PLOT AND POWER IN THE *ILIAD*

by

JOSHUA BRAXTON MCCALL

(Under the Direction of Charles Platter)

ABSTRACT

This study explores the poetic implications of power and plot in the *Iliad*. It examines the nature of Zeus' power by identifying its scope, its limitations, and its effects on the plot of the *Iliad*. I focus on three passages in particular: Zeus' speech to the assembly of the gods at the beginning of Book Eight; the *Dios Apate* of Book Fourteen; and Agamemnon's *Ate* narrative in Book Nineteen. The goal of this study is to determine the structural implications of Zeus' power.

INDEX WORDS: Plot, *Iliad*, Zeus, Hera, Agamemnon, hierarchy, Homeric formula.

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DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this Thesis to my precious wife, Jennifer McCall. Without your love and support, I could never have come this far.

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To all the members of my thesis committee, I owe a lifelong debt of gratitude. Thanks to your diligent reading, your unflagging attention, and your useful criticism, my reading of Homer is immeasurably richer. In addition, my approach to writing is more systematic and measured. My experience as a Classicist – and, consequently, as a human – will always reflect your invaluable insight.

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CHAPTER 1

ZEUS AND THE DIALOGIC IMAGINATION: EMBODIED SPEECH

As a living, socio-ideological concrete thing, as heteroglot opinion, language, for the individual consciousness, lies on the borderline between oneself and the other. The word in language is half someone else's. It becomes "one's own" only when the speaker populates it with his own intention, his own accent, when he appropriates the word, adapting it to his own semantic and expressive intention. Prior to this moment of appropriation, the word does not exist in a neutral and impersonal language (it is not, after all, all, out of a dictionary that the speaker gets his words!), but rather it exists in other people's mouths, in other people's contexts, serving other people's intentions: it is from there that one must take the word, and make it one's own. … Language is not a neutral medium that passes freely and easily into the private property of the speaker's intentions; it is populated - overpopulated - with the intentions of others. Expropriating it, forcing it to submit to one's own intentions and accents, is a difficult and complicated process.[1]

Bakhtin once observed that language's multivalent nature arises from its varying contexts: each speaker, audience, and situation refashions the meaning of the words involved. In any given utterance there is an act of migration between "the individual consciousness" of the speaker and his audience. Nobody can own the words he speaks, because they are already

1. Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2004), 294.

"overpopulated" with the intentions of others. He describes words as organic material, which the speaker must expropriate from an established common lexicon, and tailor it to suit the immediate rhetorical purpose. In addition, before words can communicate, they must predict and address the expectations and attitudes of their audience. Words fashioned in this manner betray the presence of their audience's perceived dispositions, and thus they can be described as "overpopulated ... with the intentions of others."[2]

Despite this complexity, Bakhtin does not rule out the possibility that a speaker may "expropriate" his own words, placing them at least to some degree under his own control. This control, however, is never absolute, as Bakhtin emphasizes by placing quotation marks around the phrase "his own." Even when the speaker appropriates his own utterance, that speech act is still a communal project, still only "half his own." In other words, any given speech is an exchange, or dialogue, between multiple and in multiple contexts: this quality of language Bakhtin calls "dialogism."

I contend that Zeus' discourse in the *Iliad* is overpopulated with the intentions of his audience – in other words, dialogized. My first test case will be his forceful speech in Book Eight forbidding further divine interference in the Trojan War. There are signs in Zeus' discourse that he is aware of, even anxious about, opposition from Hera and Athena. With their probable reaction in mind, he fashions his speech with an eye to accomplishing his will and commanding obedience. Since he is conscious of his listeners' perspectives, and since these perceived viewpoints compel him to tailor his address accordingly, his opponents on Mt. Olympus prove to be an important dialogizing influence in Zeus' discourse.

2. Ibid.

In addition to his rhetorical situation, the traditional style of Homeric epic also informs Zeus' speech, offering him a lexicon or register from which he derives his formulaic phrases. Zeus, or in this context the poet depicting Zeus, "expropriates" these formulae in order to address his listeners' intentions. A variety of interlacing rhetorical and stylistic forces color his discourse, rendering his speech not entirely his own, but informed by factors external to his will. In the end, I hope to demonstrate that Zeus' speech in the opening lines of Book Eight are dialogized by means of their formulaic phrases and their rhetorical context.[3] A dialogized view of Zeus' discourse complicates our vision of his character: he is both an efficacious speaker, capable of skillfully wielding Homeric formulae to suit his political purposes, as well as a contender in an ongoing process of asserting and maintaining his power.

Zeus' identity, one might argue, comes readily equipped for cunning dialogue, for Homer and Hesiod paint him as a crafty plotter. One of his common epithets is "μητίετα Ζεύς," or "cunning Zeus," and this half-line formula repeatedly reminds the audience that Zeus' power transcends the brute force he often threatens to use: he is also a profoundly clever manipulator of words, a master of cunning intelligence as well as of physical force.

Hesiod recognizes Zeus as a figure who is given to multiplicity and ambiguity not only in his mind, but in his body as well. In the *Theogony* we find a strong correlation between the epithet "μητίετα Ζεύς" and the account of his first marriage to Metis:

> Ζεὺς δὲ θεῶν βασιλεὺς πρώτην ἄλοχον θέτο Μῆτιν
> πλεῖστα τε ἰδυῖαν ἰδὲ θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων.
> ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ ἄρ' ἔμελλε θεὰν γλαυκῶπιν Ἀθήνην

3. Every use of the term "dialogue" or any of its cognates (i.e., dialogized, dialogism, etc.) is to be understood in Bakhtin's sense, unless otherwise noted.

τέξεσθαι, τότ᾽ ἔπειτα δόλῳ φρένας ἐξαπατήσας
αἰμυλίοισι λόγοισιν ἐὴν ἐσκάτθετο νηδὺν
Γαίης φραδμοσύνῃσι καὶ Οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος.

So Zeus the king of the gods took first Metis as his wife, the most knowing among the gods and among mortal men. But then when she was to give birth to bright-eyed Athena, then having deceived her mind by guile and wheedling words he swallowed her into his belly, on the advice of Gaia and of starry Uranos. [4]

This passage illustrates Zeus' complex personality. Even his body combines two identities, his own and that of cunning Metis, his first spouse. He has incorporated her female body, and as she had been pregnant with Athena before Zeus ingested her, Zeus' belly is now also a womb. The epithet "μητίετα Ζεύς" occurs four times in the *Theogony*[5] in scenes where Zeus proves his cunning, including one instance during his encounter with Prometheus. Considering such a mythological background, it is entirely appropriate that Zeus is referred to as "μητίετα Ζεύς" sixteen times in the *Iliad*. His cunning intelligence, along with his adeptness at multiplicity and ambiguity, arise from an ambiguous and multiple nature. Just as his body incorporates Metis, so does his speech; the repeated characterization of him as crafty suggests that he possesses and is possessed by an imagination that is both his and not his, that his words are both his and not his own.

Zeus' character in the *Iliad* harmonizes well with Hesiod's nearly contemporary portrayal, as Zeus' speeches in the *Iliad* employ a multilayered rhetorical approach to the pursuit

4. Theog., 886-891. All translations mine.
[5]. 55, 520, 900, 910.

of power. Since his hegemony relies so heavily on his cunning as a speaker, we can observe him in his speech in the beginning of Book Eight negotiating and taking into account the conflicting intentions of his addressees. His consolidation of power is a rhetorical process, for even though Zeus remains dominant, his control over the other gods meets with clever resistance which he must match with equal cleverness. The forceful tone and cunning imagery of his speech at the opening of Book Eight suggest that his position requires cleverness because his authority is not absolute. Indeed, his discourse anticipates a range of defiant responses, and he reacts to his perceived rivals by lacing his speech with the most effective persuasive strategy available to him - the threat of force. Instead of enjoying a fully resolved position of authority, Zeus must adapt his words to the multivalent network of power plays that surround him. As he confronts a divided audience, his traditional identity as a male possessing the cunning feminine mind of Metis puts him in a strong position to carry out his plans in the face of his perceived resistance. His efforts illustrate Bakhtin's claim that any speaker's words are only "half his own."

Bakhtin and the Epic: Another Look

A reading of *Epic And Novel* would give the critic pause before locating Bakhtin's vision of dialogized discourse in ancient epic. For much of the essay, Bakhtin sets the novel against the historical background of the epic, defining the novel's dialogized nature against what he considers the essentially monologic genre of the epic. The dichotomy between monologic and dialogic discourse is useful in describing Bakhtin's system. "Monologic" describes discourse which is in a pure relationship with its producer, and can only emerge in a rhetorical situation comprised of a sincere speaker and a submissive audience. The meaning in this type of

"monologue"[6] is fixed at the point of expression, and undergoes no significant historicizing transformation: no class, gender, or other ideological interruption disrupts the meaning intended by the speaker. The element of relativity, if present at all, fails to make any important difference in the interpretation of the discourse. Dialogized discourse, on the other hand, "is the characteristic epistemological mode of a world dominated by heteroglossia. Everything means, is understood, as a part of a greater whole-there is a constant interaction between meanings, all of which have the potential of conditioning others."[7] The dialectic is significant, as "monologic" discourse helps define and is defined by its counterpoint, "dialogic" discourse. "In Bakhtin's writings, the notion of dialogism is also systematically developed … in dialectical exchange with the persecutory power of monistic discourses..."[8]

Most importantly for our purposes, Bakhtin locates monologic discourse within a specific generic context, diagnosing the epic as characteristically a "finalized" genre of "valorized" discourse. He writes, for instance, that "[w]hatever its origins, the epic as it has come down to us is an absolutely completed and finished generic form, whose constitutive feature is the transferal of the world it describes to an absolute past of national beginnings and peak times."[9] Characters like Achilles could only thrive in a genre which presupposes an absolute past, a fairy-tale-like era when superheroes dominated narratives, far different from Dostoyevsky's haunted, diseased, ignoble characters. "The epic past," he claims, "is called the 'absolute past' for good reason: it is both monochronic and valorized (hierarchical); it lacks any relativity, that is, any gradual, purely

6. A monologue here is in Bakhtin's, not the traditional, sense. Throughout the remainder of the essay, "monologue," like "dialogue," will be used in Bakhtin's sense.
7. Bakhtin, 426.
8. Paul de Man, *The Resistance to Theory* (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1986), 108-109.
9. Bakhtin, 15.

temporal progressions that might connect it with the present."[10] Whereas the novel encourages the interchange between ideologies and levels of discourse, the epic, Bakhtin argues, rejects any such relativizing influence. Lacking any historicizing factors, its discourse is not in dialogue, but rather a monologue whose one voice resists the distortions of time and changing context.

Bakhtin's system applies to discourse both broadly and narrowly. At the broader level of discourse, dialogism exerts a relativizing influence on the language as a whole and on the genres which emerge from the traditions of that language. These forces likewise work at the level of the individual word. Beyond the subjectivity of competing perspectives that relativize whole speeches or utterances, Bakhtin also identifies an "internal dialogism" embedded in words, which he conceives as signs possessed both of static lexical meanings - as they refer to specific objects, for instance - as well as subtler, more dynamic underlying meanings. Morson explains Bakhtin's concept of *internal dialogism* of words thus:

> Every time we speak, we respond to something spoken before and we take a stand in relation to earlier utterances about the topic. The way we sense those earlier utterances - as hostile or sympathetic, authoritative or feeble, socially and temporally close or distant - shapes the content and style of what we say. We sense these alien utterances in the object itself. It is as if the object were coated with a sort of glue preserving earlier characterizations of it.[11]

Internal dialogism constitutes another universal element in Bakhtin's system. The rhetorical situation of any word, as Bakhtin understands it, exerts subtle influences over that word's reception and ultimately its meaning. Language that consists of monologue rather than dialogue,

[10]. Ibid.
[11]. Morson 137.

on the other hand, affords the individual words of which it is composed a fixed and finalized meaning, one that is determined not by competing understandings but by the intentions of the speaker.

The shifting rhetorical contexts of words become in Bakhtin's theory the collective workshop in which language evolves. It is a communal system, one in which the Romantic "isolated genius" has no place as the sole arbiter of the quality or meaning of his discourse. Where there is flux, though, there is also fixity, and this dichotomy of opposed forces in language forms another dialectic: two forces that combine to make language both a relative, organic whole as well as a comprehensible set of signs stable enough to be recognizable. Bakhtin does not view language as a constantly shifting conundrum; rather, the transformations wrought by the "essential messiness of the world"[12] work in tandem with the opposite dynamic of semiotic stability. The former Bakhtin calls *centrifugal* forces; the latter, *centripetal*.

The metaphor is rich: at one level of language, the centripetal forces act from the outside in, as though the discourse itself is responding to the historical forces in flux around it, a way of "circling the wagons" as the messiness of the world threatens the stability and the very existence of language. Opposed to this inherent centripetal action are the centrifugal forces, wherein the aforementioned historical elements surround the language and make it subjective, tugging, as it were, from the inside-out. The logic of Bakhtin's system relies on this binary, for if language were too changeable, it would cease to be intelligible, and it would thus cease to be a language. To this end, Bakhtin claims that cultures invest effort in maintaining the stability of their

[12]. Ibid., 137.

language, a project that must always be ongoing and in conflict with the centrifugal forces which work (often unintentionally) to destabilize the language.[13]

Of these two forces, the epic, it would seem, only partakes of the centripetal, or the stabilizing, reactionary impulse to create a monologue. To be "absolutely completed and finished," to "lack relativity," would seem to conclusively[14] exclude epic from consideration as a dialogized form. After all, one of the elements most central to the dialogized novel is its constant incompleteness, its near-amorphousness as a melting-pot of other sub-genres, whose literary and non-literary registers constitute a web of dissonant literary languages which Bakhtin terms *heteroglossia*.[15] The epic's "valorized" past, which Bakhtin imagines to be "absolute" and closed off from the audience, smacks of finalized meaning, an authoritative cultural structure too deeply embedded in ancient aristocratic hierarchy to ever meaningfully become relativized. In Bakhtin's understanding of Dostoyevsky, Raskalnikov, though he thrives in industrial St. Petersburg, could not survive a genre dominated by the classical ideal of manhood.

To abandon Bakhtin at this point would be to neglect the breadth - some have preferred to call it inconsistency - of his critical corpus.[16] "Dialogism can mean, and indeed has meant, many things to many critics, sometimes without reference to Bakhtin. Its more or less submerged presence is noticeable [in many contexts], as when Hilary Putnam invites us to see criticism as 'a conversation with many voices rather than as a contest with winners and losers.'"[17] Putnam's point is compatible with Bakhtin's dialogism, especially if one envisions a lifetime of scholarly work as a conversation with oneself, in which the younger critic's writing faces the dialogizing

[13]. Ibid., 139-40.
[14]. An ironic term when applied to Bakhtin.
[15]. Bakhtin, 372.
[16]. Morson, 10.
[17]. Hilary Putnam, quoted by De Man, 107.

forces of time and reconsideration. There are, despite his statements to the contrary, moments in the theorist's career where his system seems much more open and universal, where in some sense any utterance, not only those occurring in novels, is dialogized. As Morson aptly quotes Bakhtin,

> Life by its very nature is dialogic. To live means to participate in dialogue: to ask questions, to heed, to respond, to agree, and so forth … [One] invests his entire self in discourse, and this discourse enters into the dialogic fabric of human life, into the world symposium.[18]

In this more global view of dialogized communication, the key factor in the exchange is the "unfinalizability" of meaning.[19] Morson explains that the nature of any exchange between a speaker and an audience implies two different horizons of understandings, two competing realities, and consequently a bewildering array of layers in the meaning of that exchange.[20] Consequently, no speaker can control, or finalize, the significance of his words.

This voice within Bakhtin's writings complicates his vision of Epic as a monologic genre, though it doesn't necessarily dispense with his comparison between the ancient genre and the Novel. It may be true that Homer's poetry does not dialogue with itself and its audience in the same way or to the same degree as the Novel, but that distinction need not prevent us from applying the concept of dialogism to Homer's work. For one thing, Bakhtin studied the Classics as a student in the early twentieth century, which means that he acquired a nineteenth-century vision of Homer as a poet outside of time. Had he had the opportunity or inclination, he might

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[18]. Morson, 60.
[19]. Ibid., 40.
[20]. Ibid.

have modified his views on the nature of Epic. Furthermore, even with his somewhat constrained view of the Classics, Bakhtin's oeuvre offers a multivalent and open field of inquiry that invites us to locate an entry point at which his system could illuminate Homeric discourse. His understanding of the dialogic imagination could very well elucidate some of the longstanding problems in the field of Homeric criticism. Specifically, dialogism could help explain the tension between traditional forms and poetic creativity in Homer's style, two seemingly opposing impulses that have long sparked critical debate. It is my argument that Homer's formulaic approach to poetry allows just such a point of entry for an application of the dialogic imagination to Homeric discourse, for as we shall see, Zeus's speech in Book Eight is crafted with cleverness as well as with traditional, formulaic patterns. This give-and-take between established patterns (centripetal forces) and poetic creativity (centrifugal forces) is central to Bakhtin's theory of dialogism.

Orality, Tradition, and a Bridge to Bakhtin

When Bakhtin wrote, "Whatever its origins, the epic as it has come down to us is an absolutely completed and finished generic form,"[21] his introductory phrase addresses the matter upon which Milman Parry built his seminal work of the early twentieth century. Parry sought to uncover those "origins" to which Bakhtin refers. The unknown cultural forces behind Homeric epic disqualified them from being conclusively "dialogized" in Bakhtin's narrower use of the word, since there could be no clear genealogy of historic genres that led to the development of the epic. In contrast with the novel, whose antecedents we can find abundant evidence for in written manuscripts, the *Iliad*'s place in the Western canon naturally precludes definitive

[21]. Bakhtin, 15.

documentary proof that it exhibits *heteroglossia*, or a network of distinct registers of languages from various genres.

But while there is no clear documentary record of the genres predating and influencing the emergence of Homer's works, Parry's study of Homeric formulae drew on internal evidence in the epics that led him to two influential observations on their origins. First, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* arose from a highly developed and tightly structured epic tradition, which passed down metrical, thematic, and narrative formulae from one generation to the next. These formulae comprise a grammar for the epic poet of Homer's time.[22] Furthermore, this somewhat rigid structure of flexible formulae (the paradox is important) emerged from the constraints of oral performances.[23] In sum, Homer's epic was fundamentally traditional in its forms and essentially oral in its origins, a system of conventions agreed upon by bard and audience over the course of centuries. Lord summarizes Parry's findings nicely:

> Stated briefly, oral epic song is narrative poetry composed in a manner evolved over many generations by singers of tales who did not know how to write; it consists of the building of metrical lines and half lines by means of formulas and formulaic expressions and of the building of songs by the use of themes.[24]

Parry drew on two bodies of evidence to reach these conclusions. At the outset, he analyzed the internal data, or the forms within the texts that still survive, to locate empirically and statistically verifiable patterns within Homeric meter, narrative form, and theme.[25] He then devoted two

[22]. Albert Bates Lord, *The Singer of Tales* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1960), 3.
[23]. E.J. Bakker, "Introduction: Homer and Oral Poetry Research," *Homer: Critical Assessments*, Ed. Irene J.E. de Jong, (London: Routledge, 1999), 173.
[24]. Lord, 4.
[25]. Ibid., 3.

extended trips over the course of two years to studying the oral bardic tradition of Yugoslavia, observing the poets in their performative setting and conducting interviews with the epic audience there, from which he gleaned the comparative data he would go on to apply to Homeric poetry.[26] His most basic conclusion appears in a one-sentence definition of the formula: "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."[27] As his example, he chose repeated word clusters that fit a metrical slot in Homer's dactylic hexameter. "Νεφεληγερέτα Ζεύς," for instance, appears thirty times in Homer, and expresses an aspect of Zeus as "the cloudgatherer" even as it fulfills a predictable requirement in the dactylic meter, with the first two syllables short, the third lengthened, the next two short, and the last two syllables forming a spondee.

On the basis of this formular method of composition, it is only logical to assume that Homer did not work with an eye to the individual word as the basic unit of poetic composition, but created his poetry from a traditional lexicon of metrically apt phrases. The utility of such a system is clear: a poet performing in an oral context would find it difficult, if even possible, to "compose" or perform if he had to consider each word as a possible building block for his line. Parry spoke of these formulaic phrases the oral bard's "diction":

> Each one of these fixed phrases, or formulas, is an extraordinary creation in itself. It gives the words which are best suited for the expression of the idea, and is made up of just those parts of speech which, in the place which it is to fill in the verse, will accord with the formulas which go before and after to make the sentence and the verse. Each formula is thus made in view of the other formulas with which it is to be joined; and the formulas

[26]. Ibid.
[27]. Milman Parry, "Homer and Homeric Style," in "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 1, no. 41 (1930): 80.

> taken all together make up a diction which is the material for a completely unified technique of verse-making.[28]

Even in its formulaic style, or rather because of its formulaic style, Homeric verse emerged from the creative forces of generations of bards. Homeric formulae survived or were discarded according to their utility both metrically and poetically. Each phrase had to make poetic sense as an expression of meaning while simultaneously conforming to the requirements of the dactylic hexameter line.

The constraints of the dactylic hexameter are another sign pointing to a longstanding tradition that predates the *Iliad*. Homer's "material" was not all his own; rather, it was a shared body of phrases, lines, motifs, and type-scenes comprehensible to his audience and workable for the poet. Ruth Scodel notes that dactylic hexameter is itself a mark of traditionality. In employing the epic meter, therefore, Homer is invoking the poetic heritage he shared with his audience. "Implicitly, the epics appeal to traditionality at every moment, through their poetic dialect, formulaic language, and hexameter meter. The rhythm is traditional in the strongest sense, and its use for literary oracles and the wisdom of archaic philosophers proves that it carries authority."[29] When one refers to "tradition" post-Parry, that word carries with it a network of conventions that arise from the specifically oral background of Homeric epic: "poetic dialect, formulaic language, and hexameter" are all important components that define Homer's traditional style. Consequently, for the rest of this thesis, I will use "tradition" to imply its Homeric connotations.

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[28]. Ibid., "The Homeric Language as the Language of an Oral Poetry," in "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 2, no. 43 (1932): 6.
[29]. Ruth Scodel, *Listening to Homer: Tradition, Narrative, and Audience*, (Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press, 2002), 79.

After Parry established a systematic study of Homeric verse, scholars began to test the limits of his definition of the formula. This was not a departure, but rather a development of a concern he raised in his own writings on formula. He had already noticed that there were phrases that were not word-for-word repetitions, but were obviously manifestations of a formula.

> The other kind of formula is that which is like one or more which express a similar idea in more or less the same words... We may say that any group of two or more such like formulas make up a system, and the system may be defined in turn as a group of phrases which have the same metrical value and which are enough alike in thought and words to leave no doubt that the poet who used them knew them not only as single formulas, but also as formulas of a certain type.[30]

Though these phrases are not exact repetitions, Parry still classifies them as formulae. The discernible pattern lies in this instance in the idea expressed rather than the precision of a word-for-word repetition. As Nagler points out, Parry even noted a "type of corresponsion which Parry called *calembour*,"[31] which other scholars have translated "punning."[32] In this type of formula, Parry includes "words that are not semantically related" but respond to one another in sound. [33] Nagler[34] cites one of Parry's examples of *calembour* from the *Odyssey*:

a. ἀμφήλυθεν ἡδὺς ἀυτμή[35] - "The sweet breath came all around"

b. ἀμφήλυθε θῆλυς ἀυτή[36] - "The feminine cry came all around"

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[30]. Parry, Epic Technique I, 86.
[31]. Michael N. Nagler, "Towards a Generative View of the Oral Formula," *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association* 98 (1967): 274.
[32]. M.D. Usher, *Homeric Stitchings*, (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 1998), 49.
[33]. Ibid.
[34]. Nagler, 274.
[35]. Od. 12.369.

The combination of both "sound and sense"[37] brings them very near to Parry's conception of a Homeric formula, but because they do not correspond precisely, they did not meet Parry's criteria for the Homeric formula. Nonetheless, his discussion of more loosely corresponding patterns potentially broadens the scope of Homer's formulaic style, making it a flexible and organic system of metrical phrases. The poet could take these two phrases, which correspond exactly in terms of meter and approximately in terms of sound, to establish a category of description of certain types of scenes. "The sweet breath came all around" is comparable to "the feminine cry came all around," as both phrases describe a scene where some ethereal element saturates the scene. They share, along with the metrical and phonemic correspondence, a likeness in mood. Homeric formulae, it would seem, are far from a rigid, stale collection of building blocks; rather, Homeric formulae are more adaptable and open to the poet's creativity than the word *formula* might suggest.

As scholars began to develop the idea even further, testing the limits of the category of the formula, they began noting that virtually every aspect of Homeric verse is formulaic. In this sense, then, his words, phrases, often entire sentences, and even his narration of entire type-scenes were repetitions of earlier corresponding forms. The notion of the formula began to be applied so broadly that many critics began to question how useful it was to call anything a "formula," since nearly every word in Homer was a kind of formula. Nagler explains how problematic an overly vague view of the formula might prove.

> [T]o look at the evidence of the texts from a centrifugal rather than centripetal viewpoint, in an array of phrases which are progressively different from one another in various ways, which is a formula, which a "modification" of the formula, and which no formula

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[36]. Od. 6.122.
[37]. Nagler, 274.

> at all? Our uncertainty as to when we can reasonably decide that a formula has been used rests on a prior uncertainty as to the nature of the formula as a mental entity: we cannot be sure how or when the thing behaves, to say nothing of its poetic value, until we have a much better idea what it is.[38]

It is interesting that Bakhtin and Nagler use similar terms to describe the forces of stability and flux. Nagler employs the term "centripetal" forces to refer to the more stable types of formulae that correspond exactly, contrasting them with the "centrifugal" forces that make oral formulae "progressively different from one another in various ways." Given such variety, Nagler asks, how can one even distinguish between corresponding phrases that are "modification[s] of the [same] formula" and coincidental patterns that represent "no formula at all?"

Noting how pervasive formulae are in Homeric verse, and how various the instances of formula turn out to be, Nagler locates the oral tradition of formula at the generative level of composition, enlisting Chomsky's theory of generative grammar as a way of explaining them. He sees orality as fundamental to Homeric verse rather than viewing formulae as only a concrete set of phrases which the bard mixes and matches like a jigsaw puzzle. Invoking Chomsky's revolutionary work on generative grammar, Nagler argues for a similar approach to Homer's composition. In the poet's mind, he argues, there existed a "conceptual framework" composed of a body of "allomorphs" which emerged as the polymorphous system of formulae. Viewed from this perspective, Homeric formulae become much more adaptable, too infinite even to formulate completely. "But to approach accuracy this [set of "allomorphs"] would have to be made an infinitely open-ended list, leaving room for all the allomorphs that escaped recording (the vast

[38]. Nagler, 270.

majority!) and even all possible allomorphs; it would not really be a definition at all."[39] Nagler goes on to discuss these "allomorphs" as symptoms of a generative process: as Homer composes his poetry, the bard draws on the internal "grammar" of his tradition, and just as each sentence in Chomsky's model is creative, so Homer's employment of formula, though it may sound counterintuitive to speak of formula this way, is likewise a creative process.

What emerges is a system of Homeric formulae that resides in the two places that Bakhtin located language: in the consciousness of the speaker, and in the rhetorical context within which the speaker works. In crossing the boundaries between perspectives and contexts, formulae become malleable. The system of formulae has ample room for innovation even as it remains stable enough for its participants to comprehend. Nagler's conclusion offers a further synthesis of the formula as an interactive process of tradition and creativity.

> The terms 'traditional' and 'original' do have legitimate applications in a theory of oral poetry, but not as conflicting polar opposites. Rather, they describe two stages of the same creative process, Gestalt and realization. Since the former is always traditional, furthermore, and the latter by definition always original, these terms merely designate the natural condition of those two stages in true oral composition; they are not in the least controversial and need not enter into any discussion of artistic quality. A modern linguist would no doubt put it this way: "All is traditional on the generative level, all original on the level of performance."[40]

The traditional, stable forms (Nagler's "Gestalt") on which the Homeric bard depended existed in creative tension with the individual manifestations of his material. The oral epic developed

[39]. Ibid., 281.
[40]. Ibid., 291.

certain generic constraints, and the tradition responded by generating a stable set of metrically apt phrases suited for those constraints. These phrases were stable only in theory, though, and not in practice. The traces of their ideal forms were apparent to Parry, even when the actual phrases extant in Homer's poetry did not correspond precisely to those ideal forms. Nagler explains those formulae that are "progressively different from one another" by envisioning a creative fusion of bardic tradition and creativity.

It is in this aspect of the scholarship on Homer's orality that Bakhtin's system finds its niche. The poet of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* capitalized on the tension between creativity and the constraint of pattern, between experiment and tradition. The formula, which emerged as a central stylistic characteristic for oralists like Parry and Nagler, offered fixed patterns that would have been predictable and intelligible to the Homeric audience; likewise, there was space within this formular tradition for innovation and experimentation. The patterns of Homeric formulae, meticulously systematized over the course of several centuries, constitute what Bakhtin could have seen as the centripetal, or stabilizing, forces in human discourse. Each instance of its performance, though, would have exposed it to centrifugal forces from its differing audiences and performers. Without venturing into the uncertain circumstances of Homeric performance settings, Bakhtin's general principle would have held as true then as it would in any utterance: with each performance, and even within each episode within the great work, the messiness of everyday life, and therefore the messiness of an oral performance, would have worked its subtle changes on the underlying meanings of Homer's words. The *Iliad* in our possession, though it has survived history because it made its way into textual form, is only an edition of "collected manuscripts stand[ing] at the end of centuries of oral performances, in some way serving as fixed

epitomes of that ongoing process."[41] One of the consequences of an oral Homer is that the fixity and finality of our version of the *Iliad* is an illusion: the actual stability of the material that went into the written text resided at the level of formula, and as we shall see in examining Zeus' discourse in the *Iliad*, these formulae do not lend the text a monologic finality in Bakhtinian terms, but rather help to put the text into dialogue with itself.

In some respects, Zeus may seem an unlikely character to enter into dialogue with his audience. His unquestioned place as father of gods and men is buttressed with the ability to protect his position with unparalleled force. As events unfold, and as Zeus responds to the various divine and human forces at work around him, a more complex political arrangement becomes discernible in the divine hierarchy. Zeus' most formidable claim, often made in forceful terms that momentarily terrify those around him, is the assertion of his insurmountable strength. Nowhere does this boast appear stronger than at the beginning of Book Eight, where Zeus decides to favor the Trojan side and allow Trojans to slaughter Achaeans. As confident as he appears, however, it is clear from his speech that he feels compelled to reassert his power. Only the anticipation of opposition would require such a preemptive response. Rhetorical factors within the text and historical factors outside the text subtly color the meaning of his oration. The perceived resistance among his internal audience dictates the contents of his discourse, and the creative efforts of the poet exert an equally important influence. Thus the significance of his oration is far from settled once Zeus finishes speaking, nor can he begin on his own terms. A dialogized reading of Zeus' discourse has implications for the nature of Zeus' place in the *Iliad*,

[41]. James Miles Foley, "Reading Homer through Oral Tradition," *College Literature* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 3.

for if his speech is not entirely under his control, then that would suggest that the extent of his power remains an open question, continually disputed.

Zeus' "σειρὴν χρυσείην": The Rhetoric of Force and the Force of Rhetoric

By the beginning of Book Eight, Zeus' private oath to Thetis is still undergoing challenges from within the hierarchy of Olympus. Zeus attempts to circumvent any future setbacks by delivering an autocratic statement with phrases that are unambiguously all-inclusive:

> κέκλυτέ μευ **πάντές** τε θεοὶ **πᾶσαί** τε θέαιναι,
> ὄφρ᾽ εἴπω τά με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει.
> μήτέ τις οὖν θήλεια θεὸς τό γε μήτέ τις ἄρσην
> πειράτω διακέρσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος, ἀλλ᾽ ἅμα πάντες
> αἰνεῖτ᾽, ὄφρα τάχιστα τελευτήσω τάδε ἔργα.
>
> Hearken to me all you gods whether male or female, so that I may speak those things which the spirit in my breast commands me. Neither let any divinity, female or male, attempt to undercut my command, but let all of you obey forthwith, so that I might most speedily bring these deeds to fruition. [42]

Zeus' insistence on including all the gods in his command is particularly striking in this instance, as he not only includes the generic "all of you in like manner" in line eight, but specifies that "both the male and female gods" obey him; he repeats later, in the negative, "nor indeed let any god, male or female, attempt to undercut my command." His grouping of the gods into separate camps of gender is emphasized by repetition. This is because he knows some members of his

42. 8.5-9.

audience would have approved of his plan to slaughter the Achaeans: Apollo, for instance, and Artemis, as well as all the other gods who patronized the Trojans. He directs his speech particularly to those whom he suspects might resist his plan, and he would have been most conscious of Hera and Athena, both fervent partisans of the Danaans.

Zeus' speech exhibits *polyphony*, defined by Bakhtin as a "multivoiced [utterance], ' filled with dialogic overtones' … and 'overpopulated' with the meanings and intentions of others..."[43] Zeus negotiates the same limits Bakhtin outlines in his theory of dialogized language. His choice of words anticipates the response of Hera and Athena, who are bitter antagonists of the Trojans. Zeus' internal audience influences his oration with their hostility. Given this consciousness of his audience's plans to give victory to the Achaeans, and given the divine audience's very real presence as an active participant rather than a passive recipient of his speech, Zeus' choice to specifically address the gods as male and female renders his performance open to the dialogic imagination. An utterance becomes dialogized when the speaker is not in complete control of what he says, but adopts a rhetorical attitude tolerable to the audience. In this way, a dialogized speech-act will reflect the intentions of the listeners, whose power over the utterance rivals that of the speaker himself. Moreover, a dialogized utterance will contain more than one voice, since even when one person is ostensibly speaking, the listeners' role in that speech-act defines its boundaries and possibilities. Bakhtin describes this polyphonic discourse as "'heteroglot from top to bottom', a seething site of social and ideological differences."[44] The ideological and social differences facing Zeus are apparent in his speech, as he must speak across genders and to partisans of the Achaean cause. If Zeus is to effectively head off his opposition,

[43]. Richard Aczel, "Polyphony," in *Routledge Encyclopedia of Narrative Theory*, Eds. David Herman, M Jahn and M.L. Ryan, (New York: Routledge, 2005), 444.
[44]. Ibid.

his rhetoric must account for the complex arena in which he is operating. Consequently, he makes it clear that he has the Hera-Athena faction in mind as he begins his harangue.

In addition to marking out his opponents, Zeus also offers a succinct definition of power. He commands that all of the gods listen to him, then he informs them of what "the spirit in [his] breast commands [him]." The result clause expresses the goal of his speech, that he "might most speedily bring these deeds to fruition." Zeus envisions power as the ability to command an audience's attention in an assembly and their obedience in the pursuit of tangible goals. The test of his power over his subjects is the distance between what his "spirit in his breast commands" him to do and the fulfillment of certain deeds. Any obstruction on the part of the "male or female" gods would not overturn his position in the hierarchy, but it would diminish his power by delaying or distorting the plot he has devised.

After his opening lines in Book Eight, Zeus forcefully forbids the other gods from intervening in the Trojan War. He vows that if he catches sight of any god aiding either the Trojans or the Danaans, he will punish him thus:

> πληγεὶς οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ἐλεύσεται Οὔλυμπον δέ·
> ἤ μιν ἐλὼν ῥίψω ἐς Τάρταρον ἠερόεντα
> τῆλε μάλ᾽, ἧχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον,
> ἔνθα σιδήρειαί τε πύλαι καὶ χάλκεος οὐδός,
> τόσσον ἔνερθ᾽ Ἀΐδεω ὅσον οὐρανός ἐστ᾽ ἀπὸ γαίης·
> γνώσετ᾽ ἔπειθ᾽ ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἁπάντων.
>
> Having been struck, he shall not arrive nobly at all at Olympus: for seizing him I shall hurl him into dark Tartarus - far indeed - where the pit is deepest under the earth; there

the iron gates and the threshold of bronze, so far beneath Hades as Heaven is from earth; then you shall know to what degree I am the most powerful of all the gods. [45]

Zeus' insistence on his own superiority suggests a complicated political situation on Mt. Olympus. He duly portrays the great lengths his fury will reach if any chooses to defy him, threatening any offender with "dark Tartarus … where the pit is deepest under the earth." His second-person future verb "γνώσετ' ἔπειτα" (then shall you know) represents the rhetorical goal of his speech. His immediate aim is largely rhetorical, and in performing his threat in the medium of a speech, he is counting on the force of his rhetoric to subdue his audience. His strategy, or rather the fact that he requires a strategy at all, results from a dialogue with the competing concerns of his audience, whom Zeus predicts will oppose his plans. Implicit in his forceful rhetoric is the recognition of and response to the voices of others around him.

Zeus also responds to his own history in his threat when he refers to Tartarus, where epic tradition locates his vanquished enemies, the Titans. His victory over Kronos and the rest of the Titans is obviously a well-known episode among the gods, as Hera and Hypnos both allude to Tartarus in Book Fourteen, where they recall Zeus' victory in his battle with the Titans adversaries:

ἄγρει νῦν μοι ὄμοσσον ἀάατον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ,
χειρὶ δὲ τῇ ἑτέρῃ μὲν ἕλε χθόνα πουλυβότειραν,
τῇ δ' ἑτέρῃ ἅλα μαρμαρέην, ἵνα νῶϊν ἅπαντες
μάρτυροι ὦσ' οἳ ἔνερθε θεοὶ Κρόνον ἀμφὶς ἐόντες…[46]

45. 8.12-17.
46. 14.271-4.

> Take now and swear to me by the inviolable Stygian water, and take by one hand the much-nourishing earth, and by the other the marble sea, that all the gods below may be witnesses to us, those surrounding Kronos…

Hera complies with Hypnos' request, swearing by "those beneath Tartarus, who are called Titans."[47] It would appear that the victory has firmly established Zeus' κλέος in the eyes of the divine hierarchy, since they have no trouble recognizing the significance of Tartarus. His reference to Tartarus in Book Eight is a rhetorical move, an effort to forestall rebellion by his persuasive ability, as he predicts that any god who defies his command "will know to what degree I am the most powerful of the gods."[48] In alluding to his previous glorious victory, Zeus appeals to the warrior ethic so central to the *Iliad*. The image of Tartarus reminds the other gods that he surpasses them all in valor and brute force. The fact that he feels the need to reiterate his valor to his audience suggests that his renown, no matter how glorious in deed, is never so firmly established that it requires no reminder. Although he is in fact proven to be the mightiest of the gods, he must still provide rhetorical support for his image in order to translate his strength into effective political power.

If the *Iliad* were as monologic as Bakhtin claimed, there would be no need for Zeus to insist on his superiority. The other gods are well aware of his victory against Kronos and the Titans, but Zeus feels compelled nonetheless to remind his audience of his prowess. It would seem that his κλέος requires more than the deed itself; he must also confirm his glorious reputation through persuasion, despite his renown among the divine community. He enjoys the

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[47]. ὣς ἔφατ', οὐδ' ἀπίθησε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη, ὄμνυε
δ' ὡς ἐκέλευε, θεοὺς δ' ὀνόμηνεν ἅπαντας
τοὺς ὑποταρταρίους οἳ Τιτῆνες καλέονται. 277-9.
[48]. 8.17.

status of the most powerful of the gods, but whether that status guarantees him complete power over his subjects and over the events around him remains an open question throughout the *Iliad*. It may be that he does not wield the political power to accomplish his will to the same degree that his strength surpasses the other gods. In his first speech of Book Eight, he attempts to enlist his obvious superiority in force in order to do something different from establishing his ability in battle, as he did in defeating the Titans: that battle over, his new office demands that he be able to control his subjects by persuasion. There might be no greater argument at his disposal than a reminder of his κλέος.

Having chosen the rhetorical strategy of emphasizing his well-known strength in battle, Zeus develops the image of his power by imagining a hypothetical future contest of force:

> εἰ δ᾽ ἄγε πειρήσασθε θεοὶ ἵνα εἴδετε πάντες·
> σειρὴν χρυσείην ἐξ οὐρανόθεν κρεμάσαντες
> πάντές τ᾽ ἐξάπτεσθε θεοὶ πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι·
> ἀλλ᾽ οὐκ ἂν ἐρύσαιτ᾽ ἐξ οὐρανόθεν πεδίον δὲ
> Ζῆν᾽ ὕπατον μήστωρ᾽, οὐδ᾽ εἰ μάλα πολλὰ κάμοιτε.
> Come now, try it that you all may see: hanging a golden rope from heaven all of you fasten yourselves thereon, gods and goddesses too: but you would not drag from heaven to earth loftiest Zeus, your master, not even if you labored hard indeed.[49]

The sudden transition to the image of the golden cord shifts the focus from covert rebellion, in which a god acts "far apart from all the other gods," to an open show of force. Here Zeus tests the limits of the verb he employs in the previous line, "εἴδετε," a verb which carries the double

49. 8.18-22.

implication of seeing and knowing. In order that all the gods might *know* his supremacy, he performs a rhetorical exercise in helping them *see* the rendition of his strength by using a poetic image. The golden cable, symbol of Zeus' power, assumes the force of an imminent physical threat made more palpable by a clever performance. It is an image designed to attract his audience's gaze towards one aspect of Zeus' personality and away from a potential weakness. The movement of his speech directly from Tartarus onto the golden cord cleverly foregrounds the possibility of open conflict while suppressing the possibility of other, more subtle resistance. He makes the transition by capitalizing on the possibilities offered by his rhetorical situation.

One of his most basic rhetorical constraints is the dactylic hexameter line, and he employs the meter to great effect. The length of the "σειρὴν χρυσείην" is drawn out spatially, as his description encompasses the space of heaven and earth, and metrically as well, since the two words comprise between them the entire first half of the dactylic hexameter line. These two words also change the pace of his speech, since the two preceding lines (γνώσετ᾽ ἔπειθ᾽ ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἁπάντων / εἰ δ᾽ ἄγε πειρήσασθε θεοὶ ἵνα εἴδετε πάντες·) scan more quickly, with only two spondees between them (θε-**ῶν κάρτι**στος and **πειρήσα**σθε). Having signaled that the gods are about to see and know just how mighty he is, he adds emphasis to the symbolic image of his supremacy by slowing down the pace of the hexameter verse and allotting the maximum metrical space possible to the golden cord. The verbs he associates with this metrical hub encompass a succession of double-entendres in an impressive unity: "κρεμάσαντες," "ἐξάπτεσθε," and "κάμοιτε" all connote physical, literal hanging, grasping, and laboring as well as artistic activity. They are fitting images of the divine struggle against Zeus' commands, since at this point in the *Iliad* the opposition exists only in Zeus' conception. Though in the first stage of his speech he alludes to the possibility that some of the gods might act in secret, outside the

reach of his might, the second stage of his speech cunningly shifts the audience's gaze to a different kind of contest. The golden cord comes embedded with the suggestion that not only is the father of men and gods physically the most powerful, his powers of imagination are equally formidable.

Zeus' depiction of the other gods hanging from one end of this rope, laboring to drag Zeus earthward, imagines the anticipated efforts of all the other gods to challenge Zeus' strength and cleverness. It is a succinct image of dialogized discourse, as it arises from the speaker's awareness of his listeners' response, a dialogue between multiple perspectives. Zeus weaves into his speech a preemptive reply to his opposition. He dictates the terms of his hypothetical contest so that it is reminiscent of his famous battle with the Titans. In either contest, where the leadership of the cosmos is at stake and might in battle is the deciding factor, Zeus must emerge the victor. In this context, he wishes to do more than remind his listeners of his prowess; the purpose of his forceful reminder is to persuade his audience to accomplish his will.

Cognizant of opposition to his will, Zeus' rhetorical task must be to frame the contest in terms of his most formidable divine attribute in order to respond to their objections. With the other gods collectively dangling from the other end of the golden cord, Zeus shifts his focus to portray the consequences of rebellion. He measures the collective struggle from his opposition against his own role in such a conflict:

> ἀλλ᾽ ὅτε δὴ καὶ ἐγὼ πρόφρων ἐθέλοιμι ἐρύσσαι,
> αὐτῇι κεν γαίηι ἐρύσαιμ᾽ αὐτῇι τε θαλάσσηι·
> σειρὴν μέν κεν ἔπειτα περὶ ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο
> δησαίμην, τὰ δέ κ᾽ αὖτε μετήορα πάντα γένοιτο.
> τόσσον ἐγὼ περί τ᾽ εἰμὶ θεῶν περί τ᾽ εἴμ᾽ ἀνθρώπων.

> But when I should choose wholeheartedly to tug, I would draw it around the earth and the very sea; I would bind the cord then around the peak of Olympus, so that all things would become suspended in mid-air again. So much am I superior to both gods and men.[50]

The "σειρὴν" extends the scale of Zeus' power to reach around the earth and sea and all the way to Tartarus, where he has already threatened to cast anyone trying to act secretly.[51] As long as the stakes of the contest are as grandiose as the control over the cosmos, Zeus has established that he is peerless. In drawing his audience's attention to the elaborate golden cord, he cunningly emphasizes his role as a mighty avenger prone to rage while suppressing the possibility of other, potentially more threatening forms of dissent. One question still has not been settled, however: his speech conceives a plangent image of the scope of his strength, but the *Iliad* does not end here, and the gods who attend to his speech have not in fact been restrained from action. The reach of Zeus' strength has been settled; the effects of his argument have not.

There are certain avenues for obstruction still open to Hera and her divine allies because of the conditions Zeus suggests in his speech. In order to punish those who resist, those whom he has threatened to "cast into dark Tartarus,"[52] he must first "notice" the culprit acting "far apart from all the other gods."[53] Zeus of course does not cede his ultimate hegemony in suggesting the possibility of covert rebellion, but he does nonetheless expose a fissure in his power. That gap does not exist on a cosmic scale, nor is it contested through open force, but the *Iliad* finds room for dissent and even subversion within the Olympian hierarchy. Rather than challenging Zeus' cosmic control, those who oppose him must narrow their theater of activity to attempt opposition

50. 8.23-7.
51. 8.13.
52. 8.13.
53. "Νοήσω," 8.10.

on a more modest scale. Jenny Clay notes these minor challenges to Zeus' power, suggesting that such moments "[call] to mind ancient hostilities among the gods, the era of primeval theomachies and struggles for power, and the battles of the Giants and the Titans."[54] When viewed within the broader history of the divine hierarchy, the dissent among the gods' assembly harmonizes with Olympus' turbulent background.

The Other Audience

It has thus far been necessary to specify Zeus' divine audience as his internal audience, as we have focused on the contents of Zeus' speech to the other gods. There is yet another voice which inhabits Zeus' discourse in addition to the fictive listeners in the assembly on Olympus. The narrator of Zeus' speech would have performed this passage before another kind of assembly in Homer's time. The specific circumstances of these Homeric performances are perhaps irrecoverable, but some general observations are available on the basis of the text of the *Iliad* that has survived, and though general, they could nonetheless offer insight into Zeus' discourse. As discussed in the previous section on "Orality, Tradition, and a Bridge to Bakhtin," the language of Zeus' speech must have derived from a traditional network of formulae, acted upon by a long line of bards.[55] The epithet employed in line two of this speech, a Gestalt[56] at one level of its creation in the poet's mind, becomes under the auspices of the bard a description artfully suited for an introduction to Zeus' speech. While it remains at the poet's disposal in the abstract lexicon of his tradition, the descriptor "τερπικέραυνος" is a stable possibility, comprehensible to himself and to his audience who participates in the Homeric epic tradition; but

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[54]. Clay, Jenny Strauss, *The Politics of Olympus: Form and Meaning in the Major Homeric Hymns*, 2nd ed. (London: Bristol Classical Press, 2006), 20. Her comments appear in a discussion of Apollo's appearance to the divine assembly in Zeus' feasting hall. In this case, it is Apollo who momentarily disturbs the established hierarchy.
[55]. Cf. 10-17.
[56]. Cf. 16.

when it appears in this specific rhetorical context, it colors the meaning of the discourse it frames. It is thus susceptible to the centripetal and centrifugal push-pull of Bakhtinian dialogism.

The term "τερπικέραυνος" appears eight times in the *Iliad*, each time in an outbreak of violence either in the divine realm or in the heroic earthly sphere. In 1.419, Thetis comforts Achilles as she informs him that she will complain to "Zeus who delights in thunder." Her request to Zeus results in the "myriad pains" and the "mighty souls" cast down into Hades of the *Iliad*'s opening lines.[57] Agamemnon appears in 2.478 "with respect to his eyes like unto Zeus who delights in thunder." Though all the uses of this epithet foreshadow the outbreak of violence, as in Agamemnon's appearance in Book Two, or Zeus' punishment of the Achaeans in Book One, three instances of τερπικέραυνος refer specifically to his battle against the Titans. In 2.781-3, Homer employs a simile in describing a raging army which recalls Zeus' battle with Typhoeus.

> γαῖα δ' ὑπεστενάχιζε Διὶ ὣς τερπικεραύνῳ
> χωομένῳ ὅτε τ' ἀμφὶ Τυφωέϊ γαῖαν ἱμάσσῃ
> εἰν Ἀρίμοις, ὅθι φασὶ Τυφωέος ἔμμεναι εὐνάς·
>
> As when the earth groans underneath raging Zeus who delights in thunder, and whenever he lashes the earth around Typhoeus among the Arimi, where they say is the resting place of Typhoeus.

The use of this particular epithet of Zeus triggers a particular strand of myth within the traditions surrounding Zeus. In each instance, it signals a scene of rage and punishment, a warning that

[57]. 1.2-3.

would perhaps have been as clear a sign of Zeus' impending rage and punishment as a peal of thunder to the Homeric audience.

> [T]he art of traditional poetry is an *immanent* art, a process of composition and reception in which a simple, concrete part stands for a complex, intangible reality. *Pars pro toto*, as it were. "Grey-eyed Athena" or "wise Penelope" are thus neither brilliant attributions in unrelated situations nor metrical fillers of last resort. Rather they index their respective referents, in all their complexity, not merely in one given situation or even poem but against the enormously larger traditional backdrop.[58]

In the same sense, "Zeus who delights in thunder" stands for the "complex, intangible reality" of his mythical history, the network of stories surrounding his ascension to power over the cosmos. The speech Zeus delivers at the beginning of Book Eight is thus a part of a tradition of Zeus as an angry punisher of rebellious subjects divine and human. His discourse, like Homeric discourse in general, responds to its past and in doing so exposes individual scenes such as the assembly on Mount Olympus to the creative distortions of Homer's traditional art. Zeus' speech forbidding further interference in the Trojan War is in dialogue internally with its divine, fictive audience as well as with its external, human audience. His discourse "lies on the borderline between [him]self and the other,"[59] and one of the components of "the other" in this situation is a Homeric narrator working within his poetic tradition. For this scene, the poet's use of the

[58]. Foley, John Miles, "Traditional Signs and Homeric Art," in *Written Voices, Spoken Signs: Tradition, Performance, and the Epic*, ed. Egbert Bakker and Ahuvia Kahane (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 63.
[59]. Mikhail Bakhtin, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. Michael Holquist, trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2004), 294.

traditional epithet "τερπικέραυνος" places Zeus' speech within one of his traditional manifestations: the violent, avenging god.

The narrator employs a formulaic framing device at the close of Zeus' speech as well. If the poet's traditional formula at the opening of the speech reflects the violent aspect of Zeus' personality, the closing description reinforces Zeus' vengeful tendencies by noting the forceful tone of his delivery. Confronted by Hera and Athena's resistance, he responds with characteristically masculine pathos. The narrator describes his speech as one delivered "forcefully:"

> ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένοντο σιωπῇι
> μῦθον ἀγασσάμενοι· μάλα γὰρ κρατερῶς ἀγόρευσεν.
>
> Thus he spoke, and forthwith all the others grew silent in their silence, marveling at his speech; for he had indeed spoken forcefully.[60]

The temporary reaction of the other gods emphasizes once again the rhetorical over the physical: Zeus' "μῦθος" begins the line, and "ἀγόρευσεν" ends it, capping the line at both ends with words that focus on his speech instead of his physical prowess. In contrast to his impressive oration, the other gods "all grew silent in their silence." This formula appears ten times in the *Iliad*, and each time it acts as a transition from a bold speech to the audience's awed reaction. Though in each instance it reinforces the forceful tone of the speaker, the amazed silence of the audience is no guarantee that the speaker will accomplish his will. In 3.395, the two armies "grew silent in their silence" after Hector stops the fighting to propose a duel between Menelaus and Paris, and

60. 8.28-9.

though the fight does begin, it does not, as Hector and Menelaus wish, resolve in a clear decision or an end to the war. Likewise, the divine silence in the immediate wake of Zeus' speech appears to be a token of submission to the "valorized" hierarchy of the divine realm. And yet it is clear that Zeus' anticipation of resistance was correct, for Athena soon breaks the silence to register her disapproval of Zeus' wishes. The formulaic response serves only to heighten the boldness of Athena's opposition.

This picture of Olympian politics offers an alternative to Bakhtin's vision of discourse in Homeric epic. Even the mightiest character among gods and men speaks in dialogue with his internal and external audiences. Zeus inhabits a world in which valor and renown in battle do not translate neatly into political power. Given the gap between Zeus' strength and his actual ability to accomplish his goals, the *Iliad* depicts a milieu too complex for a monologic character to exist.

CHAPTER 2

THE *DIOS APATE*: HERA'S LOCUS OF DISSENT

Despite the gap between Books Eight and Fourteen, the effects of Zeus' speech still linger. As it turns out, Zeus' rhetoric of χόλος was justified, and his vision of a god or goddess "going apart from the gods wishing to give aid to either the Trojans or the Danaans"[61] becomes reality in Book Fourteen. I will argue that his commands throw Hera's actions into relief, and her devious response reveals a complex power structure within the divine hierarchy. Hera not only disobeys her husband's orders, but in devising a clever speech to attain her ends, she also competes with him. I will assert that Book Fourteen thus constitutes the other side of the dialogue we encountered in Book Eight, for whereas Zeus has confronted the faction aligned against him with threats of rage and punishment, Hera now reacts to those commands with a subtle, well-crafted plot that challenges Zeus' might. In the process, I will demonstrate how Hera becomes Zeus' staunch competitor for influence and power as she buys time for her faction to wreak havoc on the Trojans.

Since these two passages predict and respond to one another explicitly, they may be treated as paired scenes, where one moment in the plot of the *Iliad* seems to develop the theme and plot of a corresponding earlier episode. In Book Eight, Zeus relies on menacing rhetoric in order to achieve power. In the next section, I will examine how Hera responds in Book Fourteen with the only strategy at her disposal. She employs a subtle and variegated approach to accomplish her ends, working through a brilliant plot to deceive Zeus and buy time for

[61]. ὃν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλοντα νοήσω / ἐλθόντ' ἢ Τρώεσσιν ἀρηγέμεν ἢ Δαναοῖσι, 8.10-11.

Poseidon's defiant interference in the Trojan War. Since she cannot hope to match her husband's strength, she must work towards narrower ends and marshal her own brand of persuasion, a combination of disguise, secrecy, and sex. With Zeus' commands still in effect, and with the danger of opposition from the divine partisans of Troy ever present, these are the most effective approaches available to her. After all, in order for Zeus to fulfill his threats and punish rebellious any rebellious gods, Zeus must first be aware of their rebellion. I will trace Hera's response as she selects tactics that rely on private conversations and intimate settings and, as a result, generate an ironic view of Olympus' distribution of power.

I will then examine how Hera works apart from the gods, initiating private conversations with Aphrodite and Hypnos, and capitalizes on the locus of dissent afforded her by the nature of Zeus' rule and by a mythological tradition that informs the *Iliad*. While the *Dios Apate* marks out the limits of Hera's powers, it also evokes stages in her history during which she challenges these limits. In her dialogues with Aphrodite and Hypnos, her proposed visit to Okeanos and Tethys as well as her oath to "those dwelling in Tartarus" allude to open resistance to Zeus' rule. Indeed, these narratives are crucial in forming Hera's locus of dissent, as her most public acts of betrayal occur in the remembered past. Though her plans in Book Fourteen of the *Iliad* are not so cosmic in scale, I will argue that they nonetheless flow out of a primeval struggle with Zeus. This will be the most speculative stage in my argument. Much of my evidence will derive from the *Hymn to Apollo*, which portrays Hera as a Olympian deity with strong chthonic associations and behavior. Many of my conclusions will rely on the assumption, not settled in the scholarship, that the material in the *Hymn to Apollo* descends from the same mythical tradition as the *Iliad*. I will discuss how her past rebellions may form a dramatic backdrop to the *Dios Apate*, a mythical foil to her more subtle subversion of Zeus in the *Iliad*.

The Power of Recognition: How Hera Responds to Zeus' Threats

Even before Hera seizes her opportunity to distract him, Zeus has already revealed the crucial condition that would make his retribution possible. In order to punish those disobedient to his commands, he must first detect[62] them. Even though he departs for Mt. Ida soon after that speech, his ability to perceive distant events are still considerable, as is obvious when he foils Hera and Athena's attempted intervention late in Book Eight.[63] Nonetheless, his powers of perception are clearly not limitless. In Chapter Fourteen, even as Hera recognizes Poseidon participating in the war, there is no indication that Zeus takes notice.

Ἥρη δ' εἰσεῖδε χρυσόθρονος ὀφθαλμοῖσι
στᾶσ' ἐξ Οὐλύμποιο ἀπὸ ῥίου· αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω
τὸν μὲν ποιπνύοντα μάχην ἀνὰ κυδιάνειραν
αὐτοκασίγνητον καὶ δαέρα, χαῖρε δὲ θυμῷ·
Ζῆνα δ' ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης κορυφῆς πολυπίδακος Ἴδης
ἥμενον εἰσεῖδε, στυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔπλετο θυμῷ.
μερμήριξε δ' ἔπειτα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη
ὅππως ἐξαπάφοιτο Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο·

Then golden-throned Hera looked on with her eyes, standing out from the peak of Olympus. Straightway she recognized him [Poseidon] laboring in man-glorifying battle, her sibling and brother-in-law, and she rejoiced in her spirit. Then she looked on Zeus sitting on the highest crag of many-springed Ida, and he was hateful to her spirit. Then

> Ox-eyed queen Hera was anxious as to how she might deceive the mind of Zeus who holds the aegis.[64]

The diction in this passage represents Hera as a keen observer of events. She presumes that she can escape Zeus' notice, acting on her own. She "looked on with her eyes," "recognized" her brother, then "looked on Zeus" who was situated far away from Mt. Olympus. Somehow, in this instance at least, Hera sees even more clearly than "wide-seeing Zeus."[65] Though Poseidon is disguised, Hera sees through the illusion, and her superior perception grants her a crucial advantage in subverting her husband's will. Zeus' lapse in perception becomes Hera's opportunity, and even his incalculable strength cannot compensate for his momentary blind spot.

Back in Book Eight, Zeus envisioned three possible responses to his commands: his audience could either obey his orders so that the "deeds" which he desires would be fulfilled as quickly as possible,[66] attempt to go away from Olympus and act covertly,[67] or oppose him openly in a contest of strength.[68] Hera enters upon the second course of action, refusing to

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[64]. 14.153-60.
[65]. εὐρύοπα Ζεύς, an epithet that appears sixteen times in the *Iliad*.
[66]. ὄφρα τάχιστα τελευτήσω τάδε ἔργα, 8.9.
[67]. ὃν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλοντα νοήσω / ἐλθόντ' ἢ Τρώεσσιν ἀρηγέμεν ἢ Δαναοῖσι, 8.10-11.
[68]. εἰ δ' ἄγε πειρήσασθε θεοὶ ἵνα εἴδετε πάντες· / σειρὴν χρυσείην ἐξ οὐρανόθεν κρεμάσαντες / πάντές τ' ἐξάπτεσθε θεοὶ πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι· / ἀλλ' οὐκ ἂν ἐρύσαιτ' ἐξ οὐρανόθεν πεδίονδε / Ζῆν' ὕπατον μήστωρ', οὐδ' εἰ μάλα πολλὰ κάμοιτε. /
ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ καὶ ἐγὼ πρόφρων ἐθέλοιμι ἐρύσσαι, /
αὐτῇ κεν γαίῃ ἐρύσαιμ' αὐτῇ τε θαλάσσῃ· σειρὴν μέν κεν ἔπειτα περὶ ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο / δησαίμην, τὰ δέ κ' αὖτε μετήορα πάντα γένοιτο.
τόσσον ἐγὼ περί τ' εἰμὶ θεῶν περί τ' εἴμ' ἀνθρώπων. Come now, try it that you all may see: hanging a golden rope from heaven all of you fasten yourselves thereon, gods and goddesses too: but you would not drag from heaven to earth loftiest Zeus, your master, not even if you labored hard indeed. But then if I should eagerly choose to tug, I would drag it around the very earth and the sea itself. Then I would bind the cord around the peak of Olympus, then all those things

comply with the first option because of her hatred of the Trojans, and wisely avoiding the last choice as a contest beyond her powers. Zeus has in a sense offered three possible plots for the ensuing narrative, and Hera responds by choosing the second of three; only she goes even further, for whereas Zeus has envisioned the basic outlines of Hera's tactics, Hera makes plans that work through the guise of secrecy to a point at which she will engage Zeus one-on-one.

> ἥδε δέ οἱ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀρίστη φαίνετο βουλὴ
> ἐλθεῖν εἰς Ἴδην εὖ ἐντύνασαν ἣ αὐτήν,
> εἴ πως ἱμείραιτο παραδραθέειν φιλότητι
> ᾗ χροιῇ, τῷ δ' ὕπνον ἀπήμονά τε λιαρόν τε
> χεύῃ ἐπὶ βλεφάροισιν ἰδὲ φρεσὶ πευκαλίμῃσι.
>
> And this plan appeared best to her in her spirit: to come unto Ida having decked herself out well, to see if somehow Zeus would long to lie beside her flesh in lovemaking, then she might shed painless warm sleep onto his eyelids and on his shrewd mind.[69]

The narrator here announces Hera's plans, which "appeared to her" privately as she looked on. As the plot to deceive Zeus begins, the narrator and audience enjoy a privileged knowledge of the events that follow. Since Zeus has already announced the possibility of secret rebellion, Hera must devise an especially cunning device if she is to keep her plans concealed from her husband and those of the Trojan faction. In short, if she is to go "away from the gods," she must do so with a convincing alibi.

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would come to be in the middle of the ether. That is how much stronger I am than gods and men. 18-27.

[69]. 161-5.

Her unhesitating choice to defy the will of Zeus is doubly bold: not only is she responding disobediently to his commands in Book Eight, but she is also reacting to the larger body of narratives that define her place in the cosmos. Zeus alludes to one of those myths in Book Fifteen, when he awakens to find that he has been deluded.

οὐ μὰν οἶδ’ εἰ αὖτε κακορραφίης ἀλεγεινῆς
πρώτη ἐπαύρηαι καί σε πληγῇσιν ἰμάσσω.
ἦ οὐ μέμνῃ ὅτε τ’ ἐκρέμω ὑψόθεν, ἐκ δὲ ποδοῖιν
ἄκμονας ἧκα δύω, περὶ χερσὶ δὲ δεσμὸν ἴηλα
χρύσεον ἄρρηκτον; σὺ δ’ ἐν αἰθέρι καὶ νεφέλῃσιν
ἐκρέμω· ἠλάστεον δὲ θεοὶ κατὰ μακρὸν Ὄλυμπον,
λῦσαι δ’ οὐκ ἐδύναντο παρασταδόν· ὃν δὲ λάβοιμι
ῥίπτασκον τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ ὄφρ’ ἂν ἵκηται
γῆν ὀλιγηπελέων·

Surely you knew that you first would suffer from the troublesome ill-knit scheme and that I would lash you with blows. Or do you not remember when you hung from on high, and I put two anvils on your feet, and wrapped around your hands an unbreakable shackle of gold? You hung in the upper air and the clouds. The gods were furious upon great Olympus, but they could not set you free though taking your side. I would take one and hurl him having seized him from the threshold so that he might come to the earth having little strength.[70]

[70]. 15.16-24.

This memory of Hera's recent rebellion in the time of Heracles must have still been vivid, as Hera was filled with fear upon hearing Zeus recount the story.[71] Hephaestus perhaps speaks of the same incident[72] in the opening book of the *Iliad* as he attempts to dissuade her from further angering her husband:

> τέτλαθι μῆτερ ἐμή, καὶ ἀνάσχεο κηδομένη περ,
> μή σε φίλην περ ἐοῦσαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωμαι
> θεινομένην, τότε δ' οὔ τι δυνήσομαι ἀχνύμενός περ
> χραισμεῖν· ἀργαλέος γὰρ Ὀλύμπιος ἀντιφέρεσθαι·
> ἤδη γάρ με καὶ ἄλλοτ' ἀλεξέμεναι μεμαῶτα
> ῥῖψε ποδὸς τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ θεσπεσίοιο,
> πᾶν δ' ἦμαρ φερόμην, ἅμα δ' ἠελίῳ καταδύντι
> κάππεσον ἐν Λήμνῳ, ὀλίγος δ' ἔτι θυμὸς ἐνῆεν·
>
> Bear it my mother, and restrain yourself though filled with care, lest I see you with my own eyes, though you are beloved, being struck, but at that time, I will not, though grieved, be of any help at all. For Olympian Zeus is hard to battle. For already at another time he hurled me, trying to help you, having seized my by the foot from the divinely sounding threshold, and I was borne along an entire day, and when I fell along with the setting sun on Lemnos, and there was little spirit left inside.

[71]. ὣς φάτο, ῥίγησεν δὲ βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη, 15.34.
[72]. Cedric Whitman, "Hera's Anvils," *Studies in Classical Philology* 74 (1970): 37. Whitman cites the formula "τεταγὼν ἀπὸ βηλοῦ" used in both narratives as evidence for claiming that Zeus and Hephaestus are referring to the same occasion. Cf. also Richard Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. 4, *Books 13-16*, ed. G.S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 181.

The anecdote persuades Hera to desist from chiding Zeus and become more compliant.[73] Her history of rebellion and the humiliating retribution she has suffered provide an important context for her current efforts. She has had palpable proof of Zeus' ability and inclination to punish her, yet she insists on moving forward with another scheme to thwart Zeus' goals. Her actions suggest one of two possibilities: that her hatred of the Trojans is so passionate that it blinds her to reason, or that her confidence in her abilities leads her to believe she may attain her goals. Moreover, the poetic effect of her background of suffering and defeat add a keen suspense to her conspiracy, for the threat of similar retribution looms over every moment of the *Dios Apate*. Her plan is two-pronged, and it includes coming to Ida so adorned as to seduce Zeus, and shedding sleep on his eyes and on his "shrewd mind." The last stage of the plot is arguably the boldest, as the "eyes and shrewd mind" of Zeus are both integral aspects of his identity. The "wide-seeing Zeus"[74] and "wily son of Kronos"[75] is the paragon of acute perception and cunning, as his traditional epithets show, and Hera now plans to challenge him in precisely these two contexts.

Hera and Aphrodite: Two Goddesses "Far Apart from the Other Gods"

In her next move, Hera withdraws from her public vantage point on the peak of Olympus into her inner room. The narrator establishes an atmosphere of intrigue by describing the private, concealed conditions of Hera's chambers. Hephaestus, a past ally in Hera's opposition to Zeus, designed the room for secrecy when he "fit thick doors onto the doorposts with a secret lock, which no other god could open."[76] The private quarters of Hera fuse neatly with her secret plot.

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[73]. ὣς φάτο, μείδησεν δὲ θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη, 1.595.
[74]. Cf. εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς, pg. 3.
[75]. ἀγκυλομήτης, an epithet which occurs eight times in the *Iliad*, all of them describing Zeus as the "son of Kronos."
[76]. πυκινὰς δὲ θύρας σταθμοῖσιν ἐπῆρσε / κληῖδι κρυπτῇ, τὴν δ' οὐ θεὸς ἄλλος ἀνῷγεν,14.167-8.

The setting stands in contrast to Zeus' speech at the opening of Book Eight. There, Zeus spoke in public; here, Hera begins her plot in private, and the secretive mood is the suitable cover for her plans.

In order to "adorn herself" as effectively as possible, Hera must persuade a hostile audience to assist her. Aphrodite, mother to Aeneas and partisan of the Trojan cause, offers Hera her first duel of wits. It is logical that she chooses Aphrodite as her first unwitting co-conspirator, since she wishes to seduce Zeus; but there is an additional significance to her visit as well. In Book Eight, Zeus specifically and emphatically singled out the "female gods" as potential threats to his plans, and Hera now chooses to respond to Zeus' warnings by obtaining specifically feminine charms. In tracing Hera's scheme, the text employs formulae also featured in Zeus' earlier injunctions:

> τῶν ἄλλων **ἀπάνευθε θεῶν** πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπε·
> ἦ ῥά νύ μοί τι πίθοιο φίλον τέκος ὅττί κεν εἴπω,
> ἦέ κεν ἀρνήσαιο κοτεσσαμένη τό γε θυμῷι,
> **οὕνεκ᾽ ἐγὼ Δαναοῖσι, σὺ δὲ Τρώεσσιν ἀρήγεις**;
> Apart from all the other gods she spoke forth her speech: "Will you now obey your beloved parent in whatever I ask, or will you refuse it, being angry in your spirit, because you bring aid to the Trojans, I to the Danaans?"[77]

The isolation of Hera and Aphrodite's conversation from the other gods, "ἀπάνευθε θεῶν," is key to her strategy. In his earlier speech, Zeus had employed the formula in his threat to cast any

77. 14.189-92.

conniving god to Tartarus.[78] The narrator's inclusion of "ἀπάνευθε θεῶν" meets the requirements of Parry's definition of the formula: "a group of words which is regularly employed under the same metrical conditions to express a given essential idea."[79] It resides in the same metrical position within the line, and because Hera speaks "forth her speech apart from all the other gods," it is a clear violation of Zeus' commandment. The private conversation between Hera and Aphrodite constitutes a threat to Zeus' control of his divine subjects, indicating a sphere of influence beyond his power. He may rule the public realm of assemblies and official announcements as in Book Eight, but in the narrower context in which Hera operates, her perception, cunning, and persuasion lie beyond her husband's ken. The "σειρὴν χρυσείην," so vast it encompasses the cosmos, is not subtle enough to suppress the quiet rebellion of a goddess' chambers. Hera locates the flaw inherent in the nature of Zeus' rule, and she targets her efforts accordingly.

Furthermore, although line 192 of Book Fourteen[80] does not quite fit the definition of a formulaic repetition of line eleven of Book Eight,[81] there is an obvious parallel rhetorical strategy on Hera's part: the dative plural of the Danaans and Trojans appears on either half of the hexameter line, balancing the two factions on either side of the caesura. The parallel structure in her speech works to defuse the rivalry between herself and Aphrodite, the same rivalry which Zeus inveighs against as a threat to his plans when he employs a similar parallel structure. Hera mentions the rivalry dismissively, as though it is irrelevant to her purpose in visiting Aphrodite. Hera and Aphrodite had, after all, both been part of the audience when Zeus forbade them from

[78]. ὃν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλοντα νοήσω, 8.10.
[79]. Milman Parry, "Homer and Homeric Style," in "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Verse-Making," *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* 1, no. 41 (1930): 80.
[80]. οὕνεκ' ἐγὼ Δαναοῖσι, σὺ δὲ Τρώεσσιν ἀρήγεις.
[81]. ἐλθόντ' ἢ Τρώεσσιν ἀρηγέμεν ἢ Δαναοῖσι.

interfering in the war. Disguising her real motives with a feigned obedience, Hera anticipates Aphrodite's reservations by alluding to the issue that divides them.

As Hera proceeds through this first stage of her plot, she not only demonstrates a considerable capacity for persuasion in convincing a hostile audience, she also exposes an array of conflicts and disorders latent within the Olympian power structure. As Hera has anticipated in her opening remarks to Aphrodite, her interlocutor has reservations about complying with Hera's request, informing Hera that her "spirit commanded [her] to carry it out, if it is able to be carried out at all."[82] Still Aphrodite is diplomatic, recognizing Hera's rank as the "eldest daughter of great Kronos,"[83] an epithet which closely resembles Zeus' patronymic "Κρονίδης." That Hera is the daughter of Kronos, of the same generation as Zeus, works together with Aphrodite's deferential tone to elevate Hera's status. Unlike Zeus, though, Hera cannot rely on her status alone to inspire obedience, but instead employs deceit.

Before examining Hera's persuasive techniques in detail, we must first consider the complex functions of persuasion in Homer's poetry. For one thing, the act of persuading another person presupposes an exchange between two sides, and each side's role shifts between a range of attitudes. The audience may be more or less active in the interplay. The role of the audience is much stronger, for instance, in Zeus' address to the gods than in his address to Iris, who assumes a more passive role as messenger and requires no change of mind before she obeys. The speaker may also focus on verbal techniques, as Zeus in Book Eight, or combine verbal persuasion with external adornment, as with Hera in Book Fourteen. She seeks the *kestos* from Aphrodite in

[82]. τελέσαι δέ με θυμὸς ἄνωγεν, / εἰ δύναμαι τελέσαι γε καὶ εἰ τετελεσμένον ἐστίν, 14.195-6.
[83]. Ἥρη πρέσβα θεὰ θύγατερ μεγάλοιο Κρόνοιο, 194.

order to persuade Zeus with eros, a not unusual combination in Homer.[84] The "peitho/eros axis" also works in the other direction, with eros employed for the purposes of persuasion.[85] Hera's goal is to employ eros to persuade Zeus, but she must negotiate a range of persuasive techniques in order to reach her confrontation of wits with Zeus, for she must first persuade Aphrodite to lend her the *kestos*. In the pursuit of her goals, Hera displays a mastery of three different forms of persuasion, employing cunning speech, diplomacy, and erotic self-adornment in persuading Aphrodite and Hypnos. These forms of persuasion represent responses to Zeus' coercive rhetoric.

Among her reactions to Zeus' threats is a blurring of the lines between the power of physical violence and the power of erotic persuasion. In making her request to Aphrodite, Hera acknowledges the ability of erotic persuasion to "tame all men and gods."[86] Homer also uses "δαμνάω" in the masculine context of battle, as when Achilles kills Lycaon. After running away from the river, "weariness tamed his knees underneath him."[87] In the *Dios Apate*, Hera uses the second person of the same verb in assigning this considerable power to Aphrodite, and in her frank appraisal of eros' effects with another goddess, the erotic force of the "θήλεια θεὸς"[88] expresses a distribution of power between genders in the *Iliad*. There is a suggestion that the masculine, brute force of Zeus is part of the same category of power as Aphrodite's erotic charms. Hera and Aphrodite discuss this potentiality as a commonplace idea – that erotic love can tame any being, divine or human. This is perhaps why Zeus felt it necessary to address the

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[84]. John T. Kirby, "The 'Great Triangle' in Early Greek Rhetoric and Poetics," in *Landmark Essays on Classical Greek Rhetoric*, vol. 3, ed. Edward Schiappa (Davis, CA: Hermagoras Press, 1994), 10.
[85]. Ibid.
[86]. ᾧ τε σὺ πάντας / δαμνᾷ ἀθανάτους ἠδὲ θνητοὺς ἀνθρώπους, 14.198-9.
[87]. φεύγοντ' ἐκ ποταμοῦ, κάματος δ' ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἐδάμνα, 21.52.
[88]. 8.7

"gods male and female"[89] specifically in his speech in Book Eight. Like Hera and Aphrodite, Zeus recognizes the complex distribution of powers between gods and goddesses.

The alibi Hera constructs to obtain the erotic *kestos* is doubly significant. On the one hand, her narrative of a squabble between Okeanos and Tethys appeals to Aphrodite's sense of ethical propriety, disarming any suspicion Aphrodite might harbor in granting Hera's request. Her alibi also responds to Zeus' self-aggrandizing politics, as it activates alternative histories in which Hera assumes a more central role in arranging the cosmos. Just as the narrator of the *Iliad* has shifted the focus of the plot in Book Fourteen to reflect Hera's perspective, Hera's discourse likewise alludes to a tradition of rebellion against Zeus anterior to the *Iliad*.

These elements of chaos and rebellion against Zeus' government within the broader theogonic narrative are embedded just beneath the surface of Hera's more immediate designs. To persuade Aphrodite to lend her the powerful girdle, Hera tells the following story:

> εἶμι γὰρ ὀψομένη πολυφόρβου πείρατα γαίης,
> οἵ μ' ἐν σφοῖσι δόμοισιν ἐὺ τρέφον ἠδ' ἀτίταλλον
> δεξάμενοι Ῥείας, ὅτε τε Κρόνον εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
> γαίης νέρθε καθεῖσε καὶ ἀτρυγέτοιο θαλάσσης·
>
> For I am going to look upon the ends of the fecund earth, and upon Okeanos the originator of the gods and mother Tethys, who nourished and raised me well in their home receiving me from Rheia, when wide-seeing Zeus put Kronos under the earth and the barren sea.[90]

[89]. κέκλυτέ μευ πάντές τε θεοὶ πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι, 8.5.
[90]. 14.200-204.

The audience's privileged knowledge of Hera's true intentions renders this narrative ironic. Hera claims to be on a mission of reconciliation, while her true intentions are divisive and partisan. Nonetheless, in order for any lie to take hold, it must closely resemble the truth. The allusion to her foster parents assumes Aphrodite's shared knowledge of Hera's history.

One aspect of Hera's persuasive lie is her reification of Zeus' position. When she refers to the time "when wide-seeing Zeus put Kronos under the earth and the barren sea," she acknowledges the renown Zeus achieved through his victory. She also helps quell any suspicion of divisive behavior on her part when she refers to her husband as "wide-seeing Zeus." Implicit in this epithet is a reminder that Zeus is a vigilant avenger of disobedience and that his ability to detect rebellion is considerable.

At the same time, Hera also exposes a strand of her own history that rests outside of Zeus' rise to power. Very little of the particulars of the Okeanos-Tethys mythology is known to us outside of Hera's references to them in Book Fourteen. Part of the reason why we know so little is that Hera's internal audience at least seems to be so familiar with Okeanos, Tethys, and their relationship to Hera that they require no exposition. The interpretation of her Okeanos-Tethys narrative is also problematic because Hera is lying to Aphrodite about the purpose of her request for the *kestos*, and may also be lying about the feud between the two primeval divinities. But there is some firm information implicitly agreed upon by Hera and Aphrodite which they both take for granted in their dialogue: Okeanos and Tethys are Hera's foster-parents; they cared for her when Zeus took power on Olympus; they are the "origin" of all things; and they live far away at outer limits of the earth and sea. The ambiguous information concerning the feud is not insignificant, though it is unsure, since it is the device by which Hera persuades Aphrodite. Since the other information is uncontroversial to either Hera or Aphrodite, it is safe to assume that

Hera is relying on a complex theogony in which Zeus, though firmly established as the leader of the divine and human worlds, has not always been in that central position.

While one branch of the tradition has Zeus achieving glory by usurping his father, Hera survives in the settings of her own tradition. This allusion both recalls a time when a different regime ruled the cosmos, and reminds Aphrodite that Hera's story encompasses a place outside of Zeus' purview. Within this marginal setting, remote enough from the other gods that Hera can lie convincingly about it, Hera owes a debt of piety independent of her relationship to Zeus. She appeals to this sense of duty when she explains the reasons for her visit:

> τοὺς εἶμ' ὀψομένη, καί σφ' ἄκριτα νείκεα λύσω·
> ἤδη γὰρ δηρὸν χρόνον ἀλλήλων ἀπέχονται
> εὐνῆς καὶ φιλότητος, ἐπεὶ χόλος ἔμπεσε θυμῷ.
> εἰ κείνω ἐπέεσσι παραιπεπιθοῦσα φίλον κῆρ
> εἰς εὐνὴν ἀνέσαιμι ὁμωθῆναι φιλότητι,
> αἰεί κέ σφι φίλη τε καὶ αἰδοίη καλεοίμην.
>
> I go to see them, and I shall resolve their ongoing squabble; for they have held themselves aloof from one another's bed and from sex for a long time already, since rage lighted upon their spirit. If persuading those two in their dear hearts with my words I might set them in their bed to come together in sex, I should be forever called beloved and dutiful towards them.[91]

[91]. 14.205-10.

The immediate aim of her alibi is to deceive Aphrodite, but the ironic truth behind the surface of the lie offers a complicated vision of power among the gods. As the audience knows, Hera's intentions are the opposite of "beloved and beautiful." Moments before, the sight of Zeus seated upon Mt. Ida inspired her with hatred.[92] Moreover, her goal of subverting her husband's wishes is anything but "dutiful." Given the ironies so salient in her speech, and given the special knowledge the narrator has provided at the outset of this episode, it becomes clear that even as Hera is plainly lying to her internal audience, she is engaging the external audience in an ironic challenge to Zeus' pretentions of rule by force. Just as "χόλος" has sown dissension between her foster parents, so have Zeus' recent threats and past fits of rage compelled Hera, among others,[93] to employ disguise in attaining her wishes. Zeus' baleful rhetoric has in a sense opened this covert arena for Hera by forcing her hand. As she reasons with Aphrodite, appealing to the ethic of parental piety, she is also performing the counterpoint to Zeus' methods of constraint. That this contrasting style of private, domestic deceit is specifically feminine renders all the more compelling the possibility that her actions are a response to Zeus' speech in Book Eight and to his bombastic style of rhetoric and rule.

The Okeanos-Tethys feud also represents one of the first attempts by Hera to undermine Zeus' status as well as his will. She claims that her foster parents are the "originators of all" as if in passing, and Aphrodite does not dispute the title. Richard Janko points out that this narrative of Okeanos and Tethys "derives … from a theogony … wherein Okeanos and Tethus are the primeval parents…, not merely the parents of all waters."[94] In purporting to travel to "the ends of the earth" to settle this dispute, Hera elevates herself as a foster child of the origins of all things,

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[92]. 158.
[93]. Poseidon has also disguised himself in order to encourage the Argives. 14.135-152.
[94]. Janko, 181. Janko references the alternate genealogy in *Theogony* 337-70.

a claim which even Zeus cannot make. As the "dutiful daughter" of these two foster parents, Hera asserts an obligation to resolve the "ἄκριτα νείκεα," another ironic reference to her quarrel with Zeus. She has concocted a plot which conceals from Aphrodite the truth of Hera's unannounced quarrel with her husband, even as it reveals that truth to the external audience of the poem. The "squabble" she has with Zeus is, at this point in the narrative, indeed "unresolved." She claims that she is bound to settle their feud, and in doing so offers an ambiguous reading of the plot of the *Iliad*. In regards to her conflict with Zeus, Homer offers two perspectives.

From Zeus' point of view, he will eventually awaken from his sleep and resume his place as leader of the cosmos, ultimately achieving his ends stated in Book Eight. The *Dios Apate* provides an alternative view of the cosmos, outside of Zeus' purview, and from within the narrower scope of Hera's temporary goals. From the point at which she catches sight of Poseidon in battle at 14.153 until she makes love to Zeus at the end of that chapter, the narrative faithfully reports dialogues and events from within Hera's frame of reference. This focus on Hera's point of view is a common method Homer has of orienting his audience towards a certain poetic effect through the mediation of the gods. Pietro Pucci observes this technique in the opening lines of Book Four, where the gods look on enthralled by the spectacle of battle:

> [T]he text handles its gods as the intra-textual "mediators" of the extra-textual audience; it uses their divine, unobjectionable comments or the gods' absence to steer the audience towards the feelings the text desires to produce. In this way, the function the gods play in the text is to serve or sustain one of the poetic purposes of the text, that of being so authoritative, pleasing, and exciting that no audience would want to stop listening or

> reading. The pleasure the gods here and elsewhere take in the spectacle of the battles turns out to intimate the poet's ambition about the effects his poetry should produce.[95]

In Book Four, the poetic effect of the gods' attention is to amplify the piquancy of the battle scene; Hera's actions, on the other hand, invite the external audience to entertain, or even embrace, her vision of the Olympian power structure. When she says she is going to resolve the fictive plot, she also signals that she is going to resolve – and, by implication, achieve victory in - the subplot of the *Dios Apate*. Her ambiguous prediction that she will achieve her ends resonates with Zeus' earlier prediction of his victory in the divine tug-of-war. In the end, both achieve their goals, and yet none can hope for the finality of a perfect victory.

If the gods function as intratextual guides to the extratextual audience, then Hera's actions work together to "intimate the poet's ambition." This dynamic occurs at the border between the world inside the text and the world outside the text, with the gods inside the text act as guides to the audience outside it. The signals Hera sends, then, are obviously not to Aphrodite, but to and external audience privileged with special knowledge. From this point forward in the paper, when I refer to the "irony" of the discourse between Hera and her interlocutors, I will be referring to the experience of the external audience. The external audience, after all, is the recipient of the repeated double-entendres and ironies of Hera's dialogues with Aphrodite and Hypnos. Homer employs this special knowledge, along with the irony which it produces, to shift the focus of the text to Hera's perspective. When we read Hera's exchanges with Aphrodite and Hypnos, we do so not with an eye to what Zeus is thinking, but to what Hera is thinking.

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[95]. Pietro Pucci, "Theology and Poetics in the *Iliad*," in *Arethusa* 35, no. 1 (Winter 2002), 26. 17-34.

In regards to her more immediate rhetorical aim, her ruse works, and Hera manages to persuade Aphrodite. Aphrodite may assume that no god or goddess would dare to challenge Zeus' command, especially with the threat of Tartarus still looming in the background. On the other hand, she may have fallen under the spell of Hera's narrative, an ironic victim of the same kind of "charms" which she now willingly, though unwittingly, grants Hera. She obviously believes Hera's story, for otherwise her suspicions of Hera's partisan interference would prevent her from fulfilling Hera's request. But where her husband employs threats of physical punishment backed with a poetic description of his strength, Hera's device is more subtle. Her cunning speech is more persuasive than Zeus', since Hera achieves more than mere passive, outward obedience to her commands. Her deceit makes Aphrodite an active agent in her scheme, and rather than reacting with silence as she and all the other gods had at Zeus' harangue in Book Eight, Aphrodite responds with characteristic charm. She tells Hera, "It is neither possible nor seemly to deny your request, for you sleep in the arms of your noblest Zeus."[96] As Aphrodite's ironic observation demonstrates, Hera manages to craft a singular illusion and persuade Aphrodite of its truth. She unwittingly foreshadows the outcome of Hera's duplicity when she gives her reason for obeying Hera – that Hera enjoys a special degree of intimacy with Zeus as his legitimate wife – though that is just as much a cause for caution as for trust. Aphrodite has become an unsuspecting vessel of Hera's will, an ironic token of Hera's astonishing powers of persuasion.

Her first victory achieved, Hera is now clearly in the ascendant, and she collects her trophy from Aphrodite:

ἦ, καὶ ἀπὸ στήθεσφιν ἐλύσατο κεστὸν ἱμάντα

[96]. οὐκ ἔστ' οὐδὲ ἔοικε τεὸν ἔπος ἀρνήσασθαι·/ Ζηνὸς γὰρ τοῦ ἀρίστου ἐν ἀγκοίνῃσιν ἰαύεις, 14.212-13.

ποικίλον, ἔνθα δέ οἱ θελκτήρια πάντα τέτυκτο·
ἔνθ᾽ ἔνι μὲν φιλότης, ἐν δ᾽ ἵμερος, ἐν δ᾽ ὀαριστὺς
πάρφασις, ἥ τ᾽ ἔκλεψε νόον πύκα περ φρονεόντων.

And so Aphrodite loosed from her breast the lovely, embroidered girdle, where all her charms were prepared: in it there was love, longing, and intimate allurement, which deceives the mind, even of those who take clever heed.[97]

The treasury of feminine devices in Aphrodite's embroidered girdle is the antithesis of the forces Zeus envisions in his "golden cord" speech. There, he imagines a cosmic effort of the pantheon as they strain at one end of his golden cord; in Aphrodite's *kestos*, Hera prepares instead an assortment of powers better suited for her narrower goals. Yet within this more modest theater of intrigue, the *kestos*, though adjusted to intimacy of a sexual encounter, nonetheless possesses erotic powers on a cosmic scale, as it can "tame all immortals and mortal men."[98] There is as little question of the *kestos*' powers of seduction as there is of Zeus' strength in battle: both are indisputably dominant in their own right. But where Zeus' strength is able to physically conquer gods, the *kestos* reflects Hera's intention to "deceive the mind, though it takes careful heed." It possesses a power that Zeus lacks, for he manages only to engage his audience externally, while the *kestos* has the power to influence its audience internally. The feminine charms of the embroidered girdle dramatize the opposition between external and internal influence: the former is firmly in Zeus' domain, while the latter is more properly Hera's locus operandi.

97. 14.214-218.
98. 198-9.

THE HYPNOS DIALOGUE AND THE EFFECTS OF REPETITION

The transition between Hera's audience with Aphrodite and her journey to enlist Hypnos employs the formula "ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο": "While Aphrodite daughter of Zeus went home, Hera departed **the peak of Olympus** in a flash."[99] In the course of the *Iliad*, the phrase has a political connotation, since in all its three appearances,[100] "ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο" is a site of conflict between the competing desires of Zeus and Hera. Its first two uses come in Books Eight and Fourteen, and its last occurrence is in Book Nineteen when Hera departs from the peak of Olympus to foil Zeus' plans for Heracles.[101] In Zeus' speech of Book Eight, it illustrates the range of his supposed hegemony, with the ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο anchoring one end of his golden cord; when it appears in Book Fourteen, it serves as the starting point for Hera's challenge to that claim. She leaps from this peak after recognizing her brother Poseidon, and with intentions of deceiving the mind of Zeus. Its function as a geographical and poetic marker grants Hera a dramatic arena which, if not as cosmic and all-encompassing as that pictured in Zeus' "σειρὴν χρυσείην" speech, is a response all the same to Zeus' dominance. It is a boundary marker of Zeus' power as well as a locus of dissent.

Homer's use of the "ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο" is both destabilizing and stabilizing – centrifugal and centripetal – since he is both activating a recognizable form even as the shifting artistic contexts work subtle changes on the significance of the peak of Olympus. The contrasting situations between the two uses of this formula are in dialogue with one another: in Book Eight, the "peak of Olympus" constitutes also the peak of Zeus' power in his elaborate and balanced

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[99]. 14.224-5.

[100]. σειρὴν μέν κεν ἔπειτα περὶ ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο / δησαίμην, τὰ δέ
κ' αὖτε μετήορα πάντα γένοιτο. 8.25-6; cf. 14.225 quoted above;
Ἥρη δ' ἀΐξασα λίπεν ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο, / καρπαλίμως δ' ἵκετ' Ἄργος Ἀχαικόν, ἔνθ' ἄρα ἤδη / ἰφθίμην ἄλοχον Σθενέλου Περσηϊάδαο. 19.114.

[101]. This instance is embedded within Agamemnon's Ate narrative.

comparison between himself and the combined force of the other gods. After binding the cord around Olympus' peak, "all those things would then come to be in mid-air." The peak of Olympus is a convenient metrical formula that functions as line-ending and as the conveyer of a vivid and pliable poetic image. Its meaning shifts and acquires ambiguity, as the first appearance in Book Eight portrays the peak of Olympus reinforcing Zeus' power over the other gods, while in the remaining instances it serves as a launching point for Hera's subversion of Zeus' power.

Hera's meeting with Hypnos is a logical next step, as erotic love and sleep are connected by theme and genealogy in Homer and Hesiod. Homer acknowledges Aphrodite's universal power, and Hesiod does the same for Eros and Night.[102] Homer's depiction of the *Dios Apate* conveys a consistent mood of isolation, secrecy, and feminine intrigue – a realm in which the senses as well as the mind are rendered powerless by disguise and by the overwhelming charms of the embroidered female figure. Within this context of intrigue she is able to persuade Hypnos to become her ally. In the process, her discourse displays the same ironic, variegated significance as when she spoke to Aphrodite. She addresses Hypnos as "king of all gods and of all men,"[103] flattering her internal audience while signifying to her external audience, those viewing her speech as part of a larger narrative, that she intends to subvert Zeus' status as well as his will to the best of her abilities.

Because of Hypnos' role in Hera's scheme, he has more reason to refuse her request. Instead of deceiving him as she did Aphrodite, Hera openly asks Hypnos to "lull for me the brilliant eyes beneath Zeus' brows as soon as I lie beside him in the act of lovemaking."[104] The

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[102]. Richard Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. 4: *Books 13-16*, ed. G.S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992). 180.
[103]. Ὕπνε ἄναξ πάντων τε θεῶν πάντων τ' ἀνθρώπων, 14.233.
[104]. κοίμησόν μοι Ζηνὸς ὑπ' ὀφρύσιν ὄσσε φαεινὼ /
αὐτίκ' ἐπεί κεν ἐγὼ παραλέξομαι ἐν φιλότητι, 14.236.

boldness and impropriety of her request adds a comic edge to the *Dios Apate*, but one that also elucidates the seriousness of Hera's plan. If she is going to persuade Hypnos to incur Zeus' well-known wrath, then she is going to have to counteract the rhetorical effects of that wrath with suitable persuasive tactics. She offers him in return for his services "a beautiful throne of gold, always unperishing."[105] Her first offer of the golden throne is especially clever, because she is saving her best offer until after Hypnos has given his initial objections.

In the ensuing lines, Hypnos' discourse adds to the ironic double-entendres of the *Dios Apate*. But whereas Aphrodite unwittingly signals ahead to the real plot that Hera has hatched, while Hera points back to her past as an alibi, Hera's dialogue with Hypnos reverses those roles: in this exchange, it is Hera who points ahead to her plot, while Hypnos unwittingly points back to Hera's mythical past. The points of resonance between the two dialogues are abundant:

> **Ἥρη πρέσβα θεὰ θύγατερ μεγάλοιο Κρόνοιο**
> ἄλλον μέν κεν ἔγωγε θεῶν αἰειγενετάων
> ῥεῖα **κατευνήσαιμι**, καὶ ἂν **ποταμοῖο ῥέεθρα**
> **Ὠκεανοῦ, ὅς περ γένεσις πάντεσσι τέτυκται**·
>
> Hera, goddess, eldest daughter of great Kronos, while I could put to sleep any other of the everlasting gods easily, and I could even do so to the streams of the river Okeanos, though he was made the originator for all things.[106]

[105]. καλὸν θρόνον ἄφθιτον αἰεὶ / χρύσεον, 14.238-9.
[106]. 243-6.

There are several echoes in this exchange of Hera's earlier encounter with Aphrodite. He addresses Hera with the same patronymic as Aphrodite. His response also intersects with Hera's fictive narrative of the Okeanos-Tethys feud, as he mentions them unsolicited as alternatives to a showdown with Zeus. Okeanos once again appears as the "originator" of the cosmos, a status which exalts Hypnos' power to put anybody to sleep. He also employs a pun on Hera's "ἀνέσαιμι," with the phrase "ῥεῖα κατευνήσαιμι" of 14.245 responding to "εἰς εὐνὴν ἀνέσαιμι" of 14.209.[107] The points of resonance between the two passages lie along a common thread in Hera's plan: the exaltation of Hera to a lofty place in the cosmos as the "eldest daughter of great Kronos;" the knowing references to her time apart from Zeus with Okeanos and Tethys; and the foreshadowing of her eventual seduction of Zeus all build on one another to reveal a complex divine hierarchy.

Hypnos then points back to his shared past with Hera. Surprisingly, Hera has assigned herself the task of enlisting someone who has already, along with Hera, experienced Zeus' wrath firsthand and barely survived to tell the story.

> Ζηνὸς δ' οὐκ ἂν ἔγωγε Κρονίονος ἆσσον ἰκοίμην
> οὐδὲ κατευνήσαιμ', ὅτε μὴ αὐτός γε κελεύοι.
> ἤδη γάρ με καὶ ἄλλο τεὴ ἐπίνυσσεν ἐφετμὴ
> ἧματι τῷ ὅτε κεῖνος ὑπέρθυμος Διὸς υἱὸς
> ἔπλεεν Ἰλιόθεν Τρώων πόλιν ἐξαλαπάξας.
> ἦτοι ἐγὼ μὲν ἔλεξα Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο
> νήδυμος ἀμφιχυθείς· σὺ δέ οἱ κακὰ μήσαο θυμῷ

[107]. εἰ κείνω ἐπέεσσι παραιπεπιθοῦσα φίλον κῆρ / **εἰς εὐνὴν ἀνέσαιμι** ὁμωθῆναι φιλότητι / αἰεί κέ σφι φίλη τε καὶ αἰδοίη καλεοίμην, 14.208-10. For a discussion of Parry's *calembour*, cf. Ch. 1, pgs. 13-14.

ὄρσασ᾽ ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἐπὶ πόντον ἀήτας,
καί μιν ἔπειτα Κόωνδ᾽ εὖ ναιομένην ἀπένεικας
νόσφι φίλων πάντων.

I would not wish to come near Zeus the son of Kronos, nor would I wish to lull him to sleep, not if he himself should command me. For already another command of yours has made me wise on that day when that mighty-spirited son of Zeus sailed from Ilias having plundered the Trojans' city. Indeed I took the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus, having poured round him soul-pleasing sleep. But you devised evil things in your spirit, rousing a gale of hard winds upon the sea, and then you bore him to well-habited Cos, far away from all his loved ones.[108]

Hypos offers much more explicit resistance to Hera's plan than Aphrodite. This time, it is Hypnos, not Hera, who provides a narrative as argument, and his story is all the more powerful because of Hera's share in it. On the other hand, her involvement also gives her the advantage of predicting the salient points of Hypnos' objections, giving her time to craft a cunning and persuasive reply. For each of his objections, Hera offers a persuasive counterargument using the tactics she has been employing throughout the *Dios Apate*. Though she does not use deceit to persuade Hypnos, since his involvement in the seduction scene will be more direct, she does resort to clever argument combined with an erotic prize.

[108]. 14.247-56.

One reason for Hypnos' reservations comes early in his speech, as he makes clear how dangerous it is to "come near Zeus." The subtle use of the epithet "aegis-bearing Zeus"[109] once again paradoxically reiterates Zeus' status in the cosmos even as it demarcates the limits of his power, for in the same line Hypnos also recalls how he conquered Zeus' mind. This echo of line 160, where Hera mulls over "how she might deceive the mind of aegis-bearing Zeus,"[110] demonstrates the elasticity of Homeric formulae. The epithet might appear to reinforce Zeus' power, and so it does in this case, but only in order to enhance Hypnos' achievement in putting him to sleep. The shifting contexts in which the formula appears give rise to a paradoxical view of power distribution on Olympus. "These two dissonances … of the episode underline the gravity of the enterprise; they suggest a paradoxical hierarchy: Hypnos is the stronger of two brothers, his universal power is capable of triumphing even over the omniscient vigilance of Zeus, the only one of the gods however who has authority over him."[111] Where Aphrodite had to be deceived before she began ironically foreshadowing Hera's seduction of Zeus and echoing Hera's thoughts, Hypnos has fallen under a different kind of spell, but with similar results. His response further develops these contradictory sides of Zeus' power, which is too cosmic in scope to defend against more subtle attacks.

Another powerful objection is his memory of Hera's history of resistance to Zeus. Hypnos recalls Heracles being drawn off course while sailing from Ilium, a narrative which parallels Hera's current scheme of delay and suffering. Zeus' implicit plan was to have Heracles

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[109]. 252.

[110]. ὅππως ἐξαπάφοιτο Διὸς νόον αἰγιόχοιο…

[111]. Ces deux dissonances … de l'épisode soulignent la gravité de l'entreprise ; elles suggèrent une hiérarchie paradoxale : le Sommeil est le plus puissant des deux frères, sa puissance universelle est capable de triompher même de la vigilance omnisciente de Zeus, le seul des dieux pourtant qui ait autorité sur lui. Michelle Lacore, "Νήδυμος ὕπνος," in *Gaia : Revue Interdisciplinaire sur la Grece Archaique* 1-2 (1997): 30.

return to his "loved ones" after sacking Troy, but as Hypnos points out, Hera was "devising evil things." Hera and Zeus each had a plot in mind, but because of Zeus' vulnerability to schemes that do not involve war and open conflict, Hera's plot of suffering and delay was realized. Hypnos does not resist Hera's entreaty because of her weakness in scheming, but because he is afraid she might yet again prevail, and this time he fears he might not be able to escape.

Hera responds to Hypnos' refusal with the same tactics she employs elsewhere in the *Dios Apate*: clever persuasion and erotic love. First, she argues that Zeus will not be as angry over the loss of a few Trojans as he had been over his own son;[112] second, she promises to give him a daughter of Hephaestus as a reward.[113] In the first case, she deflects the attention from the fact that her proposal is more than an assault on the Trojans, but a subversion of Zeus. With her second response, she effectively mitigates the probable outcome of their scheme by erotic love. The fear that Hypnos evinced on first hearing Hera's proposal has evaporated, and it is clear that he has fallen victim to the same kind of unreasoning desire that Hera has planned for Zeus. Against his better judgment, Hypnos accedes, and Hera demonstrates once again the versatility of her rhetorical powers.

Okeanos, Tethys, and Tartarus: Echoes from Hera's Past

In the course of Hera's dialogue with Hypnos, Homer arranges a series of echoes between that dialogue and Hera's audience with Aphrodite. Just as in her conversation with Aphrodite, the discourse in Hera's encounter with Hypnos is full of double meanings, among which are pointed references to Hera's history. Each echo reinforces an important stage in a theogonic history which lies behind the *Iliad* and helps shape it. The two most remarkable

[112]. ἦ φῂς ὣς Τρώεσσιν ἀρηξέμεν εὐρύοπα Ζῆν / ὡς Ἡρακλῆος περιχώσατο παῖδος ἑοῖο; 265-6.
[113]. ἀλλ' ἴθ', ἐγὼ δέ κέ τοι Χαρίτων μίαν ὁπλοτεράων /
δώσω ὀπυιέμεναι καὶ σὴν κεκλῆσθαι ἄκοιτιν, 267-8.

similarities between the Hera-Hypnos and Hera-Aphrodite dialogues are the marked references to Okeanos and Tethys and to the Titans. These aspects of her history are repeated but varied. Hera's foster parents provide her an alibi in the Aphrodite passage, while in the Hypnos passage they point back in time to Hera's lofty origins. Likewise, she mentions in passing those gods whom Zeus "put under the earth and sea" as she deceives Aphrodite, but it is Hypnos who demands that Hera swear by those dwelling in Tartarus "around Kronos." As Ruth Scodel has observed with regard to the *Odyssey*, "Repetition with variation is the poet's most important method of pointing to meaning."[114] The subtle shift in the references to Hera's past offer insight into her current conflict with Zeus. They expose the origins of Hera's persuasive talents, and they also explain her opposition to Zeus' plans.

Hera's scheming occurs on a small scale in the *Iliad,* but her conversations with Hypnos and Aphrodite reference a time when she attempted even bolder campaigns against Zeus. Hera's response to Hypnos' objection, for instance, highlights her more aggressive attempt on Zeus' own son just one generation before the opening of the *Iliad*. In arguing that Zeus would not be as angry over the loss of Trojan life as he had been over the sufferings of Herakles, Hera relies on the common assumption that her previous alliance with Hypnos represented a graver subversion of Zeus' will. Embedded beneath the surface of Hypnos' memory of Hera's feud with Herakles is a larger pattern in Hera's relationship to Zeus. The oath which Hera then swears may be linked to a set of narratives wherein Hera's chthonic offspring challenge Zeus' Olympian power – directly, in this case, and with force.[115]

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[114]. Ruth Scodel, "The Story-teller and His Audience," in *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*. 49.

[115]. Much of the evidence for this link is from the *Hymn to Apollo*. Hera's chthonic associations are thus highly speculative.

The phrases that activate this history in Hera's oath center around the ritualistic gestures in her oath. Hypnos requires her to swear by Stygian water before he will fulfill her request, an oath which is unique to Hera in the *Iliad*:

> ἄγρει νῦν μοι ὄμοσσον ἀάατον Στυγὸς ὕδωρ,
> χειρὶ δὲ τῇ ἑτέρῃ μὲν ἕλε χθόνα πουλυβότειραν,
> τῇ δ' ἑτέρῃ ἅλα μαρμαρέην, ἵνα νῶϊν ἅπαντες
> μάρτυροι ὦσ' οἳ ἔνερθε θεοὶ Κρόνον ἀμφὶς ἐόντες,
>
> Take now and swear to me by the inviolable Stygian water, and in one hand grasp the fecund earth, while in the other the marbled sea, that all those may be witnesses for us, those gods being around Kronos.[116]

Hera swears by "ὑποταρταρίους" – "those under Tartarus" – and names them "those who are called Titans."[117] Like her Okeanos-Tethys narrative, Hera's reference to the Titans exposes a locus within the mythology which elsewhere is either suppressed or only implicit in Homer. "The gods below are not called Titans elsewhere by Homer, who names only Kronos and Iapetus…, but no doubt knew Hesiod's whole dozen…"[118] It is significant that Homer has Hera exclusively refer to the Titans, as it develops her identity as a chthonic rival to Zeus' power. When she invokes this aspect of her character, she calls upon the Titans to assist her. Thus her invocation of the Titans could be associated with her history of alliance with the chthonic realm

[116]. 271-4.
[117]. 279.
[118]. Janko, 195.

in opposition to Zeus' Olympian regime.[119] If this were true, then her relationship to the chthonic divinities helps explain her oath her in the *Iliad*, and it also complicates the history of her opposition to Zeus. Her narrative of Okeanos and Tethys as well as her Titanic oath would thus transform the conflict between Hera and Zeus from a brief squabble over the Trojan War to a longstanding cosmic opposition of natures, with Hera representing the Earth element and Zeus the Sky.

Such speculation aside, there is firm evidence within the text to show that Hera's plot in Book Fourteen employs a variety of methods in creating a locus of dissent. The formulae in Book Fourteen respond to Zeus' rhetoric of violence in Book Eight by portraying Hera's rhetoric of deceit and erotic love. Hera capitalizes on these rhetorical assets even as she surpasses her husband and rival in her ability to perceive the events around her. In the dialogues that follow, the audience gains special access to Hera's thoughts, and this focus on Hera's point of view offers a multivalent reading of the power structure within the *Iliad*, with Zeus and Hera each communicating their unique perspective. In the end, Hera achieves her immediate rhetorical aims by persuading Aphrodite and Hypnos through a cunning response to Zeus' style of persuasion. Homer thus reveals Hera's locus of dissent within which she is able to resist even the strongest of the gods.

[119]. Cf. *Hymn to Apollo*, 3.332-42 and Joan V. O'Brien, *The Transformation of Hera: A Study of Ritual, Hero, and the Goddess in the* Iliad, (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1993), 96.

CHAPTER 3

THE FUNCTIONS OF ATE IN AGAMEMNON'S SPEECH

Ate takes on several functions in Agamemnon's speech in Book Nineteen. Her multivalent character arises from the rhetorical demands faced by Agamemnon upon the return of Achilles to the Danaan ranks. By the time Achilles reunites with Agamemnon in Book Nineteen of the *Iliad*, Agamemnon is in need of more than the greatest hero's fighting strength. The leading men among the Achaeans limp to the assembly heavy with war wounds, and Agamemnon nurses a wound himself. The war has dragged on mercilessly, and with the loss of Achilles, Agamemnon cannot hope for a decisive victory over the Trojans. Moreover, everyone in his army is aware that Agamemnon is to blame for the loss of their greatest fighter. Even when Achilles does return, he still exhibits the rashness that took him out of his proper element in the first place. He wants to reenter the fight immediately, and Agamemnon must respond with a speech that curbs Achilles' impulses without alienating the newly returned champion.

Out of this immediate rhetorical need on the part of Agamemnon emerge the far-ranging implications of Ate for the *Iliad* as a whole. She provides Agamemnon with a convenient mitigating factor, and the timing of her appearance in Book Nineteen also makes her a boundary marker. She lies at one end of a central plotline of the *Iliad*, for she is manifested at the moment of Agamemnon and Achilles' reconciliation. She marks the end of their long quarrel and Achilles' retirement from battle. Because of the timing of her appearance in Agamemnon's speech, and because of the rhetorical function she serves within that speech, she provides a mythical and poetic synthesis of the bewildering events leading up to Book Nineteen.

Agamemnon's cunning use of Ate serves as that divine principle that springs on men, depriving them of their wits and driving them to self-defeating behavior. Ate is both a warning to Achilles not to act too rashly, as well as an exculpatory explanation of Agamemnon's dishonorable treatment of his most valuable warrior.

Agamemnon's subtle application of Ate in the Herakles narrative also complicates her significance. This rhetorical device allows him to associate himself with Zeus as a fellow-traveler in self-defeating and irrational behavior. By analogy, the soldiers that lie wounded in the Achaean assembly correspond to the Herakles of his tale. Just as Herakles suffered needlessly when Ate sprang on Zeus, so the Achaeans suffer without their greatest warrior after Ate victimizes Agamemnon. The source of the suffering, though, is Ate, not Agamemnon, and even as Agamemnon crafts a justification of his behavior, he also plants an implicit insult to Achilles. Achilles, after all, has not suffered from battle, but has rested in his ships while others have gained heroic renown. Ate is thus an ironic and ambiguous figure, as she is crafted to suit many purposes, both explicit and implicit, at the same time.

There is an additional audience one must consider in enumerating Ate's functions. Outside of the text in which Agamemnon addresses the Achaeans and Achilles, there is an external audience following the plot from the broader perspective of one who knows the outcome. The hindsight of the external audience adds another layer of significance to Ate. From this perspective, she functions as an important principle of the plot. When she causes Agamemnon, the army, Zeus, and Herakles to suffer as a result of the brash actions of their respective rulers, she extends the plot of those narratives by resisting resolution and by inflicting suffering. The plot of the Herakles narrative mirrors the plot of the *Iliad*, for much of the material of Books One through Nineteen is the result, direct or indirect, of Agamemnon's self-

defeating assault on Achilles' honor. Ate is the creative force that impels the plot of the *Iliad* away from fulfilling one of its central concerns: the glorification of Achilles in battle. While his *menis* is directed at Agamemnon instead of the Trojans, that glory – the plan of Zeus – is deferred.

In the same way, Zeus' aims in Agamemnon's tale undergo delay and frustration. Paradoxically, without Ate, there would be no story to tell, only the already-fulfilled announcement of Herakles' accession to power. The interference of Hera made possible by Ate is productive of both suffering and, not coincidentally, a charming story. Ate's role in the larger plot of the *Iliad* reflects the principles of delayed fulfillment, suffering, and irrational human behavior that form much of the structure of the work. She thus functions as a reflection on structure of the plot, a unifying mythical principle that renders comprehensible the absurdity of the Achaeans' situation. I will argue that her multifaceted role in the *Iliad* is made possible by the rhetorical circumstances under which she appears.

Achilles' Return and the Need for Delay

Before Agamemnon begins the speech in which he introduces the divine embodiment of Ate, several events work together to create the conditions under which she appears. Her context influences the interpretation of Agamemnon's speech as a whole and Ate's function in particular. One of the most important factors in this rhetorical context is the sudden return of Achilles to the Achaean ranks. Book Nineteen opens with Achilles and his Myrmidons mourning over the body of Patroclus. Thetis delivers him the weapons fashioned for him by Hephaestus, and promises to preserve Patroclus' body from flies.[120] Thetis turns Achilles from his mood of somber

[120]. 19.30-33.

lamentation and inspires him with rage and warlike spirit. Her first strategy in preparing him for battle is to display the glorious weapons which Hephaestus has fashioned for him. The sight of the new armor fills him with warlike rage.

> Μυρμιδόνας δ' ἄρα πάντας ἕλε τρόμος, οὐδέ τις ἔτλη
> ἄντην εἰσιδέειν, ἀλλ' ἔτρεσαν. αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ὡς εἶδ', ὥς μιν μᾶλλον ἔδυ χόλος, ἐν δέ οἱ ὄσσε
> δεινὸν ὑπὸ βλεφάρων ὡς εἰ σέλας ἐξεφάανθεν·
>
> Trembling then seized all the Myrmidons, nor did anyone dare look straight on, but were afraid. But when Achilles looked, then a great rage entered him, in his eyes underneath his eyelids it shone forth terribly as a flame.[121]

His energy is now turned towards vengeance against the Trojans, and now that Thetis has arranged to preserve his fallen friend's body, Achilles makes his way to the Achaeans under orders from his mother to reenter the war effort. "But you calling the Achaean heroes into an assembly, dismissing your rage towards Agamemnon the shepherd of the host, gird yourself very swiftly unto war, and put on warlike strength."[122] She then reinforces the rage that had already descended on him when he saw the armor by inspiring in him "a very bold fighting spirit."[123]

When Achilles turns his anger from Agamemnon onto the Trojans, he is fulfilling what the invocation of the *Iliad* suggests is the dominant theme of the work:

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[121]. 19.14-17.
[122]. ἀλλὰ σύ γ' εἰς ἀγορὴν καλέσας ἥρωας Ἀχαιοὺς / μῆνιν ἀποειπὼν Ἀγαμέμνονι ποιμένι λαῶν / αἶψα μάλ' ἐς πόλεμον θωρήσσεο, δύσεο δ' ἀλκήν, 19.34-6.
[123]. μένος πολυθαρσὲς, 19.37.

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,
πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν
οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.

Sing, O Muse, the destructive anger of Achilles son of Peleus, which laid countless sufferings on the Achaeans, and cast forth many mighty souls of heroes to Hades, and made those same a prey for dogs and all the birds, for so the plan of Zeus was accomplished, from which point Atreides king of men and godlike Achilles first drew apart quarelling.[124]

This destructive anger has up to Book Nineteen inflicted suffering on his Achaean allies; with the death of Patroclus and the intervention of Thetis, Achilles' destructive anger remains, but is now redirected against the Trojans. Achilles' glowing eyes at the sight of his new armor are a telltale sign of his imminent *aristeia*,[125] a burst of heroic energy of supernatural provenance that will give him enduring renown. This moment has been deferred for most of the *Iliad*, and Achilles' heroic glory is one of the most important thematic casualties of that feud.

In the meeting that follows, the contrasting conditions of the invigorated hero and the wounded Achaeans throws the consequences of Achilles' anger into relief once again. When he

[124]. 1.1-7.
[125]. Bryan Hainesworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. 3, *Books 9-12*, ed. G.S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 48.

approaches the Achaeans and calls them into the assembly, they immediately obey, and the text portrays the obvious relief at the return of their champion. "And indeed they then went into the assembly, because Achilles appeared, for he had long ceased from painful battle."[126] The army has good reason to be cheered at Achilles' return, for many of them had been wounded in battle. The contrast between Achilles' condition and that of the Achaean assembly is poignant. Achilles, fresh from having rested with his men while his allies executed the war, has just come from Thetis with divinely inspired fighting spirit. Furthermore, the sight of his armor has inspired him with the rage that would invigorate him against his enemies.

The condition of the assembly is far different. When Achilles summons them, they are eating and recovering from their labors. Homer names some of the most important heroes of the *Iliad*, describing them with pathos as they hobble into the assembly. Even the bravest heroes are in pain: "Then those two companions of Ares, the son of Tudeus, steadfast in war, and godlike Odysseus walked limping, leaning on their spears; for they still had painful wounds."[127] Even Agamemnon has received wounds in battle: "And then next came Agamemnon king of men, and he also had a wound. For Koon son of Antenor wounded him as well in the mighty conflict with his bronze-tipped spear."[128] Agamemnon arrives at the assembly after the other wounded leaders, and his entrance signals Achilles to begin his speech.

Such is the state of the audience Achilles has before him. It is perhaps this vision that compels him to lament his and Agamemnon's actions. As Achilles acknowledges in his speech

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[126]. καὶ μὴν οἳ τότε γ' εἰς ἀγορὴν ἴσαν, οὕνεκ' Ἀχιλλεὺς /
ἐξεφάνη, δηρὸν δὲ μάχης ἐπέπαυτ' ἀλεγεινῆς, 19.45-6.
[127]. τὼ δὲ δύω σκάζοντε βάτην Ἄρεος θεράποντε / Τυδεΐδης τε μενεπτόλεμος καὶ δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς / ἔγχει ἐρειδομένω· ἔτι γὰρ ἔχον ἕλκεα λυγρά·, 19.47-9.
[128]. αὐτὰρ ὃ δεύτατος ἦλθεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων /
ἕλκος ἔχων· καὶ γὰρ τὸν ἐνὶ κρατερῇ ὑσμίνῃ / οὖτα Κόων Ἀντηνορίδης χαλκήρεϊ δουρί, 19.51-3.

to the Achaeans, the consequences of his rage have had wide-ranging consequences for his erstwhile allies. He now recognizes the truth of the opening lines of the *Iliad*, that their feud has "laid countless sufferings on the Achaeans, and cast forth many mighty souls of Achaeans to Hades." After he summons the Achaeans to assemble, he addresses the painful consequences of the squabble:

> Ἀτρεΐδη ἦ ἄρ τι τόδ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἄρειον
> ἔπλετο σοὶ καὶ ἐμοί, ὅ τε νῶΐ περ ἀχνυμένω κῆρ
> θυμοβόρῳ ἔριδι μενεήναμεν εἵνεκα κούρης;
> τὴν ὄφελ' ἐν νήεσσι κατακτάμεν Ἄρτεμις ἰῷ
> ἤματι τῷ ὅτ' ἐγὼν ἑλόμην Λυρνησσὸν ὀλέσσας·
> τώ κ' οὐ τόσσοι Ἀχαιοὶ ὀδὰξ ἕλον ἄσπετον οὖδας
> δυσμενέων ὑπὸ χερσὶν ἐμεῦ ἀπομηνίσαντος.
> Ἕκτορι μὲν καὶ Τρωσὶ τὸ κέρδιον· αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὺς
> δηρὸν ἐμῆς καὶ σῆς ἔριδος μνήσεσθαι ὀΐω.
>
> O Atreides, was there any benefit to either you or me, when as our hearts were exceedingly enraged we quarreled in spirit-consuming strife because of a girl? It would have been better had Artemis killed her on the ships with an arrow on that day when I took Lyrnessos and destroyed it. Then indeed not so many Achaeans would have seized the unspeakable ground with their teeth under the hands of their enemies while I remained aloof in my anger. But that was useful for Hector and the Trojans. Now I think the Achaeans will long remember the strife between you and me.[129]

[129]. 19.56-64.

The obvious answer to Achilles' rhetorical question is that there was no "benefit" to the Achaeans when he and Agamemnon quarreled over Briseis. The frustration behind his speech is apparent as Achilles reconsiders his actions. He lists the same destructive consequences as enumerated in the opening lines of the *Iliad*, and draws the same conclusion: the actions of two important leaders are much larger than themselves. The results of their foolishness radiate until they affect all of those around them. His second-guessing comes far too late, and his recognition that it would have been better for Artemis to kill Briseis before the quarrel ever started emphasizes the futility and tragedy of the first eighteen books of the *Iliad*. Despite the eagerness of the Achaeans at Achilles' return, the ordeals of the first eighteen books do not disappear; rather, his well-rested eagerness stands in stark contrast to the embattled army.

While he recognizes their plight and speaks movingly of it, the ensuing part of his address is not so well suited for the occasion.

> ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν προτετύχθαι ἐάσομεν ἀχνύμενοί περ
> θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλον δαμάσαντες ἀνάγκη·
> νῦν δ' ἤτοι μὲν ἐγὼ παύω χόλον, οὐδέ τί με χρὴ
> ἀσκελέως αἰεὶ μενεαινέμεν· ἀλλ' ἄγε θᾶσσον
> ὄτρυνον πόλεμονδε κάρη κομόωντας Ἀχαιούς,
> ὄφρ' ἔτι καὶ Τρώων πειρήσομαι ἀντίον ἐλθὼν
> αἴ κ' ἐθέλωσ' ἐπὶ νηυσὶν ἰαύειν· ἀλλά τιν' οἴω
> ἀσπασίως αὐτῶν γόνυ κάμψειν, ὅς κε φύγῃσι
> δηΐου ἐκ πολέμοιο ὑπ' ἔγχεος ἠμετέροιο.

> But now let us let those things go as past, though we grieve, subduing the dear spirit in our breasts by necessity; for now indeed I desist from my rage, nor is there any need for me to stubbornly, continuously strive. But come now, quickly rouse the longhaired Achaeans to war, that I might still make an attempt coming face to face with the Trojans, if perhaps they wish to sleep beside the ships. But I believe one of these same will gladly bend the knee, who perchance might flee destructive war under our spear.[130]

The call to immediately resume battle is an absurd request considering the condition of his audience. Despite the immense pains he has inflicted on those around him, Achilles brashly believes he can return to the army with a casually dismissive statement, urging them to go along with him in letting "those things go as past." He might be able to win over the ranks of soldiers this way, and indeed they respond to his speech approvingly: "Thus he spoke, and the well-greaved Achaeans rejoiced now that the stout-hearted son of Peleus had dismissed his anger."[131] He does not take into account that there is more to an army than its soldiers, or more to a war than fighting. Agamemnon is one of the most important members of his audience, and as the leader of the Achaeans, he is concerned with the politics of warfare. For the Homeric king, that means he is concerned with upholding his honor before his men. The last assembly in which he faced Achilles, his army saw him insulted and dishonored publicly by Achilles. They have also seen Agamemnon's lavish attempts at a reconciliation rejected. If Achilles believes he can win Agamemnon over again with a couple of phrases, then he has misjudged his audience. After all, as Calchas observes in Book One:

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[130]. 19.65-73.
[131]. ὣς ἔφαθ', οἳ δ' ἐχάρησαν ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ / μῆνιν ἀπειπόντος μεγαθύμου Πηλεΐωνος, 19.74-5.

ἦ γὰρ ὀΐομαι ἄνδρα χολωσέμεν, ὃς μέγα πάντων
Ἀργείων κρατέει καί οἱ πείθονται Ἀχαιοί·
κρείσσων γὰρ βασιλεὺς ὅτε χώσεται ἀνδρὶ χέρηϊ·
εἴ περ γάρ τε χόλον γε καὶ αὐτῆμαρ καταπέψῃ,
ἀλλά τε καὶ μετόπισθεν ἔχει κότον, ὄφρα τελέσσῃ,
ἐν στήθεσσιν ἑοῖσι·

For I believe I shall enrage the man, who greatly rules over all the Argives and to whom the Achaeans show obedience. For if a powerful chief is once enraged with a lesser man, and even if he swallows his anger that same day, yet afterwards he preserves his grudge, that he might carry it out, in his breast.[132]

Of course, Achilles is clearly not a "lesser man," so he can't be expected to fear the kind of retribution as Calchas; nevertheless, Agamemnon has other means of gaining the upper hand on Achilles. Calchas suggests that it is not in the nature of powerful leaders to forget their anger, but to act on it when the opportunity comes. Now is Agamemnon's opportunity to regain some measure of the dignity he lost in his last confrontation with Achilles.

Achilles' return sets the stage for Agamemnon's Ate narrative. The dramatic contrast between Achilles and the wounded Achaeans puts Achilles at a rhetorical disadvantage, and thought the troops welcome him back eagerly, Agamemnon proceeds to regain some measure of that honor which he lost before the Achaeans in the last assembly. He seizes on the vulnerabilities in Achilles' behavior, and brings about an improbable mitigation of his own guilt in the affair.

[132]. 78-83.

Ate as a Response to Achilles

In the course of Agamemnon's Ate narrative, he responds to Achilles' misreading of his rhetorical situation by a masterful handling of his audience. He manages to welcome back the warrior he needs even as he laces his discourse with implicit insults and double meanings. Many of these double meanings are pointed responses to the last time Achilles summoned an assembly. In this way, Agamemnon regains some measure of honor among his army, which his quarrel with Achilles has damaged. The parallel between himself and Zeus and the Achaeans and Herakles elevates their status as warriors deserving of renown earned in battle. He handles the complexities of the situation so cleverly that it shows all the more how maladroit Achilles' performance is. One of the consequences of his cunning is an ambiguous reading of Ate, the centerpiece of Agamemnon's speech. She is the element in Agamemnon's speech that shields him from personal responsibility, inflicts hardship on the Achaean warriors, and ultimately forestalls any decisive victory over the Trojans.

As the text shifts to Agamemnon's speech, the Achaean leader's battle wounds lend his speech the gravitas of one who has suffered in war along with his soldiers. "And so Agamemnon leader of men spoke among them from that very place where he sat, not standing among them."[133] The narrator's description suggests that it is unusual for Agamemnon to speak from his seat rather than standing among them, but it makes sense that a wounded warrior would not have the strength to stand and speak. Once again, the contrast between Agamemnon's condition and Achilles' is salient, as Achilles is pictured standing among the Achaeans as he addresses them.[134] In a curious reversal, Agamemnon's seated position, though inferior to Achilles, elevates him in

[133]. 19.76-7.
[134]. αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντες ἀολλίσθησαν Ἀχαιοί, /
τοῖσι δ' ἀνιστάμενος μετέφη πόδας ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεύς, 54-55.

heroic stature above his erstwhile rival. Agamemnon may indeed not be able to stand, or he may be capitalizing intentionally on his war wounds for dramatic effect. In either case, the results are the same. He, not Achilles, can legitimately address his audience as his peers in battle: "O dear Danaan Heroes, companions of Ares…"[135] This is the same leader that Achilles publicly accused in Book One of cowardice in the harshest terms:

> οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ᾽ ἔχων, κραδίην δ᾽ ἐλάφοιο,
> οὔτέ ποτ᾽ ἐς πόλεμον ἅμα λαῷ θωρηχθῆναι
> οὔτε λόχονδ᾽ ἰέναι σὺν ἀριστήεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν
> τέτληκας θυμῷ· τὸ δέ τοι κὴρ εἴδεται εἶναι.
>
> Drunkard, having the eyes of a dog, the heart of a deer, you have never dared in your spirit either to gird yourself unto war along with the host, nor to go towards the ambush with the noblest of the Achaeans. For that seems like death to you.[136]

Thus even Agamemnon's seated position, which the narrator takes pains to emphasize, is loaded with a deeper significance that points back to Book One and the beginnings of their quarrel. Agamemnon's posture suggests that he is not the coward Achilles had accused him of being, while Achilles is the one who has dodged the brunt of the fighting.

The curious opening of Agamemnon's speech seems to betray nervousness on Agamemnon's part. His behavior is noteworthy, for on no other occasion does Agamemnon reveal such anxiety as when he says:

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[135]. ὦ φίλοι ἥρωες Δαναοὶ θεράποντες Ἄρηος, 78.
[136]. 1.225-8.

ἑσταότος μὲν καλὸν ἀκούειν, οὐδὲ ἔοικεν

ὑββάλλειν· χαλεπὸν γὰρ ἐπισταμένῳ περ ἐόντι.

ἀνδρῶν δ᾽ ἐν πολλῷ ὁμάδῳ πῶς κέν τις ἀκούσαι

ἢ εἴποι; βλάβεται δὲ λιγύς περ ἐὼν ἀγορητής.

Πηλεΐδῃ μὲν ἐγὼν ἐνδείξομαι· αὐτὰρ οἱ ἄλλοι

σύνθεσθ᾽ Ἀργεῖοι, μῦθόν τ᾽ εὖ γνῶτε ἕκαστος.

πολλάκι δή μοι τοῦτον Ἀχαιοὶ μῦθον ἔειπον

καί τέ με νεικείεσκον·

While it is noble to listen to one who has stood, it is not seemly to interrupt. For that goes hard even for one who has understanding. For how could one of the men in a great crowd listen or speak? He is hindered though he be a clear orator. I shall make myself clear to the son of Peleus. And now you others, Argives, agree with me, each man knows well the speech. Often the Achaeans have spoken that word to me and even quarreled with me.[137]

Walter Leaf sees Agamemnon's beginning as a series of false starts:

> The disjointed character of all the exordium of Agamemnon's speech seems designedly to portray the peevish nervousness of a man who feels that he is in the wrong and is under the disadvantage of following a speaker who by his frank admissions has won the sympathy of the audience. He makes various attempts to start, but does not fairly see his way till l. (sic) 86.[138]

[137]. 19.79-86.

[138]. Walter Leaf, ed, *The Iliad: Edited, with Apparatus Criticus, Prolegomena Notes, and Appendices*, Vol. 2, *Books XIII-XXIV* (London: Macmillan and Co., Limited: 1902), 324.

Indeed Agamemnon does shift suddenly from one tack to another, asking not to be interrupted; uttering a gnomic statement on assembly etiquette; announcing that he will make things clear to Achilles; and then suddenly admitting that the other soldiers agree with Achilles in his assessment.

Leaf is surely correct in noting their "disjointed character," but there are signs in these shifting statements of Agamemnon that he has designed his opening this way as a response to Achilles' impetuous call to arms. When Agamemnon expounds on the virtues of order in the assembly, he refers to a standing orator. Agamemnon is not standing, as the narrator has just indicated in the previous line, so his image of a standing speaker communicates to his audience what the narrator has already communicated to us: the fact that his war wounds will not allow him to do so, but (he implies) the well-rested Achilles has no problem standing to speak. Also, his gnome on interruption and assembly etiquette does not betray nervousness so much as it refers to Book One, as many of Agamemnon's veiled insults will do, where Achilles interrupted Agamemnon at line 292.[139]

Agamemnon's promise to "make himself clear to Achilles" also appears to be less disjointed than Leaf claims, for it signals a transition from the common view of the Achaeans, which they share with Achilles, to Agamemnon's interpretation of events. He goes on to clear up the matter for Achilles and for his soldiers as well. Now that he has them all assembled together, he has an opportunity to offer a persuasive reflection on the events leading up to this moment. In his view, or at least as he claims in his speech, the source of their squabble arose from far different, more ineffable causes, and did not begin with a mere girl. Read against the backdrop of

[139]. Mark W. Edwards, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, Vol. 5: *Books 17-20*, ed. G.S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 244. Edwards refers to "τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑποβλήδην ἠμείβετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς·"

Book One, these glancing introductory remarks establish a deeper design behind the literal and immediate meaning of his speech.

Agamemnon is constrained to point elsewhere for the cause of the feud because Achilles has pointed out how irrational and self-defeating his and Agamemnon's quarrel was, identifying the "girl" as the cause. This narrative is not flattering to either of them, least of all to Agamemnon, who in petulant revenge took Achilles' Briseis as a replacement for Chryseis. If the feud begins here, then the fault lies mostly with Agamemnon, and Achilles' retreat to his ships is justified. Agamemnon traces the cause back to a different source, one which is outside of his control and, indeed, even outside of Zeus' control.

ἐγὼ δ' οὐκ αἴτιός εἰμι,

ἀλλὰ Ζεὺς καὶ Μοῖρα καὶ ἠεροφοῖτις Ἐρινύς,
οἵ τέ μοι εἰν ἀγορῇ φρεσὶν ἔμβαλον ἄγριον ἄτην,
ἤματι τῷ ὅτ' Ἀχιλλῆος γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπηύρων.
ἀλλὰ τί κεν ῥέξαιμι; θεὸς διὰ πάντα τελευτᾷ.

I am not guilty, but Zeus and Fate and Erinys who walks in the dark, who also cast savage Ate into my mind in the assembly, on that day when I myself took the spoils of Achilles from him. But what could I do? A god carries all things out to the end.[140]

Not only does Agamemnon point to an external cause of his foolish behavior, he locates that cause among the gods, and in particular some of the fiercest of them all. It was not his mind which was responsible for the feud, but the divine embodiment of destructive and irrational

[140]. 19.86-90.

behavior. She entered Agamemnon's mind against his will and without his knowledge, cast there by Zeus, Fate, and Erinys.

There are implicit attacks on Achilles even in Agamemnon's description of Ate. "The destructive eldest daughter of Zeus, Ate, who bewilders everyone."[141] The enjambment between the two lines, and the hyperbaton that sees the adjective "οὐλομένη" beginning the next line, is a formulaic echo of the first two lines of the *Iliad*. There, the adjective is in the accusative case, and describes Achilles' anger; here, the adjective is in the nominative case, and describes Ate. Homer makes clever use of the formula's elasticity, subtly shifting the meaning of this formula by altering the context in which it appears. The destructive nature of Ate is much less flattering to Achilles than the destructive nature of his anger. Though Agamemnon seems to be addressing an entirely different narrative, he continues to comment on the events of Book One and on Achilles' role in the *Iliad* with rhetorical sleights of hand. His version of events diminishes Achilles' part in shaping the narrative.

The next stage of Agamemnon's speech is like no other in all of Homer. The detailed recounting of the gods' activity is normally reserved for bards, who receive their information from the Muses.[142] There are several possible strategies behind Agamemnon's unusual narrative. Ruth Scodel suggests that Agamemnon elevates his status by daring to report divine affairs so closely:

> Agamemnon's speech of apology … tests the limits of a mortal speaker. Telling how Hera tricked Zeus at the birth of Heracles, Agamemnon includes speeches of both Hera

[141]. πρέσβα Διὸς θυγάτηρ Ἄτη, ἣ πάντας ἀᾶται, / οὐλομένη, 19.91-2.
[142]. George B. Walsh, *Varieties of Enchantment: Early Greek Views of the Nature and Function of Poetry* (Chapel Hill, NC: The University of North Carolina Press, 1984), 11.

and Zeus. The story is treated as so familiar that Agamemnon need provide no authority for telling it. However, he may also be asserting his own authority by asserting unusual narrative power, to emphasize his status in a situation that threatens his prestige.[143]

Agamemnon's narrative is remarkable for its boldness, for he details the divine origins of Ate as though he has intimate knowledge of divine affairs:

καὶ γὰρ δή νύ ποτε Ζεὺς ἄσατο, τόν περ ἄριστον
ἀνδρῶν ἠδὲ θεῶν φασ' ἔμμεναι· ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ τὸν
Ἥρη θῆλυς ἐοῦσα δολοφροσύνῃς ἀπάτησεν,
ἤματι τῷ ὅτ' ἔμελλε βίην Ἡρακληείην
Ἀλκμήνη τέξεσθαι ἐϋστεφάνῳ ἐνὶ Θήβῃ.
ἤτοι ὅ γ' εὐχόμενος μετέφη πάντεσσι θεοῖσι·
κέκλυτέ μευ πάντές τε θεοὶ πᾶσαί τε θέαιναι,
ὄφρ' εἴπω τά με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἀνώγει.
σήμερον ἄνδρα φόωσδε μογοστόκος Εἰλείθυια
ἐκφανεῖ, ὃς πάντεσσι περικτιόνεσσιν ἀνάξει,
τῶν ἀνδρῶν γενεῆς οἵ θ' αἵματος ἐξ ἐμεῦ εἰσί.

For Zeus was also once driven mad, even him who they say is the noblest among men and gods. But then Hera deceived him also with her treacherous mind – she was a woman, after all – on that day when Alcmene was going to give birth to mighty Herakles in Thebes of the mighty towers. Then he spoke boasting to all the gods, "Hearken to me all you gods and goddesses, so that I might say those things which my spirit in my breast

[143]. Ruth Scodel, *Listening to Homer: Tradition, Narrative, and Audience* (Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 2002), 79.

> commands. On this same day Eileithuia who causes birth pains shall reveal a man to the light, who shall rule over all those living about him, from the race of those men who are of my blood.

Since Agamemnon has offered this narrative as an explanation of the preceding events, his listeners might be expected to perceive the parallels between his narrative and theirs. He takes care that Zeus' role resembles his own, as he says in the line preceding his myth, "For already Ate has sprung on another one."[144] Also like Zeus, a woman was at the center of Agamemnon's delusion. Agamemnon suppresses this point, for Hera's deceit is secondary to Ate's influence. She only acted on the opportunity granted her by Ate. Agamemnon emphasizes the fact that Hera, a female, was able to thwart Zeus while he was under Ate's influence.

This is a brilliant tactic, for he takes his undignified behavior towards Achilles and uses it to elevate his status. Rather than a petty despot who retaliates irrationally against his best warrior, he is now in the company of Zeus, "him whom they say is the noblest among men and gods." This phrase is nearly identical to one applied to Agamemnon. Ironically, it is Achilles who describes Agamemnon as "he who now boasts that he is by far the noblest of the Achaeans."[145] Just as Agamemnon responds to the "destructive anger" of Achilles by describing the "destructive Ate," he is contesting a jibe that Achilles leveled at Agamemnon in Book One. According to Achilles, Agamemnon only "boasted" that he was the noblest of the Achaeans, but Achilles states without reservation that he deserves the title.[146] Agamemnon further develops the

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144. κατὰ δ' οὖν ἕτερόν γε πέδησε, 19.94.
145. ὃς νῦν πολλὸν ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν εὔχεται εἶναι, 1.91
146. Gregory Nagy, *The Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999), 26. Nagy refers to 1.244, where Achilles tells Agamemnon that he will regret not having honored the noblest of the Achaeans at all in his rage: "χωόμενος ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτισας."

parallel between him and Zeus by invoking this formula, for while Zeus is the noblest one in his sphere of influence, Agamemnon suggests that he is the noblest one in his own, narrower one. He is building on a series of implicit responses to Achilles' behavior, insisting on his right to the claim that he is the "noblest of the Achaeans."

Next, Agamemnon arrives at the point at which Zeus "is driven mad." Ate acts on Zeus just after he has stated his will. As the "noblest among men and gods," Zeus has the right to boast that someone from his blood would rule over all those around him. The implication is that he would have been able to accomplish his goals had it not been for Ate:

> τὸν δὲ δολοφρονέουσα προσηύδα πότνια Ἥρη·
> ψευστήσεις, οὐδ' αὖτε τέλος μύθῳ ἐπιθήσεις.
> εἰ δ' ἄγε νῦν μοι ὄμοσσον Ὀλύμπιε καρτερὸν ὅρκον,
> ἦ μὲν τὸν πάντεσσι περικτιόνεσσιν ἀνάξειν
> ὅς κεν ἐπ' ἤματι τῷδε πέσῃ μετὰ ποσσὶ γυναικὸς
> τῶν ἀνδρῶν οἳ σῆς ἐξ αἵματός εἰσι γενέθλης.
> ὣς ἔφατο· Ζεὺς δ' οὔ τι δολοφροσύνην ἐνόησεν,
> ἀλλ' ὄμοσεν μέγαν ὅρκον, ἔπειτα δὲ πολλὸν ἀάσθη.
>
> So Queen Hera with a deceitful mind addressed him: "You shall be a liar, nor, furthermore, shall you bring fulfillment to your boast. Come now, Olympian, swear to me the powerful oath that he will rule over all those dwelling around him, he who might on this day fall between the feet of a woman of those men who are from the blood of your

lineage. Thus she spoke, and Zeus did not at all take note of her clever trickery, but swore the great oath, and at that point was driven exceedingly mad.[147]

Were it not for Agamemnon's preface, Hera's skill at tricking her husband might take center stage in this narrative. She chooses an ideal target for her challenge, for when she challenges Zeus to back up his claims with an irrevocable oath, she implies that he might not be able to carry out his boast. Thus Ate enters Zeus' mind during a dispute about status. In the company of all the gods, Hera has publicly impugned his power and his status, and like any great leader, Zeus feels the weight of his position and responds rashly. Confident in his ability to fulfill his desires, he takes the oath, and falls into the trap of defending his status so zealously that he loses sight of Hera's deceitful nature, and does "not at all take note of her clever trickery."

Such a lapse in judgment could only arise from a fit of madness, and the same explanation must also apply to Agamemnon. He too responded so rashly to Achilles' insults because he was defending his status. After he decided to take Briseis in place of Chryseis, he railed at Achilles,

ὡς ἔμ' ἀφαιρεῖται Χρυσηΐδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
τὴν μὲν ἐγὼ σὺν νηΐ τ' ἐμῇ καὶ ἐμοῖς ἑτάροισι
πέμψω, ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον
αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίηνδε τὸ σὸν γέρας ὄφρ' ἐῢ εἰδῇς
ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέῃ δὲ καὶ ἄλλος
ἶσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην.

147. 19.106-11.

> Since Phoebus Apollo is depriving me of Chryseis, I shall send her with my ship and my comrades, and I shall lead fair-cheeked Briseis, your own war prize, coming to your tent myself, so that you may see to what extent I am stronger than you, and so that any other man would hate to say that he was my equal and make himself my equal to my face.[148]

Their conflict arose over the division of spoils, which among Homeric heroes was a signifier of status. Like Zeus, Agamemnon is "driven mad" as he negotiates the division of spoils. Like Zeus, too, the symptom of his madness is a blind eye to the nuances of his political situation. Because Zeus defended his status too vigorously against a perceived attack, Hera ironically found a more direct avenue to thwart his plans. Because of her conniving, the plot he had conceived – the accession of his son to power - was now beyond his control and vulnerable to Hera's influence. Just so, Agamemnon lost sight of the real political ramifications of his actions in overreacting to a perceived insult to his status, and by his actions he put the events of the first eighteen books of the *Iliad* beyond his control and in the hands of Achilles.

Thus Ate has become the platform from which Agamemnon responds to Achilles' problematic return. Against the backdrop of Achilles' clumsy performance, the cleverness of Agamemnon's address appears all the more remarkable. Through the offices of Ate, Agamemnon manages to turn what was a liability into a strength, allying himself with Zeus in the list of those who have been driven mad by Ate. His brilliant reinterpretation of these events fundamentally alters the dynamics of his quarrel with Achilles. From this view, the epic is no longer about the petty squabbling of a greedy chief or the pointless deaths of Achaean warriors; rather, it is about a chief who joins the company of Zeus in falling victim to Ate's influence, and

[148]. 1.182-7.

the heroic sufferings of Danaans as a result. They become a part of a larger tradition of heroes who, through no fault of their own, endure the trials that earn them long-lasting glory.

Ate: The Long View

In the next section of Agamemnon's narrative, the reflections on the plot structure of the *Iliad* become more obvious. We have already seen that Agamemnon's speech looks back to the beginning of his quarrel with Achilles and addresses the damage done to Agamemnon's status. The text has offered a range of interpretations, some arising from the rhetorical moment of his speech, and others emerging from the larger history of their quarrel. As his tale progresses, the parallels become so clear that Herakles' birth and the complex machinations on Olympus functions as an epic in miniature. It includes a profound reinterpretation of the structure of the *Iliad* as a work fundamentally influenced by Ate. She turns out to be that principle of the plot that frustrates resolution, which is another way of saying that she distorts the plans of Zeus through miscalculation and delay. Her role in the plot explains why so much of the *Iliad* seems to have run off track, with the hero everyone is waiting for moping idly on his ship, and with several heroes serving as great (but not the greatest) stand-ins. The *Iliad* thus becomes as much an epic of heroic frustration and the deferment of glory as it is an epic of heroic destiny and the achievement of renown.

At this level of scrutiny, it is no longer Agamemnon and his immediate audience we must consider, but also Homer and those attending to his text. We arrive at the boundary between the inside of a text and its exterior, between the perspective of the characters within it and that of the poet who labors from the outside. The interpretation of Ate shifts dramatically when we consider her from this vantage point, since the audience of the *Iliad* of whatever era is privy to more

information than the fictional characters within the work. Among the things the external audience must consider is the overall aesthetic design of the *Iliad*. Robert Rabel organizes this dichotomy into two parts: The "Muse(s)-narrator," who represents the poet, and the "character within the drama," who in this case would be Agamemnon.

> [B]oth the poet and the Muse(s)-narrator lack personal involvement in what transpires within the *Iliad*. Their points of view are literary-aesthetic; they are concerned with producing a meaningful and beautiful story. In this regard, the Muse(s)-narrator engages in what we may call narrative-as-art. In contrast, when a character within the drama acts or tells a story, he or she acts or uses narrative for a number of practical purposes, reflecting a personal stake in what transpires. Stories told within the *Iliad* take the form of narrative-as-action.[149]

Thus far we have focused our scrutiny on the "narrative-as-action," with an eye to how Agamemnon capitalizes on his rhetorical situation and gets some measure of revenge for the disastrous assembly of Book One. But Agamemnon is not "concerned with producing a meaningful and beautiful story," but with the exigencies of the moment, or at most with the longstanding political concerns of a powerful military leader. In the ensuing sections of Agamemnon's Herakles narrative, the "narrative-as-art" emerges more fully as the analogues between the specific tale and the larger epic within which it appears become more apparent. This perspective affords us insight into the aesthetic design of the *Iliad*, one which features delayed fulfillment as a necessary prelude to heroic grandeur.

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[149]. Robert J. Rabel, *Plot and Point of View in the* Iliad (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1997), 23.

As Agamemnon's Hera labors against Zeus and his offspring, she reflects two principles that are central to the plot of the *Iliad*. On the one hand, she sets in rapid motion the events that mar Zeus' plans, while on the other, she delays the fulfillment of his desires.

> Ἥρη δ' ἀΐξασα λίπεν ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο,
> καρπαλίμως δ' ἵκετ' Ἄργος Ἀχαιικόν, ἔνθ' ἄρα ᾔδη
> ἰφθίμην ἄλοχον Σθενέλου Περσηϊάδαο.
> ἣ δ' ἐκύει φίλον υἱόν, ὃ δ' ἕβδομος ἑστήκει μείς·
> ἐκ δ' ἄγαγε πρὸ φόωσδε καὶ ἠλιτόμηνον ἐόντα,
> Ἀλκμήνης δ' ἀπέπαυσε τόκον, σχέθε δ' Εἰλειθυίας.
> αὐτὴ δ' ἀγγελέουσα Δία Κρονίωνα προσηύδα·
>
> Hera departed the peak of Olympus in a flash, and swiftly came to Achaean Argos, where she knew the stout wife of Sthenelos, son of Perseus. She was pregnant with a dear son, who stood then in the seventh month. She drew him out to the light though he was premature, but she held stopped the birth of Alcmene, and held back the Eileithuiae.

Just as in 14.225, the formula "Ἥρη δ' ἀΐξασα λίπεν ῥίον Οὐλύμποιο" signals Hera's decisive and clever opposition to Zeus. She speeds towards Argos, where Eurystheus is to be born, and rushes his birth miraculously in the seventh month. It is as if in order to defer the fulfillment of Zeus' wishes, she must rush a contradictory process. She is careful to set the subversive plot in motion before she stalls Zeus' plans for the birth of Herakles, which she accomplishes by restraining the Eileithuiae. The conflicting dynamics of speed and retardation reflect a similar contrapuntal nature in the *Iliad*, which defers Achilles' *aristeia* and hastens the destruction of the Achaeans. Hera is the one responsible for the particulars, for she executes the scheme, but Ate

still remains the first cause of the delay, for she is the one who drove Zeus mad enough to give Hera the opportunity.

In both actions, Ate influences the outcome of Zeus' original plan. That is another way of saying that the shape of the plot is profoundly different because of her activity, since Agamemnon's narrative is to a great extent a tale of two plots. Zeus' intended course of events is characterized by immediate resolution. There is hardly any story to it at all, only an announcement of Herakles' accession to power. Ate makes that plot impossible by blinding Zeus to Hera's cunning, and thus initiates an alternate plot that inflicts suffering on Herakles instead of conferring power. Zeus' plan, then, is a poetic analogue of the Herakles plot and, by inference, of the *Iliad* as a whole. Joseph Wilson, in agreement with a host of scholars who share his view, has observed that "the plot of an epic poem is simply the will of Zeus."[150]

> Homer employs the will of Zeus as the motivation for the action of the poem because the tradition of epic, which recorded the afflictions wrought by Zeus on Trojan and Greek alike, mandated it. Thus he affirms his membership in the tradition. At the same time he claims his own originality by taking the traditional *boule Dios* and altering it to fit his own story and provide not merely the plot of his epic, but a mechanism for the poet to enter into the story. The poet never departs from the traditional view that Zeus wants to kill Greeks and Trojans alike, but he demonstrates his mastery over that tradition by changing the terms under which the slaughter takes place.[151]

[150]. Joe Wilson, "Homer and the Will of Zeus," in "Reading Homer in the 21st Century," *College Literature* 34, no. 2 (Spring 2007): 151.
[151]. Wilson, 153.

From this view, it is as much Homer's clever Ate narrative as it is Agamemnon's, and as such it has a bearing on the understanding of the larger aesthetic structure of the *Iliad*. More specifically, Ate's alteration of Zeus' *boule* is a reflection on how madness, frustration, and delay have informed the *Iliad*'s plot. The Ate narrative sheds light on what Wilson calls Homer's "own originality," a "mastery" of his material which "he demonstrates … by changing the terms under which the slaughter takes place." Homer's material presumes that the gods intervene in human affairs, and he adapts this interaction for poetic effect. But heroic glory is not the only thing that comes from the interaction between gods and men: there is also an uncertainty inherent in the gods' influence, and one of the forms that uncertainty takes is delayed resolution. Ate springs just as much from the divine realm as Achilles' warlike spirit, and is also just as much a "mechanism for the poet to enter into the story" as Zeus' *boule*.

It is Achilles' warlike spirit that forms a central plank of Zeus' *boule*. Zeus must balance two contradictory obligations. On the one hand, he must fulfill the promise he made to Thetis at the end of Book One, to "give power to the Trojans" and punish Agamemnon for dishonoring her son.[152] Homer describes them breaking from their secret meeting thus: "τώ γ' ὣς βουλεύσαντε διέτμαγεν."[153] Part of Zeus' plan, therefore, must be to destroy the Trojans, though he cannot go too far in doing so. After all, he must accommodate a commonplace assumption in the *Iliad* that it is Achilles' fate to die at Troy after achieving unequalled glory.[154] Zeus manages to carry out a complex and contradictory plan by delaying

[152]. τόφρα δ' ἐπὶ Τρώεσσι τίθει κράτος ὄφρ' ἂν Ἀχαιοὶ / υἱὸν ἐμὸν τίσωσιν ὀφέλλωσίν τέ ἑ τιμῇ, 1.509-10.
[153]. 1.530.
[154]. Thetis had told Achilles many times that he would conquer Troy, and she adds weight to her prophecy by calling it the "Zeus' idea." πολλάκι γὰρ τό γε μητρὸς ἐπεύθετο νόσφιν ἀκούων, / ἥ οἱ ἀπαγγέλλεσκε Διὸς μεγάλοιο νόημα, 17.408-9.

Achilles' moment of glory, and by creating a series of battles before Achilles' *aristeia* that resist resolution. Ate is one way of imagining the contradictions in Zeus' plan.

There is thus a divine origin for the delay which influences the aesthetic experience of the work as a whole. As Agamemnon describes how Ate came to dwell in the human realm, he reinforces the commonplace idea that the troubles among the gods have disastrous consequences for humans. After Hera reveals to Zeus how he has been duped, Zeus responds with characteristic rage against Ate, and humanity becomes the secondary victim.

> ὣς φάτο, τὸν δ' ἄχος ὀξὺ κατὰ φρένα τύψε βαθεῖαν·
> αὐτίκα δ' εἶλ' Ἄτην κεφαλῆς λιπαροπλοκάμοιο
> χωόμενος φρεσὶν ἦσι, καὶ ὤμοσε καρτερὸν ὅρκον
> μή ποτ' ἐς Οὔλυμπόν τε καὶ οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα
> αὖτις ἐλεύσεσθαι Ἄτην, ἣ πάντας ἀᾶται.
> ὣς εἰπὼν ἔρριψεν ἀπ' οὐρανοῦ ἀστερόεντος
> χειρὶ περιστρέψας· τάχα δ' ἵκετο ἔργ' ἀνθρώπων.
>
> Thus she spoke, and pain struck him deep in his mind. Straightway he took Ate by her head full of glistening locks, raging in his mind, and swore a powerful oath that Ate would never again come back to Olympus or to the starry sky, who drives everyone mad. Thus speaking, he cast her from the starry sky, having whirled her about in his hand. Swiftly then she came upon the affairs of men.[155]

The movement of Ate from the divine to the human sphere of activity harmonizes with one of the dominant themes within Homer: namely, the gods are far superior to humans, especially

[155]. 19.125-31.

when it comes to the nature and extent of their suffering. There are similarities between the two realms, for Zeus' madness mirrors Agamemnon's. This is because the gods are to some extent vulnerable to one another. Humans, on the other hand, are defenseless against divine interference. Zeus, like Agamemnon, can experience mental anguish when he realizes how he was led astray, but unlike Agamemnon, Zeus has the power to cast Ate utterly from his realm and banish her forever. Agamemnon's audience would have understood the message well, for they recognized how often madness and other human folly arose from a divine origin.

In this way, Homer weaves the Ate myth into the cosmos that dominates the rest of the epic. He maintains a tragic push-pull between the human and divine experience that he has elsewhere portrayed, at times highlighting the sympathy between Zeus and Agamemnon, and then reasserting a profound difference in the scale and extent of that suffering. Conveniently for Agamemnon, he is able to ascribe his folly to a universal human condition inflicted by the gods, and thus ineffable. By the same token, Ate provides Homer with a clever device for achieving thematic unity, explaining Agamemnon's behavior and the suffering of the Achaeans against the larger background of Homer's cosmos.

But Homer does not always hold to the patterns he establishes. One of the marks of Agamemnon's speech that elevates it beyond its moment in the text is its strangeness. It is out of the ordinary from the beginning, when Agamemnon presumes to reproduce the direct speech of the gods. Another striking departure in his narrative is his use of Herakles as an admonishment to Achilles instead of as a heroic double. This is where Agamemnon's implicit insult towards Achilles comes nearest to the surface: instead of following the pattern established up to this point in the *Iliad* of linking Achilles with Herakles, Agamemnon makes the wounded Danaan heroes the analogue of Herakles. My interpretation of this parallel disagrees with that of Robert Rabel,

who sees this as yet another pairing of Achilles and Herakles. The connection between the two heroes is clear before this speech, as Rabel thoroughly adumbrates: Herakles and Achilles uniquely share the "heart of a lion"; Achilles and Herakles can both boast of sacking cities; and the exemplum of Herakles "provides Achilleus with consolation for his own impending death" in Book Eighteen.[156]

Homer embeds several suggestive signs that he is uncoupling Herakles and Achilles, though he is breaking with his own pattern in doing so. He achieves this by replacing Achilles with the suffering Argives, for just as Zeus lamented whenever he saw Herakles going through his labors, so did Agamemnon when Hector was killing so many of his men:

> τὴν αἰεὶ στενάχεσχ᾽ ὅθ᾽ ἑὸν φίλον υἱὸν ὁρῷτο
> ἔργον ἀεικὲς ἔχοντα ὑπ᾽ Εὐρυσθῆος ἀέθλων.
> ὣς καὶ ἐγών, ὅτε δ᾽ αὖτε μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ
> Ἀργείους ὀλέκεσκεν ἐπὶ πρυμνῇσι νέεσσιν,
> οὐ δυνάμην λελαθέσθ᾽ Ἄτης ᾗ πρῶτον ἀάσθην.
>
> Zeus would always groan whenever he would see his dear son suffering unseemly labor under the tasks of Eurystheus. Thus also I, when great Hector of the gleaming helm destroyed Argives in their curved ships, could not escape from Ate, by whom I was first driven mad.[157]

Achilles does not resemble the Herakles of Agamemnon's narrative in Book Nineteen, for unlike Herakles, Achilles has been lounging on his ships while others have been suffering and dying.

[156]. Rabel, 167.
[157]. 132-7.

Agamemnon leaves no doubt about his comparison when he compares Zeus' grief at his son's travails and his own preoccupation with the suffering Argives. "Zeus would always groan," he says, "whenever he would see his dear son suffering unseemly labor under the tasks of Eurystheus." The Achaeans have also suffered under "unseemly" labors which seemed to be a result of a petty squabble between two unrestrained leaders. They are now compared to Herakles, though, a hero of lofty status. Despite the wretchedness of their situation, or rather because of it, Homer elevates the Achaean heroes to the heroic company of Herakles, son of Zeus. It would seem that the frustrated resolution and resultant tribulations are not purposeless, but are productive of the epic renown which Herakles enjoyed and which every Homeric hero pursued. Paradoxically, a delay in Zeus' plan creates a space in which heroes may achieve that glorious destiny – the attainment of epic renown through toil and conflict. Ate works hand in hand with Zeus, for though they are rivals on one level, on another level they both bring about the glorification of heroes even as they inflict untold suffering on the human realm.

Herakles' sufferings in Agamemnon's speech break with the long-established parallel between the two heroes. Though like his other insults this one too is implicit, it is all the more effective, as it further demonstrates Agamemnon's rhetorical subtlety. Agamemnon has co-opted the myth of Herakles and turned it to his own purpose, providing an incisive commentary on his rival's unheroic behavior. This repudiation of Achilles' Heraklean double marks yet another point of peculiarity in a series of departures. Because it deviates from established patterns in the *Iliad*, Agamemnon's speech serves as a commentary on those patterns, making possible a range of interpretations not available before his address.

Ate's influence on the narrative thus far has been to create an atmosphere of suspense as the audience awaits the rearming of Achilles, who will perform, as it were, the final act. The

delay has not been without interest, for there have been other *aristeiae*, and even Agamemnon has gained glory in an access of heroic fervor. But the other side of the plot – the *aristea* of Achilles and the fulfillment of Zeus' plan – is the next logical stage. The diction at the end of Agamemnon's speech suggests that Homer is preparing to bring about that resolution.

> ἀλλ' ἐπεὶ ἀασάμην καί μευ φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς,
> ἄψ ἐθέλω ἀρέσαι, δόμεναί τ' ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα·
> ἀλλ' ὄρσευ πόλεμονδε καὶ ἄλλους ὄρνυθι λαούς.
> δῶρα δ' ἐγὼν ὅδε πάντα παρασχέμεν ὅσσά τοι ἐλθὼν
> χθιζὸς ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ὑπέσχετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.
> εἰ δ' ἐθέλεις, ἐπίμεινον ἐπειγόμενός περ Ἄρηος,
> δῶρα δέ τοι θεράποντες ἐμῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἑλόντες
> οἴσουσ', ὄφρα ἴδηαι ὅ τοι μενοεικέα δώσω.
>
> But since I was in a fit of madness, and Zeus stole away my wits, I wish to set things right, and to give a boundless compensation; but you rouse the other soldiers and prepare them for war. For I will give you all those many gifts godlike Odysseus promised you yesterday, coming to you in your camp. Or, if you are willing, wait, though hurried by Ares, and my attendants taking the gifts from my ships will bring them, so that you may see that I give you things sure to please you.[158]

Agamemnon cannot hope to vanquish Ate to the same extent as Zeus does, but as a leader in the realm of men where Ate is a universal condition, he must do what he can. At the very least, he may recognize the moment at which Ate has departed, and act as honorably as he supposedly

[158]. 19.137-44.

would have had Ate never driven him mad. His offer to "set things right" is forward-looking, envisioning a resumption of his normal more prudent behavior, in contrast to his retrospective rhetorical question, "What could I do?" at the beginning of his speech. Looking back, there was nothing he could do to avoid Ate's effects; looking forward, he can make things right again, and assist in the resolution he so hopes for – the destruction of Troy. Homer has intertwined two leaders, Zeus and Agamemnon, in a surprising recombination. Before now, as evidenced by the destructive dream in Book Two, Zeus has acted to thwart Agamemnon. Now, Homer represents a new unity of experience between these human and divine counterparts. Though Zeus has worked at cross-purposes with Agamemnon up to this point, Ate serves to reveal how Agamemnon partakes of an experience analogous to Zeus'.

The gift of "boundless compensation" is the logical next step. There is another hidden message within Agamemnon's speech, even in his offer of lavish gifts. The leader of the Achaeans must buy time, and this is perhaps an alternative explanation for his apparent clumsiness in his opening statements. Agamemnon's closing statement suggests that he hopes his speech will be followed by a waiting period before reentering the battle. He recognizes, unlike Achilles, that his men are in no shape to resume immediately. After all, Achilles called them from their meal when he demanded an assembly. Agamemnon's closing statement portrays his reasonable requests for a reasonable delay: knowing that his men are not ready to reenter battle, he calls for the kind of deferment that does not emerge from madness, but from sanity. Achilles betrays the same rashness in believing he can resolve his heroic destiny outside the natural order of war, in which soldiers must follow a cycle of fighting, followed by the food and rest that will give them the strength to resume battle. Noting Achilles' unnatural and unreasonable desire to reenter battle immediately, Agamemnon subtly suggests that Achilles wait for the gifts, though

Achilles feels rushed by Ares.[159] Now that Ate's spell has waned, there is a new, saner order in what things are rushed and what is delayed. As argued above, when Ate takes hold of someone, the irrational and destructive desires are rushed, while the fulfillment of proper desires is checked. Once she leaves, this trend reverses itself.

In his response, Achilles falls into another misreading of his rhetorical situation. He perceives that Agamemnon wishes to delay him, but he fails to see the purpose of waiting any longer for battle to resume. He foolishly demands that they stop wasting time with idle talk and strike up war immediately:

> Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον
> δῶρα μὲν αἴ κ' ἐθέλῃσθα παρασχέμεν, ὡς ἐπιεικές,
> ἤ τ' ἐχέμεν παρὰ σοί· νῦν δὲ μνησώμεθα χάρμης
> αἶψα μάλ'· οὐ γὰρ χρὴ κλοτοπεύειν ἐνθάδ' ἐόντας
> οὐδὲ διατρίβειν· ἔτι γὰρ μέγα ἔργον ἄρεκτον·
>
> Agamemnon son of Atreus, worthiest leader of men, if you wish to offer me gifts, as is befitting, or to keep them for yourself, it is no matter. Now let us remember the joy of battle even now, immediately; for there is no benefit for us in dealing subtly here or wasting our time. For the great deed is yet unfinished.[160]

Achilles' partial reading of Agamemnon's delays and false starts is similar to Walter Leaf's interpretation of the speech. But if Achilles assumes that the preceding events were pointless, and that victory is everything, then he is missing the point. Homer enacts a partial reading in the person of Achilles, who would naturally interpret the speech he has just heard too hastily. The

[159]. Odysseus provides more explicit and insistent arguments for eating and resting before battle.
[160]. 19.145-50.

epitome of the man of action archetype does not take the time to consider or reconsider, but is blinded by his desire to reenter his more natural theater of action.[161] As Achilles said in Book Nine, "For that man is as hateful to me as the gates of Hades who, though he might conceal one thing in his mind, says another thing entirely."[162] Agamemnon, however, is more like Calchas' vision of the powerful man, loaded with grudges that he digests until the occasion arises to act on them. He has had time to wait, and his speech demonstrates that at the same moment Achilles prepares to reach the pinnacle of his warlike valor, Agamemnon has come into his own as a clever orator, an indispensable quality for a leader of men. Unlike Achilles, he possesses considerable skill in saying one thing while intending another.

Agamemnon's wit is finally Homer's. Just as he has done in the past for Agamemnon, Homer provides the counterpoint to the joy of the Achaean audience at the sight of Achilles, undercutting what might be considered the most likely attitude towards Achilles' return with double meanings. The polysemic nature of Agamemnon's Ate narrative works beyond its moment, reflecting on a plot vexed with irony and contradictions. Homer answers the question Andrew Ford poses: "After reading the Homeric poems, and indeed after reading interpretations of them, I cannot help asking about Homer and wondering what he thought he was doing."[163] If we are to explore this question, the Ate narrative offers many tantalizing possibilities. Because of its timing in the narrative, and because it offers such a range of interpretation, Agamemnon's speech serves as a poetic reconsideration of the *Iliad* as a structured series of events. Ate is a divine and poetic representation of the apparently futile suffering caused by Agamemnon and

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[161]. Cf. pg. 11.
[162]. ἐχθρὸς γάρ μοι κεῖνος ὁμῶς Ἀΐδαο πύλῃσιν /
ὅς χ' ἕτερον μὲν κεύθῃ ἐνὶ φρεσίν, ἄλλο δὲ εἴπῃ, 9.312-3.
[163]. Andrew Ford, *Homer: The Poetry of the Past* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1994), 1.

Achilles' feud. She reminds the audience that even a hero as great as Achilles cannot enjoy his moment of glory without the universal human experience of frustration and futile waiting, and by extension insinuates that the *Iliad* is constrained by the same ineffable mechanism.

Conclusion

These three chapters have explored the complex nature of power in the *Iliad*. Zeus, Hera, and Agamemnon all share the same experience of struggling for their rightful place in a cosmos fraught with unresolved conflicts. Even in the case of Zeus, the mightiest among men and gods, his status is never unassailable. There are lapses and limits, as when he fails to take notice of Hera rebelling against his express command. Agamemnon's power is also limited, only to a greater extent than Zeus. These three figures represent three levels of power in the *Iliad*. Zeus' superior might and violent rhetorical style find a counterpoint in Hera's clever rhetorical maneuvers in the *Dios Apate*. Agamemnon, who is less powerful than either of these divine figures, is that much more at the mercy of his rhetorical ability. Across the entire hierarchy, from divine to human, each character must compensate for their vulnerabilities. My thesis has sought to examine how these three characters have negotiated their limited positions of power, and how their efforts influence the plot of the *Iliad*.

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