important powers on the mainland and on the islands to send contingents for a joint expedition to Troy. This call to arms is answered far and wide.

The ships gather at the harbor of Aulis in Boiotia, each contingent under its own commander. Agamemnon is assigned the supreme command. The fleet sails across to the Hellespont (ca. 350 km), via the islands of Lemnos and Tenedos, and lands on the coast of the Troad (territory surrounding Troy). Initial attempts to take the city by storm or to negotiate a solution end in failure. The Akhaians then commence a siege, but the stubborn resistance of the city's people and their allies from the neighboring peoples of Asia Minor causes an unexpected prolongation of operations over a number of years. These operations involve continual efforts to cut off Troy from its sources of aid and to bring about its surrender by conquering, sacking, and destroying neighboring cities, island settlements, and communities in the environs of Troy. This strategy is unsuccessful, not least because the gods are divided over the fate of Troy. In the tenth year of the war, after the pro-Trojan faction of gods has given up its opposition, the Akhaians manage to take the city by trickery. An immense wooden horse is constructed at the urging of the clever Odysseus. It is filled with picked fighting men. The besieging Akhaian warriors, seemingly demoralized, board ships and sail away. But in fact they lurk out of sight, awaiting a signal from the city during the night. The Trojans take the horse to be a gift-offering to the gods and, despite the warning of the priest Laocoön, drag it into the city to secure its supposed protective power. During the night, the Akhaian heroes climb out of the horse's belly and direct a fire-signal to the fleet standing off Tenedos. Together with the main force, which quickly sails back, they put Troy to the torch. King Priam and the adult male population are slain, and the women and children are abducted as slaves.

The return home (*nostos*) does not proceed in so orderly a fashion as had the outward expedition ten years before. Some contingents and ships go far off course. Some heroes, including Odysseus, reach home only years later, after wanderings fraught with adventure. Troy, however, is forever destroyed.

Apart from such fabulous elements as the wooden horse and the

activities of the gods, which may be "rationalized away" as generic conventions of Greek heroic saga, this sequence of events seems completely realistic, largely due to the verifiably precise geographic details. Thus, the tale was sometimes considered historical not only by ancient audiences of the eighth century and later but also by modern readers, including even some in the twentieth century. The *Iliad*, which relates a good portion of the story, often seemed to be a slightly exaggerated poetic war report. With the skeptical attitude of our own time, the pendulum has swung far to the other direction in the past fifty years. The whole tale is nowadays often taken as pure fantasy.

A reasonable compromise position may perhaps be attained in view of the following considerations: It would obviously never have occurred to the first audience of the *Iliad* to compare the singer's recitation with a reliable report of the war. This audience did expect the epic singer to reach the highest level of authenticity (Kannicht 1980, 16–19). But the required authenticity, in the sense of the need to maintain narrative consistency, could refer only to a core event whose alteration would impede the audience's recognition of the story. However, the audience regarded it as the business of the individual singer to fill out the narrative framework imposed by unchanging essential material. The epics themselves bear this out. Thus, Odysseus, while still an unidentified stranger at the court of the Phaiakians, sets the singer Demodokos the topic of "the wooden horse" in the following terms:

> but now turn to another theme and sing the song of the horse
> of wood, which Epeios readied together with Athena
> and which the ruse of godlike Odysseus brought up to the
> citadel
> after it was filled with men, who then laid waste to Ilios.
> (*Od.* 8.492–95)

With an extensive song, Demodokos fleshes out Odysseus' four-line sketch of the framework of the narrative "from the construction of the horse to the conquest of the city." The *Odyssey* poet takes twenty-one verses to describe this song (8.500–520). In formulating this synopsis, the poet makes it clear that the "actual" tale of Demodokos was significantly more elaborate (and much longer than twenty-one lines): "and he sang of how the sons of the Akhaians utterly destroyed the city, streaming out of the horse, leaving their hollow hiding place; he sang

how one here and another there laid waste the high city . . ." (*Od.* 8.514–16).

Both the singer and his public were well aware that an element of creative imagination, of what we call "fiction," had now come into play. That is, different singers would flesh out the narrative structure in different ways. An awareness of this was vital to any evaluative discrimination among singers. The poet's use of direct discourse, which the audience will have considered an indispensable feature of epic narration, points to the same conclusion. The fictional quality of the speeches could hardly escape the notice of anyone who heard at least two versions of the same story. In such a context, then, authenticity did not mean accuracy in an unchanging documentation of reality. The audience had no notion of such a reality anyhow. Rather, it meant accuracy vis-à-vis a specific, current conception of "truth" in the mind of the audience.

The singer's public at any given time thus construed authenticity as one thing respecting the overall framework and as another respecting the fleshing out of that framework. Modern scholars have often ignored that distinction and consequently come to the mistaken conclusion that the manifestly fictional character of the fleshing out proves the fictional character of the very structure as well. This is the result of false reasoning.

The admittedly fictional nature of various novels about, say, Napoleon's Russian campaign does not entitle us to deduce that the campaign itself was fantasy. This is not the way to prove or disprove the historicity of the story or specifically the historicity of the Trojan War (a topic that has, by the way, recently enjoyed great vogue at scholarly conferences and in the pages of special issues of journals). Certainty in this matter could come only from evidence independent of saga and epic. At this point, we can only build a case based on "circumstantial evidence," with all its attendant imponderables.

However, the proportion of history to fiction in accounts of the event that forms the *Iliad*'s point of departure is irrelevant to an appreciation of the poem as a work of art. The *Iliad* would remain a literary masterpiece even if the Trojan War had never occurred. Still, the modern reader of the *Iliad* does well to accept the epic on the presumption that the war was a historical reality. Only so can one recapture the outlook of Homer's public, the poem's original recipients, and thus get a feel for the effect the *Iliad* must have had on that audience. It would be pure

intellectual vanity to adopt an ironic attitude of self-conscious superiority based on rational criticism. Whoever prefers to view the text consistently from such a stance forgoes any chance of experiencing the work of art in an authentic manner.

It is impossible to summarize briefly the current state of the "case from circumstantial evidence" previously mentioned. The rediscovery of Troy in 1870 by Heinrich Schliemann (who followed topographical details in the *Iliad*) has, it is true, proved the historicity of the citadel at Ilios/Troy. But it cannot support this further chain of reasoning: that the historicity of a military conflict between the city's inhabitants and the Akhaians follows necessarily from the mere historical existence of the two parties. Only archaeological evidence (if that) can bring proof of the historicity of the war. So long as that is lacking, any decision for or against historicity can only be speculative.

Proponents of the historicity of a particular conflict can today, however, work with analogies drawn from the conditions of power politics within Akhaian civilization; this has only become possible since the decipherment of Linear B in 1952. Beginning in the fifteenth century, Mycenaean civilization had embarked "on a course of conquest and colonization . . . on Crete and farther afield on Rhodes and Cyprus, encroaching also on the coast of Asia Minor" (Gschnitzer 1981, 10). The citadel at the south entrance to the Dardanelles on the hill of Hissarlik in the vicinity of Çanakkale has left impressive fortification ruins indicating continuous habitation from ca. 3200 until ca. 1200. Its commanding position above the (then as now) important straits giving access to the Black Sea region may have attracted the interest of the Greeks prior to the catastrophe of ca. 1200. That it became, like Crete two centuries earlier, the target of a military expedition is likelier than not. The notion that a singer, standing in awe at the ruins of Troy after the catastrophe, composed a poem about the undertaking in a systematic way, conjures up a rather romantic image.

It is, of course, conceivable that the saga might have arisen in many other ways. It is advisable to concentrate on the *Iliad* as a work of art and to leave to one side the question of the historicity of the Troy story, as long as conclusive archaeological evidence is lacking. It should be noted, however, that important new light is being shed by the work of the Tübingen excavation-team under the direction of the prehistorian Manfred Korfmann. On the basis of results achieved in the area of Troy

after 1981 (Korfmann 1984–1989; Latacz 1988.a, 1988.b), the government of the Republic of Turkey in 1988 granted Korfmann permission to resume the excavations of the Cincinnati expedition, directed by Carl Blegen and broken off in 1938, on the citadel itself (Korfmann 1991 and esp. 1993, 25–28). In the excavation campaigns of 1993, 1994, and 1995, Korfmann has made finds that strengthen the case for historicity. Before the citadel in Troy VI, in the very settlement stratum where a conflict between Trojans and Akhaians comes into question, there is an extensive lower city, protected by a strong enceinte wall and two deep trenches (Korfmann 1994, 28–37; Jablonka 1994). In 1995, substantial remains of defensive armaments were found in the area of the southwest gate of the citadel, through which a road led to the harbor of Troy. Since there is no indication whatever that defenders were able to use these armaments, we likely have to do with a surprise attack. Korfmann's 1996 excavations may provide a definitive answer to this question.

The "raw form" of the Troy saga, summarized earlier in this section, gives some notion of the possibilities inherent in this extensive complex of narrative material for an epic reformulation. The singer could round off interconnected parts of this material in self-contained "chapters," such as the "Destruction of Troy" (*Iliupersis*) sung by Demodokos at *Odyssey* 8.500–520 or the "Homecoming of the Akhaians" (*Nostos*) recited by Phemios at *Odyssey* 1.326 f. He could also trace a continuous narrative line, highlight the fate of an individual, or elaborate individual episodes (thus Demodokos at *Od.* 8.75–82 sings of a "quarrel between Odysseus and the son of Peleus, Akhilleus," which likely belonged to the prehistory of the Trojan War, that is, in the subject area of the later *Cypria*).

But it was possible to tell the entire story in the epic manner at one go only at the beginning of the saga's evolution. The initial version of the story was very quickly inflated by the invention of new characters and episodes; it soon became impossible to tell the entire tale within the time limitations that any epic narration must abide by. A complete narration, in the sense of a systematic, chronological presentation of action, could occur only when the availability of writing freed the composer from any concerns about the receptive powers of a listening public. Even then definite conventions about the division of material were inherited from the routines of pre-Homeric oral performance. This is apparent in the subdivision of the saga in the post-Homeric cyclic epics:

1. *Cypria* = prehistory of the war, and the war up to the beginning of the *Iliad* (eleven books).
(2. the *Iliad*.)
3. *Aithiopis* = the story subsequent to the *Iliad*—that is, continuation of the story of the war up to the death of Akhilleus at the hands of Paris and Apollo (five books).
4. *Little Iliad* = continuation from the quarrel of Odysseus and Aias over the weapons of the fallen Akhilleus to the bringing of the wooden horse into the city (four books).
5. *Iliupersis* = continuation from the Laocoön-scene at the wooden horse, through the destruction of Troy, to the departure of the Akhaians for home (two books).
6. *Nostoi* = events subsequent to the war: the homecoming of the Greek warriors up to the return of Agamemnon and of Menelaos and Helen (five books).
(7. the *Odyssey* = the story of the homecoming of Odysseus specifically.)
8. *Telegony* = continuation of the *Odyssey* from the return of Odysseus to his death (two books).

Even if one puts down much in these written epics to the tendency of their conservative-minded authors to systematize and tidy up, the richness of material in the pre-Homeric Troy saga is obvious. No singer could have covered it all in a typical oral recitation.

It required a whole new narrative strategy and technique to achieve a seemingly exhaustive version of the Troy saga. This was in fact one of the great accomplishments of Homer. The novel perspective of the *Iliad* appears to be the manifestation of this new technique.

The Development of the Theme: The Plan of Action

For audiences that knew the whole of the Troy saga, the prooimion of the *Iliad* must have seemed to announce a poem about an individual episode. The theme—wrath resulting from a quarrel—was nothing unusual in itself. In the aristocratic world, honor occupied a high position and consisted, for example, of respect shown to an individual on the strength of his achievements or possessions. Given this, there were, naturally, unavoidable conflicts among members of the same house, clan, military camp, and so on. This much was assumed as a central

theme in the poetry of heroic epic. Thus, for example, in Homer, the quarrel of Odysseus and Akhilleus, mentioned in passing in the *Odyssey* as the subject of a song sung by Demodokos (*Od.* 8.75–82), hints at an episode that had long had its place somewhere in the overall structure of the Troy saga. So too, the portentous quarrel of Odysseus and Aias over Akhilleus' weapons, which we learn of in the *Little Iliad*, was surely fixed in the epic tradition of Troy from time immemorial, for it is linked to Akhilleus' death. Likewise a familiar subject in heroic epic was an anger or wrath stemming from a quarrel or latent difference of opinion and resulting in the angry man's hindering or frustrating the cause of his adversary even if that cause was also his own (Bowra 1952, 123–25; Patzer 1972, 46). In the *Iliad*, for example, Paris "sulks" in book 6 (see lines 326 ff.; an aborted theme in the context), and in the ninth book the Aitolian hero Meleager refrains from fighting, "cooking up his heart-offending wrath [against his mother]" (Schadewaldt), and lies apart with his wife Kleopatra, while the enemy are already scaling the walls of his home city Kalydon (*Il.* 9.553 ff.). In the world of the gods, moreover, always mirroring human conditions, anger and wrath are the order of the day (Irmscher 1950).

It is not impossible then that a quarrel between the supreme commander Agamemnon of Argos/Mycenae and the son of Peleus, Akhilleus, from Phthia in Thessaly was an element of the epic of Troy even before Homer. It may indeed have centered on a gift of honor (γέρας, *geras*)—a captive girl (Reinhardt 1961, 56–63). Even a temporary boycott of the fighting by Akhilleus may already have been present in pre-Homeric poetry. Many a peculiar thing about the opening of the *Iliad*—for example, the astonishing fact that the time of the events being narrated (the ninth year of the war) is first indicated only in the second book and then as something entirely self-evident (2.295)—would be less odd if Homer could have relied on specific prior knowledge in the minds of his auditors. But it is far less likely that this segment of the saga, the quarrel of Akhilleus and Agamemnon and the wrath of Akhilleus, had ever previously been anything more than a way station in the narrative, let alone the announced exclusive subject of an entire epic. It is still less plausible that any singer before Homer had taken as his theme not the quarrel per se but the representation of the aftermath of such a quarrel in the mind of a hero, together with the effects it exerted on the hero himself and his world.

The suspense of the audience was stimulated by Homer's novel

approach. The poet followed this up with another surprise in the elaboration of his theme. For he embodied the theme in a plan of action that far exceeded the parameters of a poem dedicated to a single episode. His "new perspective" was distinctive in a structural sense as well. The psychological dimension enabled him to handle the entire saga within a part of it, chiefly through compression and reflection. Compression occurs when a character whose nature is gradually disclosed through a series of individual scenes and situations in the overall saga is restricted in the *Iliad* to a few appearances, or even to one, in which nonetheless all the salient traits of that character are displayed. Reflection is employed when Homer cannot directly include those stages of the saga that fall chronologically before or after the action of the *Iliad*. Such material is "mirrored" along the way in the *Iliad* in various fashions, including the use of symbolic substitutes. Thus, the *Iliad* is able to be both a treatment of a single episode and a rendition of the saga as a whole. The particulars of how this is done can be seen precisely in the way the theme evolves.

The development of the theme begins with the realization of the three programmatic points announced in the prooimion.

The Events Leading up to Akhilleus's Wrath

On one of their plundering forays, the Akhaians have abducted the daughter of Khryses, a priest of Apollo. The priest goes to the camp and petitions the Akhaians en masse—"all the Akhaians" (*Il.* 1.15), "but especially the two sons of Atreus" (1.16)—to return his daughter in exchange for a considerable ransom. "All the other Akhaians," we are told, "consented to heed the holy man and to accept the shining ransom" (1.22–23)—only Agamemnon bluntly denies him. He drives away the old man with a speech that is not only insulting but blasphemous:

> Let me not find you, old man, beside the high ships
> (either tarrying now or returning again later)!
> lest your staff and the ribbons of the god not protect you!
> The girl, for her part, I will not release to you! Sooner will old
> age overtake her
> in our court in Argos, far from her home,
> working at the loom and meeting my bed!—
> Get out! Do not anger me—that way at least you may return
> home safely!
>
> (*Il.* 1.26–32)

This is the first instance of a specific type of direct address that figures prominently in Homeric poetics. It eliminates the need for direct characterization of individuals; it sets a course for future action; it injects drama into the narrative; it brings the current habits of thought and feeling of the audience into the ancient story; and it subtly guides the audience's manner of reception. Agamemnon's speech characterizes this highest ranking Akhaian as an overbearing and cynical ("and meeting my bed") autocrat. It motivates the intervention of a divine agency (Apollo) by the contempt and disdain shown for the priestly status of the petitioner. It forges, both externally and internally, the causal links leading to the conflict with Akhilleus. It elicits examples of the same personality traits from the audience's own experience, and it evokes sympathy for the victim, the rejected Khryses, while stirring initial feelings of antipathy toward Agamemnon.

The priest goes along the shore of the sea and beseeches his god, Apollo, to avenge him against *the whole body* of the Akhaians. Resonating here for the first time is the fundamental theme of the *Iliad*: how the misbehavior of an individual damages the common good. Like Khryses, Akhilleus, three hundred lines later, will go along the shore and ask his divine mother Thetis to take vengeance against *the whole body* of the Akhaians (*Il.* 1.348 ff.). In both cases, the person responsible for the subsequent horrendous reprisals is Agamemnon. The complex problem of leadership becomes apparent for the first time: leadership based on power alone courts disaster. It is hard to imagine that this lesson does not stem from Homer's own experience. The warning may reflect the threat to aristocratic leadership that sharp eyes were already discerning on the horizon in Homer's day (Nicolai 1983, 1984, 1987; Effe 1988; Latacz 1991a, 100 f.; 1992a, 205–7; Janko 1992, 38).

Apollo hears Khryses and helps him, as later Thetis hears and helps Akhilleus. He strides down from Olympos, with "anger in his heart" (*Il.*1.44); the arrows, signifying the pestilence, rattle menacingly in his quiver, as he approaches "like the night" (1.47). He sits a little apart from the ships and shoots the first disease-arrow,

> and terrible was the thrum of the silver bow.
>
> (*Il.* 1.49)

He strikes first at the mules and dogs, but then at the heroes themselves,

> and the pyres of corpses burned constantly, close by.
>
> (*Il.* 1.53)

The idea of casting the father of the abducted girl as a priest proves to be very well conceived: the insult to Khryses in this way becomes a violation not only of human but also of divine conventions. The divine sphere is thereby included in the story and a systematically two-tiered sequence of events is set in motion in the *Iliad*: action on the human plane runs parallel to action on the divine plane. These levels are quite discrete but repeatedly overlap at particular points or sections of the narrative. Humans appeal to the gods, and the gods, once implicated, take part on their own initiative as well. The result is a complex and intricate web of reciprocal interests and interdependencies. The poet who oversees all this has at hand a unique method of motivating and remotivating actions, of accelerating or retarding the tempo of action through divine intervention, of indirectly passing moral judgment on human actions, and of directing his audience toward a proper interpretation of his stated intentions (Griffin 1980, 179–204; Kullmann 1985; Erbse 1986; Janko 1992, 2).

The pestilence continues for nine days. On the tenth, Akhilleus summons an assembly of the army,

> since white-armed Hera had put this in his mind,
> because she worried about the Danaans when she saw them
> dying.
>
> (*Il.* 1.55–56)

Why does Hera, the mother of the gods and wife of the most high Zeus, show concern for the misfortunes of the Akhaians? Again, the prior knowledge of the audience is assumed. Hera, like Zeus' powerful daughter Athena, is a mortal enemy of Troy because of the judgment of Paris. Paris, at the time a shepherd on Mt. Ida in the Troad, had been asked to judge which of three goddesses—Hera, Athena, or Aphrodite—was the most beautiful. He awarded the prize to Aphrodite, because she promised him the most beautiful woman in the world—Helen. Since then, the two slighted and humiliated goddesses have hated and persecuted Paris and his people (Reinhardt 1948, 19). The poet masterfully controls the instrument of myth, playing on several keyboards at the same time: Apollo intervenes in answer to an impulsive prayer, and his impetuous actions jeopardize the siege of Troy; Hera intervenes on her own initiative because this current accident imperils many long-standing, intense interests—especially, her

desire to see Troy fall; the poet has Hera choose precisely Akhilleus as her tool, to involve him in a bitter dispute with Agamemnon and consequently to make him aggrieved and enraged. We see the poet pulling the strings of the story.

With the summoning of an assembly of the army, the narrative embarks on the second of the three programmatic points made in the prooimion.

The Origin of the Wrath

Akhilleus addresses Agamemnon as a concerned commander of the Myrmidon contingent in the army and is representative of the general mood in the Akhaian camp:

> Son of Atreus! Now I think that we, beaten back,
> must return home again—assuming we escape death
> at all—
> if evidently both war and sickness overcome the Akhaians!
> So then! Let us ask a seer or priest,
> perhaps even an interpreter of dreams (for a dream, too, comes
> from Zeus),
> who may tell us why Phoibos Apollo has become so angry. . . ."
> (*Il.* 1.59–64)

The seer Kalkhas stands up. Akhilleus had deliberately avoided naming him (why will soon become apparent), but naturally Kalkhas, like everyone present, knows that he is meant. Before he speaks, Kalkhas is expressly called

> the best of bird-watchers,
> who had knowledge of the present, the future, and the past,
> and who had guided the ships of the Akhaians on their way to
> Ilios
> by his seercraft—which Phoibos Apollo had granted him.
> (*Il.* 1.69–72)

Kalkhas thus represents a "spiritual" power. He, like Khryses, is a priest of Apollo, but a much higher ranking one, and he is especially esteemed by the Akhaians in general—an implicit counterweight to the

authority of Agamemnon, it seems. Everyone realizes that whatever Kalkhas might say will be significant. Still, he hesitates to speak, for he knows perfectly well whom he must name as the party responsible for the epidemic. The truth is dangerous, so he wants Akhilleus to guarantee his safety beforehand. Akhilleus obliges him:

> Boldly speak the word of the gods, which you know!
> By Apollo, beloved of Zeus, to whom you, Kalkhas,
> pray when you disclose the will of the gods,
> so long as I am alive and look upon the earth,
> no one beside the hollow ships shall lay heavy hands on you,
> no one of all the Akhaians, even should you name Agamemnon,
> who now declares he is far the best of the Akhaians!
>
> (*Il.* 1.85–91)

Here again we have a speech that serves several purposes. First, with regard to characterization, we see Akhilleus as the intrepid protector of the weak, but also as impulsively quick to take on weighty personal obligations. Next, with regard to the program of action, Kalkhas, as the listener realizes, will of course speak out after receiving his guarantee. The great conflict is unfolding. Finally, with regard to the implicit control of the listener's reactions, does this not appear to be a case of tacit collusion? First, the name *Kalkhas* is cleverly avoided; then, as if this were his cue, Kalkhas promptly stands up. Then the guarantee of safety is made by the very man who has called together the assembly and proposed consulting some "seer or priest" or "interpreter of dreams." Finally, in giving his guarantee, Akhilleus makes an apparently offhand mention of the name *Agamemnon*, as if only to strengthen the guarantee by referring to a risibly unlikely possibility. Is there not at work here an unspoken alliance between insightful persons who have the best interests of the group at heart? Persons who know from long experience the volatile temper of their leader, so obstinately proud of his position of supreme authority, and who wish unobtrusively to guide him back onto the right path? To achieve this, someone must say what the misguided individual would never recognize or admit on his own.

Kalkhas says it: the guilty party is Agamemnon. Because he dishonored Khryses, Apollo's priest, "the far shooting Apollo sent sorrows and will send yet more" (*Il.* 1.96), until the maiden Khryseis is given

back to her father in Khryse (and now without ransom) and Apollo himself is appeased with a great sacrificial offering.

Now the truth is out. Agamemnon rises, "his heart black with rage" (*Il.* 1.103–4) and his eyes flashing. First he makes a sharp thrust at Kalkhas, a thrust that bespeaks latent animosity:

> You seer of misfortune! You have never yet said anything pleasing to me. And now this! I must be the guilty one, because I would not take ransom for Khryseis! To be sure, I wouldn't. I dearly wanted her in my home. I preferred her even to my wife Klytaimestra, since she is not at all inferior to her. . . . But now, despite all that, I will give her back, because *I* desire that the soldiers be well and not die. But give me immediately a prize of honor to take her place, lest I alone of the Argives lack a prize! That would be unseemly!
>
> (*Il.* 1.106 ff.)

Akhilleus is very upset and answers in angry disapproval:

> Atreus, most glorious and greedy of all! How are the brave Akhaians to give you a gift? The prizes have long since been allotted; do you mean to take something back from its possessor? You must now return this maiden *at the god's bidding*! We will compensate you three- and fourfold, once Zeus has granted us to take the high-walled city of Troy!
>
> (*Il.* 1.122 ff.)

The controversy still might have ended at this point. Akhilleus' proposal is reasonable, and Agamemnon will presently comply with it. But Akhilleus has made a mistake (had he not, he would not have been Akhilleus); he has disclosed a little of what he thinks of Agamemnon in general, in a way uncalled for in the dispute at hand: "most . . . greedy of all!" he calls Agamemnon, and he insists that one cannot reclaim what has already been apportioned. We detect a note of disdain and almost of contempt: touching a nerve, he goes on to call Agamemnon "grasping," "small-minded," "petty."

The quarrel has now come to the nitty-gritty. The girl is no longer the central issue; she will shortly board ship for Khryse. The heart of the matter now is the profound hostility between these two different kinds

of men, clearly a hostility that both have felt and endured for a long while. It erupts in an explosion of long-suppressed tensions:

> *Agamemnon*: Do not try to trick me! You only want to have a gift of honor and look on gloating as I sit by without one. No! Either the Akhaians give me an equivalent prize or I myself will take one— from you or Aias or Odysseus! We will get to that later!
>
> *Akhilleus*: Oh shameless one, grasping for gain! How can you still keep your leadership? I have not come here to battle on account of the Trojans, those spear-fighting men, since they are not blameworthy *to me*! They have never once driven off *my* cattle or horses; never in the broad fields of fertile, man-nourishing Phthia have they destroyed the crops. . . .
>
> *You* were the one we followed, oh most shameless one, so that *you* might gain satisfaction! to procure honor for Menelaos and for *you*, dog-eyes! Honor from the Trojans!
>
> (*Il.* 1.131–60)

A long suppressed account is being settled here: Akhilleus has followed the commander of his own volition and not as a subject, but he has never enjoyed the same rights as Agamemnon. He far surpasses Agamemnon in achievement yet is always fobbed off with an inferior share of booty. Now comes the threat: "Enough of this! I am going home to Phthia. I do not think I shall any longer go on enriching you while I go without honor!" (1.169–71).

The quarrel now reaches its climax. Agamemnon accepts Akhilleus' threat to resign:

> Go on, then! Do as you wish. I will not ask you to stay here for my sake. There are plenty of others who respect me, Zeus above all! You, however, have always been the most hateful of princes to me! You are always keen on strife and war and battle! Don't pride yourself on your power! For that is given you by a god. Go on home with your ships and rule over your Myrmidons. I do not trouble myself over you *or care a whit about your anger*. Now here is my threat: I will send Khryseis home, to please Apollo. But in recompense I will in person take for myself your Briseis, she of the

> beautiful cheeks. With my own hand I will take your prize of honor from your tent . . . so you may well know how much greater I am than you, and so another man hereafter will shrink back from contending with me or likening himself to me!
>
> (*Il.* 1.173–87)

Akhilleus, beside himself, grasps his sword. The poet now has Athena appear (visible only to Akhilleus). In a brief exchange, he has her dissuade the hero from killing the king. In line 194, we read that

> he was drawing the great sword from its sheath, and then
> Athena came. . . .

and in line 220

> he pushed the great sword back into the sheath, and followed
> . . . .

This fleeting moment on the razor's edge, which epic renditions before Homer would simply have touched on ("named," in narratological terminology), is here filled with inner action, brought to light in the form of a divine intervention.

Of course, Akhilleus must not kill Agamemnon, and not only because the Troy saga tradition would not allow it. For how could the wrath—the theme of the whole epic—come into being without anger being repressed? The wrath, as the dramatic *basso ostinato* of the action of the *Iliad*, was possible only if total dissension came at the very beginning. Furthermore, it was possible only if Akhilleus was so deeply insulted that only the slaying of the offender could bring satisfaction, yet no such slaying takes place. In short, Akhilleus must *repress* both his sword and himself, in the literal sense of the word (that is, "press back"). The very idea of not having reacted spontaneously, of having instead repressed one's feelings—the idea, that is, of having passively suffered a humiliation—must constitute a permanent self-reproach for Akhilleus. This is what makes him so implacable. The insult went so very deep, because the insulted man could not forgive himself for having swallowed such indignities. This is what makes the wrath so very plausible. But how was the poet to bring this off? An Akhilleus who simply yielded to Agamemnon would be no Akhilleus at all. He must

be made to obey a superior force. That force could come only in the form of a divinity. The epiphany of Athena offered the solution.

With this compelling account of the origin of the wrath, the poet has made the transition to the third of his programmatic points.

The Consequences of the Wrath for the Larger Group

Akhilleus has sheathed his sword, aware of his public humiliation. The poet now has him bind himself by the terms of "a great oath," terms that will restrict his actions for a long time to come:

> Still I say this to you, and swear a great oath on it:
> as surely as this scepter will never again put forth leaves or buds,
> having left the cut stump behind in the mountain forest,
> and will never sprout again . . .
> truly a day will come when all the sons of the Akhaians will yearn for Akhilleus!
> Then, though hard-pressed, you will be able to accomplish nothing,
> when many fall to the ground, dying at the hands of death-dealing Hektor.
> But you will eat out the hearts within you,
> full of remorse, because you did no honor whatever to the best of the Akhaians!
>
> (*Il.* 1.233–44)

Among the functions of direct address in Homer, the programmatic is most prominent in this instance. To be sure, Akhilleus' words serve to characterize the hero—his passionate impulsiveness, his burning desire for satisfaction. But more importantly, they point far beyond Akhilleus and the whole situation in which he finds himself. Akhilleus' words adumbrate the structure of the work. In the terminology used by E. Lämmert in his *Bauformen des Erzählens* [Structural Patterns of Narrative] (1980), the speech provides an indistinct but inevitable anticipation of the future. In it, the poet for the first time gives concrete information about the results of the quarrel and of the wrath stemming from it: Akhilleus will no longer take part in the war ("the sons of the Akhaians will yearn for Akhilleus") and the Trojans will consequently

gain the upper hand. Their leader, Hektor, will rampage among the Akhaians. And Agamemnon—deeply aware that he can do nothing alone against Hektor—will rebuke himself, knowing that he is to blame for all this because of his tyrannical behavior during the quarrel with Akhilleus. The vague prediction of the prooimion regarding "the wrath of Akhilleus . . . that brought infinite pain to the Akhaians" (*Il.* 1.1–2) now acquires definite contours. Into the mouth of a principal character—Akhilleus—the poet puts a statement whose confirmation in an oath assures the listener that it will be accomplished. The poet thus conveys to his public that the consequences of Akhilleus' wrath will consist of the ever-worsening plight of the whole Akhaian army. But the listener at this point learns neither how these events will transpire in detail nor how they will arise at all. The listener thus continues to be in suspense.

There eventually comes a dead point in the quarrel:

> So spoke the son of Peleus. He threw the scepter down to the
> ground,
> with its golden studs, and sat down himself.
> The son of Atreus still raged on the other side. . . .
> (*Il.* 1.245–47)

Nestor intervenes, Nestor "the clear-voiced Pylian counselor with his fair words; from his throat the words flowed sweeter than honey. He had already seen two generations of men pass away . . . in sacred Pylos, and he now ruled over the third" (*Il.* 1.247–52). Nestor is a "gray eminence." He represents the wisdom of age, born of experience and reason. With all his psychological means, he tries to settle the quarrel: he points out the immense military advantage for the enemy of a rift between their two strongest and most intelligent attackers, with the attendant division of the besieging army. He recalls that many important heroes have accepted his mediation in the past. He calls on the parties of the quarrel to be reasonable and to acknowledge how crucially important their cooperation is for the whole army and how indispensable each is to the common welfare of the army. But all his efforts are frustrated by the extreme incompatibility of the two personalities. It even seems that Nestor's whole speech has been inserted chiefly to underscore the implacability of the two parties. The listener can better gauge the real depth of Akhilleus' wrath by witnessing the cogency of

the arguments he rejects. At the same time, this speech also performs the programmatic function of making the poet's structural plan somewhat clearer. The stress on the military advantage that Akhilleus' wrath gives to the Trojans shows that the scope of the wrath reaches far beyond one episode and that the whole Trojan expedition is at stake. In this epic the matter of Akhilleus' wrath speaks to a larger issue—the entire war.

After the failed attempt to mediate, matters take their course. With his friend Patroklos and the rest of his "staff," Akhilleus withdraws into his own area of the Akhaian camp. Agamemnon allows Khryseis to be returned to Khryse on a ship under the command of Odysseus. Immediately afterward, his two heralds, Talthybios and Eurybates, proceed to the tent of Akhilleus with official orders to bring away his captive girl Briseis. Akhilleus gives up the girl, but not before calling on the two messengers as witnesses of this injustice

> before the blessed gods, mortal men,
> and also this brutal king [Agamemnon], if ever hereafter
> there should be need of me to ward off shameful destruction
> from the others, because that man [Agamemnon] of course rages
>   now in his ruinous heart
> and lacks utterly the wit to look before and behind him
> so that the Akhaians might fight safely beside the ships.
> (*Il.* 1.339–44)

Here again, we have a foreshadowing. Fixed even more firmly in the mind of the listener—again, by means of an oath—is the certainty that the army will be gravely endangered by the misbehavior of its leader and will desperately need rescue by Akhilleus. At the same time, we see the opinion of the audience being molded: Agamemnon clearly lacks the foresight essential to a leader in his position; lacking "the wit to look before and behind him," he is not the man for his job. This is true of him not only at the moment of this quarrel in the ninth year of the war, but throughout the whole Troy saga; his personality is displayed in a concentrated way by the sharp contrast with Akhilleus. "One expects in the *Iliad* that this man will come to a bad end" (Kullmann 1981, 27); his own wife will suffocate him in his bath!

The heralds leave with Briseis. Akhilleus, however, goes in tears to the seashore (as had Khryses earlier). "Looking out over the boundless

sea" (*Il.* 1.350), he stretches out his arms and beseeches his mother to hear him in his need. His mother, Thetis, a goddess of the sea, comes and asks what is wrong. Akhilleus tells her. He tells her everything that the listener already knows, but this time from his own point of view, stressing Agamemnon's *hybris* (insulting arrogance). He concludes:

> If you are able, protect your son:
> Go to Olympos and petition Zeus . . .
> if he might be willing to help the *Trojans,*
> pressing the Akhaians back to the sterns of their ships along the sea,
> dying, so that they may all have the benefit of their king,
> and so the son of Atreus, the great commander Agamemnon, may recognize
> that he was blind when he did not honor the best of the Akhaians!
>
> (*Il.* 1.393–94, 408–12)

Akhilleus speaks here with sarcasm ("so that they may all have the benefit of their king"), asking that Zeus assist his mortal enemies while wreaking death and destruction on his own comrades.

Akhilleus is not, of course, actuated by a simple longing for vengeance. Were that his motive, then he would have wished for Agamemnon's own death above all. But he is interested in a subtler punishment. If Agamemnon were simply killed, then he would go—still blind—to Hades. Akhilleus would in that case have technically avenged himself, but he would not have extracted satisfaction. Agamemnon must realize that he was wrong and Akhilleus was right and that Akhilleus is indispensable to the expedition. Akhilleus' ascendancy is contingent on Agamemnon's abasement. Thus, Agamemnon himself must not die. He must live, but he must live so that his blindness may gradually be brought home to him in its consequences. But because this autocrat is demonstrably lacking in true intelligence and therefore also in the imagination needed for abstract calculation, he can comprehend his blindness only indirectly through a truly macabre series of experiences. He who is convinced that he acts in the interest of the whole army must come to the painful awareness that his actions have brought down the army to ruination. The Akhaians must die so that their leader's eyes may be opened.

The poet who had Akhilleus conceive this strategy apparently had a conception of the character of the hero unlike that found in older sagas. In the latter, Akhilleus appears to have figured as an ambitious, honor-craving, unreflective, somewhat naive prototype of the "young hot-head." The hulking Akhilleus in his helmet and armor is a common-place picture in our modern storybooks, a much imitated favorite of playful, hero-worshiping boys in heated schoolyard battles. But Homer's Akhilleus is a young man who knows his destiny is to die in the attainment of greatness. He sees himself hindered on his course by a mediocre official who has not once noticed the brilliance of the flame that burns within Akhilleus. Akhilleus is not only physically stronger than his commander; he comprehends, while Agamemnon only calculates his own interest. This is only one example. Homer never portrays truly simplistic individuals. Limited or one-sided individuals, yes, but still always self-aware human beings. Because Homer is not simple, neither are his poetic creations. Nothing could be more mistaken than to read Homer as representative of a "naive epoch."

The plan of action in the *Iliad* has again been further elucidated in the request of Akhilleus. It had already been disclosed in the oath of Akhilleus that this epic would not take the form of a mere episode. The story of the wrath of Akhilleus would be one of ever-increasing mortal peril for the Akhaians. While the perspective in the oath remained quite general, in the request we find a ray of light illuminating the darkness. The creator of the Akhaians' peril is visible—Zeus himself. *He* will help the Trojans. More specifically: he will drive the Akhaians back to the sterns of their ships (which have been drawn onto land stern-first), back to the breaking waves of the sea. This augurs not only the failure of the whole expedition but the very annihilation of the army. Then indeed Agamemnon will be aware of his blindness.

Thus the planned course of events has become a little more concrete. But here, too, we are dealing with only a partial revelation. Certain questions remain open: How, for example, will Zeus help the Trojans? Has not the fall of Troy been decided, and by this same Zeus? How can Zeus contradict himself? The still more pressing question is, What will happen when Agamemnon undergoes his "recognition"? Will there be a reversal? Will it be too late? But it cannot be too late, because, according to the saga, Troy must ultimately fall. How, then, will there be a reversal?

The poet clearly intended this uncertain element in his elucidation. It

is one of his principles of composition. The listener has already traversed three stages in the revelation of the narrative plan. First—the whole general statement of the prooimion—the wrath of Akhilleus has brought "infinite pain" to the Akhaians. Then Akhilleus in his oath graphically prophesied that the army would yearn for him in a situation of dire adversity. Now there is the prospect of the Akhaians being driven back into the sea, coupled with the as yet indefinite prediction that *then* Agamemnon will come to his senses.

The request of Akhilleus is immediately succeeded by the pledge of Thetis. It provides another small increment in the clarification of the narrative plan. It will explain the interconnections among the previously divulged parts of the plan. Thetis says:

> I will go myself to snow capped Olympos, if he [Zeus] might comply.
> But you wait, sitting by the swift ships,
> in anger at the Akhaians, and stay away from the fighting altogether!
>
> (*Il.* 1.420–22)

This reveals the general outlines of the subsequent course of events. The poet has devised a plot that will progress to the same result along two parallel planes—human and divine. On the divine plane, Zeus *will act,* while on the complementary human plane, Akhilleus *will not act.* Akhilleus will sit in wrath beside the ships, and Zeus will drive the Akhaians back to these very ships. For the overall narrative plan to succeed, both component plans must intermesh fully. That means that Akhilleus' wrath is now compulsory. If he were to take part in the fighting again, the design of Zeus would come to naught. Thus new complications and narrative threads are introduced. Being the hero he is, Akhilleus will not long endure having to sit aside in wrath. It is just not possible. His "fingers will itch." What will win out? His desire for satisfaction or his desire to see Troy fall (and to win undying fame)? For he has acted from an unqualified wish to see Troy fall; that was why he summoned the assembly of the army! The listener is far from certain about these things.

Thus the poet's technique consists of an incremental disclosure of the overall narrative plan of the *Iliad.* The individual increments are, nonetheless, relatively small and shed light on only so much of the larger

plan. This leads listeners to ask new questions and thus to experience growing suspense: "The poet's formulation of a narrative program, if it is to foreshadow events and create suspense, must never divulge everything the poet has in mind. If it makes one thing manifest, it must shrewdly conceal others. It reveals the general direction and the ultimate goal of the action, but it leaves the precise route in darkness. Above all, it says nothing about delays or setbacks. For setbacks entail an element of surprise in all narrative and dramatic art" (Schadewaldt 1938, 54 f.). Therefore, the poet only hints at the complete narrative plan. The listener can see only far enough into the future to be conscious that there is a plan. He or she cannot discern in detail how it will play out. This is what creates suspense. Moreover, there should be room within his own plan for the poet to surprise even himself. It would be impossible to sketch every last detail of such an immense construction on the drawing board. The good architect leaves much open. No one has seen this more clearly than the great Homer scholar Karl Reinhardt: "thus new elements are successively added to an underlying pattern or matrix, emerging in part from that matrix itself, in part from circumstances arising outside it, and growing more or less in step with the main trunk" (Reinhardt 1961, 210). Of course, the *Iliad* poet's exact processes of creation can no more be reconstructed than those of any other poet. What reader even today does not automatically know that works of art begin with a concept, an original plan that is then gradually elaborated, at some times very successfully, at others less so?

The Execution of the Narrative Plan: "Akhilleid" and *Iliad*

The listener who has followed the *Iliad* poet carefully up to this point has not only a *basic* structural concept of the further course of action but also the sense that the structure delineated to this point will take up considerable space. In the first 427 lines, the course has been set, and the listener feels that the actual "journey" is now beginning. It will leave far behind the spatial and temporal confines of previous incidents. To this point, everything has transpired in a small area: the Akhaian camp (the meeting place and the tent of Akhilleus) and along the shore where the ships have been dragged to land. The action has involved only a few characters: Khryses, Agamemnon, Akhilleus, Nestor, Patroklos, and fleetingly also Aias, Odysseus, Hektor, Khry-

seis, Briseis, the two heralds, Zeus, Apollo, Hera, Athena, and Thetis. The events since the poem's opening have occupied only a few hours: on the first day of action the brief altercation between Khryses and Agamemnon occurred; then the passing of nine days of pestilence is simply indicated or "named"; on the tenth day we have the assembly, the quarrel, the wrath of Akhilleus, the return of Khryseis to her father at Khryse, the fetching of Briseis from the tent of Akhilleus, and Akhilleus' conversation with Thetis.

The listener is now aware that the framework of action will enlarge. We foresee that Zeus himself will be taking matters in hand; he will allow the Trojans to drive the Akhaians back to the sea. Therefore, the Trojan side also will now figure in the action. The city of Troy, until now only an abstraction, will be depicted concretely. The number of actors will increase. Battle will resume. The static character of the action to this point will come to an end. Events will acquire momentum. Great things are in the offing.

There is now a brief interlude for the expiatory embassy to Khryse; this is essential from a technical, narrative standpoint, since the action at Troy can proceed only when the pestilence in the Akhaian camp ceases, and this in turn will happen only after the appeasement of Apollo, as Khryses has made plain (Latacz 1981b). Starting in line 493, events begin to take on dimensions that are difficult for a modern reader to grasp. (Naturally, the ancient audience, steeped in saga, will have had an easier time of it.) The next 15,205 lines of the epic recount—more or less exhaustively—the incidents of a further thirty days and five nights.

Before discussing how Homer structured this massive narrative, we must set out a synopsis of the events in the *Iliad*. In table 1, the flow of action has been segmented into individual scenes, which are defined and labeled in the interest of gaining the clearest possible conception of the poem's organization. (Other divisions might serve other interests.) The letters *a* and *b* added to line numbers indicate the first and second half of the line. Line numbers in the "day" column indicate the point at which a day or night begins or ends. The Greek terms designating particular books or parts thereof (for example, τειχοσκοπία, "view from the wall," for book 3) go back for the most part to ancient Homer scholars, and perhaps in some cases to the practice of rhapsodes. The causal connections between the most important complexes of scenes are discussed after the synopsis.

TABLE 1. Scene-Distribution in the *Iliad*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 1	
	Prooimion	1–12a
9th year of the war	I. Quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon: background	12–53
(2.295)	(1) Khryses before Agamemnon—his appeal is rejected	12b–32
1st day	(2) Khryses on the shore: he appeals to Apollo for vengeance on the Akhaians	33–43
	(3) Apollo sends the plague	44–53
	Days 1–9: plague	
10th day	II. The Quarrel and its consequences	54–492
(1.54)	(1) Council of the chief Akhaians (ἀγορή, *agorē*):	54–187
	(2) Escalation of the quarrel almost to the killing of the king	188–94a
	(3) Intervention of Athena: killing of the king forestalled; Nestor's fruitless attempt to mediate; partial concession of Akhilleus; Agamemnon sends heralds to Akhilleus	194b–326
	(4) The heralds with Akhilleus and Patroklos; they take Briseis with them	327–348a
	(5) Akhilleus and Thetis on the shore: Akhilleus' petition (407–12)	348b–430a
	(6) The embassy under Odysseus in Khryse	430b–476
11th day	(7) Return of the embassy from Khryse	477–487
(477)	(8) Akhilleus' anger (μῆνις, *mēnis*)	488–492
	11-day absence of the gods, including Zeus, with the Ethiopians	
21st day (493)	III. Intercession of Thetis, the promise of Zeus, and the council of the gods (θεῶν βουλή, *theōn boulē*; 493–611)	
	(1) Thetis with Zeus: her petition; Zeus promises to fulfill it	493–533a
	(2) Zeus and Hera quarrel	533b–570
	(3) Hephaistos reconciles his quarreling parents; "Homeric laughter"; banquet of the gods; the gods retire to sleep	571–611

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 2	
	The testing of the Akhaian army (διάπειρα, *diapeira*); the catalogs	
Night	I. Zeus sends Agamemnon a dream: "Attack!"	1–47
before the 22nd	II. Council of the Akhaian elders (βουλή, *boulē*); assembly of the Akhaian army	48–483
day (1.605) 22nd day	(1) Testing-speech of Agamemnon: tumultuous departure of the army for the ships; intervention of Athena and Odysseus; return of the army into assembly	48–210
(2.48) =	(2) Thersites scene; attempt at mutiny	211–278
1st day of	(3) Calming speeches of Odysseus, Nestor, Agamemnon	279–393
combat	(4) Sacrifice and breakfast in the camp	394–483
	III. Catalog of Ships (marching order of the Akhaian contingents)	484–785
	IV. Zeus sends Iris, messenger of the gods, to the Trojans: the Trojan army marches forth	786–815
	V. Catalog of the Trojans (marching order of the Trojans and their allies)	816–877
	Book 3	
	Truce—view from the wall (τειχοσκοπία, *teikhoskopia*)	
	I. Request and preparations for a truce: the resolution of the war to come through single combat of Menelaos and Paris	1–120
	(1) Encounter of both armies	1–14
	(2) Paris and Menelaos	15–37
	(3) Conversation of Hektor and Paris; agreement between Hektor and Menelaos regarding truce and decisive single combat of Paris and Menelaos	38–120
	II. View from the wall, *teikhoskopia* (Helen "spots" the Akhaian heroes from the wall for Priam)	121–244
	III. Conclusion of the truce between Agamemnon and Priam	245–313
	IV. The single combat of Menelaos and Paris: Paris in dire need, rescued by Aphrodite	314–382
	V. Aphrodite forces Helen to the bed of the defeated Paris	383–448
	VI. Result: Agamemnon claims victory for Menelaos, restitution of Helen and the stolen treasure, and payment of reparations	449–461

(continued)

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 4	
	Bow-shot of Pandaros	
	I. Breaking of the truce	1–219
	(1) Council of the gods: decision—continuation of the war and destruction of Troy; Zeus sends Athena to the Trojans—she is to induce the Trojans to break the truce	1–73
	(2) Pandaros wounds Menelaos with a bow-shot at the urging of Athena	74–147
	(3) Agamemnon's concern for his brother Menelaos; the physician Makhaon treats the wound	148–219
	II. Agamemnon reviews the assembled Akhaian troops (ἐπιπώλησις, *epipōlēsis*)	220–421
	III. Beginning of the battle	422–544
	(1) The armies advance and engage: individual combats (exemplifying the battle on a wider scale: technique of selection); Apollo encourages the Trojans, Athena the Akhaians	422–516
	(2) Further individual combats leading to the full development of battle	517–544
	Book 5	
	Aristeia of Diomedes (Διομήδους ἀριστεία)	
	I. Superiority of the Akhaians by Athena's influence	1–453
	(1) Aristeia of Diomedes	
	(a) the deeds of Diomedes up to his wounding by Pandaros' arrow	1–113
	(b) his fight against Aineias and Pandaros and his wounding of Aphrodite	114–418
	(2) Athena derides Aphrodite; Apollo saves Aineias	419–453
	II. Superiority of Trojans under Ares' leadership in Athena's absence	454–710
	(1) Recovery of the Trojans through Ares and Hektor; Diomedes gives ground	454–626
	(2) Fight between Lykian Sarpedon and Rhodian (Akhaian) Tlepolemos; further deeds of Hektor	627–710
	III. Intervention of Hera and Athena on behalf of the Akhaians	711–846
	IV. Diomedes wounds even Ares	847–906
	V. Hera and Athena return to Olympos	907–909

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 6	
	Conversation (ὁμιλία, *homilia*)	
	I. The battle: individual combats; many Trojans fall; Nestor urges the Akhaians to energetic pursuit and slaughter of the Trojans	1–72
	II. Conversation of Helenos and Hektor; Helenos' advice: "Go into the city and arrange for the women to make a state sacrifice for Athena"	73–118
	III. The Lykian Glaukos and Diomedes meet	119–236
	IV. Hektor in the city (ὁμιλία, *homilia*)	237–529
	(1) Hektor with his mother, Hekabe	237–311
	(2) Hektor with his brother, Paris, and his sister-in-law, Helen	312–369
	(3) Hektor with his wife, Andromakhe, and his small son, Astyanax	370–502
	(4) Hektor returns with Paris to battle	503–529
	Book 7	
	The building of the Akhaian wall	
	I. The Trojans gain ground	1–16
	II. Single combat of Hektor and Aias (inconclusive outcome; respectful exchange of gifts)	17–312
	III. Council of the leaders (βουλή, *boulē*) in Agamemnon's tent; result: request for a truce for the purpose of burial of the dead (and the erecting of a wall around the ships)	313–344
	IV. The Trojan army assembles (ἀγορή, *agorē*) on the Acropolis; result: assent to the Akhaian proposal, additional offer of the stolen treasure (but not Helen)	345–380
23rd day (7.381)	V. Truce and burial of the dead; the Akhaians refuse the Trojan compromise offer	381–432
24th day (7.433)	VI. The Akhaians build a wall (Poseidon and Zeus watch from Olympos: Poseidon may destroy the wall after the Akhaians depart (anticipatory rebuke)	433–464
	VII. Meal in the Akhaian camp; thunderclap of Zeus—omen of a difficult battle	465–482

(continued)

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 8	
	Broken-off battle (κόλος μάχη, *kolos makhē*)	
25th day (8.1) = 2nd day of combat	I. Assembly of the gods: the gods will not participate in battle; Zeus goes to Mt. Ida	1–52
	II. The second day of battle	53–565
	(1) Inconclusive battle	53–67
	(2) Midday intervention of Zeus (weighing of the destiny of both parties [κηροστασία, *kērostasia*]): superiority of the Trojans	68–77
	(3) Advance of the Trojans under Hektor; Zeus drives back Diomedes	78–197
	(4) Hera angered by the course of the fighting; prayer of Agamemnon to Zeus; change in the battle	198–252
	(5) Advance of the Akhaians	253–315
	(6) Hektor pushes the Akhaians back	316–349
	(7) Zeus forestalls an attempt by Hera and Athena to intervene in the battle on behalf of the Akhaians despite his prohibition	350–484
	(8) Nightfall ends the battle; the Trojans encamp for the first time in the plain outside their walls; dire straits of the Akhaians	485–565
	Book 9	
	The embassy to Akhilleus (Λιταί, *Litai*)	
Evening and night before the 26th day (8.486)	I. Council meetings of the Akhaians	1–181
	(1) Assembly of the army: crisis situation (ἀπορία, *aporia*)	1–88
	(2) Advice (βουλή, *boulē*) of the elders (γέροντες, *gerontes*) in the tent of Agamemnon: an embassy to Akhilleus	89–181
	II. Unsuccessful embassy to Akhilleus (Akhilleus' mind unchanged by the speeches of Odysseus, Phoinix, and Aias)	182–668
	III. Announcement of Akhilleus' refusal and the reaction of the Akhaians	669–713
	(1) Odysseus announces Akhilleus' answer	669–691
	(2) The angry Diomedes disperses the assembly; summons to further battle on the next morning	692–713
	Book 10	
	Doloneia (Δολώνεια)	
	I. Both sides plan a nighttime spying expedition	1–339
	(1) Preliminaries of the Akhaian spying expedition	1–298

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	(2) Preliminaries of the Trojan spying expedition Dolon)	299–339
	II. Encounter of Dolon with Diomedes and Odysseus; Dolon's slaying	340–468
	III. The actions of Diomedes and Odysseus in the camp of the Trojans	469–525
	IV. Return of Diomedes and Odysseus to the camp of the Akhaians	526–579
	Book 11	
	Aristeia of Agamemnon (Ἀγαμέμνονος ἀριστεία)	
26th day	I. Preparation for battle: drawing up of both armies	1–66
(11.1) = 3rd	II. Balance of power in the battle	67–83
day of	III. Aristeia (supremacy) of Agamemnon	84–283
combat	IV. Advance of the Trojans; heroic actions of Hektor	284–309
	V. Counterattack of Diomedes and Odysseus; Hektor stunned	310–367
	VI. Slackening of Akhaian opposition because of the wounding of several major heroes (Diomedes, Odysseus, Agamemnon, Machaon—whom Nestor conveys out of the battle—and Eurypylos)	368–595
	VII. Akhilleus sends Patroklos to Nestor (Patroklos is to investigate the situation)	596–848
	Book 12	
	Battle around the camp wall (Τειχομαχία, *Teikhomakhia*)	
	I. Further description of battle; fate of the wall after the fall of Troy	1–35
	II. Preparation for battle at the wall	36–107
	III. Attack of the Trojan ally Asios on the wall is repulsed	108–194
	IV. Attack by Hektor is repulsed	195–289
	V. Attack of the Lykian Sarpedon is repulsed	290–429
	VI. Hektor smashes the gate with a boulder; the Trojans break into the Akhaian camp; the Akhaians flee toward the sea to the ships	430–471
	Book 13	
	Battle by the ships	
	I. Poseidon interferes on behalf of the Akhaians	1–125

(continued)

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	II. Battle at the center	126–205
	III. Renewed intervention of Poseidon; preparation for battle on the left flank	206–329
	IV. Intense fighting in the sector of Idomeneus and Meriones	330–344
	V. Zeus and Poseidon in opposition on the battlefield	345–360
	VI. Aristeia of Idomeneus	361–454
	VII. Battles over the corpse of the Trojan Alkathoös	455–575
	VIII. Single combats of Menelaos	576–672
	IX. Trojans prepare for a new general assault; the Akhaians stand firm	673–837

Book 14

Day	Scene	Lines
	The deception of Zeus (Διὸς ἀπάτη, *Dios apatē*)	
	I. Nestor and the three wounded Akhaian heroes (Diomedes, Odysseus, Agamemnon) reenter battle; Poseidon incites the Akhaians	1–152
	(1) Nestor takes stock of the situation	1–26
	(2) Nestor's encounter with the three wounded heroes	27–40
	(3) The four leaders take counsel	41–134
	(4) Poseidon encourages the leaders and the army	135–152
	II. Hera seduces Zeus, with the help of Aphrodite and Hypnos, the god of sleep, to assist the Akhaians	153–362
	III. Continuation of fighting up to the (temporary) victory of the Akhaians	363–522
	(1) Preparation for battle by both sides	363–388
	(2) Poseidon now personally leads the Akhaians	389–401
	(3) Aias fights Hektor; Hektor dazed	402–439
	(4) New onslaught of the Akhaians; successful single combats of the Akhaians	440–505
	(5) Flight of the Trojans back over the camp trenches	506–522

Book 15

Day	Scene	Lines
	I. Restoration of the earlier situation	1–389
	(1) Zeus awakes; argument with Hera	1–77
	(2) Hera goes to the gods on Olympos and tries to instigate them against Zeus	78–156
	(3) Zeus, through Iris, orders Poseidon to leave the battle	157–219

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	(4) Apollo heals Hektor	220–262
	(5) Battle under Apollo's leadership up to the light of the Akhaians again to their camp	263–389
	II. Patroklos soothes Eurypylos in his hut and then returns to Akhilleus	390–404
	III. Battle at and around the ships, under Zeus' own leadership	405–746
	(1) Hektor and Aias fight at one of the ships; single combat	405–591
	(2) Hektor's advance to the ships; Nestor's warning speech: last call	592–673
	(3) Aias must slowly retreat in his defense of the ship, the sea at his back	674–746
	Book 16	
	Patrokleia	
	I. Patroklos' petition and preparation for he sortie	1–256
	(1) Patroklos asks Akhilleus to allow him to wear his arms into battle	1–100
	(2) Intensified pressure on the Akhaians	101–129
	(3) Patroklos and the Myrmidons arm	130–220
	(4) Akhilleus prays to Zeus for Patroklos' success	221–256
	II. Patroklos' deeds up to the flight of the Trojans back to the trench	257–418
	III. The death of Zeus' son Sarpedon at the hands of Patroklos; fighting over his corpse	419–683
	IV. Patroklos' last deeds; his death	684–867
	(1) Pursuit of the Trojans by Patroklos up to Troy's walls	684–711
	(2) Apollo, in the guise of Hektor's uncle, Asios, encourages Hektor	712–730
	(3) Fight between Hektor and Patroklos	731–828
	(4) Hektor speaks with the dying Patroklos	829–867
	Book 17	
	Aristeia of Menelaos	
	I. Single combat over the corpse and the weapons of Patroklos (= the arms of Akhilleus)	1–139
	II. Massed combat over Patroklos' corpse; shifts in momentum	140–423

(continued)

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	III. Battle for the horses of Akhilleus	424–542
	IV. Return of the Akhaians with the corpse of Patroklos	543–761
	Book 18	
	The arms of Akhilleus	
	I. Announcement of Patroklos' death and its aftermath	1–147
	(1) Antilokhos informs Akhilleus of Patroklos' death	1–34
	(2) Lament of Thetis for her son	35–64
	(3) Akhilleus informs Thetis of his intention to avenge Patroklos; Thetis promises him new arms	65–147
	II. Rescue of the Akhaians, who are retreating with Patroklos' corpse, by Akhilleus' appearance at the trench	148–238
Night before the 27th day (18.239–242)	III. Events in both camps during the following night	239–368
	(1) End of the battle owing to premature sunset	239–242
	(2) Poulydamas' advice to return is overruled by Hektor	243–314
	(3) Akhilleus by the corpse of Patroklos; vow of vengeance	315–355
	(4) Dialogue of Zeus and Hera	356–368
	IV. Thetis with Hephaistos; Hephaistos makes a new set of arms for Akhilleus; the shield of Akhilleus	369–617
	Book 19	
	Quelling of the wrath (μήνιδος ἀπόρρησις, *mēnidos aporrhēsis*)	
27th day (19.1) = 4th day of combat	I. Thetis gives Akhilleus his new arms	1–39
	II. Settlement of the quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon; Briseis given back to Akhilleus	40–281
	III. Laments for Patroklos (Briseis and the women; Akhilleus and the chief Akhaians)	282–351a
	IV. Preparations for the battle for vengeance	351b–424
	(1) Akhilleus arms for battle; the army goes forth	351b–398
	(2) His horse, Xanthos, informs Akhilleus of his approaching death	399–424

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	Book 20	
	The *Aeneid*	
	I. Council of the gods; participation of the gods in the approaching battle	1–75
	II. Single combat of Aeneias and Akhilleus	76–352
	(1) Apollo encourages Aeneias to engage Akhilleus	76–111
	(2) Hera tries in vain to stir Poseidon and Athena to intercede on Akhilleus' behalf; the gods draw back	112–155
	(3) Conversation of Aeneias and Akhilleus; they fight	156–287
	(4) Poseidon rescues Aeneias	288–352
	III. Akhilleus' battle-rage and the flight of the Trojans	353–503
	Book 21	
	The river battle; battle of the gods (Θεομαχία, *Theomakhia*)	
	I. Akhilleus fights the Trojans beside and in the river Skamandros	1–232
	II. Skamandros fights Akhilleus; Hephaistos overpowers Skamandros (fire against water)	233–384
	III. The battle of the gods	385–520
	(1) Ares vs. Athena	391–417
	(2) Athena vs. Aphrodite	418–434
	(3) Apollo vs. Poseidon	435–469
	(4) Artemis vs. Hera	470–496
	(5) Hermes vs. Leto	497–504
	(6) Artemis on Olympos with Zeus	505–514
	(7) Apollo goes to Ilios; the other gods go back to Olympos	515–520a
	IV. Flight of the Trojans into the city under Apollo's protection	520b–611
	Book 22	
	The death of Hektor	
	I. Preliminaries to the encounter of Akhilleus and Hektor	1–130
	II. Hektor's flight before Akhilleus	131–166
	III. The gods decide Hektor's destiny	167–247
	(1) The gods deliberate	167–187
	(2) Akhilleus continues his pursuit of Hektor; the scales of Zeus weigh against Hektor	188–213

(continued)

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	(3) Athena, in the guise of Deiphobos, persuades Hektor to stand his ground against Akhilleus	214–247
	IV. The battle between Akhilleus and Hektor; Hektor's death	248–394
	V. Akhilleus' mistreatment of Hektor's corpse; dirges for Hektor	395–515
	(1) Akhilleus drags Hektor's corpse back to his camp	395–404
	(2) Hektor's father Priam and his mother Hekabe lament his death	405–436
	(3) Andromakhe hears Hekabe's lament and hurries to the tower	437–474
	(4) The lamentation of Andromakhe	475–515

Book 23

Day	Scene	Lines
	Funeral games (Ἆθλα, *Athla*)	
	I. The burial of Patroklos	1–255
	(1) Akhilleus drives around Patroklos' corpse; the funeral meal	1–58
Night before the	(2) Patroklos appears in a dream to the sleeping Akhilleus and asks to be buried quickly	59–110a
28th day	(3) The burning of Patroklos' corpse	110b–225
(23.62)	(4) The burial of Patroklos' bones	226–257a
28th day	II. Funeral games in honor of Patroklos	257b–897
(23.109) 29th day	(1) Chariot race: Eumelos, Diomedes, Menelaos, Antilokhos, Meriones	257b–652
(23.226)	(2) Boxing: Epeios and Euryalos	653–699
	(3) Wrestling: Aias and Odysseus	700–739
	(4) Foot race: the lesser Aias, Odysseus, Antilokhos	740–797
	(5) Armed combat: Diomedes and Aias	798–825
	(6) Discus throwing: Polypoites, Aias, and Epeios	826–849
	(7) Archery: Meriones and Teukros	850–883
	(8) Spear throwing: Akhilleus stops the contest between Agamemnon and Meriones	884–897

Book 24

Day	Scene	Lines
	The ransom of Hektor (Ἕκτορος λύσις, *Hektoros lysis*)	
	I. Preliminaries to the ransoming of Hektor's corpse	1–467
	(1) Akhilleus' mistreatment of Hektor's corpse	1–21

TABLE 1—*Continued*

Day	Scene	Lines
	The mistreatment goes on for 11 days	22–30
41st day (24.31)	(2) Council of the gods: Zeus instructs Thetis to persuade Akhilleus to release Hektor's body	31–142
	(3) Zeus, through Iris, commands Priam to go into the camp of Akhilleus	143–187
Night before the	(4) Priam goes into the Akhaian camp; Hermes guides him to the tent of Akhilleus	188–467
42nd day (24.351)	II. The encounter of Akhilleus and Priam; the ransom of Hektor	468–676
	(1) Priam's appeal; they join in sorrow; Akhilleus promises to give back the corpse	468–571
	(2) Akhilleus accepts the offered ransom; he washes, anoints, and clothes Hektor's corpse and then bids Priam join him in a common meal	572–627
	(3) Akhilleus prepares a bed for Priam and agrees to an 11-day truce for Hektor's funeral	628–676
42nd day (24.695)	III. Hektor's corpse is brought home; mourning and burial	677–804
	(1) Hermes urges Priam to depart in safety during the night; he leads him to the Skamandros	677–697
	(2) Priam arrives at Troy with Hektor's body; Kassandra's cry of grief; general mourning	698–718
	(3) Solemn laments of Andromakhe, Hekabe, and Helen in the palace	719–776
	9 days to build Hektor's pyre	777–784
51st day (24.785)	(4) The burial of Hektor's corpse	785–804

In all, 51 days' events: the occurrences of 15 days and 5 nights are narrated action; the rest of the time is, in narratological terms, only named.

Despite the, at times, large magnitude of some of the scenes we can always discern the main line of development through all phases of the *Iliad*'s action. (Though we should not forget that, as with all large-scale epics in world literature, there is normally also a "hidden" agenda present.)

In conformity with the plan of action laid down in book 1, Akhilleus refrains from joining in battle, and Zeus drives the Akhaians ever farther back toward the sea. As the situation of the Akhaians becomes more dire (at the end of book 8), they appeal to Akhilleus for help. Akhilleus refuses because his condition for rejoining is far from fulfilled: the Akhaians, and thus Agamemnon, are not yet standing on the brink of disaster (book 9). As the battle takes an ever higher toll (book 11), Akhilleus can no longer bear merely to look on (this eventuality, too, was anticipated already in the program outlined in book 1). He sends his friend Patroklos to gather information (at the end of book 11). Patroklos goes to the tent of Nestor. There, the old man urges him to ask Akhilleus if he might at least send Patroklos into battle in his stead (*Il.* 11.796). Patroklos is slow to return, because he stops to care for the wounded Eurypylos. By the time he gets back to Akhilleus, the Trojans are already throwing torches on the ships of the Akhaians (end of book 15)—this latest critical turn of events was something that Patroklos himself, however, had not observed during his return; he reports to Akhilleus only of the "extreme peril" of the Akhaians. Repeating the words of Nestor's request at 11.796 almost verbatim (16.38), Patroklos asks Akhilleus to send him into battle in his place along with the now well rested Myrmidons (about twenty-five hundred men, as we know from *Il.* 2.67 f.). Akhilleus consents, provided that the Akhaians "are actually already pushed back against the sea surf and hold only a narrow strip of the shore" (*Il.* 16.67 f.). Patroklos dons Akhilleus' armor and the enemy takes him to be Akhilleus. He drives the Trojans back to the walls of Troy but is then killed by Hektor (16.855). The Trojans now finally have a free hand.

When Akhilleus learns of his friend's death, all his previous arrangements are null and void. His wrath, "accursed" in view of its outcome, is now inconsequential and obsolete. He settles his dispute with Agamemnon as a mere irksome formality (19.270–75) and plunges back into battle (end of book 19). With his Myrmidons, he drives the Trojans back to the city walls. Then he avenges Patroklos by killing Hektor (22.361). He buries the body of Patroklos with all honors, but he dese-

crates the corpse of Hektor in a frenzy of vengefulness that alienates him from himself (24.39–54). The gods intervene. They prompt the old king Priam to go in person to Troy's mortal enemy, the killer of his son, to ask for Hektor's body. Priam dissolves Akhilleus' nearly inhuman obduracy by an act of nearly superhuman self-effacement: Priam kisses the hands of Akhilleus, "the dreadful, manslaughtering hands that had cut down so many of his sons" (24.478 f.). Akhilleus gives back Hektor's corpse, which is brought home to Troy and buried.

This is the baseline of the action that throughout the whole plot stays fixed in the listener's consciousness as the "reality." It is the Akhilleus line with which the work began: the wrath and its consequences. By the end, these consequences have amassed such "infinite pain"—and not only physical pain—as to obscure and submerge the point of the wrath. These consequences abate only gradually, and finally, with the ransom of Hektor's body, they die away altogether. This is the *mēnis* (wrath) plotline. It is rightly dubbed the *Akhilleid.*

The *Akhilleid* does not, however, encompass the entire work. Other elements are combined, mixed together, and merged with it. There are narrative sequences that seem only indirectly relevant to the *Akhilleid:* for example, certain of the scenes at Troy—Helen with Priam on the wall, identifying the Akhaian heroes; Aphrodite forcibly bringing Helen and Paris together in bed; Hektor's lengthy conversations with his mother, his brother, Paris, and his wife, Andromakhe. Then there are the long battle scenes of the third day of combat, which fill nearly all of books 11 through 18; the description of the shield of Akhilleus (*Il.* 18.478–607); the detailed account (639 lines) of the funeral games in book 23. The *Akhilleid* by itself could be quickly presented. It is the expansions (which Analyst scholars prefer to call "ornamentations," "accretions," "poetic augmentations," "patchwork," "insertions," "interpolations," and so on) that lengthen what might have been a short narrative, as it were—a novella—and make it into an epic; in short, they make an *Iliad* out of the *Akhilleid.* How are we to interpret the relation between the two?

Is the *Iliad* a river along which the narrator travels, regarding the landscape beyond the shore and including sections of it in his narrative? Is the *Iliad* a more or less accidental unity, held together only by the will of a poet selecting material according to his own whim or the preferences of his public? Superficially, we are dealing with the question posed by F.A. Wolf and all Analyst scholars after him. If one

scratches the surface, however, one ultimately comes to the fundamental issue that has motivated Analytic scholarship—the poetic quality of the *Iliad*. This issue was already indirectly raised by Aristotle in the context of his comparison of tragedy and epic at *Poetics* 1462b3–11 (unfortunately a somewhat lacunose passage). Aristotle evaluates Homeric epic very positively: "And yet [though the length of epic necessarily makes it seem less unified than drama] *these* poetic works [the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*] are put together [composed, organized] as well as can be and are nearly the representation of a *single* action." The rationale for this judgment is provided in another passage (*Poetics* 1455b13): the episodes (that is, "added elements") in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are "intrinsically related" (οἰκεῖα, *oikeia* = integral constituents). Is Aristotle correct? We cannot here decide the issue with respect to the immense structure of the whole *Iliad*. But perhaps we may give a few indications of how carefully the structure of the work has been contrived and arranged.

The *Mēnis* Theme

The plan of action laid out by the *Iliad* poet by line 427 of book 1 may be completed only when both of the principals involved in it—Zeus and Akhilleus—act in conformity to that plan. In other words, Zeus must help the Trojans, and Akhilleus may *not* help the Akhaians. But both parties must first be induced to act in these ways. For both in reality wish to do quite the opposite: Zeus actually desires the fall of Troy, and Akhilleus in fact wants to fight along with the Akhaians (even though he is in a different mood at the moment). Both must therefore be compelled to reverse their genuine instincts. Thetis effects this reversal in Akhilleus by her advice to "sit beside the swift ships in anger at the Akhaians and keep far away from the fighting!" (*Il.* 1.421–22). She achieves it with Zeus by her petition (1.503–30). But only when both reversals are actually realized can the narrative shift into the anticipated course. The poet must therefore report the reversals.

He describes the first reversal (Akhilleus) at *Iliad* 1.488–92:

> But he waited in anger, sitting beside the swift ships,
> the divinely born son of Peleus, swift-footed Akhilleus:
> Now he went neither to the assemblies where men gain honor
> nor into battle. But he constantly wasted his heart

holding out in his camp, yet longing always for the fighting and
din of battle.

This amounts to a very literal implementation of the advice that Thetis gave at 1.421–22. Thus one of the two complements of the plan of action is fixed once and for all in the listener's mind; it is a component that provides the substructure of books 2 through 19: Akhilleus' wrath and abstinence from fighting, and the suffering (including his own) caused thereby. The wrath of Akhilleus—a mere abstraction in the first line of the poem—has now taken on concrete form in the mind of the listener: it consists of utter passivity and suffering.

Of course, this entailed a problem for the poet. To support the overall structure of the plot, the poet had to keep his listeners continuously aware of both of the, so to say, weight-bearing members of the construction—the divine as well as the human. This was not difficult as regards the divine complement of the plan: it was easy to translate into action the behavior of Zeus in helping the Trojans and driving back the Akhaians. The same was not true as regards the human complement of the plan, because in this case he had to show how Akhilleus was *not* acting. This could not be accomplished simply by having Akhilleus disappear, for the listener would tend to forget him—precisely what must not be allowed to happen. Then the listener would not perceive the structural tension in the fabrication of the following narrative. Rather, the listener had to be made to think, "All that I am witnessing here and now—the battles, the woundings and deaths of men, even the hopes and disappointments on both sides—is possible only because Akhilleus is passive." Akhilleus, then, far from vanishing from the narrative, had to remain as present as possible, but as a nonparticipant. The listener had to be aware of Akhilleus' passivity as passivity. Only then could the listener distinguish what was happening as a conditional, ephemeral, inconclusive state of affairs, a reversal of momentum that would persist only so long as Akhilleus was passive. It had to be very clear that, if Akhilleus renounced his passivity, the reversal would be undone and the true state of affairs reinstated. Only such an awareness of conditionality could generate suspense in the deeper sense; that is, the point of view must be one of constantly maintained expectancy. Thus the *Iliad* poet faced the task of presenting the inaction of Akhilleus as one of the *most forceful* actions of the epic.

Homer solved the problem by a certain process of reiteration. He

repeatedly flashes on the passivity of Akhilleus in the intervals between the passages in which it is the main focus (books 1, 9, 16, 18, 19). Thus the structural efficacy or energy of the basic theme of the action of the *Iliad* could not be forgotten even in those portions of the story that otherwise might have seemed to be loose episodes. This stratagem of reiteration had the further effect of showing the apparently loose episodes to be parts of the action made possible only because of the wrath of Akhilleus.

It is not possible here to quote all the relevant passages at length. They include: *Iliad* 2.239 ff., 2.769 ff. (the catalog of ships), 4.512 ff. (where Apollo encourages the Trojans), 5.788 (where Hera encourages the Akhaians), 6.99 (where Helenos mentions Akhilleus in the presence of Hektor), 7.228 ff. (where Aias threatens Hektor). Two examples will illustrate the type. In the first, Thersites accuses Agamemnon before the assembled army of lacking the qualities of leadership:

> he who has now insulted even Akhilleus, a man better by far
> than he:
> he has taken away his gift of honor, seizing it himself!
> But there is no gall in Akhilleus, the weakling!
> Else you would have behaved disgracefully for the last time, son
> of Atreus!
>
> (*Il.* 2.239–42)

In the second, Hera addresses the Akhaians:

> Shame on you Argives, good-for-nothing pretty boys!
> Indeed, so long as godlike Akhilleus used to go into battle. . . .
> (*Il.* 5.787–88)

The wrath of Akhilleus, the underlying theme of the action, is referred to in this way no less than six times between books 1 and 9—once by the poet in propria persona, and five times by various Akhaian, Trojan, and divine characters. Akhilleus is present even in his absence. Every character (and thus also the audience) remains fully aware of Akhilleus' abstention from fighting and thereby of the temporary nature of the present situation. There is a concomitant sense of the retardative character of the *Iliad* within the Troy saga as a whole.

Clearly, an organizing intellect wishes to maintain a unified action and seeks to prevent a collapse into fragmentation.

Hand in hand with this technique of conjunction goes a technique of disjunction. By distinctively anticipating later flashbacks, the poet is able to expand the scope of action and include complexes of material that initially seem irrelevant but suddenly prove pertinent. This technique is most in evidence in books 2 through 7.

The Theme of the Thetis Petition

It required a strong force to reverse in a lasting way the true desires of both the major figures in the plot the poet had devised. The poet provided such a force in the form of Thetis. As a goddess and the mother of Akhilleus, she was able to move on both the divine and the human levels of action. Thus she could plausibly bring about on both levels the change in circumstances demanded by the poetic plan. With her son Akhilleus, Thetis could simply give a command: "Stay sitting by the ships and fight no longer" (*Il.* 1.421–22). Akhilleus obeys, at first, of course, with pleasure, because the command coincides with his own wishes, but soon, the poet tells us, his compliance brings ever increasing inner turmoil. For Akhilleus is acting against his own true nature, which impels him not to sit around but to perform heroic deeds: "he sat in wrath beside the ships and went neither into the assembly of the army nor into battle, but his heart languished unceasingly while he stayed there and he longed unceasingly for battle and the sounds of battle" (1.488–92). Moreover, the listener will later be apprised of Akhilleus' destiny, which had to be known to him since it was a basic element of the saga. As Akhilleus himself puts it: "My destiny prescribes alternative paths to death for me: if I remain here and fight around the city of Troy, then my homecoming is lost, but undying fame will be mine; if I return to my house in my beloved homeland, then glorious fame will be lost for me and my life will continue for a long time" (9.411–15). Akhilleus, of course, has long ago opted for the former, that is, the fame. He *must*, therefore, wish to fight, and he must wish to destroy the city of Troy. Consequently, he must also be troubled and tormented by the present developments, which run contrary to all he desires. Nonetheless he obeys. His sense of honor and his mother's command constrain him.

Thetis could not simply command Zeus, the other actor who had to "play along," if the plan was to succeed. Him she had to entreat. She presents her request in book 1, lines 503–10: "Zeus, if I have ever served you well in word or deed in the past, grant this wish to me. Honor my son, who has been born to die so long before his time. The lord of men Agamemnon has utterly dishonored him. He has taken away his gift of honor with his own hands! Therefore, do grant him honor, Olympian Zeus, in your great wisdom. Grant supremacy to the Trojans until finally the Akhaians show respect to my son and overwhelm him with honors!" Zeus gives his consent, although he has reservations in view of what he knows to be the diametrically opposed objectives of his extremely emancipated wife, Hera. In one of the most majestic scenes of the *Iliad*, Zeus nods assent and Olympos trembles (1.524–30; by such means the poet customarily underscores the importance of particular items in his narration). It signals also the accomplishment of the second reversal. The two complementary motive forces of the narrative can now begin to function. Akhilleus is wrathful and Zeus helps the Trojans.

But, surprisingly, the expectations of the listener are met only with respect to the first motive force of the narrative. Akhilleus is in fact wrathful and the listener is alerted to this fact repeatedly in the subsequent books, as I have shown. But Zeus does *not* help the Trojans in these subsequent books. In books 2 through 7, the action runs quite contrary to the expected reversal; that is, the Akhaians are winning. They drive the Trojans into such dire straits that, toward the end of the seventh book, they make an offer of partial capitulation: to wit, the return of all the treasure that Paris had once taken with him from Troy. Beyond that, they also offer to make an additional payment by way of reparation. Paris wishes only to keep Helen. The Akhaians refuse and the battle continues the next day.

At this point, Zeus suddenly begins to fulfill the request of Thetis. He in fact gives supremacy to the Trojans and prevents the pro-Akhaian goddesses Hera and Athena from intervening on behalf of their favorites. And toward the end of the eighth book, Zeus announces his long-range plans in precisely the way we would have expected him to do immediately after Thetis made her request:

> Tomorrow morning, you will see the powerful son of Kronos
> [= Zeus] become yet stronger,

if you have the stomach for it, ox-eyed lady Hera,
destroying a numberless host of Argive spear-fighters.
Because the mighty Hektor will not leave off from battle
till swift-footed Akhilleus bestirs himself beside the ships,
at that time when battle rages around the very sterns of the ships
for the body of Patroklos in the frightfully narrow space
remaining to the Akhaians.

(*Il.* 8.470–76)

This passage is known to students of Homer under the rubric "the first announcement of Zeus." In it, the poet sketches in broad outline the actual course of events of the next day of battle, detailed in books 11 through 18: Hektor will drive forward to the ships of the Akhaians; Patroklos will be sent against him; Patroklos will fall. Akhilleus will bestir himself beside the ships to avenge his friend. From the stance of narrative technique, this announcement is a foreshadowing by the poet; but it is also a veiled allusion to and reiteration of the actual terms of Thetis' request. The catchword is "sterns" (πρύμναι, *prymnai*). In the first formulation of his petition to Thetis, Akhilleus had used this word to designate the spatial limit of his desire for vengeance. She in turn used the same word in conveying the request to Zeus. He was to allow the Akhaians to be driven back to the "sterns" of their ships (*Il.* 1.409). Now here the poet picks up the same catchword again in Zeus' announcement: "at that time when battle rages around the very sterns of the ships" (8.475). Obviously, one and the same poet is at work here: he picks up in book 8 the thread of the narrative line begun with the request of Thetis in book 1, without overlapping, lapses in logic, or gaps.

But what are we to make of books 2 through 7? Why is the request of Thetis not mentioned in them? Furthermore, why is the request of Thetis apparently inoperative in them? Why does the action in these books run precisely counter to the direction of events that the request of Thetis must dictate? Has the poet in these books forgotten the promise that he has had Zeus give to Thetis in the first book? Or—the interpretation preferred by Analyst scholars—was the poet of books 2–7 not the poet who composed the request of Thetis?

The latter explanation is not possible. For the request of Thetis and the wrath of Akhilleus form a bipartite structural unity. The request has been indissolubly linked to the wrath since book 1, lines 419–22. Now

the structural correlative of the request of Thetis, namely, the wrath of Akhilleus, is a recurrent motif in books 2 through 7, as I have shown. That the poet of the wrath (*mēnis*) is identical to the poet of the request is undeniable in light of the indissoluble connection of these two components of the overall narrative plan. Therefore the poet who constantly invokes one of the two complements in books 2 through 7 cannot conceivably have "forgotten" the other in these same books. Rather, he must have merely avoided it. That is, the *Iliad* poet, in books 2 through 7, must deliberately have faded out, postponed, and suspended all traces of the request of Thetis and the promise Zeus gave in response. Themes are suppressed in narrative to make room for others. What then did the *Iliad* poet fade into this free space or "breathing room" that he created for himself?

After Zeus has given his promise, he immediately thinks of a way to fulfill it. On the following night (beginning of book 2), he sends a dream to Agamemnon. The dream, at Zeus' instigation, deludes Agamemnon into thinking the conquest of Troy will occur the next day. Nothing could be more welcome to Agamemnon than such a vision, which promises to free him from all his current difficulties. He clutches at the straw held out in the dream. The poet stresses Agamemnon's self-delusion and desperation by one of his very rare uses of auctorial commentary: "for he believed that he could take the city of Priam on that very day—fool that he was, who knew nothing whatever of the things Zeus was plotting" (*Il.* 2.37 ff.). At dawn, Agamemnon persuades the fairly skeptical members of his general staff to mobilize the men (though the pestilence has only just ceased and one of the most important contingents—that of Akhilleus—has gone on strike). An assembly of the army is summoned. Agamemnon then tries to restore the motivation of the troops by means of a ruse that is often effective in military settings. He feigns a disgraceful defeatism with the aim of shocking the men; this is the famous *diapeira* or "test," of the army, which he had discussed early during the conference with his general staff. In the course of his long "testing" address (2.110–40), the poet has Agamemnon make a statement that radically alters the direction of the entire narrative to this point: "nine years of mighty Zeus have already gone by, the timbers of our ships have disintegrated and the ropes have rotted, and our wives and young children sit at home longing for us, while the task we came here to perform remains utterly undone" (2.134–38).

This indication of time introduces a development that accounts for

the suspension of the request of Thetis in books 2 through 7. For it introduces a whole new dimension to the narrative: the dimension of the past, of history. To this point, it has seemed that only an excerpt of the saga would be presented, within a discrete time frame, while the background, the larger context, and the depth of the story would be presupposed. In other words, the narrative seemed to be synchronic. Now, however, a diachronic perspective comes into play. A few lines later, the poet mentions Helen. This not only pushes the temporal envelope further back into the past (the reason for the war, the period prior to the war) but also introduces an element of causation. From the current situation before Troy, an arc extends back to the first beginnings. A background emerges.

In the following books, the poet consistently follows the narrative line established here. The first instance comes a little later in book 2 itself, when Odysseus gives his long speech to boost morale (*Il.* 2.284–332). Not only does he too speak of the "ninth year of the siege" (2.295), but he tries to stir new hope for victory by a graphic picture of the wonderful omen that the Akhaian army had received at Aulis at the outset of the expedition. The prophet Kalkhas, as everyone well knows, had construed it to signify the conquest of Troy in the tenth year of the war. The listener is imperceptibly transported back through nine years to find himself suddenly at the start of the expedition. The circumstances of book 1—the quarrel and the wrath—begin to lose their insularity; they have become a pivotal moment in the context of events occurring over a span of ten years. The story of the entire Trojan War has been absorbed, inserted, and interwoven into the story of the wrath of Akhilleus. The listener remains in the plain before Troy, but with a small part of his consciousness he is also at Aulis. This small part of his consciousness will expand in the following parts of the narrative—first, in the so-called catalog of ships that almost immediately follows. Leaving aside the thorny questions associated with this piece of the narrative, we may take the following as certain: the present context of the narrative does not call for a catalog of ships that once arrived at Aulis for the expedition to Troy; rather, it calls for a plan of the marching order and battle formation of the regiments being positioned for an infantry attack in the plain before Troy. Chronologically speaking, the list of ships belongs to the beginning of an *Iliad*, not of an *Akhilleid*. The poet has inserted it here for just this reason. It offered him the chance to augment in a natural way his projected leap back into the past.

The point of this stratagem is apparent. It allowed the poet to transform what initially seemed to be merely an episode—the wrath of Akhilleus—into a grand epic of the Trojan War, in short, into an *Iliad*. He accomplished all this without abandoning his true theme—the *mēnis Akhilēos* (wrath of Akhilleus). The same technique is evident in the structure of the *Odyssey* as well. The antecedents of the story being narrated by the poet are mirrored into the current story in the form of Odysseus' first-person flashback narrative among the Phaiakians. This is, of course, a universal technique. In later Greek literature, we first encounter it in its perfected form in Herodotus, where the subject proper is the history of the Persian War and the flashback narrative encompasses the prior national history of the principal belligerents. Here in the *Iliad*, we find the technique at an evidently early stage in its development, since the flashback is not truly made explicit, as it is in the *Odyssey* by the use of first-person narration. Still, it is patently a flashback.

This becomes still clearer in the following books. After the "troop review" of the two catalogs, the listener is expecting a first clash of the armies. Instead, in the area between the two assembled armies, Paris offers to duel Menelaos; that is, the offending party challenges the offended party (*Il.* 3.67–75). As he informs his brother Hektor, Paris would like to fight Menelaos, with the winner taking home both the entire treasure and Helen. All the other combatants would have to conclude a treaty of friendship. By its terms, after the ensuing duel, the besiegers would return home again and the Trojans would finally enjoy peace once more. This is an attempt to settle the conflict by a duel of the two opponents who have a personal stake in the outcome; it amounts to a judgment of the gods. Logically, this should have come up not in the ninth year of the siege but at the beginning of the war. The same is certainly true also of the ensuing scene sequence known as the *Teikhoskopia*, or "view from the walls."

While Menelaos is agreeing to Paris' proposal to duel and Hektor is sending a herald to the acropolis of Troy to summon King Priam for the authorization of the truce, the messenger-goddess Iris fetches Helen, who sits modestly weaving at her loom. When she comes into the presence of the curious old men along the city wall by the Skaian gate, they whisper among themselves: "this woman is incredibly beautiful, like a goddess! Still, it were better she should return home, lest she bring misfortune to our sons hereafter" (*Il.* 3.158–60). It most certainly would

have occurred to these wise elders to make such an exhortation to Helen, the cause of the war, long before its ninth year. This raises the expectation of the listener to hear related further incidents from the beginning of the war.

The view from the wall follows (*Il.* 3.160–244). Priam calls Helen to his side and has her identify by name the individual Greek leaders who are present in the plain. It turns out that he does not recognize Agamemnon, Odysseus, or Aias—something utterly impossible, of course, in the ninth year of the siege. In terms of the chronology of saga and epic, the *Teikhoskopia* likewise belongs to the beginning of the war.

After the duel of Paris and Menelaos comes the famous scene where Aphrodite compels Helen to join the loser, Paris. The irrational character of the mutual attraction of Helen and Paris is well illustrated by their coming together just here in the immediate aftermath of the complete humiliation of Helen's lover at the hands of her husband. The saga of the rape of Helen is, as Karl Reinhardt used to put it, transported into an epic situation.

The temporal and causal dimensions of this retrospective line of narrative have now been repeatedly increased. At the beginning of book 4 there is a council of the gods on Olympos. Zeus considers ending the war between the Akhaians and the Trojans (*Il.* 4.16). There are several indications in the context of the passage that Zeus is not being disingenuous. This scene cannot, then, come from the same chronological stratum as book 1. If it did, Zeus, bearing in mind his promise to Thetis, could not entertain any such ideas of terminating the war at this point. The Trojan Pandaros then must maliciously break the truce that has been concluded and thereby open the way for further warfare and the conquest of Troy. Clearly the mythic (that is, individual and human) motivations for the war handed down in ancient saga are corroborated here by rational (that is, legal and moral) motivations. This whole complex of attempts to settle rationally the question of responsibility for the war obviously belongs to its beginnings.

In the fifth book, the Akhaians behind Diomedes push forward so successfully that in the sixth book the Trojan opposition collapses altogether and salvation can be expected only in the form of divine assistance. Hence Hektor visits Troy, which gives an opportunity for a deeper analysis of the situation in a city under siege and of the feelings of the heroes' families. When Hektor returns to his forces in book 7, the dire situation there has not changed one whit (*Il.* 7.4–7). Only a divine

intervention (Athena and Apollo in collaboration) brings a temporary reprieve. Then comes the offer of capitulation mentioned earlier (7.385–97).

In looking back on books 2 through 7, we may say this much is clear: with the opening of book 2, the poet gradually begins to fade out the request of Thetis and concomitantly to open the perspective of the work to include the prior history of the war and the events of the war's opening phases. In this way, he makes an *Iliad* out of the *Akhilleid*. The technique by which this broadening of the narrative horizon is achieved consists of a gradual, oblique redirection of the listener's attention back to the very beginnings of the course of events. A sudden disruption or an abruptly explicit flashback is thus avoided. The technique entails an ever more detailed depiction of the opening stages of the war. To speak in terms of the genesis of the poetry—though that is not our express purpose—we may conjecture that we are seeing portions of the general Troy epic being adapted for use here, portions that the *Iliad* poet had himself previously used in many recitations. The advantage of this mirroring of prior history consists, on the one hand, of a general deepening of the subject matter of the *mēnis Akhilēos* through the integration of the general subject matter of the saga of Troy and, on the other, of laying the basis, in terms of dramatis personae and mise-en-scène, for the ensuing wrath-poem.

This tactic of "mirroring in" ends, as I have shown, in book 8, where the narrative thread begun in book 1 is again picked up. We immediately see what effects the wrath of Akhilleus is having: the Trojans have for the first time encamped for the night in the plain rather than inside the city walls. Akhilleus' services are obviously indispensable for the Akhaians. Thus their decision to send an embassy to petition him. With the completion of the extended narrative parenthesis, the poet's partially suspended structural plan once more becomes fully operative: the Akhaians are gradually driven back, ultimately to their very ships. It is understandable that Akhilleus should not have been petitioned for help till the ninth book. For only in the eighth book have the Akhaians come to a full realization of his importance. From this perspective, the first day of combat in the *Iliad*, which begins in book 2, does not seem to the listener to be the first day of combat in the tale of the wrath of Akhilleus. The first day of combat in the *mēnis* movement is rather that of the eighth book.

It is evident that we have here a careful first attempt to fashion a nar-

rative that is at once both taut (employing the technique of conjunction by recalling the wrath) and loose (dropping and then later picking up one strand of the double narrative thread). The *Odyssey* exhibits a further stage of development in the same strategy. Homeric scholars still cannot say whether, as Karl Reinhardt (1961) believed, this represents the ongoing efforts of one and the same poet to perfect the technique.

Analysis of this obviously well conceived mode of incorporating material shows we are dealing with a relatively high level of technical narrative skill on the part of the *Iliad* poet. This carries important methodological implications. Attempts to excise seemingly irrelevant portions of the narrative as later "interpolations" to an earlier original structure are now only a last recourse. Before resorting to such attempts, we must first exhaust every conceivable possibility that such portions of the narrative are better understood as deliberate structural enhancements, enlargements, additions, and so forth. Thus, for example, it is ill advised to label the long descriptions of the third day of battle (books 11–18) "confused," "chaotic," or the like. Careful analysis reveals a premeditated structural design underlying these narrative sequences as well (Latacz 1977). The length of the battle descriptions poses no difficulty. An aristocratic audience would be quite happy to have the deeds of its heroes "trotted out" in great detail. They would not have been bored, any more than modern sports fans are bored while listening to or watching sometimes hours-long radio or television broadcasts of, say, five-set matches at Wimbledon. The audience follows every serve, return, slice, lob, and so on with rapt attention. Of course, in this domain, it was still well within the realm of possibility to "enrich" an already finished work by adding this or that detail, scene, or character. It is a fair judgment, however, that, in its intrinsic form and content, the work as a whole was still unaffected by such things. The *Iliad* exhibits a thoroughly premeditated unity from first to last: there are no overlappings, no actual reduplications, no lapses in logic, no inconsistencies in the basic plan. If one were to have asked the *Iliad* poet whether he (like his modern interpreters) had paid special attention to this and whether he had taken special pains to achieve this, he would likely have reacted with surprise. He was preoccupied with creating not a unified epic—that was a given—but one that would make the world more comprehensible and more beautiful.

4
The *Odyssey*

The Homecoming of Odysseus: The Theme and Its Framework

The *Odyssey* begins in a less-focused way than the *Iliad*. With the first word of its prooimion, it designates as its theme not a specific episode in the life of its hero but the hero himself: "tell me of the man, O Muse, the man of many turns. . . ." Then the theme is narrowed down; only a well-defined section of the man's life will be recounted: "the man who wandered much after he sacked the sacred city of Troy." Only the post–Trojan War part of the hero's life is to be included. But within these limits, no further boundaries are drawn at first.

> He saw the cities of many people and learned their thoughts,
> undergoing many pains on the sea and in his heart,
> striving tirelessly to preserve his life and the homecoming of his
> comrades.
> But even so he did not save his comrades, though he yearned to:
> they perished through their own unruly deeds,
> the fools! who devoured the cattle of the sun god Hyperion. . . .
> Tell us, too, about these things, starting anywhere, goddess,
> daughter of Zeus.
>
> (*Od.* 1.3–10)

The thematic open-endedness of this invocation of the muse contrasts sharply with that of the *Iliad*: "tell us about these things, starting anywhere. . . ." It seems as though this poet has no definite plan. His opening is much less focused, less portentous, less dramatic and suspenseful. The muse is asked only to tell the story of this much-traveled Trojan War veteran to the poet's audience too (as she has already done to so many others before). It is the story of a hero who endured many sufferings during his return from Troy, who alone of his whole company reached home at last, because he did not act so recklessly as his companions.

Although all this has a generic ring to it, this is not due to a lack of a definite objective on the part of the poet. Rather, it is an attribute of the material. The public that heard these opening verses of the epic was familiar with the material, possibly even more familiar than it was with that of the *Iliad*. It did not even have to hear the name of the implied hero (mentioned first in line 21). The clever veteran of the Trojan expedition, the man of many turns, much "turned round" by the forces of destiny, the hero who returns home at last, having survived all dangers thanks to his practical intelligence—this character was a symbol. All the intelligence, resourcefulness, diplomacy, pragmatism, irrepressible will to survive, inventiveness, and instinctive hope to be found in humanity had been attributed to this hero—to Odysseus—in countless stories for centuries. A song about Odysseus, unlike one about Akhilleus, could in fact begin "anywhere," because, whatever the specific subject matter, the same story was always being told in an exemplary and comforting manner: the ultimate triumph of the human spirit.

Odysseus is not a Greek name. The form *Olysseus* (cf. Latin *Ulixes*) is also attested. On the basis of other evidence, we know that *d* was substituted for *l* in words borrowed by Greek from the language of the pre-Greek population in the Aegean region. Thus Odysseus must have been a figure in the sagas of the indigenous people, a figure who became familiar to Greeks only after their immigration into the Aegean area. From the beginning, Odysseus was a seafarer, at home on the sea and on the islands; he himself was an islander with a home on Ithaka. The Greeks—landlubbers originally—became sailors themselves in their new homeland. They no doubt acquired from the indigenous population a knowledge of shipbuilding and its terminology, maritime geography, and nautical science (Kurt 1977). From the same source, they will also have taken the sagas and yarns of seafarers. Odysseus belonged to that narrative realm.

All the magicians and giants, mermaids and mermen, and the ghost ships and floating islands that these seagoing people thought they had seen, all the adventures in distant lands and on remote islands that they had come through triumphantly—all these things were attributed to Odysseus. He had always come home again, through every kind of danger.

Naturally, Odysseus also had to have taken part in the Trojan War.

The cleverest man of all could not be left behind. Of course, he tried to avoid recruitment—else he would not be the cleverest—but the madness he feigned for that purpose was exposed as a pretense. Before Troy, he again demonstrated that the decisive weapon of humankind is the intellect. When all the military force had been exerted in vain, he conceived the stratagem of the wooden horse: physically, the Trojans had held out for nine long years; intellectually, they were checkmated in a few hours.

The return home of a sailor like Odysseus could not be the same as that of an Agamemnon or Diomedes. We cannot now ascertain when exactly an epic singer first hit on the idea of shifting the adventures associated with the *seafarer* Odysseus to the time of the *warrior* Odysseus' homecoming. We may be certain, however, that it was not done first by the poet of our *Odyssey* (Lesky 1967, 803 f. [116 f.]).

Still a third narrative theme seems to have been connected with Odysseus long before the composition of our *Odyssey*—that of the belated homecoming. This theme was a perfect fit for a sailor. Embarked at the mercy of the sea, tossed by storms, repeatedly detained by various obstacles, reduced to penury on foreign shores, destitute, down at heel, and lacking the means to continue his journey home, this husband is away so long that he is taken for lost or perhaps even dead. Affairs at home take their course. Suitors for the hand of the "widow" make their appearance. She strives long and hard to remain true (since she has no certain report of her husband's death). Because there is a son who is now growing up, the suitors press her. Gradually, she loses hope and begins to give in; the wedding date is set. But, at just the last moment, the husband given up for dead returns home.

Long before Homer, the tradition of oral song had woven together sailors' stories, tales of homecoming, and accounts of the returns of the Trojan War veterans, into a great complex of narrative centered on Odysseus (Lesky 1967, 803 f. [116 f.]). Thus the singer could in fact reach in and produce a song "starting anywhere." The audience could be relied on to reconstruct the context. Thus, the poet of our *Odyssey* begins his version in the customary fashion, at least initially: "Tell us, too, about these things, starting anywhere, goddess!"

Then, however, the poet abruptly becomes clearer and more concrete. As in the prooimion of the *Iliad*, the theme is suddenly sharply defined and a program is outlined:

Then all the others who had escaped sheer destruction
were at home, having survived the war and the journey by sea.
Only this one, who so longed for his homecoming and his wife,
was held fast by the queenly nymph, Kalypso, the noble
goddess
who wanted him for her spouse, in her vaulted cave.
Even when the year had come in the cycle of seasons,
in which the gods had granted his wish to return home
to Ithaka, even in that place he was not free from struggles,
among his own loved ones. . . .

(*Od.* 1.11–19)

With these words, the poet of *this* version fixes in both space and time the theme he wishes to deal with in the story. The starting point will be Odysseus' detention with the nymph Kalypso; the end point will be his struggles on his home island of Ithaka. The time frame is the year of his homecoming. The connoisseur knew that this was the twentieth year after Odysseus had set out for Troy (this chronological point is often repeated in the epic itself). As in the *Iliad*, so also here the poet has chosen a very opportune moment. He begins not just "anywhere" in the universe of the story; and he does not seize on just anything in it. Contrary to the impression he gives in his opening, which seemed to conform to customary past practice, the poet begins at a point where matters are just about to come to a head; he begins at the decisive moment in a critical phase of the story.

Beyond these external facts, the poet reveals more of his program in the expanded prooimion. Of the sea adventures that would come to the mind of anyone who heard the name *Odysseus* there is no mention. Instead, the poet alludes to the "struggles" (the Greek word is *aëthlos*, which means "trial" or "contest"; cf. *athletics* in English), which the hero will have to endure even in his own homeland of Ithaka, even "among his own loved ones." The poet is clearly interested in the homecoming rather than adventures. He focuses on tests of intelligence, strength, perseverance, cunning, and self-control that the hero must pass in the presence of his own people before he can be truly "at home" again. This is what made the story intriguing for the poet and sparked his interest: to tell how a man refused even a "queenly nymph" and "noble goddess," because he so longed for home and for his wife. To tell how such a man had to prove himself in the presence even of his

own wife, the person most beloved to him, for whom he had endured all the misery of warfare and the sea, so that he might win the struggle to regain his own loved ones—his son and his wife.

The listener might not grasp right at the beginning of the narrative precisely what is actually meant by the passage. The "struggles" seem, at first sight, to refer only to the battle against the suitors, in which the hero of the story, having returned home, must overcome the many competitors for his wife who have appeared in his absence. Many singers had already told of this. Only later will the audience realize that the poet of *this* epic has other struggles in mind. The poet is not interested in the external, superficial aspects of the struggle. He is captivated by the question of what it meant *psychologically* to have to "win" one's wife again; what it meant to the wife and son and those others who had remained at home to have to accept back again the man who had gone away twenty years before. It will become evident that the poet of the *Odyssey*, like the poet of the *Iliad* (whether one and the same person, we cannot say), is really interested not in the factual details of the story but in what the saga demands of its heroes in terms of the human spirit. In each epic, the poet describes not how it was but how it could have been. Each says, "it was this way," but actually means, "I imagine it was this way." By tapping the potential for understanding, they charge the old sagas with relevance to the present. Thus their interpretations of the saga help listeners to see and contemplate in a new light both their fellow human beings and themselves.

The Elaboration of the Theme

The structure of the *Odyssey* is easier to grasp than that of the *Iliad*. A detailed synopsis is not necessary. The events are played out in three primary and two secondary locales. Appropriately enough in a tale of a seafarer's return home, all three primary locations are islands: Ogygia, the island of Kalypso; Skheria, the island of the Phaiakians; and Ithaka, Odysseus' homeland. The two secondary locales are Nestor's palace at Pylos and the palace of Menelaos and Helen at Sparta.

As in the *Iliad*, the action encompasses only a few days, forty in all. Again as in the *Iliad*, the events of some of these days (sixteen days and eight nights) are narrated, while the events of the others are only indicated. The *Odyssey* gives the impression of encompassing a very long time. Two things contribute to this sensation. One is Odysseus' first-

person narrative among the Phaiakians, in which he reports on his adventures between the fall of Troy and his arrival at Skheria (covering nearly ten years). The other is the thoroughness with which the poet recounts the incidents since the day (the thirty-fifth in the chronology of the poem's action) following the night of Odysseus' arrival on Ithaka. At the beginning of book 13 Odysseus arrives—this is his first day on Ithaka. At the end of book 23—during his fifth day back home—Penelope recognizes him. The chronicle of only five days (and, to be exact, parts of four nights) extends over eleven books, nearly half of the entire epic. Here and there, the poet's account even approaches real-time narration (that is, coincidence of time narrated and time of narration). Thus, for example, the fifth and decisive day after Odysseus' return to Ithaka occupies no less than four books (20–23), 1,701 verses in all. Conversations, interior monologues, the thoughts of various individuals—all these things contribute to a sense that much time has passed. But, in fact, these things actually reflect the efforts of the poet to portray a reality fuller, deeper, and more textured than the bare reality of everyday life. Familiarity with the modern narrative techniques of twentieth-century literature has put us today in a better position than most scholars during the heyday of Analytic criticism in the nineteenth century to appreciate this sort of representation of reality.

The action of the *Odyssey* consists of five large blocks:

		Book
Initiation of the action: council of the gods		
I.	Ithaka prior to Odysseus' return	1 and 2
II.	Telemakhos' journey to Pylos and Sparta to ascertain the whereabouts of his father (parts I and II, together with the return of Telemakhos in book 15, are designated the Telemakhia)	3 and 4
III.	Odysseus drifts by raft from Ogygia to Skheria	5
IV.	Odysseus on Skheria with the Phaiakians (the so-called Phaiakis): Odysseus recounts his adventures from the fall of Troy to his arrival at Skheria	6 to 12
V.	Odysseus on Ithaka	13 to 24

A fundamentally bipartite structure is quite apparent:

A. Twelve books in which all the participants at Ithaka are (unwittingly) prepared for the homecoming, with appearances by wife, son, domestics, suitors, the people of Ithaka, the outside world of the houses of friendly nobles, the gods, and Odysseus himself.
B. Twelve books of the homecoming itself: reacquisition and securing of possessions once taken for granted.

The Program of the Poem

The poet begins with a council of the gods. This was anticipated in the expanded prooimion with the information that now "the year had come . . . in which the gods granted his wish to return home" (*Od.* 1.16 f.). Zeus begins speaking and, with his mention of the murder of Agamemnon by Aigisthos and its avenging by Orestes, brings up the topic of the homecoming of the veterans of the Trojan War. Athena, Odysseus' protectress, immediately seizes on this opening: "and what of Odysseus? He must suffer griefs for so long far from his loved ones on the wave-ringed island. The daughter of Atlas (= Kalypso) detains the unlucky man, lamenting piteously,

> and always with smooth and flattering words
> she plies him to forget Ithaka. But still Odysseus,
> pining only to see the smoke rise
> over his land, longs to die. Does even that
> not stir your heart, Olympian?
>
> (*Od.* 1.56–60)

Zeus explains that Poseidon is the obstacle to Odysseus' homecoming. Poseidon is angry at Odysseus for having blinded his son, the Kyklops Polyphemos. But Poseidon at the moment is off on a journey, and the matter of Odysseus' homecoming can now be taken up. Poseidon will resign himself to it later. Athena seizes the opportunity:

> Our father, son of Kronos, you are the highest lord!
> If then this is now really pleasing to the blessed gods,
> that clever Odysseus should set out on his journey homeward,
> then let us bid the messenger Hermes, the famed slayer of Argos,
> to go to the island Ogygia, that he might very quickly

> tell the fair-haired nymph of this ineluctable ruling:
> that long-suffering Odysseus should in fact return home!
> But I myself shall set out for Ithaka, to encourage
> his son further and to put greater resolve in his mind,
> to call the longhaired Akhaians into an assembly
> to forbid the suitors from the house, who are always
> slaughtering the sheep and the shuffling cattle with their curved horns.
> Then I will send him to Sparta and to sandy Pylos,
> to inquire about his father's return, if he might hear something,
> and so he may have a good renown far and wide among men.
> (*Od.* 1.81–95)

Thus the immediate plan of the epic is clarified for the listener. First Athena will go to Ithaka and rouse Odysseus' son Telemakhos to action (the Telemakhia); then Hermes will go to Kalypso on Ogygia and deliver the directive to allow Odysseus to leave (book 5).

The execution corresponds precisely to the plan, just as it does in the *Iliad*. It has, of course, struck some as odd that the gods assemble on Olympos again at the beginning of book 5 and that Athena again complains to Zeus that Odysseus is languishing on Kalypso's island, whereupon Zeus—only now!—sends Hermes to Ogygia (*Od.* 5.1–42). The explanation (of, for example, Lesky 1967, 810 [124]; 1971, 69–70) that the poet, following the order of succession in narrative, could only recount seriatim two actually simultaneous actions (the Telemakhia in books 1–4 and the journey of Odysseus from Ogygia to Skheria in book 5) is unconvincing for a variety of reasons. It does better justice to the poet to credit him with having wished to make the two actions appear as distinct, nonintersecting, continuous blocks, each with its own motivations, two unified episodes moving toward convergence. Undoubtedly, there were precedents for both plot sequences in the rich and varied materials of the Odysseus saga. It is also clear that the fusing of these disparate elements within such a frequently treated and multifaceted theme posed a special problem. But an important circumstance is often overlooked. If written versions of the *Iliad* had already been in circulation for some two or three decades, the *Odyssey* poet was living in an era of advanced textuality. With him, more so than with the *Iliad* poet (even if they were one and the same), we may assume the existence of written drafts of both his own work and that of others. In view

of these complexities of the poem's origins, we must marvel even more at the poet's achievement in fashioning such a monumental whole.

The First and Second Major Segments: The Telemakhia

The Telemakhia is the foundation of the epic. It lays out in detail the situation at home and prepares the listener for the appearance of Odysseus. (The same technique is found later in Attic tragedy: Herakles in Sophocles' *Women of Trakhis* and Philoktetes in his *Philoktetes* are seen first through the eyes of third parties before they themselves actually appear on stage.) The poet does not describe the situation on the island to his listeners. Rather, they enter into the setting step-by-step together with Athena, who comes to the master's house on Ithaka disguised as Odysseus' old guest-friend Mentes. The situation here has recently become critical. For about three years, the clever spouse of a clever man has staved off her numerous suitors. She said she would decide among them after she had completed a piece of weaving (a shroud for Odysseus' aged father, Laertes). But she secretly unwove every night what she had woven during the day (Heubeck 1985). After the exposure of this scheme, the suitors, feeling tricked and cheated, put ever greater pressure on Penelope. They "occupy" the palace and inflict all the economic disasters associated with their daily abuse of a coerced "hospitality." And now finally they say she must give up her absurd hopes for the return of her husband, the rightful lord of the island, and consent to marry one of them.

Penelope no longer knows what to do. Telemakhos, her son by Odysseus, is neither still a child nor yet a full-grown man. He is at just that point where he is beginning to sense how unjust and intolerable the situation is and to chafe at his mother's indecisiveness. Penelope sees this with anxiety. For she is constantly aware of something she will later tell the suitors (and the audience): when Odysseus set out for Troy, he said to her on his leave-taking (*Od.* 18.259 ff.): "I do not think that all of us who are going to Troy will return again. The Trojans, too, know how to fight. Thus, I know not whether I shall return. So, in the future, you must take care of everything here":

> "Remember my father and my mother here in the house
> as you now do, or even more so, while I am away.
> So soon as you see that our son grows a beard,

> marry whom you please and go out of the house!"
> These were his words. And now all these things are come to
> pass.
>
> (*Od.* 18.267–71)

It has been speculated, and with justification, that the stipulation "so soon as . . . our son grows a beard" formed the central motif of the old story of the homecoming. The *Odyssey* poet has transformed it into a concrete situation, into an action and a state of mind (Hölscher 1978, 60). What happens, he asks, when that moment has actually arrived? And he gives an answer, in that he has the son first of all seek definite information about his father. The son has never known who his father actually was; because he was an infant when his father left, he has only heard stories.

> Friend [Mentes/Athena], my mother says indeed I am his son,
> but I
> do not know. For no one has witnessed his own begetting!
> Would that I were the son of a prosperous
> ordinary man, whom old age overtook among all his
> possessions.
> But I am the son of the most ill-fated of men.
> *That* is the man from whom they say I am sprung!
>
> (*Od.* 1.215–20)

Telemakhos does not know what he ought to do, because he does not know who he is. He must first find his identity. Only then can he act with force and conviction. And only then can he encounter his father, because to recognize his father as truly his father, he must first recognize himself as his son. The poet of the *Odyssey* is aware of this. For this reason, he has Athena send the young man into foreign parts, after his fruitless attempt to clear up the situation in the community assembly on Ithaka. Although the heads of the aristocratic houses that had previously been friendly with his father in Pylos (Nestor) and Sparta (Menelaos and Helen) cannot say whether Odysseus still lives or not, they can tell the young man what is most significant for him at this moment: that he is the son of Odysseus. They knew Odysseus. They are therefore able to discern Odysseus in both the physical features and the nature of Telemakhos. That is compelling. When Telemakhos returns,

he has found himself. He has matured and grown in self-awareness. Now he is ready to be his father's partner when he returns, something he could never have done before.

The Third and Fourth Major Segments: The Phaiakis

The poet can now attend to the return of Odysseus. But another problem presents itself. It is basically a variant of the Telemakhos problem, as in fact the theme demands. Odysseus has not only been away from home for years; he has of late also been utterly isolated. On the island of Kalypso, "where the navel of the sea is" (*Od.* 1.50), he has lived a life without purposeful activity, a life of surrender to the love and care of an affectionate goddess, a life, however, of heartache and yearning. In large measure, he has lost his vitality and autonomy together with his own image of himself. He has almost entirely forgotten that he is a hero of the Trojan War, who has triumphantly accomplished so many world-renowned feats. He must "relearn" all this. Before he can face his last great trial, he must first "grow into" himself once again. To this end, the poet does not have him return nonstop from Kalypso to Ithaka. Instead, he diverts him to an intermediate way station—the land of the Phaiakians.

In the first council of the gods, when the initial plan of action was presented in the words of Athena, there was no mention of the Phaiakians. That comes now for the first time, just before the actual departure from Ogygia in book 5. In the form of instructions to Hermes, Zeus prophetically reveals the poet's further plan of action. (The technique of disclosing the structure of the work through prophecy—prophecy certain of fulfillment because pronounced by a god—is familiar to us already from the *Iliad.*)

> Hermes!—for you are my messenger in all other matters—
> tell the fair-haired nymph of this ineluctable ruling:
> long-suffering Odysseus shall return home!
> Escorted home by neither gods nor men
> but enduring troubles on a securely bound raft, he must
> come to the fertile land of Skheria on the twentieth day out,
> the land of the Phaiakians who are close to the gods.
> They will revere him like a god from their hearts
> and carry him by ship to his homeland,

giving him bronze and abundant gold and many clothes
(Odysseus would not have brought so much back from Troy
had he returned safely home straightway with his share.)
In this way, it is destined for him look upon his loved ones
and come back to the high-roofed house in his fatherland.
(*Od.* 5.29–42)

The poet clearly states here the purpose of the Phaiakis, the fourth major segment of the *Odyssey*: the stay among the Phaiakians restores to Odysseus a sense of his own self-worth. These people, who are "close to the gods" (thus especially trustworthy), show him great respect and bestow material gifts on him. Thus, he does not return to his fatherland a broken and destitute man. (Ironically, he chooses to return disguised as a beggar.)

The poet leaves indistinct the details of the process of Odysseus' psychological rehabilitation among the Phaiakians. He is employing the same technique of adumbration familiar to us from the *Iliad*. Tension is heightened and interest is sharpened anew.

But before this resurrection comes a fall—to the lowest point imaginable: "enduring troubles on a . . . raft, twenty days on the sea." In the course of events, Odysseus first feels renewed hope after his splendid achievement of building the raft in four days (*Od.* 5.228–61). But his reawakened self-confidence is utterly annihilated during his solitary raft-voyage to Skheria. Poseidon in his anger sends a storm and shipwrecks him; Odysseus, in fear for his life and nearly drowning, clings to the last of the raft's timbers. He swims for it and (again with divine aid) finally reaches land, but in what a state!

He bent his knees and his strong arms,
because the saltwater had subdued his heart;
his whole body was drenched, and a flood of water
gushed from his mouth and nose. Breathless and speechless,
he lay there, barely living, and an awful exhaustion gripped him.
(*Od.* 5.453–57)

Having had to strip off his clothes, Odysseus arrives among the Phaiakians naked, debilitated, and unsightly—a man at the limit of his physical and psychological resources; he will depart three days later fully recovered, well groomed, well clothed, and—most important—

armed with a new awareness of himself. All this is brought about by the friendship, admiration, and love of the Phaiakians for the hero, and for the man, Odysseus. It is no accident that he is repeatedly aided and restored to courage by women: above all, Athena, but also Kalypso; then, during the sea journey, the nymph Leukothea (5.333–53); and now, on Skheria, Nausikaa, the king's daughter, a girl in the flower of her youth. Nausikaa is attracted to this mature, much-traveled man, so different from her age-mates, whose chief preoccupation is games. This contributes not a little to Odysseus' rediscovery of his own self-worth. Of the greatest importance in this process of recovery, however, is Odysseus' successful self-validation, first in his quest for social approval during a dispute with the king's son Laodamas and in the ensuing athletic competition (8.143–255), and then—climactically—in the restoration of his honor as a hero through his account of his deeds and tribulations between the fall of Troy and his arrival at Ogygia, in the so-called apologues (tales) of books 9 through 12.

The adventures of Odysseus, recounted first-person over the space of four books, are not simply topics that the *Odyssey* poet could not pass over because tradition and his audience demanded their inclusion. In *his* version of the story, they had a crucial function to perform: Odysseus had to reconstitute in them his own mighty deeds and tribulations. The function of the adventure tales within the *Odyssey* of the *Odyssey* poet coincided neatly with their function within the *saga*: by demonstrating the triumph of the human spirit they strengthened the faith of the listeners in themselves. But this deeper significance of the adventures could be made obvious only by their placement in a new context within this epic. By making the adventures fulfill a specific function within the *Odyssey*, the poet revealed their true meaning.

A detailed account of the adventures is unneeded here; instead, a sketch of their general outlines follows:

Odysseus' departure from Troy with twelve ships

1. The land of the Kikones: destruction of the city of Ismaros. Battle with the neighboring Kikones. Loss of seventy-two comrades. A storm off Cape Malea (in the extreme southeast of the Peloponnesos) drives them past the island of Kythera and beyond for nine days. Departure from the real world into the realm of sailors' yarns.

2. The land of the Lotophagoi (Lotos-Eaters): the enjoyment of the drug Lotos almost causes them to forget their homecoming.
3. The island of the Kyklopes (one-eyed ogres); the Kyklops Polyphemos (*polyphēmos*, "the notorious one"): Odysseus shut up in the giant's cave with twelve companions, six of whom are devoured by the Kyklops. They bore out the giant's one eye with a sharpened, burning hot olive-wood stake. The "Nobody" trick. They escape under the bellies of sheep tied together three-by-three, even though Polyphemos, now blind, guards the opening of the cave. Incautious taunting of the giant from the boat. Polyphemos petitions his father Poseidon for revenge.
4. The floating island of Aiolos, the lord of the winds: he gives them the bag of winds. As they come within sight of home, the foolish comrades open the bag of winds. A whirlwind carries them back to Aiolos, who utters a curse against Odysseus.
5. The land of the Laistrygones (giants): the giants destroy eleven ships in the harbor by throwing boulders down on them; the comrades swimming for it are fished out and devoured. Only Odysseus' ship now remains.
6. The island Aiaia and the sorceress Kirke (daughter of the sun god Helios): Kirke transforms twenty-two comrades into swine. Hermes gives Odysseus the apotropaic herb moly (μῶλυ, *moly*, a wonder plant). Odysseus succumbs to Kirke's attractions. A year's life of leisure with Kirke. Kirke sends Odysseus to the seer Teiresias in the land of the dead.
7. Conjuring up of the dead along Okeanos, the river that circles the earth: the prophecy of Teiresias; Odysseus encounters his mother, Agamemnon, Akhilleus, Patroklos, Aias. He observes Minos, the judge of the dead; the malefactors Tityos, Tantalos, and Sisyphos; and the beneficent Herakles. Return to Kirke, who forewarns Odysseus about the Sirens, the planktai (wandering rocks), Skylla and Kharybdis, and the cattle of Helios.
8. The island of the Sirens: Odysseus is tied to the mast (and his companions' ears stopped with wax); thus Odysseus escapes the temptation of absolute knowledge.
9. Skylla and Kharybdis (a maelstrom): six companions are lost.

10. Thrinakia, the island of Helios: out of hunger, Odysseus' comrades slaughter the forbidden cattle of Helios. Helios demands vengeance from Zeus, who blasts the ship with his lightning. All the comrades drown. The sole survivor, Odysseus, arrives at Ogygia, Kalypso's island, by riding the lashed-together mast and keel of the ship.

The Fifth Major Segment: Homecoming on Ithaka

The first half of the *Odyssey* has created a background of ten years for events of six days' duration. Thus, the audience already knows the personal history of each of the leading characters in the story: Odysseus, Penelope, Telemakhos, and the suitors. The whole first half of the epic has made it unnecessary to offer explanations of their conduct.

So, too, the audience understands why Odysseus cannot go directly to his house after he awakens on Ithaka. The motif of his arrival back home in disguise was firmly fixed in the old return stories. The *Odyssey* poet shows why it has to be this way. No one actually believes that the master of the house is still alive. That is the real reason why everyone—the people of Ithaka, the house servants, Telemakhos, even Penelope—tolerates the behavior of the suitors, albeit with displeasure and a troubled conscience. Whoever arrives on the scene at this point and says, "I am Odysseus," will have to bear the burden of proof.

The whole second half of the epic provides this proof. The traditional tale of the homecoming typically employed signs to facilitate the hero's recognition: the scar, the trees Odysseus planted with his own hands, and the bed he built himself. The poet of the *Odyssey* finds these insufficient. Is it that simple? he asks. Is it so easy that, away for twenty years, the hero returns and says "Here is the scar, look! I am Odysseus"? How does it really take place when layers of mistrust, fear of disappointment, and disbelief must be penetrated?

Odysseus would not be the man the poet has presented in the great adventures of books 9–12—circumspect, farsighted, and therefore truly daring—if he failed to realize that he should dissemble his identity when he first arrives back on Ithaka. When he meets a young man of noble bearing along the shore, he regales him with a tale of woe: he is (he says) a fugitive from Crete (and yet a Trojan War veteran), where he killed the king's son. He has drifted off course to Ithaka with a group of Phoenicians. When the young man, ostensibly an aristocratic shepherd,

reveals himself as Athena, the strongest intellects on both the divine and the human levels enter into alliance. As Athena puts it:

> "It would take a crafty and deceitful one to surpass you
> in all your machinations, even if a god went against you!
> You naughty, shifty-minded, habitual trickster. . . .
> Not even in your own land have you been willing to give up
> your tricks
> and deceptions that so thoroughly please you!
> Let us speak no more of this. We both know how to
> beguile. For you are far the best of all mortals
> in planning and speaking, while I among all the gods
> am renowned for counsel and cleverness. . . .
> (*Od.* 13.291–99)

A plan is formulated: Odysseus must first go to the faithful swineherd Eumaios at his "ranch" outside of town and reconnoiter the situation from there. Athena will fetch Telemakhos from Sparta. Next, both Odysseus and his son will plot the destruction of the suitors. But Odysseus, for reasons of security, must be rendered unrecognizable. Athena disguises him as a ragged and ugly old beggar.

Everything now proceeds according to plan. On the first day, Odysseus learns from the ever-loyal Eumaios how matters stand in the city and in the house of Odysseus. (Eumaios, like everyone else, does not recognize the beggar, but he has an odd feeling when in his presence.) On the third day, Telemakhos arrives from Sparta, having been guided by Athena past the ambush set for him by the suitors. He also proceeds to the "Eumaios-base." Odysseus then reveals himself to Telemakhos, who recognizes him *without* external distinguishing signs. On the fourth day, Odysseus arrives at his own house and continues to play the role of beggar. He maintains his "cover" despite all the insults he receives at the hands of the suitors and his own household servants and despite the almost superhuman self-control that the role demands of him when he first meets with his wife after his twenty-year absence. On the fifth day, he finally reveals his true identity, first to the loyal servants Eumaios and Philoitios, and then to the suitors. He kills the suitors and then is also able finally to break through the cool reserve of his wife Penelope. On the sixth day, he is reunited with his old father

Laertes out in the country. Together with Laertes, wondrously rejuvenated by joy at his son's return, Odysseus settles the dangerous situation on the island arising from the punishment that he has inflicted on the sons of the leading houses of Ithaka. Here, too, Athena steers things along. She first initiated the action during the council of the gods (book 1) and she has seen it all the way through to the end. Why? Athena says to Odysseus:

> thus I cannot abandon you when you are in trouble,
> because you are wise and quick-witted and insightful.
> (*Od.* 13.331–32)

This is the new ideal of the human being, whose glory is sung in the *Odyssey*. The nobility has changed its outlook on the world. Strength, military preparedness, a dogged sense of honor, and excessive obstinacy now count for much less. Now, whoever is ingenious like Odysseus enjoys the favor of the gods. The gods no longer love the strong arm more than the clever head.

The Recognition of Odysseus and Penelope

The recognition of the two spouses is the true objective of the epic; the poet's narrative strategy has been leading to this from the very beginning. It is cited right at the start, in the (expanded) prooimion:

> [Odysseus], who yearned for his homecoming *and for his wife.*
> (*Od.* 1.13)

The *Odyssey* is actually complete when this goal is reached in book 23. (Nonetheless, book 24, in which the poet, by way of epilogue, reports on the *securing* of all the things Odysseus has finally won back, is not simply a superfluous appendage [Stössel 1975, 150].)

The longing of the two spouses for each other spans the whole epic, appearing repeatedly in a manner and with an effect reminiscent of the technique of reiteration employed in the *Iliad*. Penelope's longing is first mentioned in book 1. Phemios has been singing of the returns of the Trojan War heroes; Penelope overhears from her rooms upstairs and comes down:

yet stop this sad song,
which always casts down the spirit in my breast,
because an unforgettable sorrow oppresses me grievously,
since I must yearn for such a person,
for a man whose fame reaches far throughout Hellas and the heartland of Argos.

(*Od.* 1.340–44)

Odysseus' yearning is brought home to the listener in book 5 with images that will remain fixed in the memory throughout the rest of the narrative. Kalypso, coming upon Odysseus,

found him sitting along the shore; his eyes
were never dried of their tears, since he passed his life
in lamentation for his homecoming. . . .
. . . .
All day he sat on the rocky beach
and looked continuously out over the barren sea, shedding tears.

(*Od.* 5.151–53, 156–58)

Like the wrath in the *Iliad*, this yearning of husband and wife in the *Odyssey* resonates as the recurrent, fundamental theme throughout all that happens. Because Penelope cannot forget Odysseus, she cannot summon the nerve to leave home. Because of her inability to bring matters to a close, she must continue to live in a state of intolerable uncertainty, which impels her son to make his journey and to risk death. Because she longs so very much for Odysseus, who left twenty years earlier, she cannot recognize Odysseus in the flesh when he has been living for two days under the same roof, though she does have peculiar sensations. Because Odysseus cannot forget Penelope, no other woman can hold him, neither goddesses like Kirke and Kalypso, nor human women like Nausikaa among the Phaiakians.

During the first day Odysseus spends inside his own home in twenty years, the suitors humiliate and revile him and pelt him like a stray dog. During the evening of that same day, Odysseus meets his wife for an audience. Penelope wishes to ask this beggar, who seems so unlike a beggar, whether he knows anything about Odysseus. He tells her a story of how he once entertained Odysseus on Crete (because he

is actually the brother of the king of Crete, etc.; we know the story already). Penelope cannot keep back her tears:

> As she listened, the tears flowed down and her skin melted,
> as when the snows melts and flows down from the high
> mountains,
> when the east wind thaws what the west wind has heaped up,
> when the snowmelt, running down, fills the rivers,
> so her fair cheeks melted, spilling over with tears,
> as she wept for her man, who was sitting right beside her.
> Odysseus, meanwhile pitied his wife in his heart, as she
> sobbed,
> but his eyes stood fast as horn or iron,
> unmoving inside their lids; cleverly he hid his tears. . . .
> (*Od.* 19.204–12)

This superhuman self-restraint nearly goes for naught when his old nurse Eurykleia, on Penelope's command, washes the beggar's feet. The scar! She recognizes the scar. In the traditional versions of the homecoming, this apparently signaled the beginning of the recognition. The poet of our *Odyssey* makes something else altogether out of the scar motif—another test for Odysseus, who forestalls a premature revelation by grabbing Eurykleia by her throat (Erbse 1972, 96 f.). This shows the same presence of mind he displayed inside the wooden horse, when one of his companions nearly gave everything away by making a noise that could be heard outside the horse. The time is not yet ripe. But this had to be a near miss! The listener had to recognize that Odysseus was in terrible danger. The resolution of twenty years of suffering and striving could have been wiped out in a few seconds. Not for nothing is the *Odyssey* laced with references to the counterexample of the homecoming of Agamemnon; he had been too trusting, too forthright. He simply came home. He did not think of the perils that a long absence might breed. His wife's suitor, Aigisthos, had struck him down. And it had been easy for him. Agamemnon had conquered Troy—but he died in his own bath.

The *Odyssey* poet delays the recognition. First, the suitors must be eliminated. Odysseus must again become master of his home. Success must not be imperiled by haste. It is risky to allow anyone to be "in on" his secret.

When the suitors have been shot through with spears and arrows and their corpses cleared away, the proper moment for the recognition has come. Husband and wife sit before each other. Penelope still cannot believe it. She had had a presentiment, to be sure. But what if it is all a trick? The clever Penelope is not so naive as to fall on the neck of the beggar just because he has killed the suitors. What possibilities for subtle deceptions still remain! No one is more mindful of this than the woman who has for years led a whole horde of grown men around by their noses. No, there must be greater certainty. She feels that this is indeed Odysseus, but can Penelope allow herself to give in to a mere feeling, a hunch? Would that be worthy of her husband, of a man of Odysseus' intelligence? Then, one last time, she puts him to the test, a test that will also show him how truly unique his wife is:

> You strange man! I do not flatter myself or snub you!
> Even so, I am not terribly impressed. I know very well how you [!] were
> when you [!] sailed away from Ithaka on the long-oared ship.
> Now then, Eurykleia, lay out for him the stout bed,
> *outside* the well-built bedroom, which he himself constructed.
> Carry out there for him the stout bed and put upon it the bedspread,
> sheepskins, sheets, and gleaming coverlets.
>
> (*Od.* 23.174–80)

This is too much. Not that he is being quartered outside the house, but that the bed evidently no longer stands in its place. *That* provokes him to respond: "I myself constructed the bed using an olive tree that grew there as one of the four bedposts! Has some other man . . . ?"

> This loosened her knees and her heart on the spot:
> she had recognized the irrefutable signs that Odysseus had shown her.
> She broke into tears, ran to him, flung her arms
> around Odysseus' neck, and kissed his head. . . .
>
> (*Od.* 23.205–8)

The *Odyssey* poet has been working toward this moment right from the start. He has prepared for it in various ways; he has brought it close and then put it off. This serves to make it credible.

The *Odyssey* derives its inner unity from this ultimate goal. As Peter Von der Mühll said in his splendid article on the *Odyssey*: "It is obvious and needs no proving that the *Odyssey* as a whole follows a well-conceived plan and is a unity" (1940, 698). True, it does not really require proof. But one must know how to listen. Even the Greeks themselves, in the centuries after Homer, could no longer listen particularly well. Art shows this: no incident mentioned in the *Odyssey* was as frequently depicted by artists as the blinding of Polyphemos. As if this one adventure among many so typified either Odysseus or what the poet of the *Odyssey* wanted to make of the myth of Odysseus in *his* version. But it was spectacular. Much more spectacular than the construction of the raft in book 5, a man's self-control in the presence of his wife as she weeps for him, or the gripping of his own nurse's throat (book 19). This superficial interpretation of the *Odyssey* continued in Roman times, the Renaissance, and even our own day. Countless books have been written about "the adventures of Odysseus" and "the wanderings of Odysseus." Countless hypotheses have been put forward to determine which island of the Mediterranean or the Black Sea or the North Sea was really Kirke's Aiaia, where the Lotos-Eaters or the Laistrygones really lived, or where Odysseus' raft broke up. It is as if the poet of our *Odyssey* had not made clear the shift of emphasis that he was striving for when he ingeniously adapted to his own purposes the whole series of traditional Odysseus adventures by transforming them into first-person narrative! No, those who read the *Odyssey* in this superficial way will not be able to divine its unity. They are hearing only the old yarns of sailors; they are not hearing Homer.

Abbreviations and Works Cited by Author's Name and Date

AA	*Archäologischer Anzeiger*
AAntHung	*Acta Antiqua Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae*
AJA	*American Journal of Archaeology*
ArchHom	*Archaeologia Homerica: Die Denkmäler und das frühgriechische Epos.* Ed. F. Matz and H.-G. Buchholz. Göttingen 1967–. [Projected are three volumes embracing some twenty-eight monographs as chapters; now nearly complete.]
CW	*Classical World*
JHS	*Journal of Hellenic Studies*
RE	*Paulys Real-Encyclopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*
ST	*Studia Troica*
WJA	*Würzburger Jahrbücher für die Altertumswissenschaft*

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