

LANGUAGE OF GODS AND MEN

by

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(Under the Direction of Nancy Felson)

ABSTRACT

This study of how the gods are depicted in the *Iliad* focuses on the words of the characters themselves. I compare and contrast the speech-patterns of the poem's divine and mortal figures, concentrating on three types of speech: quarrels, commands, and prophecies. An examination of the diction, syntax, formulae, and narrative effects of these speeches reveals how the Homeric poet-performer characterized the gods as superior to humans both ontologically and epistemologically. In the consideration of quarrels we see the basic contrast between the ineffective human method of handling conflict and the relatively successful way in which the Olympian characters resolve disputes through dialogue. The section on commands takes this observation one step further by demonstrating the relative stability of the divine hierarchy. The examination of prophetic language shows the importance of divine knowledge to the poet-performer's characterization of the gods and its usefulness as a narrative and performative device.

INDEX WORDS: *Iliad*, Homer, Greek gods, characterization, oral poetry

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to the memory of my maternal grandmother, Margaret Watson Quinn, who was a pillar of strength and a guiding light to me for as long as I can remember. She will be sorely missed but never forgotten.

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INTRODUCTION

The *Iliad* poet presents divine characters in anthropomorphic form, describing them in terms that are intelligible to his human audience. And yet he portrays them as clearly different from mortal characters by ascribing to them a distinctiveness that goes beyond the simple possession of superior physical powers. By examining the language the poet assigns to divine characters I intend to show one way in which he highlights their epistemological and ontological superiority. This entails a close consideration of the moods, syntax and vocabulary found in their speech as compared to the speech of human characters. I limit myself to three types of speech that occur on both the divine and human planes: quarrels, commands, and prophecies.

Chapter one compares the deliberations that occur in the divine and human assemblies in the first book of the *Iliad* (I.533-611 and I.53-303). Both assemblies consist primarily of quarrels that follow a similar sequential pattern; they have the same number of exchanges between the two interlocutors. The exchanges mirror each other and comprise a pattern to which both the divine and human assemblies adhere. But by varying the language used and presenting significantly different outcomes for the two assemblies, the poet communicates that the hierarchy of the gods is more stable. Moreover the language used by the gods differs in many respects from mortal. For one thing, Zeus does not resort to pejorative name-calling: he first addresses Hera by her name (I.545) and later calls her **daimoniē** (I.561), a relatively neutral term.¹ Akhilleus,

however, addresses Agamemnon with such slurs as “dog face” and “drunkard” (I.159 and 225), inflammatory language. The syntax employed by the gods also differs from that of the mortals. In discounting Zeus’ solution to the argument, Hera asks, “What sort of **muthos** have you spoken?” (I.552). Thus she questions him, but she gives him an opportunity to respond. In the mortal assembly Agamemnon, using an imperative, tells Akhilleus to leave if he so wishes since he does not need him (I.173). This amounts to an insult as Agamemnon enacts what Akhilleus already senses, dishonor. The parallels finally break down completely after the mediator intervenes. Hera heeds Hephaistos’ advice, but Agamemnon ignores Nestor’s. And in stark contrast to the divine assembly, which results in a smiling Hera and a feast for all the gods (I.595-600), the human assembly ends in the angry departure of Akhilleus (I.504-7). In the poet’s portrayal the divine quarrel has no real repercussions and does not jeopardize the divine hierarchy, which is static.² The quarrel in the Greek assembly, however, causes a violent rupture among the leadership and leads to the **mēnis** of Akhilleus.

The second chapter compares commands and threats made by gods with those made by humans. I select command speeches from among the many speeches that are introduced by the term **muthos**, which Richard Martin has shown marks the utterance that follows as an authoritative speech-act. I first examine the commands issued by Zeus, Hera and Poseidon to other gods, noting especially the verb forms used. I then attempt to determine whether threats accompany one group more than the other, and I focus on the nature of the threats comparing and contrasting those from each group. Do gods and humans use the same sort of threats? Further, I explore the notion that threats uttered by Zeus are equivalent to predictions.³ The verb forms used in some of Zeus’ threats point

to a prophetic certainty, reflecting his role as the arbiter of fate and his supreme position in the divine hierarchy. Do human threats convey anything similar to this certainty? I also consider how commands are issued, directly or indirectly through a messenger, and what differentiates divine and human messengers or their delivery of commands and threats. Does the messenger simply repeat the commands verbatim and then depart, or does she or he also engage in dialogue with the recipient? Does the messenger provide any personal commentary? Finally I consider what can be learned about the hierarchies, divine and human, from commands. Zeus' injunction to Poseidon, delivered by Iris, receives special attention here because of the negative reaction it provokes (XV.157-215).

The third chapter focuses on prophetic statements and premonitions of future events. I first examine prophecies uttered by mortals, especially those of Calchas (I.93-100 and II.323-29), Helenus (VII.47-53) and Polydamas (XII.211-229). I then turn to the two prophecies that Zeus reveals to Hera (VIII.470-83 and XV.60-70), paying special attention to the tenses and moods employed and noting the presence of any modal auxiliary particles. A marked difference in moods and tenses might point to varying levels of certainty or specificity. Does Zeus, who has privileged knowledge of fate, express more or less certainty about the future than humans? Does the scope of his poems far exceed that of human prophecies? I also assess the truth-value of the prophecies in the world of the poem and evaluate the possible intentions of the speakers. Are the prophecies of Zeus more accurate than those of humans? For what reasons would either Zeus or mortals intentionally issue false prophecies? Finally I examine the roles that prophecies play in the narrative as poetic devices.⁴ Do the divine prophecies

serve a different purpose in the narrative than prophecies uttered by mortals? If so, is this a function of different language or simply of how the poet characterizes the speaker?

Drawing on the observations made in the three chapters of this investigation, I hope ultimately to highlight a crucial aspect of the poet's portrayal of the gods and its implications for the performance of the poem. At times the Homeric poet clearly takes an interest in presenting the speech of gods as unique and distinctive on a lexical level.⁵ Numerous differences between divine and human speech indicate that the poet depicts the gods in ways that transcend their surface anthropomorphism. This method of characterization is much more subtle than the explicit representations of the gods' superhuman physical powers. The way in which the poet portrays them handling conflict, issuing commands and foretelling future events shows his audience that the divine characters have a more stable hierarchy and superior knowledge as compared to the mortal characters. The more stable divine hierarchy serves largely as a foil to the unstable and tumultuous human hierarchies of the poem. The superior knowledge of the gods however, reflects on the poet himself. His own access to divine knowledge, which he presents most explicitly in the four divine naming passages, would seem to set *him* apart from ordinary men and from lesser poet-performers.⁶ By displaying his skill at representing not only the words and deeds of the heroes but also the speech and action of the gods, the Homeric poet reaffirms his reliability as a teller of tales.

CHAPTER 1

QUARRELS

The divine world of the *Iliad* serves as a foil for that of the heroes, who take center stage in the poem. A concrete example of the way in which the two realms reflect each other occurs in the first book of the poem. The quarrels between Akhilleus and Agamemnon and Zeus and Hera demonstrate certain similarities that provide a basis of comparison for the two dialogues. A close reading of the two scenes with particular attention to fine stylistic features such as enjambment, diction and choice of formulae reveals significant differences between the two conversations, which become more numerous and profound by their respective ends. These differences shed light on the radical differences between men and gods.

The similarities between Zeus and Akhilleus are intricate and function on many levels.⁷ Not only does the imagery associated with both tie them together, but allusions to other myths from Archaic Greece hint at a potential connection that is not realized in any extant stories from ancient Greek mythology. Since Akhilleus is the son of Thetis, he is destined to outdo his father.⁸ As Laura Slatkin has shown, the *Iliad* contains numerous subtle allusions to a possible myth in which Zeus, an erstwhile suitor of Thetis, fathers Akhilleus, who will overthrow him as he had overthrown Kronos.⁹ Many of the passages that allude to this alternate existence relate to strife among the gods. These

scenes point to an earlier time in which the Olympian hierarchy was still new and Zeus' supremacy was still seriously challenged.

The mythic world of the *Iliad*, however, does not allow this possibility. It was Peleus who fathered Akhilleus, not Zeus. And so Akhilleus, who would have taken over rulership of the gods and men from Zeus in the alternate myth, establishes his supremacy among the Akhaians not only on the battlefield, but in the agora as well. The true Homeric hero incorporates skills in both of these arenas, as Phoinix emphasizes during the embassy scene when he reminds Akhilleus why Peleus sent him along with his only son:

τουνεκά με προέηκε διδασκόμεναι τάδε πάντα,
 μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτῆρα τε ἔργων. (IX.442-43)¹⁰
 Therefore he sent me forth to teach [sc. you] these things,
 to be a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.

By the end of the poem Akhilleus becomes a dispenser of gifts (XXIII. *passim*). He also claims to Priam that he will command the Greeks to halt the fighting for twelve days so that the Trojans can have a fitting funeral for Hektor. This new authority Akhilleus seems to possess at the end of the poem results from his valor on the battlefield, but it also derives from his command of language.

In a comparison of the two assemblies at the beginning of the *Iliad*, Akhilleus, who resembles Zeus in many respects, appears as a homologue of Hera, while Agamemnon shares with Zeus the role of the acknowledged leader who finds his position threatened. The resemblance that Zeus and Agamemnon share is basically structural: they share the same role in the quarrel. The similarity between Hera and Akhilleus however, goes beyond the characteristic wrath that Akhilleus and Hera share or their roles in the respective scenes.¹¹ The language that Hera employs resembles that of

Akhilleus. For instance they begin with rhetorical questions in both their first and second speeches of the arguments. They display some differences, however, and these differences multiply as they reach the end of their respective arguments. Akhilleus gradually becomes more distressed and angry, while Hera becomes more reticent and accommodating, finally obeying Zeus and curbing her heart, **epignampsasa . . . kēr** (I.569). Zeus' language differs more significantly from Agamemnon's than Hera's does from Akhilleus'. The anger and agitation that the Argive king exhibits through his illogical syntax, for example, stands in stark contrast to Zeus' calm and well-ordered words to Hera. Yet the two kings share a similar role, that of the threatened leader, and their language reflects similar concerns. Agamemnon's primary motivation for threatening Akhilleus appears at the end of their argument, when he says:

... ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηίδα καλλιπάρηον
 αὐτος ἰὼν κλισίηνδε, τεὸν γέρας, ὄφρ' εὖ εἴδηις
 ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέηι δὲ καὶ ἄλλος
 ἴσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην. (I.186-87)

And I myself, coming to your camp, would lead away
 Briseis of the fair-cheeks, your war-prize, so that you might know well
 how much stronger I am than you, and so that any other might hesitate
 to say that he is equal to me and liken himself to me face to face.

Zeus uses very similar wording when he threatens the assembled gods, just before the tide of fortunes turns decisively in the Trojans' favor:

τόσσον ἐγὼ περί τ' εἰμι θεῶν περί τ' εἶμ' ἀνθρώπων. (VIII.27)
 So much am I superior to gods and men.

And so, as with Akhilleus and Hera, Agamemnon and Zeus share more than similar roles; they display similar choices in language.

This comparison of Agamemnon to Zeus and Akhilleus to Hera does not hold up by the poem's end. In *Iliad* XXIII and XXIV, Zeus and Akhilleus both appear as arbiters. And just as Zeus settles the dispute between Apollo and Hera (XXIV.31-76),

thus establishing a truce among the immortals, so too Akhilleus, by accepting the supplication of Priam and allowing him to bury Hektor (XXIV.669-70), establishes a truce among mortals, however provisional it may be. The very fact that Akhilleus has the authority to call a halt to the fighting for twelve days suggests that he has gained more than just a new perspective by the end of the poem.

At the beginning of the poem the audience witnesses two assemblies in which a serious argument takes place, one near the opening and the other near the end of the first book. These two scenes give the first book of the *Iliad* an annular structure, with the divine assembly (I.533-611) mirroring the human assembly (I.54-305) in several ways. Both are caused by supplications, first Khryses supplicating Agamemnon on behalf of his daughter, and then Thetis supplicating Zeus on behalf of her son. Aside from the primary difference, namely that one occurs entirely on the mortal plane and the other on Olympos, the crucial distinction for the outcome of the poem lies in the reaction of the one supplicated: Agamemnon refuses Khryses while Zeus agrees to help Thetis, albeit grudgingly. The arguments in both assemblies, human (I.121-87) and divine (I.539-570), are occasioned by the outcome of supplication.

Hera and Akhilleus begin their respective arguments with a rhetorical question. In each case the question prods the other party into responding. Akhilleus asks Agamemnon a question for which the poem's audience would not easily know the answer:

πῶς τὰρ τοι δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί; (I.122)

How will the great-spirited Akhaians give you a war prize?

He says that in the current state of affairs there are no stockpiles of shared loot (I.124).

He continues by pointing out that those things, which have previously been plundered

from cities, have already been distributed to the soldiers and it would not be proper to recollect them (I.125-26). He concludes by promising Agamemnon that in the future, whenever the Greeks gain more loot, the soldiers will repay him three and four fold for his loss (I.127-29). This reasoning demonstrates that Akhilleus already knew the answer to his question and that it was indeed rhetorical. Kirk characterizes Akhilleus' statement as logical and calm, pointing to the "end-stopped" lines 124-26.¹²

The rhetorical nature of Hera's question is much more immediately apparent to the audience.

τίς δὴ αἶ τοι, δολομήτα, θεῶν συμφράσσατο βουλάς; (I.540)

Which one of the gods, o wily one, contrived counsels with you?

The audience has already discovered that Hera knew about Thetis' visit with Zeus and that she knew about their plotting together (I.536-38). The indirect statement, which reflects the goddess' thoughts (" . . . nor was Hera unaware of him, seeing that silver-footed Thetis contrived plans with him." I.536-38)¹³, gives the audience direct insight into her mind, and the repetition of line 538 at line 556 calls attention to her awareness. Immediately after the audience first learns that Hera is aware of what has been going on, the poem presents her opening statement with a striking characterization: "**kertomioisi** [sc.**epeessi**]" (I.539).¹⁴ The term clearly points to *neikos*-type language, which Martin has labeled "flyting."¹⁵ Thus the language that introduces Hera's speech characterizes it as more confrontational than Akhilleus' speech at I.121, which begins with a common formulaic element.¹⁶ The rest of Hera's opening speech emphasizes the ongoing nature of her dissatisfaction with Zeus' style of rulership.

αἰεὶ τοι φίλον ἐστὶν ἐμεῖ' ἀπὸ νόσφιν ἐόντα
κρυπτάδια φρονέοντα δικαζέμεν· οὐδέ τί πώ μοι
πρόφρων τέτληκας εἰπεῖν ἔπος ὅττι νοήσης. (I.541-543)

It is always dear to you to make decisions secretly,

being away from me; and you do not eagerly dare
to tell me whatever it is that you have thought.

The placement of **aiei**, always, at the beginning of the line draws the audience's attention to this aspect of her complaint. And **kruptadia**, secretly, also emphasized by its verse-initial position, occurs only one other time in Homeric poetry. While recounting his lineage to Diomedes, Glaukos tells the tale of Bellerophon, whose exile was caused by King Proteus' wife, who wanted to mingle in love secretly, **kruptadia**, with him. The expressed theme of infidelity in this Homeric digression could be at work on a more subtle level in the divine argument of *Iliad* I. An ancient scholiast characterized Hera's remonstrance of Zeus as that of a wife chiding her husband.¹⁷ The personal nature of her complaint also resonates with Akhilleus' grievance against Agamemnon.¹⁸

Akhilleus, who begins logically and calmly, shows signs of agitation or excitement before he has even finished his first speech. The enjambment in lines 127-129 gives a sense of urgency to the imperative, "give this girl to the god" (127), and the promise, "they will repay you three and four fold" (128), although Kirk calls the enjambed conclusion "not exactly excitable."¹⁹ Willcock characterizes Akhilleus as "still polite" at this point in the dispute, citing the word **philokteanōtate** as the only possible evidence of rudeness.²⁰ Much like Hera, he still displays a degree of diplomacy at this early stage of the argument. But despite Kirk's explanation of **philokteanōtate** as "a little less insulting"²¹ in Homeric society, given the prevalence of raiding as a livelihood, the label can hardly be complimentary and the subsequent reference to acquisitiveness (I.128)²² strengthens its negative impact. Indeed the insult of greediness and the urgency of Akhilleus' closing thought appear, at this early stage of the argument anyway, to prompt Agamemnon's heated and confused reply.

Agamemnon begins his reply with a stern command to Akhilleus, which contains a concessive phrase. He tells the young warrior not to beguile him, **mē klepte noōi**, although he is noble, **agathos per eōn**.²³ Zeus provides a similar concession in his reply to Hera. Concerning his **muthoi**, his speech acts, or in this case his deliberations, he tells Hera not to hope to know them all. He then explains that they are difficult for her **alokhōi per eousēi**, “though she is his bedmate.” In both the divine and human concession there is an acknowledgment of power. Though Hera, as Zeus’ wife, has more power than most, she will nonetheless find his plans difficult. Similarly, although Akhilleus may have the power to speak well on account of his nobility, Agamemnon claims that he should not try to deceive him, for he will fail.

After the initial commands, the language of Zeus’ reply to Hera begins to show significant variations from the more heated reply of Agamemnon. The disjointed syntax that follows Agamemnon’s command demonstrates how badly Akhilleus offended him and shows that Agamemnon is already having trouble controlling his temper. Willcock calls 133-34 “an awkward sentence.”²⁴

ἦ ἐθέλεις, ὄφρ’ αὐτὸς ἔχηις γέρας, αὐτὰρ ἔμ’ αὐτῶς
ἦσθαι δευόμενον, κέλεαι δέ με τήνδ’ ἀποδοῦναι; (I.133-34)

Do you want, so that you yourself might have a war-prize, but that I likewise will sit lacking, and you order me to give her back?

The ordering of the clauses is indeed unwieldy and the result clause, a clear case of anacolouthon, reveals the resentment that Agamemnon harbors. The incomplete conditional in the following two lines, 135-36, further demonstrates how disconnected his thoughts have become, as he tries to hold back a nearly uncontrollable temper.

ἀλλ’ εἰ μὲν δώσουσι γέρας μεγάθυμοι Ἀχαιοί,
ἄρσαντες κατὰ θυμόν, ὅπως ἀντάξιον ἔσται· (I.135-36)

But if the great-spirited Akhaians give a war-prize,
fitting it according to desire, so that it will be equivalent.

Agamemnon translates his emotional fervor into confused syntax, which translators usually gloss over by supplying some phrase such as, “...well and good.” The repetition of **aut-** in line 133 and of the **-ai** in 134, which achieves a stuttering effect, further emphasizes this sense of confusion.

Zeus, quite unlike Agamemnon, speaks clearly and concisely. And after his initial command to Hera in 545-46, he continues in a conciliatory tone.

ἀλλ’ ὄν μὲν κ’ ἐπεικὲς ἀκουεμεν, οὔ τις ἔπειτα
 οὔτε θεῶν πρότερος τόν γ’ εἴσεται οὔτ’ ἀνθρώπων· (I.547-48)
 But whatever is suitable to hear, then no one,
 neither of gods nor men, will know it sooner [sc. than you].

The text highlights Zeus’ tone by placing the object, which contains the positive term **epieikes**, first. As in 545-46, the enjambment of 547-48 creates a sense of flow. This combined with the clear subordinating syntax demonstrates the concision and directness of Zeus’ rhetoric. The use of **akouemen** indicates to the audience that the **muthoi** to which Zeus refers in line 545 are verbal in nature, confusing the distinction between Zeus’ plans (**boulas** I.537) and his speech-acts (**muthous** I.545). Indeed Hera’s major concern is that he has been crafting **boulas** (540) in secret with someone else. In his reply to her he warns her not to inquire about his **muthous** (545). The confusion, or semantic overlap, between these two terms gives credence to the privileged status of the term **muthos** since it is thus linked with the **Dios boulē**.²⁵ And according to Kirk, the main clause of the sentence in line 548 is a “truly polar expression” and thus “wholly rhetorical.”²⁶ The statement is clearly concessive. With this concession the god suggests that occasionally he chooses to make plans with others and when he believes that he can share these plans with anyone, he will share them with her first. Thus he undercuts her statement (I.541) that it is always, **aiēi**, dear to him to reach decisions apart from her,

emei apo nosphin (541-42). By addressing this complaint, he demonstrates that he is not ignoring her concerns.

Unlike Zeus, who continues with a conciliatory tone, Agamemnon selfishly focuses on himself. For recompense he wants a prize **kata thumon**, according to his desire.²⁷ Moreover, the immediate appearance of a negative conditional, stating what the Argive king would plan to do should he not be recompensed, suggests that he is overly concerned about losing his **geras** and thus his **timē**. This point comes through clearly in the diction of 133-35. Agamemnon refuses to accept a situation in which Akhilleus, who urges him to hand over Khryseis, will have a **geras** (133) while he lacks one (134). The only answer, according to Agamemnon, is an equivalent prize (135). In the threat that follows the broken conditional, he repeats this key word, **geras** (138).

εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν, ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἔλωμαι
ἢ τεὸν ἢ Ἀϊάντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος
ἄξω ἐλών· ὃ δέ κεν κεχολώσεται ὄν κεν ἴκωμαι. (I.137-39)

But if they (the Akhaians) should not give (sc. a war-prize), I myself coming would take either yours, or Ajax', or Odysseus' war-prize, having taken it I will lead it away; and he would be angered, whomever I might approach.

The first thought expressed in 139, namely that he will lead the **geras** away having taken it (**axō helōn**), seems redundant after 137, and the thought that occupies the remainder of 139 is self-evident: surely any Akhaian hero robbed of his war prize would become angry. These factors led Aristarchus to athetize line 139. Kirk argues, however, that the dramatic and sinister nature of the statement makes it effective.²⁸ Unlike Zeus, Agamemnon already intimates the possibility of violence at this early phase in the dispute. The confused syntax of Agamemnon's opening statements (133-34), the broken conditional (135-36), and the apparent redundancy (139) all combine to produce muddled verbosity that stands in stark contrast to Zeus' succinct statements.

Following his concession to Hera in 547-48, Zeus makes a direct and more confrontational statement, which is very authoritarian in tone.

ὄν δέ κ' ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλωμι νοῆσαι,
 μή τι σὺ ταῦτα ἕκαστα διείρεο μηδὲ μετάλλα. (I.549-50)
 But whatever I wish to think apart from the gods,
 do not ask about these things or investigate them at all.

The language invokes the imagery of Zeus as the solitary planner, **apaneuthe theōn ethelōmi noēsai**, a pointed affront to Hera. The lack of enjambment achieves a staccato effect that emphasizes the pithy and direct nature of the statement. And the line's three semantically and rhythmically distinct cola, each one slightly longer than the previous one, give a sense of urgency.²⁹ The rising three-fold rhythm, which Kirk calls a rising three-folder,³⁰ and the subordinating syntax of the relative clause contribute to the statement's clarity. The two negative commands in the final line of Zeus' response (I.550) introduce a more authoritarian tone, but there is still no direct threat of violence.

In stark contrast to Zeus' confident authority and clear language, Agamemnon attempts to ignore the issue at hand. He suggests that they defer until later the question of just how he will be recompensed.

ἀλλ' ἤτοι μὲν ταῦτα μεταφρασόμεσθα καὶ αὖτις. (I.140)
 But indeed we will also consider these things later... at another time.

The use of **autis** with the verb **metaphrazomai** emphasizes that he does plan to take up the issue, but for now he will avoid it. This tactic of diversion characterizes the king as a weak leader. The drastic shift in his thought can be felt quite strongly because of the **nun d' age**, a collocation that even exceeds the disjunctive force of the commoner **nun de**.

And while his subsequent statements demonstrate that he has decided to return Khryseis to her father, he avoids the immediate problem that he has just raised, that someone will have to give up his **geras** so that he, Agamemnon, will not lack one. He makes one more

jab at Akhilleus by referring to him as **pantōn ekpaglotatos andrōn**, “the most excessive/vehement of all men.”

A formulaic line, which occurs four other times in the *Iliad*,³¹ introduces Hera’s reply to Zeus. It occurs in combination with the subsequent line – the first verse of her reply – two other times in the poem.³²

τὸν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα βοῶπις πότνια Ἥρη·
 "αἰνότατε Κρονίδη, ποῖον τὸν μῦθον ἔειπες;
 καὶ λίην σε πάρος γ’ οὔτ’ εἶρομαι οὔτε μεταλλῶ,
 ἀλλὰ μάλ’ εὐκηλος τὰ φράζεαι ἄσσο’ ἐθέλησθα. (I.551-54)

And then ox-eyed queen Hera replied to him,
 “Most dreadful son of Kronos, what sort of speech did you utter?
 In the past I certainly neither questioned you nor interrogated you,
 but very much free from worry you deliberated whatever you wished.”

Her first three lines express indignation and dissatisfaction, which she directs not at the affront (I.549) nor at the current situation involving Thetis, but at what she sees as Zeus’ misreading of her past actions. The tone of her reply shifts from indignation (552-54) through anxiety (555-559), but she avoids blatantly insulting language. She repeats the formulaic line, **ainotate Kronidē, poion ton muthon eeipes?**, five times in the *Iliad*,³³ each time with the same indignant tone. And although no other god uses as strong a form of address as **ainotate** when speaking to Zeus, the term is not necessarily negative; it simply denotes excessive fear-inspiring power, a quality that befits the supreme deity. At this point in the argument, the reactions of Hera and Akhilleus begin to diverge significantly. She keeps a tight rein on her anger while he vehemently expresses his with violent and insulting language.

The narrator-language that introduces Akhilleus’ reply to Agamemnon³⁴ reflects his emotional rage by departing from more conventional language of replies. The phrase **hupodra idōn**(cf. II.245) designates a character as angry, and its use here contrasts

sharply with the two previous lines of narrator-language introducing character dialogue, which merely indicate who is about to speak without characterizing the speech itself (121 and 130). The phrase also marks his reply as much more heated than Hera's. Akhilleus begins with an interjection and addresses Agamemnon with clearly abusive language.

ὦ μοι, ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένε, κερδαλέοφρον,
 πῶς τίς τοι πρόφρων ἔπεσιν πείθεται Ἀχαιῶν,
 ἢ ὁδὸν ἐλθέμεναι ἢ ἀνδράσιν ἴφι μάχεσθαι; (I.149-51)
 Oh me, you greedy man clothed in shamelessness,
 how would any of the Akhaians eagerly obey your words
 either to go on this path (of war) or to fight men with force?

The insult **anaideiēn epieimene**, clothed in shamelessness, does not leave any room for misunderstanding. A crucial component of the heroic code, **aidōs**, even motivates the actions of gods.³⁵ The word **anaideiē** occurs only one other time in the *Iliad*, in Akhilleus' reply to Odysseus, where he again calls Agamemnon "clothed in shamelessness" (IX.372). Although Kirk argues that **kerdaleophron** should be translated here as "crafty" rather than "avaricious," the idea of greed seems crucial to the insulting tone Akhilleus uses. He follows this rebuke with a question that is again rhetorical in nature and incredulous in tone: "How would anyone of the Akhaians eagerly obey your words to go on this path (of war) or fight men with force?" (I.150-51). Its implied meaning, that no one should obey him, is eminently demeaning, as are the unambiguous taunts that he later hurls at the leader (I.158-59).

After trying to reassure Zeus, at least outwardly, Hera shifts suddenly from her indignant, almost defensive tone to one of concern, signaled by the verb **deidoika**.

νῦν δ' αἰνῶς δείδοικα κατὰ φρένα, μή σε παρείπηι
 ἀργυρόπεζα θετίς, θυγάτηρ ἀλίοιο γέροντος·
 ἠερίη γὰρ σοί γε παρέζετο καὶ λάβε γούνων. (I.555-57)
 But now I am terribly afraid in my mind that silver-footed

Thetis, the daughter of the old man of the sea, persuaded you;
for at dawn she was sitting next to you and grasped your knees.

The “end-stopped” lines, in which sense breaks coincide with verse ends, demonstrate an orderly speech pattern that appears carefully thought out by the speaker. The occurrence of the frequent collocation, **nun de**, indicates a focalization on the *hic et nunc*, and marks a distinct departure from what precedes. This emphasizes the break from her prior statement about Zeus’ misreading of her past actions; in the ensuing fear clause, Hera focuses on the present situation. She then repeats verbatim a line that occurred in narrative only eighteen lines earlier, just before the argument began (I.538).³⁶ By giving Thetis a full line for her name and epithets, the poet-performer indicates her importance, even her centrality, to the plot.³⁷ The repetition brings the audience’s attention back to the crux of Hera’s concern, Zeus’ conversation with Thetis. And the adjective that she attaches to Thetis, *ēeriē* (“at dawn”), also occurred previously in the narrative (I.497). Here it serves as a temporal marker, but its semantics are far from clear. The enigmatic adjective could point to a theme of a dawn goddess seeking aid from the supreme god.³⁸ The only possible insult in this rhetorical context is Hera’s insinuation that Thetis, by persuading Zeus, overcame him in a contest of will and words.³⁹ Even such a veiled insult is certainly less insulting than Akhilleus’ blatant gibes at Agamemnon.

After belittling the Argive leader with name-calling and a rhetorical question that casts doubt upon his ability to inspire the troops, Akhilleus explains his reasons for deciding to leave Troy and return home. He argues that he came to Troy for the sake of Agamemnon and Menelaos, not to seek any personal revenge on the Trojans (I.152-53). By mentioning horse thievery and cattle rustling as a justification for retaliatory warfare (I.154), Akhilleus alludes to a component of the heroic code that he later rejects. By the

time of the embassy scene of book IX, he seems to have reached a new, almost revolutionary perspective, namely that **geraa**, “war-prizes,” are not worth loss of life. Another component of the heroic code, **philotēs**, or “friendship,” compelled Akhilleus to accompany the Greeks to Troy, he claims (I.158-60). And indeed friendship remains important to him even after he rejects the amassing of war-prizes as a valid goal for the hero. Thus the slight he receives at the hands of the Argive king hurts that much more, because Agamemnon, by publicly threatening and humiliating Akhilleus, disregards his **philotēs**.⁴⁰

ἀλλὰ σοι, ὦ μέγ’ ἀναιδές, ἅμ’ ἐσπόμεθ’, ὄφρα σὺ χაίρηις,
τιμὴν ἀρνύμενοι Μενελάωι σοί τε, κυνῶπα,
πρὸς Τρώων· τῶν οὐ τι μετατρέπε’ οὐδ’ ἀλεγίζεις. (I.158-60)

But we came along with you, you greatly shameless one,
so that you might benefit, with us winning honor from the Trojans for Menelaos
and you, you dog-face; but you don’t care or give a damn at all about these things.

The pointed and unambiguous rebuke, **ō meg’ anaidēs**, and **kunōpa**, display the intensity of Akhilleus’ anger and his diminishing control over it.

καὶ δὴ μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς,
ὦι ἔπι πόλλ’ ἐμόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἱεὺς Ἀχαιῶν. (I.161-62)

And what’s more, you threaten that you yourself will take away my war-prize,
for which I greatly toiled, and the sons of the Akhaians gave her to me.

Using the key word, **geras**, the young Myrmidon emphasizes the Greek leader’s complete disregard for reciprocity and even singles out one aspect of the king’s threat, **egō de autos helōmai**, “I myself will seize it”(137). This highlights Akhilleus’ preoccupation with the personal nature of Agamemnon’s offense. Only after giving his reasons does Akhilleus tell the assembled Akhaians what he plans to do, **nun d’ eimi Phthiēnd’**, “But now I will go to Phthia” (I.169).

After revealing that she is upset because of her fear that Thetis has persuaded Zeus, Hera accurately sets forth what Zeus promised to the sea nymph.

τῆι σ' οἴω κατανεῦσαι ἐτήτυμον, ὡς Ἀχιλλῆα
 τιμήσεις, ὀλέσεις δὲ πολέας ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν. (I.558-59)⁴¹
 And I suppose you truthfully nodded assent that you would honor
 Akhilleus and destroy many of the Akhaians at their ships.

The enjambment of **timēsēis** in line 559 sets off her description of Zeus' actions. It is the only instance of enjambment in her response (552-59) and its presence attaches some urgency to her statement. Indeed, the plot of the poem consists largely of Zeus' extension of honor to Akhilleus and destruction to the Akhaians.⁴² Hera's closing statement foreshadows divine conflict, which is caused precisely by these two themes, honor and destruction.⁴³ By displaying her own insights and slighting those of Zeus, she provokes and elicits his harsh and threatening response.

Both Zeus and Agamemnon reply with threatening language. Agamemnon goes much further, though, in suggesting the inferiority of his opponent by belittling even the qualities of Akhilleus that he grudgingly acknowledges. Agamemnon's response differs most from Zeus' in the intensity of its dismissive tone. The father of gods and men only dismisses Hera's complaints, saying that regardless of how she feels about it, he will do as he pleases. The mortal king, however, literally dismisses Akhilleus himself, blatantly threatening and belittling him. But the formulaic nature and the ambiguous semantics of Zeus' final threat strike a much more ominous chord than the human king's empty posturing.

The appearance of the epithet **nephelēgereta**, cloud-gatherer, seems purposeful at the introduction to Zeus' final reply in the divine argument. The image of storm clouds gathering on the horizon gives Zeus' angry response a natural yet foreboding tone.

τὴν δ' ἀπαμειβομένος προσέφη νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς·
 "δαίμονίη, αἰεὶ μὲν οἶεαι, οὐδὲ σε λήθω,
 πρῆξαι δ' ἔμπης οὐ τι δυνήσεαι, ἀλλ' ἀπὸ θυμοῦ
 μάλλον ἐμοὶ ἔσεαι, τό δέ τοι καὶ ῥίγιον ἔσται. (I.560-63)

Replying to her, cloud-gathering Zeus said:
 “Strange lady, you are always wondering, and I do not elude you,
 and yet, you will not be able to do anything, but you will be
 farther from my heart and it will also be frightful for you.

Although **daimoniē** can indicate “affectionate remonstrance,” as Kirk points out,⁴⁴ its ambiguous and sometimes derisive meanings should not be ignored. The tone of line 561 is clearly indignant sarcasm. Zeus follows up the euphemistic and vague threat **apo thumou mallon emoi eseai**, with a familiar phrase: **kai rhigion estai**. Agamemnon uses the same threat in a general way; it would apply to whomever he should choose to deprive of his war prize (I.325). Coming from Zeus, the threat is both more specific and more ominous. It is clearly intended for Hera specifically.⁴⁵ The term **thumos**, often translated heart or soul, denotes a type of intangible organ shared by both gods and men, unlike a **psukhē**, soul or spirit, possessed only by humans.⁴⁶ The supreme Olympian issues no commands in this first half of the response, only statements of fact. He does not say, “Do not do anything,” but “You will not be able to do anything,” suggesting that he is quite certain that his authority over Hera is secure and stable.

In his dismissive and insulting reply, Agamemnon displays quite clearly how concerned he is with not appearing weak before the assembled Akhaian leaders:

φεῦγε μάλ', εἴ τοι θυμὸς ἐπέσσυται· οὐδέ σ' ἐγὼ γε
 λίσσομαι εἴνεκ' ἐμεῖο μένειν· πᾶρ' ἐμοί γε καὶ ἄλλοι
 οἳ κέ με τιμήσουσι, μάλιστα δὲ μητίετα Ζεύς. (I.173-75)

Well, flee already, if your spirit urges you to; I am certainly not
 beseeching you to stay on my account; anyway, there are others around me
 who might honor me, and especially wise Zeus.

With this reply Agamemnon displays his ineptitude and ignorance. An audience familiar with the story of the Trojan War would recall that it is precisely during the absence of Akhilleus that Zeus extends victory and honor to the Trojans in order to increase the young Myrmidon's own glory. By dismissing Akhilleus and claiming at the same time

that he will receive honor from Zeus, Agamemnon completely misreads his own situation.⁴⁷ And these first lines of the response show a profusion of what Kirk labels “integral enjambment” in which no real sense pause can be observed at the end of a line because the following line contains information necessary to the main argument.⁴⁸ This variety of enjambment communicates an unavoidable sense of haste, although the clear coordinating syntax shows more composure than in his earlier statements.

Agamemnon continues by stating that he considers the Myrmidon to be the most hateful of all kings (I.176); he then explains that his dislike stems from Akhilleus’ constant love of war and conflict (I.177). Since ability on the battlefield is a widely acknowledged heroic quality, Agamemnon must then make an apparent concession to the warrior’s power.

εἰ μάλα καρτερός ἐσσι, θεός που σοὶ τό γ’ ἔδωκεν.
οἴκαδ’ ἰὼν σὺν νηυσὶ τε σῆις καὶ σοῖς ἐτάροισιν
Μυρμιδόνεσσιν ἄνασσε· σέθεν δ’ ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀλεγίζω
οὐδ’ ὄθομαι κοτέοντος· (I.178-81)

If indeed you are more powerful, I suppose some god gave you this power.
Going homeward with your ships and comrades,
rule over the Myrmidons; I do not care about you
and I am not concerned about your being angered.

The fact that the concession occurs in a conditional calls into question whether Agamemnon really acknowledges this superior quality of the young warrior. It immediately becomes apparent that Agamemnon only mentioned Akhilleus’ superior strength so that he could undercut its value. Kirk cites the asyndeton of 177-78 and the rising threefold in 179 as signs of Agamemnon’s “growing excitement.”⁴⁹ This excited and dismissive jab at Akhilleus’ abilities rings hollow, however, since the god-given nature of a mortal’s abilities does not diminish their value.⁵⁰ Agamemnon emphasizes that Akhilleus should sail away in *his* ships with *his* companions. This stands in contrast

with the nearly parallel phrasing in 183, in which he says that he will send Khryseis back to her father with his own ship and companions. The contrast exhibits another slight: while Akhilleus leaves the war, taking his resources with him, Agamemnon will use his resources to further the Akhaian cause. He strengthens his ringing denunciation by stating as clearly as he can that he does not care about Akhilleus, and by emphasizing that even an angry Akhilleus is not a cause for concern.⁵¹ The only two imperatives in all of this speech occur in the first portion (173-180) when the leader tells him to leave and to rule over his countrymen. The placement of **pheuge**, “flee,” at the beginning of the speech sums up the dismissive tone. And by commanding Akhilleus to do things that he already intended to do, Agamemnon again displays weakness in leadership and a lack of confidence with respect to his own authority.

Zeus continues in a sarcastic tone and finishes with threats and commands in his final reply to Hera.

εἰ δ' οὕτω τοῦτ' ἔστιν, ἐμοὶ μέλλει φίλον εἶναι.
 ἀλλ' ἀκέουσα κάθησο, ἐμῶι δ' ἐπιπείθεο μύθῳι,
 μή νύ τοι οὐ χραίσμωσιν ὅσοι θεοὶ εἰς' ἐν Ὀλύμπῳ
 ἄσσον ἰονθ', ὅτε κέν τοι ἀάπτους χεῖρας ἐφείω. (I.564-67)

If this [sc. matter] is thus [i.e. as you say], it is probably important to me.
 But sit down quietly and heed my authoritative speech act,
 surely as many gods as there are in Olympus could not give aid to you
 against me approaching nearer, whenever I lay my untouchable/irresistible hands
 upon you.

The use of **mellein**, a probability verb rather than a temporal auxiliary here,⁵² gives the verse a dismissive coloring, emphasizing Zeus' anger and disdain. The imperatives in the subsequent line, **kathēso** and **epipeitheo**, provide a strong climax, unlike in Agamemnon's reply to Akhilleus where the imperatives come early in his speech and are essentially ineffective as commands. The tone of the first three lines of this reply (561-

63) is factual and vaguely threatening. The verbs there are primarily future indicatives, **dunēseai**(562), **eseai**(563) and **estai**(563). The break occurs when Zeus states the simple conditional, “If the matter is as you say, it is probably important to me.” Clear commands and an ominous threat that discounts the effectiveness of all the Olympians follow this offhand statement about the situation. The combination of future tense verbs and imperatives bestows a prophetic certainty upon Zeus’ pronouncements, which in turn strengthens the effectiveness of his subsequent threat. Richard Martin suggests that Zeus, unlike a mortal hero, does not need to prove his boasts and threats: merely speaking the threat is effective. Divinity carries with it the authority of an extralinguistic institution, so that: “...in the language of Zeus, commands, threats and predictions comprise one and the same category.”⁵³ The threat becomes even clearer after the divine mediator of the scene, Hephaistos, intervenes and recounts how Zeus hurled him from heaven when he tried to aid Hera.

Agamemnon, in closing his reply to Akhilleus, repeats his threat from earlier in the argument that he will take away someone’s **geras** as recompense for his own loss.

But now he states that he will take Akhilleus’ prize.

... ἀπειλήσω δέ τοι ᾧδε·
 ὡς ἔμ’ ἀφαιρείται Χρυσηίδα Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
 τὴν μὲν ἐγὼ σὺν νηί τ’ ἐμῆι καὶ ἐμοῖς ἐτάροισιν
 πέμψω· ἐγὼ δέ κ’ ἄγω Βρισηίδα καλλιπάρηον
 αὐτός ἰὼν κλισίηνδε, τεὸν γέρας, ὄφρ’ εὖ εἴδηις
 ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν, στυγέηι δὲ καὶ ἄλλος
 ἴσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι καὶ ὁμοιωθήμεναι ἄντην. (I.181-87)

... and I will threaten you thus:
 since Phoebus Apollo takes away Khryseis from me,
 I will send her with my ship and my companions;
 but I myself, coming to your camp, would lead away
 Briseis of the fair-cheeks, your war-prize, so that you may know well
 how much stronger I am than you, and so that anyone else may hesitate
 to claim that he is equal to me and to liken himself to me face to face.

The repetition of **autos** demonstrates the personal nature of the threat. The purpose clauses that follow provide the audience with Agamemnon's primary motivation. He cannot appear weak in front of the assembled Akhaians and he refuses to allow Akhilleus to think that he is generally superior. Kirk points out that there is an implied contrast between **pherteros**(186) and **karteros**(178).⁵⁴ The physical connotations of **karteros**, "mighty," fit well with Akhilleus' reputation as an eminent warrior.⁵⁵ By the end of his boast, Agamemnon's position becomes clear. He feels threatened and wishes to make an example of Akhilleus. Just as the argument in the Greek camp is about to escalate to bloodshed, with a humiliated Akhilleus attacking the Argive leader, Athena's divine intervention, witnessed only by Akhilleus, curbs his wrath enough to avoid the violence. This divine intervention effectively ends the argument, although after Athena's departure the young Myrmidon continues to insult Agamemnon (I.225-44), as Athena prompted him to do (I.211).

These two arguments within Book I illustrate an important distinction between the divine and human realms in the *Iliad*. The argument in the Greek camp escalates and nearly leads to violence while the divine argument remains calm, with only veiled insults and threats. That Hera effectively communicates her grievances to Zeus can be seen in his first response. He assures her that he will share with her any information that he deems fitting. Yet despite his concessive statements, he asserts his authority with direct commands and somewhat ambiguous threats. Part of his effectiveness derives from the extralinguistic institution represented by divinity.⁵⁶ Akhilleus, perhaps unintentionally, provokes Agamemnon in his first speech of the argument (I.122-129), but at this point he does not actually insult the Argive king. After Agamemnon has lost his temper, which

can be seen in the confused grammar of his first speech (I.131-147), Akhilleus responds with threats and insults (I.149-171). Despite his more composed reply, the Argive king manages the situation very badly, dismissing and belittling Akhilleus and avoiding the immediate problem of recompense (I.173-87). The hierarchy in the human world appears unstable and on the verge of collapse, with the acknowledged leader sending away the most powerful warrior in humiliation and alienating him. The audience witnesses a divine hierarchy, on the other hand, that is stable.

Evidence from elsewhere in the poem corroborates this view of a stable and even static hierarchy among the gods. Zeus and Hera have obviously quarreled before and her resistance to his plans appears several times in the poem as an ongoing divine theme. Although he does threaten her and other gods in the poem, these threats are never realized. Except for the *Iliad*'s almost comical *theomakhia* (XXI.384-514), the only other hint of a violent divine realm, the sort of existence envisioned in the *Theogony*, occurs in allusions to previous events in the world of the gods.⁵⁷ The ever-present nature of violence in the human realm of the *Iliad* thus stands in stark contrast to the situation on Olympos. And Akhilleus, who could have challenged Zeus for mastery of Olympos if the gods had not married Thetis to Peleus, serves as the primary instigator of much of the violence in the poem. By thus avoiding a possibly disastrous succession, Zeus has relegated Akhilleus, his human doppelgänger, to the mortal world. But by securing peace and stability on Olympos in this way, he curses humans with strife. The increasingly stable environment in heaven is thus matched by an increase in violence among the fourth race of men, the heroes. Of this fourth race Hesiod says:

Ζεὺς Κρονίδης ποίησε, δικαιότερον καὶ ἄρειον,
ἀνδρῶν ἠρώων θεῖον γένος, οἷ καλέονται

ἡμίθεοι, προτέρη γενεὴ κατ' ἀπείρονα γαῖαν.
καὶ τοὺς μὲν πόλεμός τε κακὸς καὶ φύλοπις αἰνὴ

.....

... ὤλεσε... (*Opera et Dies* 158-63)⁵⁸

Zeus the son of Kronos made a divine race of heroic men,
better and more just, who are called
demigods, an earlier race upon the boundless earth.
And war and dreadful strife
destroyed them.

CHAPTER 2

COMMANDS

A close examination of the language used in the command-speeches that appear in the *Iliad* provides insight into key themes of power and authority on the divine and human planes. Among the gods Zeus reigns supreme and his authority is rarely and only inconsequentially questioned. He commands with confidence, backing up his orders with threats and reminders of past violence. The human power structures in the poem provide a stark contrast to such a stable divine hierarchy. Both the Trojan and Akhaian forces have inconsistent and ambiguous leadership in that no one leader appears to be completely in control of either group. Of all the mortal characters in the poem, Akhilleus most resembles Zeus in his manner of crafting command-speeches; and as he rises to a preeminent position of authority among the Greeks, he issues commands with increasing frequency. Agamemnon, on the other hand, shows himself to be a weak leader in part because of his inability to fashion effective and appropriate command speeches. Unlike the human leaders in the poem, who lack status, as in Akhilleus' case, or skills, in Agamemnon's, the divine ruler combines the position of authority with the power to enforce it.⁵⁹

The poem, a tale of soldiers and warfare, abounds in command speeches, thus certain ones must be selected based on their significance. By examining character-speech rather than simple narration we accord high value to performance, and so our criteria

involve a consideration of the performative context and effectiveness of the speeches within the world of the poem. Richard Martin's research into speech genres proves especially useful for this purpose. He sets up a dichotomy between the terms **muthos** and **epos**:

“...muthos is, in Homer, a speech-act indicating authority, performed at length, usually in public, with a focus on full attention to every detail. I redefine epos, on the other hand, as an utterance, ideally short, accompanying a physical act, and focusing on message, as perceived by the addressee, rather than on performance as enacted by the speaker.”⁶⁰

He follows his exploration of these two terms with a typology of **muthoi**, in which he posits three subsets, or genres: commands, boast and insult contests, which he calls “flyting”, and recitation of remembered events.⁶¹ The appropriate blending of these speech-genres characterizes a speaker as successful. More specifically, the issuing of effective command speeches is a crucial component of good leadership; their presence reveals a stable hierarchy.

While the narrative at the beginning of VIII does not *introduce* Zeus' address to the assembled gods as a **muthos** speech, it does use this term when describing the reaction of the other gods (28). Moreover, the narrator marks Zeus' speech as effective by depicting the gods as “marveling,” **agassamenoι**, at it because Zeus had spoken powerfully, **kraterōs** (VIII.29). Thus the poem provides its own external audience with the focalization of Zeus' audience.⁶² Martin refers to this speech as an ideal example of a command **muthos**, pointing to both the length and the elaboration of the speech as signs of its authoritativeness.⁶³ He describes the image of the golden chain (VIII.18-27) as a metaphor for the political situation on Olympos, with Zeus at the top of a vertical axis. The command itself is a prohibition addressed to all the assembled gods.

μήτέ τις οὖν θήλεια θεὸς τό γε μήτέ τις ἄρσην

πειράτω διακέρσαι ἐμὸν ἔπος, ἀλλ' ἅμα πάντες
 αἰνεῖτ', ὄφρα τάχιστα τελευτήσω τάδε ἔργα. (VIII.7-9)
 So let no female nor any male god attempt
 to break this word of mine, but all of you together praise it,
 so that I may accomplish these deeds most swiftly.

In the *Iliad* the form **peiratō**, a third person singular present imperative, occurs only here and in Akhilleus' refusal speech to Odysseus (IX.345). The word **diakeirō**, literally “to cut through,” occurs no where else in the *Iliad*. By including **peiratō** as an auxiliary, Zeus gives the impression that his word, **epos**, cannot be hindered; if it could, the simple prohibition **mē diakersatō**, “let no one cut through (i.e. hinder)” would suffice. This choice of words reveals a confident speaker who does not doubt his position of authority. Such self-confidence permeates Zeus' speeches throughout the poem.

The future more vivid conditional that follows strengthens the impression of an unbreakable word. In it Zeus relates the punishment he would mete out to any god he should find transgressing his prohibitive command. As with his chastisement of Hera in Book XV, Zeus uses a threat rich with imagery to encourage his audience to obey him.

ὄν δ' ἂν ἐγὼν ἀπάνευθε θεῶν ἐθέλοντα νοήσω
 ἐλθόντ' ἢ Τρώεσσιν ἀρηγέμεν ἢ Δαναοῖσιν,
 πληγεῖς οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ἐλεύσεται Οὐλύμπόνδε,
 ἢ μιν ἐλὼν ῥίψω ἐς Τάρταρον ἠερόεντα,
 τῆλε μάλ', ἦχι βάθιστον ὑπὸ χθονός ἐστι βέρεθρον,
 ἔνθα σιδήρειαί τε πύλαι καὶ χάλκεος οὐδός,
 τόσσον ἔνερθ' Ἄϊδεω ὅσον οὐρανός ἐστ' ἀπὸ γαίης·
 γνώσεται ἔπειθ', ὅσον εἰμὶ θεῶν κάρτιστος ἀπάντων. (VIII.10-17)

Whoever I notice willingly going apart from the gods
 to give help to either the Trojans or the Danaans,
 he will go (back) to Olympos beaten and disgraced
 or, having grabbed him, I will hurl him into shadowy Tartaros,
 very far off, to where there is the deepest pit beneath the ground;
 there the gates are iron and the threshold bronze,
 as far below Hades as heaven is from the earth;
 and then you all will know by how much I am the most powerful of all the gods.

The image evoked by these lines calls to mind some of the other allusions to violence among the gods. Besides such threats, which are never fulfilled in the poem, only recollections give a context for these violent allusions.⁶⁴ For instance, Zeus reminds Hera of the punishment he inflicted on her because she had caused Herakles to be shipwrecked on Kos (XV.18-30); thus he employs a recollection as an implied threat which only becomes explicit at the end of his speech (XV.31-33).⁶⁵ Here, Zeus does not directly recount a past act of violence. But the allusion is still powerful, especially since the audience has already encountered more specific allusions to past struggles, as when Hephaistos recounted his violent exile from Olympos (I.586-94), and when Akhilleus reminded Thetis of how she had once rescued Zeus from the other gods (I.396-406).

In the speech at the divine assembly of Book VIII, the vivid imagery and multi-layered allusion to violence demonstrate the force of Zeus' verbal authority. But the clearest evidence of the effectiveness of this command speech is the reaction, as mentioned above, of the other gods:

ὥς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα πάντες ἀκὴν ἐγένεντο σιωπῆι
 μῦθον ἀγασσάμενοι· μάλα γὰρ κρατερῶς ἀγόρευσεν. (VIII.28-29)
 Thus he spoke, and they all became quiet with silence
 marveling at his speech; for he spoke most powerfully.

The first of these lines appears again in the Greeks' reaction to Agamemnon's dispirited speech at IX.29-30. There the silence stems from dismay, even disappointment, as seen in Diomedes' response.⁶⁶ Here, however, the general feeling among the gods could be better characterized as respect, as the first two lines of Athena's reply reveal.

ὦ πάτερ ἡμέτερε Κρονίδη, ὕπατε κρειόντων,
 εἶ νυ καὶ ἡμεῖς ἴδμεν ὅ τοι σθένος οὐκ ἐπιεικτόν· (VIII.31-32)
 O our Kronian father, most high of the mighty ones,
 we know full well that your strength is irresistible.

Athena certainly intends to convey deference to Zeus. So also at line 35, when she says, **all' ētoi polemou men aphexometh', ei su keleueis**, “but indeed we will hold back from war, if you order it,” she demonstrates not only the effectiveness of this speech, but of Zeus’ speeches in general. She also reveals the presence of a generally acknowledged hierarchy among the gods, based upon their subservience to and respect for Zeus’ authority.

Athena appears to question that authority, however when she states that she and the other pro-Akhaian gods will recommend a plan to the Greeks, thus implying that she wants to be exempted from his prohibition against helping either side.⁶⁷ Zeus replies enigmatically:

θάρσει, Τριτογένεια, φίλον τέκος· οὐ νύ τι θύμῳι
 πρόφρονι μυθέομαι, ἐθέλω δέ τοι ἥπιος εἶναι. (VIII.39-40)
 Take heart, Tritogeneia, my dear child; it is not that I make this speech
 with an earnest mind at all, but rather, I wish to be conciliatory to you.

After his authoritative command to the assembled gods, Zeus’ sudden change of heart seems rather strange. He seems to be calling into question the jurisdiction of his own words. Athena’s subsequent disobedience is less surprising in light of her father’s apparent vacillation in tone. When Athena finally takes up arms and convinces Hera to aid her in supporting the Akhaians, in blatant violation of her father’s original charge, Zeus immediately sends Iris to rein in the rebellious goddesses with a stern warning.

The later conversation between Hera and Zeus, at the beginning of Book XV, marks a significant turning point in the ongoing drama among the Olympians. When Zeus awakens from the slumber that Hera had Sleep cast upon him, he immediately sees the Greeks and Poseidon routing the Trojans and the grim plight of Hektor, who is severely wounded (XV.1-6). He pities the Trojan leader and then turns toward Hera to

vent his rage. After directly threatening her (14-17) and reminding her of a previous punishment for tormenting Herakles (18-30), he states that he will recount this painful story to her again whenever she tries to disobey him (31-33).⁶⁸ She becomes frightened, **rhigēsen** (34), and swears by an elaborate oath (36-40) that Poseidon is harming the Trojans and Hektor of his own volition and not at her behest (41-44). Furthermore, she states that she would advise the sea-god to follow Zeus' commands, whatever they might be (45-46).⁶⁹ Here the quarrel between the king of the gods and his wife, an important element of the plot, reaches a climax. Yet Zeus couches his orders to Hera in terms that assume a certain unanimity between them. And as can be seen from the use of conditionals in his **muthos**, he bases his authority to give her orders upon this alleged concord.

The specificity of Zeus' **muthos** to Hera after her oath of loyalty demonstrates that he is both a capable speaker and a strong leader. He gives detailed instructions and strengthens his appeal by incorporating another speech genre into his command; he inserts a prediction that is meant to console his wife. His instructions for Hera are specific and clear. She is to act as an intermediary, carrying summonses to both Iris and Apollo. And then they are to descend to earth and carry out his ultimate orders, Iris by recalling Poseidon, Apollo by reviving Hektor. So this speech is not a typical "instruction" to a messenger, even though Zeus tells Hera, the potential envoy, the gist of the messages that the two lesser gods will be carrying.⁷⁰ The poem characterizes Zeus' command speech with the opening narrative phrase **epea pteroenta prosēuda** (XV.48), "he spoke forth winged words." Martin proposes that this introduction to character-speech serves the narrative function of labeling the subsequent words as a particular type

of speech-act he calls a directive. This pragmatic form of speech is intended to elicit a particular action from the speaker's audience, which is usually just one or two individuals. Directives need not contain direct imperatives; but their intended purpose is to prompt the listener to action.⁷¹ Thus the speeches that follow this formulaic tag function largely as the command **muthoi** do.

The directive that Zeus issues to Hera at the beginning of XV begins and ends with predictions, both of them contingent upon Hera's cooperation. The initial one concerns Hera and Poseidon:

εἰ μὲν δὴ σύ γ' ἔπειτα, βοῶπι πότνια Ἥρη,
ἴσον ἐμοὶ φρονέουσα μετ' ἀθανάτοισι καθίζοις,
τῷ κε Ποσειδάων γε, καὶ εἰ μάλα βούλεται ἄλλητι,
αἶψα μεταστρέψει νόον μετὰ σὸν καὶ ἐμὸν κῆρ. (XV.49-52)
If, ox-eyed queenly Hera, you really were to sit
among the immortals hereafter, thinking in line with me,
then Poseidon, at least, even if he plans very differently [sc. from us],
would immediately change his mind into line with your heart and mine.

Thus unity among the divine hierarchy's top echelon, which consists of Zeus, Hera and Poseidon, will come into being only if Hera joins with Zeus' side in counsel.⁷² By putting his prediction in a future less vivid condition, the supreme god makes explicit the tenuous nature of their power dynamic and his own surprise at Hera's apparent acquiescence. He thus acknowledges that the concord upon which he bases his commands is not a given. Wakker points to the use of the optative mood in the **ei**-clause as proof that "he expresses some degree of disbelief about Hera's promise."⁷³ Zeus then utters another conditional; his actual commands, which take the form of direct imperatives, appear in the apodosis:

αλλ' εἰ δὴ ῥ' ἔτεόν γε καὶ ἀτρεκέως ἀγορεύεις,
ἔρχεο νῦν μετὰ φῦλα θεῶν, καὶ δεῦρο κάλεσσον
Ἴρην τ' ἐλθέμεναι καὶ Ἀπόλλωνα κλυτότοξον . . . (XV.53-55)
But if you are really speaking truthfully and unwaveringly,

go now amongst the tribes of gods, and summon
Iris and Apollo, famed for his bow, to come here . . .

This conditional, in contrast to the one just preceding, contains a present indicative in the protasis and imperatives in the apodosis, giving it a sense of greater immediacy.

According to Wakker this is one of only three Homeric passages in which both **dē** and **ara** occur but **ara** is not connected to an established fact.⁷⁴ In the evolution of the Greek language from Homeric to classical times, the modal particle **dē** became increasingly common in indicative **ei** clauses where it indicated some level of scepticism. The presence of **dē rh'** and the adverbs **eteon ge** and **atrekeōs** demonstrate Zeus' "strong doubts about Hera's sincerity."⁷⁵ Rather than asking her for further assurances and then giving her orders, Zeus appears to accept her oath, albeit with reservations.⁷⁶ His assumption of Hera's truthfulness, despite the reservations that he voices, may also indicate a self-assured indifference on his part, a self-confidence characteristic of Zeus. In the apodosis, the emphatic position of **erkheo nun**, "go now," and **kalesson**, "summon," suggest that Hera's obedience to Zeus' commands is more important than her truthfulness.

The formulaic phrase that Zeus uses, **meta phula theōn**, which occurs three times in the *Iliad*, all in XV, and three times in the *Hymn to Demeter* (322, 443, and 461), suggests a thematic connection between Hera, who stands apart from Zeus, and Demeter who fled Olympos thereby sabotaging the cosmic order. Demeter's withdrawal from Olympos happened before the divine hierarchy had reached the level of stability evident in the *Iliad*; the occurrence of the phrase here in connection to Hera hints at a possible narrative line that would include a similar disruption of the cosmic order. While such a disruption does not take place on the divine plane, the withdrawal of Akhilleus on the

mortal plane does lead to a significant disruption in the Greek army. The thematic similarities between Demeter in the *Homeric Hymn* and Akhilleus in the *Iliad* have been noted before.⁷⁷ Some have also compared Hera and Akhilleus, primarily by pointing to their characteristic wrath.⁷⁸ While Zeus persuades Hera to return to the “tribes of the gods” and thus control her wrath, her mortal counterpart, Akhilleus, is not successfully persuaded by Agamemnon or any other Greek soldier. Only vengeance, a redirection of his wrath, compels him to return to the fighting.

In his directive to Hera, Zeus’ elaboration of the missions he has planned for Iris and Apollo adds to the persuasive power of the speech. And while his explanation may indicate confidence in Hera’s loyalty, the fact that he did not give *her* the ultimate orders to convey to Poseidon could indicate distrust on his part.⁷⁹ In his explanation he begins with the specific near future, his plans for Iris and Apollo, and only later refers to the events of a more distant time, the outcome of the war:

ὄφρ’ ἢ μὲν μετὰ λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων
 ἔλθῃ καὶ εἴπησι Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι
 παυσάμενον πολέμοιο τὰ ἄπρὸς δῶμαθ’ ἰκέσθαι,
 Ἔκτορα δ’ ὀτρύνῃσι μάχην ἔξ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
 αὐτίς δ’ ἐμπνεύσῃσι μένος, λελάθῃ δ’ ὀδυνάων
 αἰὲν μιν τεύρουσι κατὰ φρένας . . . (XV.56-61)

. . . so that she may go amongst the host of bronze-armored Akhaians
 and tell lord Poseidon to go home, having ceased from war,
 and so that Phoebus Apollo may drive Hektor into battle
 and breathe force into him again, and straightway cause him to forget
 the pains which now afflict him in the lungs.

Zeus’ explanation, strictly speaking, is not necessary; but it serves two purposes. As a narrative device it prepares the audience for events to come by preannouncing them.

Within the plot its function is to placate the previously hostile goddess: by sharing his current plans with her, Zeus directly contradicts Hera’s earlier statement that he always

keeps his plans secret (I.541-43). This gesture softens the abruptness of the direct imperatives in line 54. These lines and the subsequent prediction for the course of the war have posed problems to readers of the *Iliad* since antiquity, in part because they are not essential to the flow of the narrative. Aristarchus and Aristophanes of Byzantium both athetized lines 56-77, citing needless repetition (**ouk anankaiōs palillogētai** Erbse IV: 19.) and the inaccuracy of the predictions. But the prophecy and the explanation of his plans win Hera over. Zeus first uses threats (14-33) as a stick, but as a carrot he confides in his wife whose obedience and support illustrate how persuasive he is.

During Hera's delivery of Zeus' instructions to Olympos, her apparent transformation into a loyal messenger depicts the divine hierarchy as intact. Ares' nearly disastrous outburst adds a small element of doubt, but this is offset by his marginal position among the gods and by the sentiments of Hera and Athena, two divinities of far greater importance.⁸⁰ Instead of immediately passing along Zeus' message to Iris and Apollo, Hera first puts off Themis' question concerning Zeus.⁸¹ Significantly, Hera uses the same words (**mē tauta dieireo** 93) that Zeus himself uses in their quarrel at I.550, a sign perhaps that she is indeed "thinking in line" (**ison phroneousa**) with her husband. She then bewails the foolishness of all the gods who oppose him, including herself (104-109). At that point, after Ares learns of his mortal son's death and nearly descends to earth against Zeus' prohibition, Hera summons Iris and Apollo into a private conference where she tells them to go to Zeus on Mt. Ida (146). She adds that whenever they arrive there they should do whatever he tells them.⁸² The blanket statement seems surprising in light of Hera's earlier intransigent opposition to her husband's wishes.⁸³ Her newfound allegiance prepares the audience for a partial rapprochement between the pro-Akhaian

and pro-Trojan gods.⁸⁴ Indeed, in its cosmological significance the mission that Zeus has planned for Iris — to give Poseidon the ‘cease and desist’ order — far surpasses the directive to Apollo. With Hera now amenable, if not completely submissive, to the will of Zeus, only Poseidon poses a meaningful threat to the established order. Thus Iris’ task is crucial indeed.

Ironically, it is after Hera’s trick (**dolos**) in XIV that Zeus begins to appear reconciled with the opposing deities. The narrator presents the god’s focalization at XV.155-6: “he was not angered at heart (**thumos**) seeing that the two gods (Iris and Apollo) swiftly obeyed the words of his beloved bedmate.”⁸⁵ Here the poem hints at the cooperation between the father of gods and men and his wife. Moreover, the message that he gives Iris to take to Poseidon, though stern and demanding, contains concessive elements. Most importantly, by not demanding that Poseidon return to Olympos, he allows the sea-god to save face before the other gods. As with his command speech to Hera, the narrator introduces his orders to Iris with the phrase, “he addressed winged words to her” (157) marking it as an authoritative speech-act that is intended to elicit a concrete response from his audience. His speech begins abruptly with emphatic imperatives:

βάσκ’ ἴθι, Ἴρι ταχεῖα, Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι
 πάντα τάδ’ ἀγγεῖλαι, μηδὲ ψευδάγγελος εἶναι.
 παυσάμενόν μιν ἄνωχθι μάχης ἠδὲ πτολέμοιο
 ἔρχεσθαι μετὰ φύλα θεῶν, ἢ εἰς ἄλλα δῖαν. (XV.158-61)

Now go, swift Iris, announce all these following things
 to lord Poseidon, and do not be a false messenger.
 Bid him to cease from battle and war
 and to go among the tribes of the gods, or into the divine/shining sea.

By sending Iris to Poseidon as an intermediary, Zeus avoids a confrontation of potentially cataclysmic proportions. Moreover, by giving him a choice of places to go, Zeus avoids

forcing him to return to the divine counsel in disgrace. If Zeus antagonizes Poseidon too much, fraternal strife could lead to a worst-case scenario, a total breakdown of the divine order. Due to the extremely sensitive nature of the message it seems that the Homeric **oidos** would want to portray Zeus' concern with its precise wording. Indeed the use of the term **pseudangelos**, "false messenger," a *hapax legomenon* in Homeric poetry, demonstrates just how concerned Zeus is that Iris convey the message truthfully and accurately; she fails to do this, for she later claims to Poseidon that Zeus has actually threatened to attack him on the battlefield. She does accurately relate the actual command, which appears in lines 160-1. Zeus offers the sea-god a choice of actions, though, either to go amongst the gods, in other words back to Olympos, or to dive into the sea, his native element, further diffusing the possible tension.

The pattern in Zeus' directive to Poseidon (XV.158-67) differs from the one in his command to Hera earlier in the scene (XV.14-77). That scene began with an elaborate threat, which he reinforced by recollecting a specific punishment he had previously dealt out to Hera (XV.14-33). Only then did he issue his orders, following up with prophetic statements that essentially reassured the queen of the gods by foretelling the fall of Troy (XV.49-77). In his directive to Poseidon, however, Zeus first issues clear commands (XV.160f.) and then a threat. Only the clear concession to his addressee remains. He also does not remind Poseidon of past violence, as he did with Hera, but instead, the king of the gods simply claims that his authority is both legitimate and backed up by force:

εἰ δέ μοι οὐκ ἐπέεσσ' ἐπιπέισεται, ἀλλ' ἀλογήσει,
 φραζέσθω δῆπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν,
 μή μ' οὐδὲ κρατερός περ ἐὼν ἐπιόντα ταλάσσηι
 μείναι, ἐπεὶ ἐό φημι βίηι πολὺν φέρτερος εἶναι
 καὶ γενεῇι πρότερος. τοῦ δ' οὐκ ὄθεται φίλον ἦτορ
 ἴσον ἐμοὶ φάσθαι, τόν τε στυγέουσι καὶ ἄλλοι. (XV.162-7)

If he will not obey my words, but disregards them,
 let him take thought in his mind and his spirit
 lest he not have the resolve, strong though he is, to withstand
 me attacking, since I claim to be far more powerful in force than him
 and elder by birth. But his own heart does not shrink from
 claiming to be equal to me, which even the others hesitate to do.

Once again, in order to soften the peremptory tone of his command, Zeus uses a concessive element, here **krateros per eōn**, “though being strong.”⁸⁶ Pierre Chantraine has argued that while the terms **krateros** and **pherteros** can both relate to physical force, the meaning of **pherteros** is often rather vague. He specifies that the latter word can connote superiority in a social hierarchy; but the root of **krateros**, **kratos**, primarily denotes brute force.⁸⁷ Such an interpretation of the two terms accords well with this passage. For Zeus may concede that Poseidon would be a difficult opponent in a contest of force, but by stating that he is **polu pherteros**, “much superior,” the king of the gods chooses suitably ambiguous language which implies that he is superior in more ways than one.

The knowledge that Zeus displays in this speech proves to be virtually prophetic, since Poseidon not only tries to disregard the orders but also claims to be Zeus’ equal (XV.185-99). And while Zeus asserts his superiority primarily in terms of brute force and then of legitimate seniority, elsewhere he relies almost entirely on his superior might. With gods such as Hera or Ares, an explicit appeal to seniority is unnecessary and the threat of brute force suffices. Occasionally Zeus displays superior knowledge concerning the workings of fate, and perhaps here he implies such knowledge. The connection between seniority and superior knowledge appears explicitly at XIX.219 and XXI.440.⁸⁸ The sky-god’s prophetic statements reflect his divine understanding, and remind the audience that, along with the wrath of Akhilleus, the plan of Zeus (**boulē Dios**) is a

central theme of the poem. This reminder of the **Dios boulē** further validates the legitimacy of Zeus' authority.

A startling innovation in the message Iris delivers to Poseidon seems to provoke him, nearly causing a rupture in the cosmic order that Zeus is trying to solidify. When she delivers the message, she alters it beyond the simple changes required for the delivery of a message not given to the messenger verbatim. When he spoke to Iris, he did not give her the *ipsissima verba* intended for the sea-god, but spoke of him in the third person; she must change third person verbs to second person verbs and third person pronouns to second. But she also tells Poseidon that Zeus threatens a direct confrontation with him in the Troad,⁸⁹ a threat that the sky-god never actually made.

ἀγγελίην τινά τοι, γαίηοχε Κυανοχαῖτα,
ἦλθον δεῦρο φέρουσα παραὶ Διὸς αἰγίοχοιο.
παυσάμενόν σ' ἐκέλευσε μάχης ἠδὲ πτολέμοιο
ἔρχεσθαι μετὰ φῦλα θεῶν, ἢ' εἰς ἄλλα δῖαν.
εἰ δέ οἱ οὐκ ἐπέεσσ' ἐπιπέισσαι, ἀλλ' ἀλογήσεις,
ἠπεῖλει καὶ κείνος ἐναντίβιον πτολεμίζων
ἐνθάδ' ἐλεύσεσθαι· σὲ δ' ὑπεξαλέασθαι ἀνώγει
χειῖρας, ἐπεὶ σεό φησι βίηι πολὺν φέρτερος εἶναι
καὶ γενεῆι πρότερος. σὸν δ' οὐκ ὄθεται φίλον ἦτορ
ἴσόν οἱ φάσθαι, τόν τε στυγέουσι καὶ ἄλλοι. (XV.172-83)

Bearing a certain message to you, earthshaking Dark-Haired Lord,
I have come here from aegis-bearing Zeus.

He ordered that you cease from war and battle,
and go among the tribes of the gods or into the divine sea.

If you do not obey his words, but disregard them,
that one even threatens that he will come to this place to make war;
and he urges that you avoid his hands, since he claims
to be far more powerful in might than you and elder by birth.

But your own heart does not shrink from claiming to be equal
to him, which even the others hesitate to do.

The context requires the alteration of **min anōkhthi** (XV.160), “command him,” to **s' ekeleue** (XV.176), “he ordered that you. . .” By claiming at XV.179 that Zeus threatens

to come to the Troad and make war on Poseidon, Iris is at least exaggerating, if not indeed fabricating. Janko explains that Iris is attempting to make explicit the threat implied in **epionta** (XV.164), “approaching, attacking.” The verb **epeimi** literally means “approach.” In this context and many others the speaker implies a violent approach, in other words an attack.⁹⁰ But neither the specific deictic element **entha**, “thither,” nor any equivalent occurs in Zeus’ speech to Iris; thus there is no match for Iris’ **enthade** (180). And given Zeus’ reluctance to involve himself directly in the war, the prospect of him attacking Poseidon on the plains outside of Troy seems very unlikely. Perhaps by retorting angrily, Poseidon is calling Iris’ bluff. She could have invented the specific threat, hoping that it would intimidate the sea-god into quick submission. But his reaction shows that the threat of a direct confrontation on the earth, one of the two areas common to all gods (XV.193), is a direct affront to his dignity as one of children of Kronos and Rhea.

If this drastic change in Zeus’ orders is Iris’ attempt to convince Poseidon, it does not work. Indeed his reaction poses the possibility of a true **theomakhia**, a battle of the same proportions as that related in the Hesiodic *Theogony*.

ὦ πόποι, ἦ ῥ’ ἀγαθός περ ἐὼν ὑπέροπλον ἔειπεν,
εἴ μ’ ὁμότιμον ἐόντα βίηι ἀέκοντα καθέξει. (XV.185-86)

Alas, he, though noble, has spoken arrogantly
if he will restrain me, though I am of equal honor, against my will and with force.

Poseidon goes on to state that the three sons of Kronos divided the heavens, seas and underworld among themselves, leaving the earth and Olympos as common ground (**xunē**) (187-93). He then issues an angry command for Iris to relay to Zeus:

τὼ ῥα καὶ οὐ τι Διὸς βέομαι φρεσίν, ἀλλὰ ἔκηλος
καὶ κρατερός περ ἐὼν μενέτω τριτάτη ἐνὶ μοίρῃ.
χερσὶ δὲ μή τί με πάγχυ κακὸν ὡς δειδισσέσθω·
θυγατέρεσσιν γάρ τε καὶ υἰάσι κέρδιον εἶη

ἐκπάγλοις ἐπέεσσιν ἐνισσέμεν, οὐς τέκεν αὐτός,
οἷ ἔθεν ὀτρύνοντος ἀκούσονται καὶ ἀνάγκη. (194-99)

Therefore, you know, I will not live in accordance with Zeus' will and thoughts, but undisturbed and strong though he is, let him remain in his third allotment. And let him not frighten me thus with his hands, in any evil way whatsoever; for it would be more profitable for him to scold his sons and daughters, whom he himself begot, with vehement words, they who indeed by necessity will listen to him as he urges.

Poseidon avoids sounding peremptory by utilizing **menetō**, a third person imperative, rather than **anōkhthi** (bid/command) plus an infinitive, as Zeus had used (160f.). Third person imperatives can be used both to command absent individuals and to invoke gods.⁹¹ Yet, as Janko points out, the sea-god's logic is flawed: if the sky-god must remain in his portion, then why may the sea-god act in the common space?⁹² Indeed, by commanding Zeus in turn, and by restricting his right to issue certain commands, Poseidon challenges the established hierarchy. This is the most severe instance of any such challenge, since it lacks the comic elements inherent in most of the marital squabbles between Zeus and Hera.⁹³

In her response to Poseidon's hasty commands Iris proves her mettle as a judicious messenger. By asking a rhetorical question rather than issuing an order or advising a retraction, she avoids giving the impression that she has the authority to command the sea-god:⁹⁴

οὕτω γὰρ δὴ τοι, γαιήοχε Κυανοχαίτα,
τόνδε φέρω Διὶ μῦθον ἀπηνέα τε κρατερόν τε,
ἦ τι μεταστρέψεις; στρεπταὶ μὲν τε φρένες ἐσθλῶν.
οἶσθ' ὡς πρεσβυτέροισιν Ἐρινύες αἰὲν ἔπονται. (XV.201-4)

So, earth-embracing Lord of the Dark Hair, shall I really bear this unyielding and powerful speech to Zeus, or will you change your mind at all? The minds of the noble are pliant. You know that the Furies always attend the elder-born.

Poseidon himself praises Iris for her diplomacy, calling her a “messenger who knows what is proper” (**angelos aisima eidēi**) and who has spoken “according to the proper

measure” (**kata moiran**). Nevertheless, he characterizes Zeus’ message as purposefully provocative (209-11). And though Iris has diffused the fraternal tension, she does not completely win Poseidon over to Zeus’ side. For he warns that should Zeus decide to spare Troy, the pro-Akhaian gods will have incurable anger (**anēkestos kholos**) towards him. And despite Iris’ tact, Poseidon’s outburst (185-99) and the lingering resentment could easily be a result of her misrepresentation of Zeus’ words.⁹⁵

Zeus’ command to Poseidon is effective because of his appeal to might and seniority (**biē** and **proteros geneēi**).⁹⁶ And despite Aristarchus’ point that Zeus’ appeal to rank at XV.166 suits an insecure leader such as Agamemnon more than the king of the gods, his use of such an argument differs greatly from any human’s. The divine hierarchy, as Janko points out, combines rank and prowess in one person, in contrast to the tragic disparity between Agamemnon’s status as **basileus** and his mediocrity as a leader.⁹⁷ Indeed, the self-assurance that permeates Zeus’ edicts both reflects and serves as the basis for the stability of the divine order. Agamemnon’s ineffectiveness and inadequacy are evident in many passages in which he attempts to command the Greek troops.⁹⁸ Thus, although there are superficial similarities between the divine and human kings, the difference in their effectiveness as leaders becomes more and more pronounced as the poem progresses and as Akhilleus becomes more dominant.

Agamemnon’s poor handling of his disagreement with Akhilleus best illustrates his weakness as leader. His attempt to reconcile the young warrior by sending an embassy — a plan initially suggested by Nestor, not the Mycenaean king — only highlights this inability. In the catalogue of gifts, which he recites to the prospective

embassy, Agamemnon ends with an arrogant command that Akhilleus should submit to him.

δηθήτω — Ἄϊδης τοι ἀμείλιχος ἢδ' ἀδάμαστος·
 τούνεκα καί τε βροτοῖσι θεῶν ἔχθιστος ἀπάντων —
 καί μοι ὑποστήτω, ὅσσον βασιλεύτερός εἰμι
 ἢδ' ὅσσον γενεῇ προγενέστερος εὐχομαι εἶναι. (IX.158-61)
 Let him [sc. Akhilleus] be subdued — indeed Hades is implacable and
 unconquerable;
 and because of this he is the most hated of all the gods even to mortals —
 and let him admit to me how much more kingly I am
 and how much older I claim to be by birth.

Odysseus, the cunning orator,⁹⁹ omits these clearly inflammatory commands, which are completely unsuited to a purportedly conciliatory speech. The admission that Agamemnon demands from Akhilleus recalls language from their initial confrontation (I.185-7).¹⁰⁰ His boast in that argument nearly provoked Akhilleus into killing him on the spot; only Athena's intervention halted him. In that quarrel he also expressed displeasure with Akhilleus for claiming to be equal to him (187). The word **stugeō** appears both in that passage and in Zeus' message to Poseidon (XV.167). Agamemnon uses this incendiary language even though he does not have the power to actualize his boasts. In contrast, when Zeus says such things he does not seem boastful, but simply matter-of-fact. Here at the outset of the crucial embassy, Agamemnon shows that he did not learn from his earlier mistake by once again employing his characteristic swaggering speech in an inappropriate context.

Agamemnon's use of flyting at the wrong time characterizes his ineffective style of speaking, which in turn paints him as a weak leader.¹⁰¹ Examples of such ineffective commands abound. In his exhortations to the troops in IV, Agamemnon uses **neikos** language when urging Odysseus and the Athenian Menesthius toward the frontlines. The

narrator introduces his speech with the “winged words” label, thus characterizing it as a directive.¹⁰² The term Agamemnon applies to Odysseus, **kerdaleophron**, first appeared in Akhilleus’ rebuke to the Argive king at I.149. Thus he essentially recycles an insult, which was fittingly used against him, in a context that does not merit its use;¹⁰³ for the insulting form of address that he uses is totally inappropriate in an exhortation.¹⁰⁴

Odysseus’ reaction to the demeaning speech highlights Agamemnon’s ineptitude. Not only is the formulaic phrase that introduces the reply (**ton d’ ar’ hupodra idōn**)¹⁰⁵

characteristic of heated and angry speech, but Odysseus’ words themselves demonstrate his shock and anger at such ill-considered language:

Ἄτρείδη, ποῖόν σε ἔπος φύγεν ἕρκος ὀδόντων;
 πῶς δὴ φῆις πολέμοιο μεθιέμεν; ὀππότε’ Ἀχαιοί
 Τρωσὶν ἔφ’ ἵπποδάμοισιν ἐγείρομεν ὄξυν ἄρηα,
 ὄψεαι, ἦν ἐθέλησθα καὶ αἴ κέν τοι τὰ μεμήληι,
 Τηλεμάχοιο φίλον πατέρα προμάχοισι μιγέντα
 Τρώων ἵπποδάμων· σὺ δὲ ταῦτ’ ἀνεμώλια βάζεις. (350-55)
 Son of Atreus, what sort of word escaped the barrier of your teeth?
 How do you say that we shirk [from] war? Whenever the Akhaians
 rouse sharp war against the horse-breaking Trojans,
 you will see, if you wish and if these things concern you,
 the dear father of Telemakhos mixing with the vanguard
 of the horse-breaking Trojans; you are saying windy/baseless things.

Facing this rebuke, Agamemnon tries to retract his jibe, saying that he does not reproach him (**oute se neikeiō**). Yet such incompetent commands characterize him as a weak leader.

Even though Agamemnon lacks the ability to speak persuasively and effectively, he possesses the status of commander-in-chief; Priam lacks this status. A council of elders holds real power in Troy; and factions appear to exist as well. The poem alludes to how Paris, who was hated by many Trojans, manages to keep Helen against the wishes of those who would like to avoid war and give her back: he held out the promise of gold.¹⁰⁶

The revelation of Paris' bribery makes it clear that no single Trojan controls the war policy. Unlike Agamemnon, upon whom the other Akhaian leaders rely for direction and final decisions, Priam seems to be a leader in semi-retirement, or perhaps simply a figurehead: his position consists of prestige more than authority. Only the conversation between Akhilleus and Priam at the end of the poem provides the audience with good evidence of Priam's speaking ability. And there, as in his plea with Hektor to return into the city (XXII.38-76), Priam's speech strikes the reader as a mournful supplication rather than a kingly command.

More so than any other mortal character Akhilleus appears to have the prowess to match his rank. The other warriors, both Greek and Trojan, regularly refer to his expert fighting ability. And he himself proves his ability as a speaker, the other component of a Homeric hero's excellence. Even while absent from the fighting he demonstrates his ability to command his men effectively. At the beginning of the sixteenth book of the *Iliad* Akhilleus grants Patroklos' request that he be allowed to lead the Myrmidons into the fighting, and thereby take Akhilleus' place as their commander on the battlefield. In a lengthy speech, the Myrmidon prince reminds his companion of his reasons for refraining from the conflict (49-59). Because of Patroklos' pleas, however, he agrees to relent somewhat: he allows his men to join the fray, but he himself continues to abstain from the fighting. He hints at this partial change of heart when he says that they should let bygones be bygones and explains that he was planning to relent anyway when the battle reached their camp (60-3). He then bids Patroklos arm and lead the Myrmidons into battle:

τύνη δ' ὥμοιιν μὲν ἐμὰ κλυτὰ τεύχεα δῶθι,
 ἄρχε δὲ Μυρμιδόνεσσι φιλοπτολέμοισι μάχεσθαι. . . (XVI.64-5)

Therefore don my glorious gear upon your shoulders
and lead the battle-loving Myrmidons to make war . . .

These two commands begin the second section in Akhilleus' overall speech (XVI.49-100).¹⁰⁷ He describes the current situation, saying that the Trojans have pushed the Akhaians right up to the shore (66-70). Then he explains why this was possible: he is absent, Diomedes does not suffice, and the commander-in-chief, Agamemnon, is silent (71-77). Akhilleus again describes the current situation, this time focusing on the Trojans' tumultuous gains on the battlefield (77-79).

Akhilleus' elaboration, in which he expresses his concern for the Greek ships, reveals his primary motivation for giving way to his comrade's impassioned pleas: friendship. The orders that he issues to Patroklos combine two related themes, **loigon amunōn**, "warding off destruction," and **philos nostos**, "the dear homecoming."

ἀλλὰ καὶ ὧς, Πάτροκλε, νεῶν ἀπὸ λοιγὸν ἀμύνων
ἔμπεσ' ἐπικρατέως, μὴ δὴ πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο
νῆας ἐνιπρήσωσι, φίλον δ' ἀπὸ νόστον ἔλωνται. (XVI.80-82)

But also, Patroklos, warding off destruction from the ships
attack most powerfully, lest they [sc. Trojans] destroy
the ships with blazing fire, and take away our dear homecoming.

The formulaic phrase, **loigon amunai**, "to ward off destruction," occurs often in connection with Akhilleus, as at I.341, XVIII.450, and XXIV.489.¹⁰⁸ Here Akhilleus makes the formula more specific, bidding his companion to ward off destruction *from the ships*. The Greek ships are the vehicle for the return, or **nostos**, of the Greek warriors, an important epic theme.¹⁰⁹ In a speech that is central to the *Iliad*, Akhilleus explains that the only worthy alternative to imperishable fame, **kleos aphthiton**, is a **nostos** followed by a long life and swift death (IX. 410-16). By expressing a desire to save the ships while personally avoiding battle, the young Myrmidon leader seems to continue to hold out hope for the less glorious alternative.

The specificity of Akhilleus' command speech to his friend and surrogate points to his power as a heroic speaker. He could simply express his willingness to let Patroklos lead their men into battle. The flow of the narrative only requires that Patroklos be given permission to replace his friend as commander in the field. But instead of ending his speech with these commands, Akhilleus elaborates in a ring composition that forms the third and final part of his speech to Patroklos: he gives detailed instructions of how his friend should proceed as the provisional leader of the Myrmidons.¹¹⁰ First he introduces the results he hopes will occur with a striking command to pay attention:

πείθεο δ', ὥς τοι ἐγὼ μύθου τέλος ἐν φρεσὶ θείω,
 ὡς ἄν μοι τιμὴν μεγάλην καὶ κῦδος ἄρῃαι
 πρὸς πάντων Δαναῶν, ἀτὰρ οἱ περικαλλέα κούρην
 ἄψ ἀπονάσσωσιν, ποτὶ δ' ἀγλαὰ δῶρα πόρωσιν. (XVI.83-6)

But pay heed, so that I may place the goal [point] of my speech in your mind,
 so that you might win great honor and renown for me
 from all the Danaans, but that they might give back
 the very beautiful maiden, and give glorious gifts in addition.

Here, Akhilleus expresses desire for gifts and honor from the Greeks, both of which he has previously rejected (IX.378-420, especially 406-9). Even in ancient times readers of the *Iliad* sensed something questionable about this apparent change of heart.¹¹¹ Janko's argument, that anyone in a heroic society seeking glory must have recognition from his fellows, seems simplistic, especially considering Akhilleus' new insights into the society that Homeric poetry represents.¹¹² Akhilleus has expressed a preference for life over heroic glory and **geraa**, war-prizes (IX.406-9). During the embassy only friendship seems to keep him from leaving the Greek camp and sailing home (IX.624-55, especially 629-32).

Akhilleus immediately returns to the theme of the ships, which represent the collective Akhaian **nostos**. His interest in that homecoming highlights his ties of friendship with the Greeks:

ἐκ νηῶν ἐλάσας ἰέναι πάλιν· εἰ δέ κεν αὖ τοι
 δῶνι κῦδος ἀρέσθαι ἐρίγδουπος πόσις Ἴηρης,
 μὴ σὺ γ' ἄνευθεν ἐμεῖο λιλαίεσθαι πολεμίζειν
 Τρῶσιν φιλοπτολέμοισιν· ἀτιμότερον δέ με θήσεις· (XVI.87-90)
 Drive [sc. them] to go back from the ships; but if the loud-thundering
 mate of Hera should grant that you achieve glory,
 do not be eager to make war apart from me with the battle-loving Trojans;
 for you will make me more dishonored.¹¹³

Akhilleus tells Patroklos not to accept **kudos**, “honor, renown,” from Zeus on his own. The apodosis of the conditional, “Do not be eager to make war apart from me with the Trojans,” does not necessarily reveal a hope of gaining glory himself, as **atimoteron . . . me thēseis**, “you will make me less honored,” seems to imply. Instead it shows his desire to gain glory with his companion. He reinforces this sentiment at the end of the speech with the impossible wish that he and Patroklos sack Troy on their own.¹¹⁴ His

final command to Patroklos in this speech includes this prophetic warning:

μηδ' ἐπαγαλλόμενος πολέμῳ καὶ δηϊοτήτι
 Τρῶας ἐναϊρόμενος προτὶ Ἴλιον ἡγεμονεύειν,
 μή τις ἀπ' Οὐλυμποιο θεῶν αἰειγενετῶν
 ἐμβήηι - μάλα τοὺς γε φιλεῖ ἐκάεργος Ἀπόλλων-
 ἀλλὰ πάλιν τρωπᾶσθαι, ἐπὴν φάος ἐν νήεσσιν
 θήηις, τοὺς δέ τ' ἐᾶν πεδίον κάτα δηριάσθαι. (XVI.91-96)
 Do not lead the way right up to Troy, exulting in war and battle
 and despoiling Trojans,
 lest some one of the eternal gods from Olympos
 should intervene — the far-worker Apollo especially loves them [Trojans] —
 but turn back, whenever you have brought the light of salvation
 among the ships, and allow them to struggle all along the plain.

Although the prophetic allusion to Apollo is brief, its specificity is striking. As Martin points out, Zeus' commands and threats often contain predictive elements.¹¹⁵ Already at

XV.64ff Zeus used a prophecy to strengthen the persuasive power of his command to Hera. Here Akhilleus uses a prophetic statement, albeit only in passing, to persuade Patroklos to obey his commands. Not until later does the audience learn that Thetis had warned her son that the “best of the Myrmidons” would die while he, Akhilleus, was still living (XVIII.9-11). Akhilleus seems to have forgotten this when he acquiesces to his comrade’s pleas and sends him out into battle.

By the end of the poem, Akhilleus appears transformed. During the funeral games in honor of Patroklos he serves as a judge and a dispenser of prizes.¹¹⁶ One reason for his assumption of such a role is his close friendship with the deceased. Nevertheless, his preeminence at the games contrasts sharply with the low profile of the commander-in-chief, Agamemnon. The Mycenaean king nearly participates in the final event, the spear-throwing, but Akhilleus stops him and grants him the first-place prize without even holding the event. He explains his actions with a flattering statement to Agamemnon.¹¹⁷ The flattery serves as an ironic contrast to the heated and insult-riddled argument between the two warriors in the first Akhaian assembly. Akhilleus’ dominance throughout the games and his largesse to Agamemnon highlight his new prominence among the Akhaians. Akhilleus’ vow near the end of the poem at XXIV.669-670, to stop the fighting for twelve days so that Priam can bury Hektor, takes the reader by surprise. Does the Myrmidon prince actually have the authority to command the entire Greek host for this purpose? His ability to issue such wide-ranging commands correlates with the similarity his command speeches bear to those of Zeus. Akhilleus not only has more **muthos** speeches than the official leader of the Greek host, Agamemnon, but also his

command **muthoi** are much more powerfully persuasive, as is especially clear in his final **muthoi** to Priam in Book XXIV.

After the narrative describes how Akhilleus and his companions gazed in wonder at the recently-arrived Priam, the poem presents a lengthy **muthos** speech by the Trojan king. The language introducing the **muthos** — the participle **lissomenos**, “beseeching/supplicating” — characterizes it as a supplication. As befits a supplication, it contains both lamentation and persuasion. The speech contains direct imperatives, but on a more subtle level, Priam tries to win Akhilleus over by gaining his sympathy and pity:

μνησαι πατρός σοιο, θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ' Ἀχιλλεῦ,
τηλίκου ὡς περ ἐγών, ὀλοῶι ἐπὶ γήραος οὐδῶι. (XXIV.486-87)

Remember your father, god-rivaling Akhilleus,
since I am of the same age, on the very destructive threshold of old age.

In beseeching Akhilleus by invoking his father, Priam is following Hermes' advice at XXIV.466-67. The directness of his appeal for Akhilleus contrasts with the usual, more elaborate and circuitous introductions to supplications in Homeric epic.¹¹⁸ The Trojan king immediately draws a comparison between himself and Peleus on the basis of age. The term **tēlikos**, though it occurs several times in the *Odyssey*, appears nowhere else in the *Iliad*.¹¹⁹ Priam expands his appeal by hinting at other similarities: hostile people surround both himself and Peleus (XXIV.488-89 and XXIV.499-501), and both have lost their best son and protector, whom they miss dearly (XXIV.489-92 and XXIV.499-501).¹²⁰ The king then briefly tells Akhilleus that he has come to ransom Hektor's corpse (XXIV.501-2). The language echoes the narrative description of Khryses in the first book (I.13).¹²¹ Priam finally repeats his imprecation for Akhilleus to remember his father, this time using a participle:

ἀλλ' αἰδεῖο θεούς, Ἀχιλλεῦ, αὐτόν τ' ἐλέησον,
μνήσαμενος σοῦ πατρός· ἐγὼ δ' ἐλεεινότερός περ,

ἔτλην δ' οἷ' οὐ πῶ τις ἐπιχθόνιος βροτὸς ἄλλος,
 ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνου ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι. (XXIV.503-6)
 But reverence the gods, Akhilleus, and pity me myself,
 remembering your father; but I am more pitiable still;
 I have borne such things as no other earth-dwelling mortal,
 to stretch to my mouth the hand of my son's murderer (lit. a son-murdering man).

The use of the participle **mnēsamenos** allows Priam to foreground the immediate actions that he wants Akhilleus to perform, namely to show reverence, **aidōs**, to the gods and pity, **eleos**, towards himself. He emphasizes the appropriateness of pity in this context by repeating the key term in the next line, **eleinoteros**; this comparative adjective allows him to make a claim for his own extraordinarily fitting need for pity. The image of kissing the hands of a “son-killer” recalls the earlier line that describes the actual moment when Priam does this (XXIV.478-9).¹²² The narrative clearly shows the success of Priam's appeal at XXIV.507-12. The two of them, “remembering” (**mnēsamenō**), mourn together (XXIV.510-11). Priam has succeeded in gaining the young warrior's pity.¹²³

After they have both finished weeping, Akhilleus attempts to assuage Priam's pain with a gnomic explanation of why humans must suffer. The narration introduces the speech with the phrase, “winged words,” thus labeling it a directive according to Martin's argument.¹²⁴ The young prince uses the parable of the two jars, from one of which Zeus dispenses good fortune, from the other evil fortune, to illustrate that no human experiences only good fortune. Although both Peleus and the Trojan king suffer now, Akhilleus reasons, both enjoyed much previous good fortune as well. The warrior echoes his own words to Patroklos (XVI.60) when he tells Priam that they will leave their pains to rest in their **thumoi**, and thus in silence.¹²⁵ This is the essence of his directive to the old man. They must both let go of their pains and move on. He highlights this by closing his speech with emphatic imperatives:

ἄνσχεο, μηδ' ἀλίσστον ὀδύρεο σὸν κατὰ θυμόν·
 οὐ γάρ τι πρήξεις ἀκαχήμενος υἱὸς ἔηος,
 οὐδέ μιν ἀνστήσεις, πρὶν καὶ κακὸν ἄλλο πάθῃσθα. (XXIV.549-51)
 Endure, and do not suffer ceaselessly in your spirit;
 for aggrieved over your son you will not do anything,
 nor will you raise him up before you suffer yet another evil.

The first imperative, **anskheo**, “endure,” identical in form to the second singular aorist at 518,¹²⁶ recalls the beginning of the speech. Akhilleus emphasizes the sentiment that Priam should move beyond the past by issuing both the affirmative command, **anskheo**, and a prohibition, **mē . . . odureo**, “do not . . . suffer.” During this speech it becomes clear that Priam has set the tone for the discussion with the very first word of his speech, **mnēsai**. For Akhilleus employs elements of recollection in his directive to Priam. He recalls his own father’s lot, both the bad (XXIV.538-42), and the good (XXIV.534-37). And he reminds the Trojan king of his good fortunes before the Akhaian landing (XXIV.543-46). He finishes his speech by predicting that Priam will suffer yet more evil. In his use of a command speech containing recollection and prediction Akhilleus resembles Zeus.

Akhilleus does not appear to be as persuasive as Priam, since the bereaved father, perhaps out of impatience, immediately tells him to release Hektor’s body and accept the ransom he has brought. Akhilleus begins his angry retort with a prohibition, **mēketi nun m’ erethizde**, “do not anger me now.” Thus he echoes Priam, who also began his plea with a prohibition, **mē pō m’ es thronon hizde**, “do not set me in a chair at all.” The verbs even share a phonetic resemblance, though the roots are quite separate, and the imperatives occur at the same place in the line.

In his anger, Akhilleus suddenly seems unwilling to let the king think that he is releasing the body out of sympathy, and he offers Priam another motive, reminiscent of

his reasoning to Patroklos at XVI.83-90. There, the apparent problem with his reasoning involved his earlier rejection of **geraa**, and by extension of the honor, **timē**, that they represent, and of the heroic code based upon them (IX.406-9). The more plausible motive for Akhilleus' command/warning speech to Patroklos was friendship and his concern for the welfare of his friend.¹²⁷ Here, in his speech to Priam, although he claims that he will ransom Hektor's corpse because of commands from Zeus, the sympathy that he has developed for Priam seems a more prominent motive. His new respect for the old man comes through in his intuitive explanation of how the king could have opened the heavy gate to the Myrmidon camp. "Some one of the gods led you to the swift ships of the Akhaians," he says (XXIV.564). He finishes his speech to Priam with a stern warning that the old man not anger him:

τὼ νῦν μή μοι μάλλον ἐν ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ὀρίνηις,
 μή σε, γέρον, οὐδ' αὐτὸν ἐνὶ κλισίηισιν ἐάσω
 καὶ ἰκέτην περ ἐόντα, Διὸς δ' ἀλίτωμαι ἐφετμάς. (XXIV.568-70)
 So do not rouse my spirit in pain any more now
 lest, old man, in my hut I harm you yourself (lit. not let you be)
 even though you are a suppliant, and lest I transgress against Zeus' commands.

He mentions the commands from Zeus almost as an afterthought. The narrative introduction and the appeal to Zeus' **ephetmas**, "laws/commands," as an ultimate authority characterize this speech as a heated break from the conversation's otherwise very mild tone. Even before hearing Akhilleus' words, the audience becomes aware of his anger from the formulaic narrative introduction **ton d' ar' hupodra idōn**, "looking askance at him."¹²⁸ Akhilleus' intensity shows that he still considers himself to be fully in control of the immediate situation, and Priam's acquiescence indicates that this belief is well founded. The short but pointed command succeeds in intimidating the Trojan king.

Although Akhilleus' last **muthos** speech is essentially an entreaty that the old man eat, the young prince crafts it in such a way that it resembles some of Zeus' more effective **muthoi**. He recounts the story of Niobe and her children, how even after the death of her twelve sons and daughters she remembered to eat. The repetition of **mimnēskō** (601, 602 and 613) hearkens back to Priam's initial imperative, **mnēsai** (486), and further reinforces the memory oriented nature of the whole dialogue. Indeed much of the speech's persuasive power comes from this elaborate allusion. Nestor and Zeus, both effective speakers, incorporate recollections into their command speeches; and often these recollections bring into focus distant times and places.¹²⁹ Jasper Griffin has noted that Akhilleus is also capable of this, pointing out that he refers to distant places and exotic names. Griffin states that Akhilleus calls to mind "a vision of places far removed from the battle-ground of Troy."¹³⁰ This tendency of his speech not only makes it more powerful, it reinforces the image of an Akhilleus who has gained an understanding that surpasses the more common view espoused by many warriors.¹³¹

An important distinction between the divine and human realms becomes clear from this analysis of command speeches. Among the gods of Olympos there is a stable hierarchy with a clear chain of command that originates with Zeus. His own speech to the assembled gods in the eighth book provides an excellent metaphor for the power structure — the golden chain stretching from Olympos to earth with him at the top and the other gods at the bottom (VIII.19-27). When lesser deities do question his authority, as Poseidon does in the fifteenth book, the challenge does not last. Indeed Zeus foresees Poseidon's challenge and answers it in advance with a claim to legitimacy based on seniority and power.

No human matches the effectiveness of Zeus' authoritative command speeches. Leadership on the human plane appears quite weak in comparison. Priam and Hektor are both constrained by the political situation in Troy; neither can issue authoritative commands without first consulting advisors and councilors. Agamemnon, though he has the status of commander-in-chief and is called "shepherd of the people," lacks the skill to lead well. His style of commanding consists of ineffective speeches that result in challenges to his authority. Occasionally he uses elements that appear in Zeus' speeches, but unlike the god he uses them at inappropriate times and to no good effect.

Of all the characters in the *Iliad*, Akhilleus most resembles Zeus. His command speeches exhibit features common to Zeus', especially elements of recollection and prediction. The transformation that he undergoes over the course of the poem is evident in his speeches of command. Not only does he issue command **muthoi** more frequently as the poem progresses; his predominance in the funeral games of XXIII and the authority he reveals in XXIV when he offers to stop the fighting for twelve days show that he has gained a new level of self-confidence. Coupled with this self-confidence is the compassion that he demonstrates toward Priam. The *Iliad* opens with a leader who refuses a suppliant and then shows himself to be insecure about his status as leader. It is fitting that the poem ends with Akhilleus' gracious acceptance of a suppliant and his demonstration of self-assured authority.

CHAPTER 3

PROPHECIES

Prophecy plays a key narratological role in the *Iliad*. It provides the external audience with a perspective that lies between that of the short-sighted mortal characters within the poem and the seemingly omniscient and thus godlike perspective of the poet. It is as if the poet offers his audience a glimpse of his own superior knowledge concerning the tradition and the plot to come.¹³² Although the characters within the poem gain some insight from prophecies, the poem's audience, because of its position outside of the narrative, "enjoys what amounts to a "divine" perspective."¹³³ And yet just as prophecy can offer a divine perspective to an audience so too it can mislead, upsetting their expectations and shattering their assumptions.

The tragic feeling that so pervades the *Iliad* results primarily from the gulf between the audience's foreknowledge and the characters' lack of it. Thus foreshadowing is a crucial poetic device throughout the narrative. In the opening lines of the poem the narrator predicts the result of Akhilleus' wrath: countless Akhaians will die on the battlefield (1-5). From this beginning on, the audience looks to the narrator as a reliable forecaster of what they can expect.¹³⁴ Predictive character speech works in concert with the narrator's frequent foreshadowing to develop and intensify anticipation in the reader or listener. Aside from the narrator, the poem's divine characters issue the most authoritative and believable predictions; and the audience is more likely to believe

the prescience of divine characters than that of mortals.¹³⁵ As a form of foreshadowing prophecy is more explicit, detailed and precise than other types of predictive language, such as threats, promises, hopes and fears. Yet prophets are often derided for speaking foolishly or selfishly, even though their connection with divine knowledge gives them added authority and credibility.¹³⁶ And the two prophecies that should have the most credibility, those of Zeus, turn out to contain glaring errors.

By its very nature prophecy has an inherent connection with the divine.¹³⁷ When a human character speaks prophetically, he acts as a filter between his audience and the divine source of knowledge that he accesses. Most often in the *Iliad*, prophecy takes the form of an interpretation of some sign or omen coming from the gods.¹³⁸ There are occasional exceptions in which characters in the mortal realm appear to prophesy as the result of direct inspiration.¹³⁹ Zeus' two prophecies resemble these instances of direct inspiration unmediated by portents or omens. The ancients themselves grouped different forms of divination into two broad categories: natural and learned. Natural divination, or *divinandi genus naturae*, as Cicero calls it, includes direct inspiration, the sort of mantic frenzy Cassandra exhibits in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*.¹⁴⁰ Learned divination, or *genus divinandi artis*, consists of the interpretation of signs and includes augury and haruspicy, among other oracular "arts." Natural divination, which is conspicuously rare in the *Iliad*, appears to be the province of the gods, particularly Zeus, and only available to certain mortal characters on rare occasions.¹⁴¹

The first prophet whom the audience meets in the *Iliad*, Kalkhas son of Thestor, only appears once in a brief scene at the first Greek assembly.¹⁴² His speech, though brief, is the only one spoken by the Greek seer in simple character speech, and it sets the

stage for the quarrel of the first book.¹⁴³ By divining the reason and remedy for the plague sent by Apollo, Kalkhas plays a crucial role in the narrative. The description of him at I.70 resembles that of Polydamas at XVIII.250. Kalkhas “knows the things that are, those that will be, and those that were previously;” while Polydamas is “the sort of man who sees forward and backward,” i.e., he learns from the past and thus can plan ahead.¹⁴⁴ Thus both characters are explicitly depicted as wise advisors. But the description of Kalkhas marks his knowledge as oracular, while that of Polydamas refers only to knowledge gained from experience.¹⁴⁵ The Greek seer not only knows the cause of the plague; he also shrewdly guesses the anger that will result from his revealing this cause in the assembly. He asks Akhilleus, who has summoned the assembly, to promise him protection since he realizes that his words will anger a man who “rules many Akhaians” (I.76-79). In his reply Akhilleus promises Kalkhas that no harm will come to him, even if he should anger Agamemnon himself (I.85-91). The fact that Akhilleus is clearly on Kalkhas’ side, protecting him from the hostile Agamemnon, is crucial to understanding Akhilleus’ relationship to prophecy. He seems to mention the Mycenaean leader as an afterthought, in a sarcastic tone, but the brief remark turns out to be prophetic.

Kalkhas reveals his mantic insight in a concise and well-balanced speech that contains features found in other prophecies, most notably those of Zeus. It consists of two main statements, each four verses long. The first statement, which explains the cause of the plague, demonstrates his knowledge about the things that are, **ta eonta**; in the second he divulges the remedy, thus exhibiting his knowledge of the things that will be, **ta essomena**:

οὐτ’ ἄρ’ ὅ γ’ εὐχολῆς ἐπιμέμφεται οὐδ’ ἑκατόμβης,

ἀλλ' ἔνεκ' ἀρητῆρος, ὃν ἠτίμησ' Ἄγαμέμνων
 οὐδ' ἀπέλυσε θυγάτρα καὶ οὐκ ἀπεδέξατ' ἄποινα,
 τούνεκ' ἄρ' ἄλγε' ἔδωκεν Ἐκηβόλος, ἡδ' ἔτι δώσει·
 οὐδ' ὅ γε πρὶν λοιμοῖο βαρείας χεῖρας ἀφέξει,
 πρὶν γ' ἀπὸ πατρὶ φίλωι δόμεναι ἐλικώπιδα κούρην
 ἀπριάτην ἀνάποινον, ἄγειν θ' ἱερὴν ἑκατόμβην
 εἰς Χρῦσην· τότε κέν μιν ἰλασσάμενοι πεπείθοιμεν. (I.93-100)

He does not blame us over a vow (sc. unfulfilled) or a hekatomb (sc. unoffered) but because of the priest, whom Agamemnon dishonored, and he (Agamemnon) did not free his daughter and did not accept the ransom, because of this the far-darter gave pains and will give further pains; nor will he remove his heavy hands from the plague until the flashing eyed maiden is given back to her own father without ransom or price and someone leads a hekatomb into Khryse; then we might placate him by beseeching.

In line 93 Kalkhas precisely repeats the wording of Akhilleus' previous musings about the reason for the plague — a subtle example of his memory's accuracy.¹⁴⁶ He then succinctly tells the assembly the true reason for Apollo's anger, "because of the priest." He elaborates by recalling Agamemnon's actions toward the priest, Khryses, and ends his explanation with a brief but ominous prediction, that Apollo will continue to cause pains for the Akhaians. The second half of his short speech, in which he offers the solution, has a grammatical construction that appears elsewhere in prophecies, the double **prin**. It occurs in two of Zeus' prescient speeches (VIII.473-74 and XV.72-74), serving essentially the same purpose as here: to set a temporal limit on the principal verb. In each of the three speeches future indicative verbs appear in the main clause, infinitives in the **prin** clause.¹⁴⁷ Furthermore, in each instance the **prin** clause sets a condition that must be completely fulfilled before certain events, which are desired by the speaker's audience, will take place. The **prin** clause emphasizes the overriding concern that prophecy has with time and timing. By using the optative mood in his closing statement, "then . . . we might persuade him," Kalkhas further demonstrates the contingent and

potential nature of this outcome. The optative also occurs in some of Zeus' predictions, particularly in the more long-range prophetic speeches.

In contrast to most mortal prophecies, in which a human character usually divines the will of the gods by interpreting some natural phenomenon, such as thunder or the flight of birds, the *Iliad's* first prophecy involves no such omens.¹⁴⁸ Nevertheless, the narrative labels Kalkhas quite explicitly as the best of the **οἰδνοποιοί**, augurs, or interpreters of birds' behavior. The term occurs only one other time in the *Iliad*, when the narrator introduces the Trojan seer, Helenos (VI.76). With a few apparent exceptions, such as Kalkhas' insight into Apollo's wrath, a human who wants to gauge a god's will seems dependent on natural phenomena.

In his speech after the near rout in the second book, Odysseus, the master speaker, appropriates prophetic speech in order to give his own words greater authority. Only in this passage does the poem present us with a human character quoting the words of an oracle to bolster his credibility. After he has beaten the commoner, Thersites, into submission, Odysseus chastises Agamemnon for suggesting retreat and then attempts to boost the soldiers' morale by recounting an oracle Kalkhas gave at Aulis.¹⁴⁹ That prediction, according to the Ithakan king, promised victory after nine years of battle. Odysseus tells the troops to remain so that they may learn whether or not the prophecy is true.

τλήτε φίλοι, καὶ μείνατ' ἐπὶ χρόνον, ὄφρα δαῶμεν
 ἢ' ἔτεδὸν Κάλχας μαντεύεται ἦε καὶ οὐκί. (II.299-300)
 Endure friends, and wait for a time, until we know
 whether Kalkhas prophesied truly or not.

While Odysseus may appear to be questioning the validity of the prophet's words and thus questioning his abilities as a seer, perhaps, as one of the exegetical scholiasts writes,

he justly seizes upon the prophet's trustworthiness, as a rhetorical ploy.¹⁵⁰ The scholiast also points out that later, when Poseidon assumes the seer's form to encourage the Greek soldiers just after a major setback, the poem again highlights Kalkhas' credibility (XIII.45f.). By relaying this extended recollection, Odysseus intends to convince his audience to remain confident. The speech contains elements of at least three different "speech genres," command, recollection, and prophecy; by mixing the genres appropriately Odysseus succeeds in his goal and proves his ability as a speaker.¹⁵¹ Nevertheless, central to his speech's success is the appropriation of Kalkhas' prophecy.

Odysseus employs his own rhetorical skills to convince the troops, but the oracular authority of Kalkhas' words gives his speech much of its persuasive power. First the wily Ithakan describes the scene at Aulis when the assembled Greeks were performing sacrifices for the upcoming voyage to Troy.¹⁵² Then he depicts the portent itself before he relates Kalkhas' interpretation of it. The depiction exemplifies fine speech-making, worthy of Antenor's later description of this *rhetor* (III.204-24).

ἔνθ' ἐφάνη μέγα σῆμα· δράκων ἐπὶ νῶτα δαφεινός,
 σμερδαλέος, τόν ῥ' αὐτὸς Ὀλύμπιος ἦκε φώωσδε,
 βωμοῦ ὑπαίξας πρὸς ῥα πλατάνιστον ὄρουσεν.
 ἔνθα δ' ἔσαν στρουθοῖο νεοσσοί, νήπια τέκνα,
 ὄζωι ἔπ' ἀκροτάτῳ, πετάλοις ὑποπεπτηῶτες,
 ὀκτώ, ἀτὰρ μήτηρ ἐνάτη ἦν, ἣ τέκε τέκνα.
 ἔνθ' ὅ γε τοὺς ἐλεεινὰ κατήσθιε τετριγῶτας,
 μήτηρ δ' ἀμφοποῦτο ὄδυρομένη φίλα τέκνα·
 τὴν δ' ἐλελιξάμενος πτερύγος λάβεν ἀμφιαχυῖαν.
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ τέκν' ἔφαγε στρουθοῖο καὶ αὐτήν,
 τὸν μὲν αἰζήλον θῆκεν θεός, ὅς περ ἔφηνεν·
 λᾶαν γάρ μιν ἔθηκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω· (II.308-19)

Then a great sign appeared: a serpent, red on its back,
 terrifying, which the Olympian one himself sent toward the light,
 darting from under the altar it rushed toward the plane-tree.

Then there were the sparrow's chicks, witless babies,
 on the highest branch, cowering under the leaves,

eight of them, but the mother which bore them was the ninth.
Then it ate the crying birds down pitifully
 and the mother flew around lamenting her dear offspring;
 and twisting about it grabbed the crying mother by the wing.
But when it ate down the offspring of the sparrow and the sparrow herself,
 the god who revealed it made it invisible;
 for the son of crooked-minded Kronos turned it to stone.

The careful organization of this portrayal into four statements, each three verses long, is its most obvious quality. The wording is clear and concise: the first three statements begin with **entha**, providing a vivid, step by step description, and in the final statement the adversative **autar epei** alerts the internal audience to the climactic importance of the following statement.¹⁵³ Kirk believes that the pathos of the scene is greatly increased by the repetition of **tekna** in verse final position in lines 311, 313 and 315, and by the near rhyme of **-ōtes** and **-ōtas** in lines 312 and 314.¹⁵⁴ Surprisingly, though usually very attentive to metrics in his annotations, Kirk does not mention the spondaic fifth feet of 312 and 314, which also add to the scene's tragic tone.¹⁵⁵ Odysseus then describes the amazement of the onlookers before he finally reports the *ipsissima verba*¹⁵⁶ of Kalkhas' prophecy.

Even though Odysseus employs a simpler structure in recounting the prediction than in describing the portent, the prophecy's "fuzzy" logic, deemed obscure since ancient times, belies the wily speaker's intent — to give his audience a morale boost and thus hoodwink them into staying. He continues his speech by quoting the prophecy delivered by Kalkhas at Aulis:

Κάλχας δ' αὐτίκ' ἔπειτα θεοπροπέων ἀγόρευεν·
 "τίπτ' ἄνεω ἐγένεσθε, κάρη κομόωντες Ἀχαιοί;
 ἡμῖν μὲν τόδ' ἔφηνε τέρας μέγα μητίετα Ζεύς,
 ὄψιμον ὀπιτέλεστον, ὅο κλέος οὐ ποτ' ὀλείται.
 ὡς οὗτος κατὰ τέκν' ἔφαγε στρουθοῖο καὶ αὐτήν,
 ὀκτώ, ἀτὰρ μήτηρ ἐνάτη ἦν, ἣ τέκε τέκνα,
 ὡς ἡμεῖς τοσσαῦτ' ἔτεα πτολεμίζομεν αὐῶτι,

τῶι δεκάτῳ δὲ πόλιν αἰρήσομεν εὐρυάγων." (II.323-329)
 And then Kalkhas, revealing the divine will, spoke out straightway,
 "Why have you become silent, long-haired Akhaians?
 Crafty Zeus revealed to us this great portent
 late in arrival, late in fulfillment; the fame of it will never perish.
 As this (snake) ate down the offspring of the sparrow and the sparrow herself,
 eight of them but the mother who bore the offspring was ninth,
 thus will we make war there for just so many years
 and in the tenth year we will take the wide-wayed city."¹⁵⁷

The only two occurrences of the verb **theopropeō** relate to Kalkhas.¹⁵⁸ The first two words of line 325 are both hapax legomena, perhaps neologisms used by Odysseus to give the prophecy a more authoritative and oracular tone.¹⁵⁹ A scholiast in the T manuscript also points to the addition of **ou pot' oleitai** as a subtle attempt to keep the soldiers from despairing and turning away from battle. Such a precise interpretation of this rather mundane natural phenomenon demonstrates either Kalkhas' superior mantic powers, or misrepresentation on the part of Odysseus.¹⁶⁰ The **marturoi** whom he now addresses were all presumably present at the sacrifices and would remember the prophecy. The implied audience of the Homeric **aidos** would have been aware of the traditional story of the gathering at Aulis.¹⁶¹ In each case the speaker manipulates the audience's knowledge — a ten year old memory of an eye-witness or an external audience's familiarity with the epic tradition — in order to establish credibility. He then adopts the presumed authority of prophetic speech to create a particular expectation in his audience: the war is near its end.

The Greeks in general tend to profit more from oracular predictions than the Trojans; even Agamemnon, who ridicules Kalkhas, accepts his explanation of the plague and how to end it. The Trojans seem myopic by comparison, with a prophet who offers

little of worth, Helenos, and an especially gifted advisor, Polydamas, who acts as a prophet, but is often ignored.¹⁶²

Just as the Trojans are preparing to storm the Greek position, which is guarded by a trench and a wall, Polydamas advises caution to Hektor. Although the narrative mentions the Trojan counselor earlier,¹⁶³ this is his first speech and the first scene in which he figures prominently (XII.61-79). In the lengthy speech he recommends that they attack the fortifications on foot and leave their chariots behind. Hektor accepts the advice gladly, and the one warrior who ignores it, Asios, proves its wisdom since he never returns to Troy alive (XII.110-72).

νήπιος, οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλε κακὰς ὑπὸ κῆρας ἀλύξας
 ἵπποισιν καὶ ὄχεσφιν ἀγαλλόμενος παρὰ νηῶν
 ἄψ ἀπονοστήσειν προτὶ Ἴλιον ἠνεμόεσσαν· (XII.113-15)
 The fool, he would not, after escaping the evil fates
 with his horses and exulting on his chariot by the ships,
 return back to windy Ilion.

Polydamas advises caution or restraint in all four of his speeches.¹⁶⁴ Hektor accepts his advisor's counsel the first and third time that it is offered, but the other two times he bitterly rejects it. He even ridicules Polydamas, calling him a coward (XII.231-50). Hektor's first rejection of his friend's sound advice simply highlights his own delusion and ignorance; the second time he ignores Polydamas and remains on the battlefield despite Akhilleus' return, it proves fatal.

Polydamas never claims to be an actual seer, nor does the narrative ever label him as such;¹⁶⁵ but in his second speech to Hektor he assumes that role, interpreting an omen, in his words, “just as a **theopropos** would” (XII.228).¹⁶⁶ Polydamas gives a detailed interpretation of the portent, which the narrative has already depicted quite elaborately. As the Trojan host approaches the Greek encampment an eagle flies overhead and drops a

living snake into the crowd after being bitten on the chest; the eagle then flies off to the left (XII.200-7). The sign is portentous enough to cause the Trojans to stop and gaze in fear at the serpent (209-10). Polydamas urges Hektor to stop the advance: **mē iomen Danaoisi makhēsomenoi**, “Let us not go to fight with the Danaans” (216). He then interprets the omen in order to explain how he reached this conclusion.

ὦδε γὰρ ἐκτελέεσθαι οἴομαι, εἰ ἐτεόν γε
 Τρῳσὶν ὄδ’ ὄρνις ἦλθε περησέμεναι μεμαῶσιν,
 φοινῆεντα δράκοντα φέρων ὀνύχεσσι πέλωρον
 ζῶν· ἄφαρ δ’ ἀφέηκε πάρος φίλα οἰκί’ ἰκέσθαι,
 οὐδ’ ἐτέλεσσε φέρων δόμεναι τεκέεσσιν ἐοῖσιν.
 ὥς ἡμεῖς, εἴ πέρ τε πύλας καὶ τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν
 ῥηξόμεθα σθένει μέγαλωι, εἴζωσι δ’ Ἀχαιοί
 οὐ κόσμῳ παρὰ ναῦφιν ἐλευσόμεθ’ αὐτὰ κέλευθα·
 πολλοὺς γὰρ Τρῳῶν καταλείψομεν, οὓς κεν Ἀχαιοί
 χαλκῶι δηιώσωσιν ἀμυνόμενοι περὶ νηῶν. (XII.217-27)

“For I suppose that it will turn out in this way, if truly this bird came to the Trojans as they were yearning to cross over (sc. the trench), (this bird) bearing the live serpent as a portent in its talons. But quickly it lost it (the snake) before arriving at its own home and, bearing (the snake), it did not succeed in giving it to its own offspring. Thus, even if we break the Akhaians’ gates and wall with great strength, and the Akhaians should yield, we will not come (back) from the ships orderly along the same ways. For we will leave behind many of the Trojans, whomever the Akhaians ravage with the bronze while warding them off from around the ships.”

As with Kalkhas’ prophecy in the Greek assembly, this speech can be divided into two parts of equal length: the first explains the present situation, here the portent and its context; the second predicts the future. Both halves of Polydamas’ prophecy contain conditional statements, indicating his doubts, whereas Kalkhas’ two prophecies contained no conditionals. The first **ei**- clause shows that Polydamas does not have complete faith in his own oracular abilities. As the scholia point out, one alternative to the supposition in 217-18 would be that the portent appeared for the Greeks.¹⁶⁷ Polydamas’ hesitation

highlights his status as simply an advisor and not a seer. Furthermore, his portrayal of the portent contains elements that are not explicit in the earlier narrative description. The Trojan apparently assumes that the bird was taking the snake back to its nest as food for its young.¹⁶⁸ His reliance upon this assumption could point to his fallibility as a prophet. Despite his status — not a true prophet — and his assumption, which weakens the authority of his words, his use of future indicative verbs, **eleusometha** and **kataleipsomen**, as opposed to optatives, denotes confidence in his prediction. And at the end of his speech he also tries to reassure Hektor by saying **hōde kh' hupokrinaito theopropos**, “thus would a prophet answer.” Although he is not a true prophet, a real **theopropos**, he asserts, would answer in the same way. Nevertheless, his need to reassure Hektor, and himself, indicates an anxiety over his own ability to emulate a seer.

Hektor’s angry and dismissive reply not only demonstrates his distrust of prophecy and his rash temperament, it also symbolizes the more general Trojan shortsightedness, especially among the leadership. Homeric language captures this myopia succinctly in the term **nēpios** and its derivatives **nēpieē** and **nēputios**. Often the term has been interpreted simply as “childish” and compared to Latin **infāns**, which derives from the privative “in-” plus “fāns”, the present participle of “for, fārī”, “to speak”; thus **infāns** strictly means “a youth not yet able to speak.” The derivation of **nēpios** from **epos**, however, does not seem tenable in light of linguistic scholarship subsequent to the composition of LSJ.¹⁶⁹ Edmunds links **nēpios** not to **epos**, “word, speech,” but to **ēpios**, which she defines as “connecting” in the sense of “conciliatory;” and she claims that **nēpios** is the privative.¹⁷⁰ While her argument rests on somewhat shaky phonological evidence, the semantics are appealing.¹⁷¹ The term **ēpios** often

appears in relation to a father figure, someone who is conciliatory, nurturing and fully developed. And while all children are **nēpios**, not all **nēpioi** are children. She argues that **nēpios** denotes a lack of development and a resultant dissociation which becomes manifest in mental or social deficiencies and also in the “profane condition.” Those in the “profane condition” are “not dull-witted or stupid . . . (they) have not received a divine revelation.”¹⁷² Trojans and their allies are called **nēpios** (or **nēputios**) no less than twelve times. Furthermore, eight of these occurrences appear in the narrative, not character-speech, thus lending the characterization a certain amount of objectivity and credibility. It should be noted that gods are actually labeled **nēpios** four times.¹⁷³ Three of these occurrences are in the **theomakhia**, during which the gods insult each other as heroes do before combat. The first time the term is used to describe a god, however, Hera applies it to all of the Olympians except Zeus because they seek to oppose that god’s will.

Hektor clearly displays his own **nēpieē** when he ridicules Polydamas for relying on prophecy; not only does Polydamas correctly interpret the snake and bird omen as a warning, his advice in the poem is always sound. In a haughty response to his counselor’s prediction, the Trojan commander accuses him of cowardice and exhorts him to value patriotism over prophetic insights. He recalls that Zeus promised him glory in battle but seems to have forgotten that Zeus granted him success for just that one day. Hektor’s shortsightedness appears even more pronounced in another angry response to Polydamas after Akhilleus returns to the battlefield. The prudent counselor advises Hektor and the Trojan warriors to return to the city since Akhilleus will no longer hang back at his ships (XVIII.254-66). With a prophetic-sounding introduction, **hōde gar estai**, “it will be thus,” Polydamas predicts that if Akhilleus arms and finds the Trojans

still in the field, they will regret it (266-72). But if they fortify themselves in the city, Akhilleus will not be successful (272-83). Hektor mockingly turns this cautious advice upside down: if Akhilleus arms and finds them in the field, he will regret it. Hektor concludes **ou min egō ge / pheuomai ek polemoio** (306-7), “I certainly will not flee from him, out of the battle,” foreshadowing his later opposite behavior — indecision and flight. In this deluded speech, the Trojan commander ironically calls Polydamas **nēpios** before launching into his own plans.¹⁷⁴ Not only does he appear ignorant of the future, he also displays an acute amnesia: he claims to have Zeus’ support, thus showing that he has forgotten the limits of the god’s promise — the support would last for but one day, the day that is now ending.

Although Hektor is only called **nēpios** once, the narrator labels his men, both Trojans and allies, with this term three times for following the leader’s misguided commands. When they roar assent for Hektor’s insulting response to Polydamas (XVIII.285-309), the narrator immediately reveals that they are all deluded:

ὥς Ἴεκτωρ ἀγόρευ’, ἐπὶ δὲ Τρῶες κελάδησαν,
 νήπιοι, ἐκ γὰρ σφεων φρένας εἴλετο Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη·
 Ἴεκτορι μὲν γὰρ ἐπήνησαν κακὰ μητιόωντι,
 Πουλυδάμαντι δ’ ἄρ’ οὐ τις, ὃς ἐσθλὴν φράζετο βουλήν. (XVIII.310-13)
 Thus Hektor spoke and the Trojans shouted approval,
 fools, for Pallas Athena stole their minds from them;
 for they gave praise to Hektor (who was) planning badly,
 and not a one praised Polydamas, who was devising a good plan.

Such an explicitly negative characterization of Hektor’s followers — not to mention the clear explanation of why they deserve the harsh portrayal — highlights a basic problem among the Trojan leadership: useful advice, especially prophetic advice, often goes unheeded or is at best misunderstood. In two other instances the narrative labels Hektor’s men **nēpioi** for following his advice. The Trojan commander urges his followers to

retrieve Patroklos' body, promising whoever succeeds a share in the ransom (XVIII.220-32). When they attack Telamonian Aias, who guards the body, the narrative calls them **nēpioi**, pointing out that many of them fell in the attempt (234-36). Hektor again holds out the promise of rewards, this time Akhilleus' horses, to Aeneas (XVII.485-90). The Trojan leader, Aeneas, Khromios and Aretos, all attack Alkimedon and Automedon, who now control the Myrmidon chariot and team since Patroklos has been killed. The two Trojans and their allies are called **nēpioi** for attacking Automedon, who overcomes them by praying to Zeus (XVII.497-500). The explicit mention of his prayer, juxtaposed with the narrative description of the Trojans, highlights how the Trojans are currently in the "profane condition"—to use Edmunds terminology—while Automedon gains the attention and assistance of the sky-god. Throughout the poem, the Trojan situation contrasts startlingly with that of their enemies. The Greeks are only called **nēpioi** as a group once, and it is Hektor, not the narrator, who applies this term to them (VIII.177). By looking at the distribution of the word **nēpios** and considering the contexts in which it appears, one may conclude that the Trojans suffer from **nēpieē** far more often than the Greeks. If we accept Edmunds' interpretation of the term, this conclusion could be refined to state that the Greeks are more connected to the divine plan.

Helenos—clearly a Trojan seer with prophetic powers, unlike Polydamas—also proves ineffectual, though for different reasons. He has the ability to perceive the will of the gods and thus predict future events accurately, but he gives advice to Hektor only twice and both times it seems rather inconsequential. At the beginning of Book VI he advises Hektor to rally the troops and then enter Troy (VI.77-101). While it is not

obvious that he divines this plan from the gods, he is called “the best by far of the bird interpreters” just before making his speech; and the religious nature of the trip into Troy also hints at some prophetic insight. While the explicit purpose of Hektor’s journey into the city is to have the Trojan women beseech Athena to stop Diomedes, the primary result is not tactical or religious but poetic. This brief return into the city allows the poem to characterize Hektor in a vastly different setting, giving him much of the human appeal readers have found over the centuries. And though the poet achieves this goal, the Trojans fail to accomplish Helenos’ stated purpose of supplicating and placating Athena. The only other advice that Helenos gives Hektor is at VII.47-53: to challenge a Greek champion to a duel in accordance with the will of Apollo and Athena. The duel does not end in a decisive victory for either side and ultimately only serves to delay the Trojan gains made on the following day. In both instances, then, although Helenos’ knowledge of the divine will appears accurate, he does not really benefit the Trojan side.

By the beginning of the sixth book Zeus has still not begun to fulfill his promise to help the Trojans and thus demonstrate to the Greeks how badly they need Akhilleus. According to Morrison, the use of a past counterfactual construction, “then A would have happened if B had not occurred,” to introduce Helenos’ advice at this juncture (VI.73-76), should indicate that the plot is about to move in a new direction. Not only have the Greeks not reached the dire straits hoped for by Akhilleus, but Diomedes’ *aristeia* actually made great gains for them, diminishing the glory of the Myrmidon; by now the audience of the poem would be expecting a reversal of fortunes to occur.¹⁷⁵ Nevertheless, Helenos’ advice fails to gain Athena’s favor because it is not followed precisely. Hektor relays the prophet’s words to Hekabe almost verbatim (VI.269-78),

with slight changes dictated by the shift of addressee. When she carries out her son's instructions two aspects of his plan go awry: a priestess not mentioned in the original plan is included; and the wording of the prayer changes, leaving the request completely unacceptable to the goddess. Although Helenos' language in his speech to Hektor does not preclude the possibility of a single priestess serving as a mouthpiece for the Trojan women, it does seem to imply that Hekabe herself should perform the prayer (VI.86-98). Furthermore, when the priestess, Theano, attempts to supplicate Athena, she asks for more than Helenos has recommended. He said that the old women should ask that Athena ward Diomedes off from Troy. Theano actually calls for the fall, presumably the death, of the Greek warrior.

πότνι Ἰθηναίη ἐρυσίπολι, δῖα θεάων,
 ἄξον δὴ ἔγχος Διομήδεος, ἠδὲ καὶ αὐτόν
 πρηνέα δὸς πεσέειν Σκαίων προπάροιθε πυλάων. (VI.305-7)
 "Lady Athena, city-protector, shining among goddesses,
 shatter the spear of Diomedes and grant that even he himself
 will fall face down before the Skaian gates."

Of course the goddess cannot accept the death of one of her favorites.

ὥς ἔφατ' εὐχομένη· ἀνένευε δὲ Παλλὰς Ἰθήνη. (VI.311)
 Thus she spoke praying; but Pallas Athene nodded refusal.

The original plan to ward Diomedes off from Troy would have been more acceptable to the goddess. This is the only instance in Homeric poetry where a divinity flatly refuses a supplicant's request *in toto*. Helenos' plan fails not because he is a poor seer but because of the Trojans' general disconnectedness from the divine.

Helenos proves that he is a good seer capable of accurately interpreting the will of the gods in his next piece of advice to Hektor; but again it accomplishes little. Athena and Apollo meet on the battlefield and decide to delay the general combat by means of a

duel between Hektor and some Greek champion (VII.17-42). The narrative depicts

Helenos hearing their plan in his **thumos**:

Ἑλενος . . . σύνθετο θυμῶι
βουλὴν, ἣ ῥα θεοῖσιν ἐφῆνδανε μητιόωσιν.
Helenos heard in his **thumos**¹⁷⁶ the plan
which was pleasing to the gods taking counsel.

The term **boulē** recalls the proem, from which the audience learns that the entire poem will be an enactment of the **Dios boulē**, as related to them by the poet-performer. Here, the seer, relaying the **boulē Athēnaiēs Apollonos te**, advises Hektor to have the Greeks and Trojans assemble and then to summon forth the best of the Akhaians to a duel. He concludes by predicting that Hektor will not die.

οὐ γάρ πώ τοι μοῖρα θανεῖν καὶ πότμον ἐπισπεῖν·
ὥς γὰρ ἐγὼν ὅπ' ἄκουσα θεῶν αἰγιγενετάων. (VII.52-3)
For it is not your lot to die and meet your fate just yet;
thus I heard the voice of the everlasting gods.

As with Kalkhas' prophetic advice in the first Greek assembly, the poem does not explicitly state how the seer gained his foreknowledge from the divine plane but it does affirm the accuracy of the prediction. In each case the audience has just recently viewed the behind-the-scenes divine machinery and thus knows that the seer's insight is accurate. The lack of any explicit portents, which are so common elsewhere, suggests an interesting possibility: whereas non-seers need some sign to guess the will of the gods, **οἰδῆνοποιοί**, despite their title, do not, though they excel in interpreting signs that do occur. Apollo and Athena, interestingly enough, appear as birds just after Helenos' prediction, perhaps alluding to the possibility of an earlier bird omen.¹⁷⁷ Nevertheless, the duel that the seer advises, even though it accords with the will of the two gods, merely postpones the actual Trojan gains that occur on the next day. While the prediction

and the duel may heighten suspense for an audience that no doubt anticipates Trojan success by now, it gains little, if anything, for the Trojan forces.

Aside from the prophecies of Helenos and Kalkhas, authoritative predictions that do not involve the interpretation of some sign sent by the gods are exceedingly rare. In addition to **oiōnopoloi**, the only characters in the mortal realm who issue such prophecies are humans on the verge of death and Akhilleus' horse Xanthos. At various times in antiquity it was believed that someone who was about to die had special insight.¹⁷⁸ Both Patroklos and Hektor, before expiring, utter prophetic warnings to their killers (XVI.849-54 and XXII.356-60). Akhilleus' horse Xanthos, which was a gift from the gods and enjoys a sort of semi-divine status, prophesies his master's death after being granted the gift of speech by Hera (XIX.408-17). Neither the near-death predictions nor that of Xanthos involve the interpretation of any signs, but they clearly demonstrate some special knowledge beyond what the characters would ordinarily know of the **Dios boulē**.

The death scenes of Patroklos and Hektor share three verses that illustrate an extraordinary feature of these characters' deaths, that the **psukhē** leaves the body and wails as it flies to Hades.¹⁷⁹ Unlike the other terms used to describe the mental and emotional existence of humans, such as **thumos**, **phrenes**, **menos**, etc., **psukhē** never appears in connection with a god. In these two remarkable scenes, as the **psukhē** departs the body, the dying person suddenly seems prescient. The accuracy of Patroklos' knowledge can be seen in his explanation of the details surrounding his own death.

ἀλλά με Μοῖρ' ὀλοή καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός,
 ἀνδρῶν δ' Εὐφορβος· σὺ δέ με τρίτος ἐξεναρίζεις. (XVI.849-50)
 But rather, destructive Fate and Leto's son killed me,
 and among men, Euphorbos. But you are the third to despoil me.

Just as with Kalkhas' speech in the assembly, so here an explanation of the current circumstances precedes Patroklos' foretelling of Hektor's approaching fate. The same ordering of elements also occurs in Hektor's final words to Akhilleus in which he displays an insight into Akhilleus' present state of mind before actually making his prediction:

ἦ σ' εὖ γινώσκων προτιόσσομαι, οὐδ' ἄρ' ἔμελλον
 πείσειν· ἦ γὰρ σοι γε σιδήρεος ἐν φρεσὶ θυμός. (XXII.356-57)
 Ah, knowing you well I foresee, nor was I about to convince you;
 yes, for the spirit/heart in you, at least, is iron.

This sentiment, an explicit self-proclaimed anagnoresis, echoes Hektor's other recent awakening, when he saw that Athena had deceived him and admitted to himself that he was going to die. The Trojan commander, who seems so deluded throughout much of the epic, finally gains clarity of vision in his last gasp. And in both near-death speeches, this realization — the insight into what is going on behind the scenes, as it were — directly precedes a prophetic warning for the killer.

In both scenes the vanquished prophesies to the victor both his death and the identity of his killer. Patroklos introduces his prophecy with a formulaic line admonishing Hektor to pay heed:

ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δέ με φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῆισιν·
 οὐθὲν οὐδ' αὐτὸς δηρὸν βέε', ἀλλὰ τοι ἤδη
 ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή,
 χερσὶ δαμέντ' Ἀχιλλῆος ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο. (XVI.351-54)
 And I will tell you another thing – strike it in your mind:
 you yourself will indeed not live long, but already death
 and powerful fate have taken a stand just next to you,
 conquered at the hands of illustrious¹⁸⁰ Akhilleus, scion of Aiakos.

Hektor's dying prophecy, also in the form of a warning, begins with a similar sentiment, as he calls on his killer to pay attention:

φράζεο νῦν, μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι

ἦματι τῶι, ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 ἐσθλὸν ἐόντ' ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαίῃσι πύλῃσι. (XXII.358-60)
 Take care now, lest I become a source of the gods' anger towards you
 on that day when Paris and Phoibos Apollo will slay
 you, though you be valiant, at the Skaian gates.

The actual prophecy appears, fittingly enough, in a subordinate temporal clause; Hektor never seemed to put much stock in prophecy while alive, and even in death he subordinates it. But while the Trojan responded dismissively to Patroklos' final words, indulging in a hopeless fantasy of ultimate success, Akhilleus replies with cold indifference and resignation: he will accept his fate whenever Zeus may send it.

Akhilleus' new fatalistic mood first appears after the death of Patroklos, and over the course of the ensuing verses he displays this new outlook on numerous occasions, one of which is a rather unusual prophetic scene. Whether Xanthos the horse gains the gift of foresight along with that of speech from Hera, or whether he has this ability by virtue of his semi-divine status is a moot point. Hera grants him the power of speech so that he may answer Akhilleus, who ordered the horse to return his new charioteer unharmed — obviously hinting at the horse's inability to do this with Patroklos. Xanthos replies that he will return Akhilleus and Automedon safely from the fighting this time, but he warns the Myrmidon prince that his fate is approaching swiftly:

καὶ λίην σ' ἔτι νῦν γε σαώσομεν, ὄβριμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ·
 ἀλλὰ τοι ἐγγύθεν ἦμαρ ὀλέθριον· οὐδέ τοι ἡμεῖς
 αἴτιοι, ἀλλὰ θεός τε μέγας καὶ Μοῖρα κραταιή.

.....

νῶϊ δὲ καὶ κεν ἅμα πνοιῆι Ζεφύροιο θέοιμεν,
 τὴν περ ἐλαφροτάτην φασ' ἔμμεναι· ἀλλὰ σοὶ αὐτῶι
 μόρσιμόν ἐστι θεῶι τε καὶ ἀνέρι ἴφι δαμῆναι. (XIX.408-10 . . . 415-17)

We will certainly save even you, mighty Akhilleus, this time at least:
 Nevertheless your destructive day is near; but we are surely not to blame,
 rather it is a great god and powerful Fate.

.....

And we two would contend even with the breath of the west wind,

although they say he is the most nimble; but for you yourself
it is allotted to be violently vanquished by a god and a man.

After this rather vague prediction, upon which Hektor's later warning elaborates, the Erinyes remove Hera's gift of voice to Xanthos. Akhilleus' response reveals much about his stance towards prophecy and his own fate.

Ξάνθε, τί μοι θάνατον μαντεύεαι; οὐδέ τί σε χρή.
εὖ νύ τοι οἶδα καὶ αὐτός, ὅ μοι μόρος ἐνθάδ' ὀλέσθαι,
νόσφι φίλου πατρὸς καὶ μητέρος· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπηγ
οὐ λήξω, πρὶν Τρῶας ἄδην ἐλάσαι πολέμοιο. (XIX.420-23)

Xanthos, why do you prophesy my death? It is not at all necessary that you do. Indeed even I myself know well that it is my fate to die here, far from my dear father and mother. But nevertheless, I will not slacken until I drive the Trojans to war's welcome end.

Unlike Hektor, who displayed angry disbelief at Patroklos' warning, Akhilleus expresses resignation that is informed by accurate foresight. His foreknowledge of his own destiny must come from his mother, who, in Zeus' words, "always attends him night and day." (XXIV.72-3)¹⁸¹

Despite their superiority to mortals in the *Iliad*, the gods do not appear omniscient. Hera's deception of Zeus proves that even the supreme god does not always know what is going to happen. Indeed the term **nēpios**, which is attached to many mortal characters, also appears in relation to the divine characters. The narrator never calls any of the gods **nēpios**; and three of the four occurrences are in the **theomakhia** wherein gods are ridiculing their opponents just as the heroes do before combat. The term first appears in connection to the gods just after Zeus' second prophecy when Hera tells the assembled gods—all of the Olympians except Zeus, that is—that they are **nēpios** for wanting to oppose the supreme god (XV.104). Yet gods certainly have a special connection to prophecy; and Zeus, by definition, has a very personal relationship with the **Dios boulē**. Both Zeus and Poseidon utter speeches that can be labeled *bona fide*

prophecies. Poseidon briefly mentions the important role that Aeneas will play after the fall of Troy (XX.293-308). This prediction, quite unlike any of the mortal prophecies examined above, alludes to the larger epic tradition—events and themes that are peripheral to the *Iliad* itself, but integral to other tales in the epic cycle. Furthermore, Poseidon's speech concerns a character who is rather minor in the *Iliad*, though critical in the later tradition. His purpose is also quite clear: since he has sided with the Greeks he wants to justify his rescue of a Trojan. The internal motivation for Zeus' prophecies is not so clear-cut. The external, or poetic, reasons for the content and placement of Zeus' speeches, however, are quite significant in that they offer us a glimpse of the poet at work.

Although Zeus makes predictive statements elsewhere (XI.186-94, XVI.433-38, XVII.201-8, XVII.443-54), only two of his speeches should be considered as full-fledged prophecies that reveal part of the divine plan to his auditors. Both appear at crucial junctures in the narrative, just as the tide of battle is turning. One contains the key term, **thesphaton** (VIII.477), which marks it as a true prophecy that divulges information from the divine plan, unlike other forms of predictive speech; the other (XV.61-77), delivered to Hera only, contains very specific information that details events far into the future. As Martin notes, promises and threats made by Zeus generally display more certainty than those made by other characters; his promise to give Hektor strength for the remainder of the day, for instance, has an almost prophetic tone of certainty (XI.186-94).¹⁸² Such speeches however, are not actual prophecies.

The sky-god's two extended speeches differ from other predictive speeches in their tone and diction as well as in the scope and specificity of the actions they foretell.

The first (VIII.470-83) immediately precedes the embassy scene, when the Akhaian leadership concedes that they desperately need Akhilleus to hold back the advancing Trojan forces encamped on the plain (VIII.553-66 and IX.1-9). The second (XV.61-77) precedes the last-gasp Trojan offensive in which Hektor again leads his men into the Greek camp and sets fire to a ship (XV.360-XVI.123); Akhilleus then sends Patroklos into battle and the fortunes of war turn once more, this time in favor of the invading Greeks. In both prophetic speeches Zeus foretells events that are within the scope of the poem, but in the second speech he also predicts events that will occur after Hektor's funeral. As with human prophecies, both speeches are motivated by internal causes but also serve a distinct narratological purpose: they offer the external audience a preview of upcoming events at critical turning points in the narrative. Zeus' two prophetic speeches, however, are much more significant for the unfolding of the narrative than any predictive speech made by a mortal character. They also have important implications for the actual performance of the poem: their placement suggests two breaks in performance, effectively dividing the narrative into thirds. Furthermore, the vague, even misleading content of these two speeches keeps the Homeric audience guessing, upsetting their expectations; only the most knowledgeable members of the audience—themselves performers of the *Iliad*, or perhaps their apprentices—would be familiar enough with the tradition to see through the poet's ruse.¹⁸³

Zeus practically flaunts his superior foreknowledge in his first prophecy in order to chastise Hera for disobeying his prohibition against divine interference in the war. The tide of battle has recently turned in the Trojans' favor, as the narrator so vividly and explicitly indicates with the image of Zeus' golden scales (VIII.66-77). Hera and Athena

plan to aid the struggling Greeks, but before they have even departed from Olympos, Zeus sends Iris to stop them and summon them to a divine assembly. After being taunted by the supreme god, Hera replies with indignation, nearly repeating Athena’s speech verbatim from the beginning of the eighth book.¹⁸⁴ In both scenes Zeus shows little interest in their concerns; but here his response to Hera differs greatly from his earlier response to Athena. While he reassured his daughter, telling her that he wanted to be **ēpios** to her (VIII.39-40), he ends his response to Hera by saying “**ou seo kunteron allo**,” “there is not anything more doglike (often interpreted as ‘shameless’) than you” (VIII.483).

By depicting a chain of events that would be even bleaker to Hera than what actually transpires, Zeus seems to design his prophetic speech to goad her into an angry response. The prediction not only emphasizes Hektor’s upcoming gains on the battlefield, it reveals in a callously casual tone that Akhilleus’ best friend, Patroklos, will die before the Myrmidon leader returns to battle.

ἦοῦς δὴ καὶ μάλλον ὑπερμενέα Κρονίωνα
 ὄψεαι, αἴ κ’ ἐθέλησθα, βοῶπι πότνια Ἥρη,
 ὀλλύντ’ Ἀργείων πουλὸν στρατὸν αἰχμητῶν.
 οὐ γὰρ πρὶν πολέμου ἀποπαύσεται ὄβριμος Ἔκτωρ,
 πρὶν ὄρθαι παρὰ ναῦφι ποδώκεα Πηλείωνα
 ἥματι τῶι, ὅτ’ ἂν οἱ μὲν ἐπὶ πρύμνησι μάχωνται
 στείνει ἐν αἰνοτάτῳ περὶ Πατρόκλοιο θανόντος·
 ὥς γὰρ θέσφατόν ἐστι. (VIII.470-77)

And tomorrow you will certainly see the Kronian one, who abounds in **menos**, should you wish, ox-eyed queenly Hera, destroying the vast army of Argive spear-men. For mighty Hektor will not cease from war until the swift-footed Peleian one rises by his ship on that day when they are fighting at the sterns in the most dreadful strait around dead Patroklos; for thus it is divinely ordained.

The first three lines have a sarcastic and insulting tone. Zeus characterizes himself as overwhelmingly powerful with the term **hupermenea**, which encapsulates Hera's depiction "**toi sthenos ouk epieikton**," "your strength is unyielding" (463). He then uses a phrase that Akhilleus will employ in his response to Odysseus during the embassy scene, "**opseai, ai k' ethelēistha**," "you will see, if you should wish" (IX.359). Such an introduction implies the speaker's indifference: if his auditor wishes to view what he will do, he or she may, but he will do it regardless. The prophecy consists of a main clause with a future indicative, "Hektor will not cease," restricted by a **prin** clause, "until the Peleian one arises." This structure mirrors that of Kalkhas' first prophecy: "Apollo will not stop the plague until the maiden is given back and a hekatomb is led into Khryse" (I.97-100). The double **prin** with a future indicative and an infinitive in the restricting clause will also occur in Zeus' second prophecy. Zeus' prophecies resemble those of Kalkhas more than those of the less successful Trojan prophets. Unlike Polydamas' speech at XII.217-27, neither of Zeus' pronouncements contains conditionals that call into question the speaker's confidence in the accuracy of his own prophecy. Ironically, Polydamas' prediction in XII is accurate, yet he doubts this when giving his speech. The inaccuracies in Zeus' two prophecies only become apparent with the unfolding of the plot.

Two misrepresentations appear in Zeus' prophecy, only one of which seems to have been noticed by most commentators. Although it may be more of an ambiguity than a falsehood—thus escaping the notice of commentators—Zeus' statement concerning when Hektor will refrain from battle does not clearly represent what actually happens. In fact Zeus later tells Hektor to stay out of the battle as long as Agamemnon remains in the

field (XI.186-94). How is it that Zeus cannot foresee his own actions? If he does indeed have foreknowledge of Hektor's respite, which seems quite likely, then he must be trying to deceive his audience. The dream that the god sends to Agamemnon makes it clear that he is willing and able to deceive mortals with untrue predictions (II.5-34). But can he issue false predictions to other gods? And if he can, why would he?

Whereas his prediction about Hektor staying in the battle could be viewed as simply ambiguous and not false, the temporal clause, which indicates when Akhilleus will arise, contains a blatant lie. On the day indicated, the Greeks and Trojans are not fighting over Patroklos' body *at the prows*; in fact no one is fighting among the ships.¹⁸⁵ After leading the attack that repulses the Trojans, Patroklos fights right up to the Trojan walls. When Akhilleus hears of his companion's death and "arises," **orthai** (VIII.474), he must go to the Greek moat to be seen and heard by the Trojans; therefore they must be out on the plain, far from the ships (XVIII.215-30).¹⁸⁶ The remainder of Zeus' speech, a scathing repudiation of Hera, gives us a clue as to his possible motives for these prophetic deceptions.

Zeus issues a bleak prediction to Hera so that he may discourage and paralyze her. The mean-spirited last half of his speech emphasizes his callous indifference towards her. And although he does not actually threaten to exile Hera to Tartaros, his reference to that dreaded prison, which echoes another menacing speech he recently delivered to all of the gods (VIII.13), lends his speech the force of a threat.

... σέθεν δ' ἐγὼ οὐκ ἀλεγίζω
 χωομένης, οὐδ' εἴ κε τὰ νείατα πείραθ' ἴκηαι
 γαίης καὶ πόντοιο, ἴν' Ἰαπετός τε Κρόνος τε
 ἦμενοι οὔτ' ἀγῆις Ὑπερίονος Ἡελίοιο
 τέρποντ' οὔτ' ἀνεμοισι, βαθὺς δέ τε Τάρταρος ἀμφις·
 οὐδ' ἦν ἔνθ' ἀφίκηαι ἀλωμένη, οὐ σε' ἐγὼ γε

σκυζομένης ἀλέγω, ἐπεὶ οὐ σέο κύντερον ἄλλο. (VIII.477-83)

. . . and I do not care about you being angry,
not even if you should reach the farthest boundaries
of the earth and sea, where Iapetos and Kronos residing
enjoy neither the ray of Hyperion Helios
nor the winds, and deep/profound Tartaros is all about;
even if, wandering off, you should reach there, I am not concerned
about you being angry, since there is no one more dog-like than you.

As when Odysseus recounts Kalkhas' prophecy, so here Zeus uses prophetic speech to enhance the persuasive power of his words. The god's goal, radically different from Odysseus', is to discourage and frighten his divine audience. The god makes his indifference explicit in this speech with the phrases **ouk alegizō** and **ou . . . alegō**, referring back to the ambivalence apparent in the speech's opening, **opseai ai k' ethelēistha**. Regardless of Hera's actions or feelings, Zeus will carry out his **boulē**. The picture he paints of a rampaging Hektor surely frustrates the goddess, but more importantly, the image of Patroklos' death and of the fighting reaching the ships must upset her even more. Many characters mention the possibility of the ships being put to the torch: the Trojans hope for it and the Greeks fear it.¹⁸⁷ Zeus' desire to discourage Hera into inaction provides us with the internal motivation for the deceptive prophecy, but why does the poet-performer introduce a misleading prophecy at this particular point in the narrative?

The reversal of fortunes requested by Akhilleus has only just begun by the end of the eighth book and during the next eight books the poet-performer primarily relates a Trojan offensive and Greek losses.¹⁸⁸ When we view Zeus' prophecy with this context in mind, and recall the narratological purpose of prophecy—to preview “coming attractions”—the significance of the speech's placement becomes clearer. It is not likely that the entire *Iliad* could be performed in one sitting without much omission and

compression.¹⁸⁹ Concluding a performance with a preview of upcoming events would have the distinct benefit of enticing the poet-performer's audience into returning.¹⁹⁰ Both of Zeus' prophecies center upon two events that are crucial to the *Iliad's* plot: the death of Patroklos and Akhilleus' subsequent return to battle. The first prophecy, offered by Zeus to discourage Hera, inaccurately foretells events that will occur in the next third of the poem. The scenario presented in his prediction would frustrate the expectations of an Iliadic audience that had general knowledge of the epic tradition.¹⁹¹ They would feel inclined to return so that they could resolve the inconsistencies between what they knew and what the poet forecasts via Zeus' words.

Zeus' second prophetic speech functions similarly: it inaccurately foretells events, thus provoking in the audience a misapprehension about how the final third of the poem will unfold. The events mentioned in Zeus' first prophecy have not yet come to pass when he prophesies again at XV.61-77, but Akhilleus' request has begun to be fulfilled. The Greeks have sent an embassy begging for his help (IX.182-652), Nestor has asked Patroklos to lead the Myrmidons in Akhilleus' place (XI.794-803), and several Greek leaders have abandoned the field after being wounded (XIV.27-30 and 128-32).¹⁹² Another reversal of fortune seems imminent. The prophecy at XV.61-77, heard only by Hera, forecasts events that occur beyond the scope of the poem, including the fall of Troy. Indeed the internal motivation for this prophecy, in stark contrast to the one in book eight, is to reassure Hera, who has just pledged support to Zeus.

The prophecy occurs in a directive to Hera that enjoins her to summon Iris and Apollo. Zeus goes beyond simply sending her to fetch the two gods: he confides what his orders for them will be (XV.49-60). Furthermore, in his prediction, he paints a picture

that is ultimately reassuring to Hera: Akhilleus will return to battle and the Greeks will indeed take Troy.

... αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὺς
 αὐτίς ἀποστρέψῃσιν ἀνάλκιδα φύζαν ἐνόρσας,
 φεύγοντες δ' ἐν νηυσὶ πολυκλήϊσι πέσωσιν
 Πηλείδew Ἀχιλῆος. ὃ δ' ἀνστήσει ὄν ἐταῖρον
 Πάτροκλον· τὸν δὲ κτενεῖ ἔγχεϊ φαίδιμος Ἴκτωρ
 Ἴλίου προπάραιθε, πολεῖς ὀλέσαντ' αἰζηοὺς
 τοὺς ἄλλους, μετὰ δ' υἱὸν ἔμον Σαρπηδόνα δῖον·
 τοῦ δὲ χολωσάμενος κτενεῖ Ἴκτορα δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.
 ἐκ τοῦ δ' ἄν τοι ἔπειτα παλίωξιν παρὰ νηῶν
 αἰὲν ἐγὼ τεύχοιμι διαμπερές, εἰς ὅκ' Ἀχαιοὶ
 Ἴλιον αἰπὸν ἔλοιεν Ἀθηναίης διὰ βουλᾶς.
 τὸ πρὶν δ' οὔτ' ἄρ' ἐγὼ παύω χόλον οὔτε τιν' ἄλλον
 ἀθανάτων Δαναοῖσιν ἀμυνέμεν ἐνθάδ' ἐάσω,
 πρὶν γε τὸ Πηλείδαο τελευτηθῆναι ἐέλδωρ,
 ὡς οἱ ὑπέστην πρῶτον, ἐμῶι δ' ἐπένευσα κάρητι,
 ἦματι τῶι, ὅτ' ἐμεῖο θεὰ Θέτις ἦψατο γούνων,
 λισσομένη τιμῆσαι Ἀχιλλῆα πτολίπορθον." (XV.61-77)

... but he (Hektor) will turn back the Akhaians
 straightway, rousing cowardly rout,
 and they (the Akhaians) fleeing will fall among the many-benched ships
 of Peleus' son Akhilleus. And he will rouse his companion, Patroklos,
 to action; but shining Hektor will kill him with the spear
 before Troy after he (Patrklos) has destroyed many other noble men,
 among them my son, divine Sarpedon;
 angered over this, divine Akhilleus will slay Hektor.
 Then from that time on I will cause a continuous and unending
 retreat from the ships until the time when the Akhaians
 might take steep Troy by means of Athena's plans.
 I do not renounce/end my anger, nor will I allow any
 of the immortals to aid the Danaans there before
 the wish of Peleus' son is completed
 as I previously promised to him, and I nodded my head in assent,
 on that day when the goddess Thetis grasped my knees
 beseeching me to honor Akhilleus sacker of cities.

The prophecy begins with an inaccuracy reminiscent of the prophecy in book eight: the Greeks do not fall among the many-benched ships of Akhilleus, nor does he rouse up Patroklos. The opposite is true.¹⁹³ Zeus does correct an earlier inaccuracy by stating that

Hektor will slay Patroklos before Troy and thus not among the Greek ships. Beginning in line 68, Zeus predicts events subsequent to those in his previous prophecy, including the death of Hektor, the Trojan rout and the fall of Troy (68-71). At this point there is a disjunction, as Zeus switches from predicting the distant future, for which he uses optative forms, to the nearer future, for which he uses indicatives. He then issues a prohibition to Hera for all of the gods, which contains a familiar grammatical construction—the double **prin**.¹⁹⁴ The **eeldōr Pēleidaō** has already begun to be fulfilled, but the aorist passive in line 74, **teleutēthēnai**, indicates that before Zeus will end the *kholos* and allow the gods to enter the fray Akhilleus' wish must be *completely* fulfilled.¹⁹⁵ The phrases with which line 76 begins, **ēmati tōi**, also occurs in Zeus' earlier prophetic speech. Then it referred proleptically to the day of Patroklos' death, while here it points back to the very beginning of the poem. In both instances Zeus concludes his prediction with this temporal clause, emphasizing prophecy's concern with time and timing.

Zeus employs prophetic speech twice in order to keep Hera from intervening in the war. Whereas he discouraged her in his last speech, in book XV, after awakening from the enchanted slumber that Hera recently cast upon him, he reveals future events that should reassure her. Since she has been assured that Akhilleus will return to battle and that the Greeks will ultimately take Troy, Hera need not take direct action in the ongoing human conflict. Zeus notably omits the death of Akhilleus from his prediction so that he will not unduly discourage her.

Both of Zeus' extended prophetic speeches occur just before very crucial scenes in the poem: the first appears towards the end of the eighth book, less than a hundred

lines before the Greek assembly in which the embassy to Akhilleus is planned; the second speech precedes Patroklos' *aristeia* and death. The glaring inaccuracies in both relate to the extent of the Trojan gains. These misleading predictions would cause the Homeric audience to question its knowledge of the epic tradition. An *Iliad* that allowed Patroklos to be killed in the Greek camp would be a very different story and could conceivably include a massacre of the invading troops, thus jeopardizing the Greeks' **nostoi**.¹⁹⁶ The second prophetic speech differs little from the first except in one important respect: it alludes to the larger epic tradition, particularly the Greek victory and the sack of Troy. This extension of the poetic perspective implies a certain openendedness to the narrative without actually departing from the tradition. The audience might expect the narrative to extend beyond Hektor's funeral to the fall of Troy.

The fluid nature of the tradition certainly allowed for variation in the narrative of the poem from one performance to the next. It is impossible to say just how much variation occurred without more direct evidence from several different performances. Nevertheless, Zeus' prophetic speeches open a window onto alternative plot lines. The scope of these predictions is far greater than any mortal prediction in the poem and thus better suited to the poet's purpose of presenting epic's vast panorama. And their placement, which neatly divides the poem into three "movements," demonstrates that they are more significant for both the flow of the narrative and the poet's actual performance of the poem.

Inspirational prophecy, without the aid of any omens or portents, is exceedingly rare in the *Iliad*; indeed it appears to be reserved for gods and on occasion for their mouthpieces, the prophets. One historical scholar who notes the rarity of *genus divinandi*

naturae in Archaic Greece, dismissively refers to Zeus' speeches in the *Iliad* as poetic devices and claims that they are of no worth when looking at the origins of mantic predictions in Greek culture.¹⁹⁷ Despite his tone, Dietrich makes a good point in highlighting the poetic usefulness of the speeches. The mortal prophets in the poem issue short range predictions with clear goals; they are advising their leaders and offering a plan of action. In stark contrast to these prophecies, Zeus' two speeches serve the purposes of the poet more than those of any character. Prophecy and poetry were connected in antiquity and the poet's use of prophecy in performance to enchant the audience probably made more sense to his contemporaries than it does to modern sensibilities. The poet presented himself as a mouthpiece for the muses, the daughters of Zeus and Memory. In a sense, Homeric poet-performers styled themselves as inheritors of Zeus' grand vision. Who could better relate the Plan of Zeus — except for the god himself?

CONCLUSION

The intent of this inquiry is to highlight important aspects of the Iliadic characterization of the gods by examining some of the speech patterns that the Homeric poet-performer assigns to them. In doing this we refine our notions of how the Homeric *aoidos* represents the gods speaking. The poem portrays the divine characters vis-à-vis the mortal ones in part by varying the way in which they employ language. One very explicit instance of this variation on the lexical level prompted the direction of this study: the four examples of divine naming that appear throughout the text (I.403-4, II.813-4, XIV.290-1, XX.74). On four occasions the poem's audience hears that gods have names for certain entities which differ from the names used by humans. This fact poses some interesting questions for students of the *Iliad*. Is the lexical variation found in the four naming passages an isolated phenomenon or does it represent a larger pattern of characterization? If it is part of a larger pattern, where can other examples of this bifurcation be found? Why would the Homeric poet-performer assign different manners of speech to the two sets of characters and what does he gain by doing so?

By presenting the gods to his audience in anthropomorphic form the Homeric **aoidos** made them more intelligible to his audience; yet he still had to depict their divinity sufficiently, demonstrating their superiority over mortal characters. This occurs in the narrative often and explicitly, as, for instance, when the narrator describes Hera traveling from Mt. Ida to Olympos at the speed of thought (XV.78-83). But since the

world of the *Iliad*'s heroes is one of both deed and word, **ergon kai epos**, it stands to reason that the *Iliad*'s poet would also depict the gods as superior speakers. A close examination of the gods' use of language not only demonstrates that they are more effective speakers, it also reveals aspects of their ontological and epistemological superiority. For instance, their hierarchy is stable and not given to breakdowns; and their knowledge of the future and the past—Zeus' knowledge especially—is far superior to humans, though not absolute. Their more effective uses of language should not be seen as the cause of their superiority, however; it is, instead, a method of the poet to characterize the gods and their distinctiveness from human figures in the poem. Indeed the divine utopian environment stands in stark contrast to the mortal world of the poem.

In the first chapter a close reading of two passages reveals some basic distinctions between the nature of conflict in the divine and human realms. The quarrel between Akhilleus and Agamemnon near Troy and that of Zeus and Hera in Olympos share certain structural similarities that provide fertile ground for comparison. The pejorative diction and blustery tone of the human quarrel paint a picture of the humans' inability to reconcile, which leads to a breakdown of the power structure as Akhilleus storms off in self-imposed exile. The concise and balanced syntax of the divine quarrel however, depicts a rather stable hierarchy in which the participants are able to reconcile their conflicts with words. The poem's utopian world of the Olympians does not appear attainable by the mortals in the poem; they are beset with strife even in the relatively peaceful books at the end of the poem when death and destruction still loom on the horizon. Furthermore, the divine scenario presented to the poem's audience is not a goal for which they should strive; the poet is not trying to teach mortals how to handle conflict

by giving them an ideal example, but rather characterizing the gods as he conceives of them.

The *Iliad* provides only hints of a divine realm more like that depicted in Hesiod's *Theogony*—a world in which titanic struggles among the gods are not uncommon. They appear in Zeus' ominous and threatening tone as well as in allusions to past mythic events, such as Zeus hurling Hephaistos down from Olympos (I.590-4), or Poseidon, Hera and Athena holding the sky-god captive (I.396-400). But the scenario evident in the Greek camp resembles this tumultuous past of the gods far more than the current Olympian situation does. It is almost as if the gods have bequeathed a legacy of violence to this generation of heroes. Indeed Laura Slatkin shows how a network of allusions in the *Iliad* relating to Akhilleus and Thetis hint at what would have been a potential genealogy for the sea nymph's son. According to Pindar Zeus once vied with Poseidon for her hand (Isthmian 8.29-38). If the gods had not married Thetis off to Peleus, her son, who had been prophesied to outdo his father, could have overthrown Zeus and thus subvert the divine hierarchy—an eventuality to which Aeschylus alludes (*Prometheus Bound*, 907-9). This other Akhilleus would have been a disruptive figure in the story of the gods' evolution towards a stable existence instead of a destructive figure in the human story.

The examination of the respective power structures on the human and divine planes continues in the second chapter, but with a different focus and different results. Command speeches, with which the speaker intends to order or convince an inferior to carry out some action, offer the student of the *Iliad* an opportunity to see the respective hierarchies at work in the poem. Effective speech has the potential to persuade and

mediate disputes thus avoiding serious conflicts and breakdowns in the power structure; this is crucial to any effective leadership. Speeches were selected from the many that are introduced by the term **muthos**, which according to Martin marks the utterance that follows as an authoritative speech act. Successful speakers often incorporate other speech genres, such as threats or recollections, to make their commands more effective. An incompetent orator, such as Agamemnon, may attempt this but fail because he has employed another type of speech inappropriately or at an inappropriate time. For instance, Agamemnon's fondness for threats and denigrating language, which highlights his insecurity as a leader, often leads to angry retorts rather than obedient compliance and even triggers Akhilleus' **mēnis**, which brings destruction to the Greek host. Zeus, on the other hand, occasionally uses elaborate threats with vivid imagery, or detailed predictions; both of these remind his audience of his superior strength and knowledge.

Careful consideration of these speeches reinforces the observation made in the first chapter concerning the relative weakness of the human power structures in the poem. The Trojan situation appears even more complicated than that of the Greeks because of political factions in Troy and the heterogeneous nature of the allied forces fighting alongside Hektor. Of the human characters Akhilleus issues command speeches that most resemble those of Zeus: both employ predictions and recollections in their commands; they also both use threats that they are able to carry out, unlike the blustery Agamemnon. Unlike anyone in the mortal world of the poem, Zeus bases his authority on both seniority and physical superiority. While Nestor and Phoinix both have seniority, they have reached the threshold of old age, and can no longer fight at the forefront;

characters such as Diomedes and Akhilleus may display superior might, but they lack seniority. When seen in this light, the more stable hierarchy of the gods appears based on knowledge and strength: Zeus prevents Hera from defecting to Poseidon by predicting the fall of Troy in great detail; he reins in the rebellious Poseidon by emphasizing his own superior abilities—he is **pherteros**—and his seniority, which is closely related to his privileged knowledge of fate.

In the third chapter an examination of prophetic speech reveals that while human characters have access to the superior knowledge of the gods, it is almost always mediated by omens or signs and only prophets, or those acting as prophets in the case of Polydamas, can interpret it in a detailed and articulate manner. In the mortal world of the poem, the Trojans appear less successful at this than the Greeks. The term **nēpios** often depicts individuals as out of touch with the divine plan, in other words they have trouble foreseeing the outcome of their actions. The poem labels the Trojans, and especially men following Hektor's advice, as **nēpioi**, while the term is only applied to the Greeks as a group once. This, and the more effective employment of prophetic speeches among the Greeks, leads one to believe that they are far less **nēpios**, and thus more in touch with the divine plan. Indeed in this contrast we may be seeing a Hellenic denigration of Trojan prophetic powers since a pro-Greek stance on the part of the poet seems logical even if it is rather subtle.

Extended prophetic speeches appear in the divine world only twice, and not surprisingly Zeus issues them. While Poseidon does prophesy the future role of Aeneas, Zeus' two prophecies appear far more integral to the narrative. Not only do they foretell crucial events both within and beyond the scope of the poem, their placement at the end

of the first and second third of text suggests that they could have served as conclusions to performance. The number of hexameters in each third of the poem is not so great that they could not be performed in one long night; and the tensions created between the inaccuracies in the predictions themselves and the prior knowledge of the audience would have compelled them to return to the next performance. Furthermore, the narrative usefulness of these two speeches suggests a special status for the divine characters in the **aidos**' bag of tricks. As with the behind-the-scenes glimpses of divine counsels, the highly detailed prophecies of Zeus allow the poet-performer to foreshadow events in a multitude of ways. This foreknowledge that he offers the audience coupled with the myopia of the characters in the poem produce much of the *Iliad*'s tragic tone.

The gods in the poem do serve as a foil to the heroes who dominate the action, but they function in other important ways as well. They also allow the poet to open a window for his audience—a window on the much more expansive world of the epic tradition. The Homeric **aidos** also portrays their world as a utopian example of stability and calm compared to that of the heroes. The contrast that appears between this relatively peaceful utopia and the tumultuous Olympian world seen in Hesiod's *Theogony*—to which the *Iliad* only alludes—provides a frame in which we can view the actions of the poem's heroes more clearly. Ironically, the remove between gods and men in the poem suggests a comparison of the divine figures and the audience of the **aidos**. Both view from a comfortable distance the horror of war and the ignorance of mortals concerning their own fate. Akhilleus comes closest to breaking through this mortal veil, but he can only hope to survive as the subject of epic, kept alive by his “unwithering

fame,” **kleos aphthiton**. Zeus and the other gods, however, stand apart, and remind the audience that they can take pleasure from viewing the tragic events of the human world.

εἰ γάρ τις καὶ πένθος ἔχων νεοκηδέϊ θυμῷ
 ἄζηται κραδίην ἀκαχήμενος, αὐτὰρ αἰδοῖς
 Μουσάων θεράπων κλεῖα προτέρων ἀνθρώπων
 ὑμνήσει μάκαράς τε θεοὺς οἳ Ὀλυμπον ἔχουσιν,
 αἶψ’ ὅ γε δυσφροσυνέων ἐπιλήθεται οὐδέ τι κηδέων
 μέμνηται· ταχέως δὲ παρέτραπε δῶρα θεάων. (Hesiod, *Theogony*, 98-103)

For even if someone, having sorrow in his newly-grieved soul,
 should fear, being troubled with respect to his heart,
 nevertheless the poet-performer, servant of the Muses,
 will sing [about] the glory of earlier men and also [sing about] the blessed gods
 who hold Olympos, and immediately the man forgets his anxieties nor does
 he remember his woes at all; but the gifts of the goddesses swiftly divert him.

END NOTES

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- ¹ LSJ offers the translation “good sir/lady” and points out that it occurs only in the vocative case in Homeric Greek.
- ² Laura M. Slatkin, *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the Iliad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 104.
- ³ Richard P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989), 52-3.
- ⁴ James Morrison, *Homeric Misdirection: False Predictions in the Iliad* (Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 1992), 1-10.
- ⁵ On four occasions in the *Iliad* he ascribes unique terms to the gods (I.403-4, II.813-14, XIV.291, XX.74). See also Calvert Watkins, “Language of Gods and Language of Men: Remarks on Some Indo-European Metalinguistic Traditions,” in *Myth and Law Among the Indo-Europeans*, ed. Jaan Puhvel (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970): 1-17 and Jenny Clay, “The *Planktai* and *Moly*: Divine Naming and Knowing in Homer” *Hermes* 100.2 (1972): 127-31.
- ⁶ Ancient scholiasts of the *Iliad* believed that Homer mentioned these four divine terms so that he could show his audience that he was familiar with the words used by the gods and that he had been reared by the muses. See Hartmut Erbse, *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem: Scholia Vetera* vol. 1 (Berlin: Walter De Gruyter and Co., 1969), 115. Interestingly, the audience first learns that gods have unique terms from Akhilleus (I.403), not the narrator. This, coupled with the image of Akhilleus singing the *klea andrōn* (IX.189), strengthens the connection between poetic and divine knowledge.
- ⁷ Cedric Whitman, *Homer and the Heroic Tradition* (New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1958), 230
- ⁸ See Pindar’s Isthmian 8.29-38.
- ⁹ Consider Aeschylus’ *Prometheus Bound*, 907-9, which compliments the prophecy found in Pindar’s Isthmian 8. See also Slatkin, *Power*, 70-84.
- ¹⁰ The Greek texts used are from the *Bibliotheca Scriptorum Graecorum et Romanorum Teubneriana: Homeri Ilias: Volumen Prius, Rhapsodias I-XII Continens*, ed. Martin L. West (Stuttgart: B. G. Teubner, 1998) and *Homeri Ilias: Volumen Alterum, Rhapsodias XIII-XXIV et Indicem Nominum Continens*, ed. Martin L. West (München: K. G. Saur, 2000). The translations are my own.
- ¹¹ Joan V. O’Brien, *The Transformation of Hera: A Study of Ritual, Hero, and the Goddess in the Iliad* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 1993), 77-94.
- ¹² G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary Vol.1 books 1-4* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 66.
- ¹³ **oude min Hērē/ ēgnoiēsen idous’ hoti hoi sumphrassato boulas/ arguropeza Thetis...**
“nor did Hera fail to notice him, knowing that silver-footed Thetis took counsel with him. . .”
- ¹⁴ The adjective occurs only four other times in the *Iliad*. Twice it occurs in a formulaic line uttered by mortal characters (XX.202 and XX.433). The other two occurrences, which are in direct narrative, appear in lines that introduce divine speech (IV.6 and V.419) as here. One of the two introduces Zeus’ speech to Hera and Athena at the beginning of the fourth book when he is obviously trying to provoke them. In the second such occurrence, Athena actually refers to the offensiveness of her words while she is addressing Zeus.
- ¹⁵ See Martin, *Language*, 68-69; consider also Zeus’ own words:
hē de . . . m’ aiei en athanatoisi theoisin / neikei (I.520-21)
“And she [i.e. Hera] always reproaches me among the immortals.”

- ¹⁶ The collocation **to/ēn d' ēmeibet' epeita**, “And then s/he replied to her/him. . .”, occurs forty-eight times in the *Iliad*.
- ¹⁷ The ancient scholiast bT commented about these verses that wives often grow angry at husbands who keep secrets from them.
- ¹⁸ See Harry C. Avery, “Achilles’ Third Father,” *Hermes* 126.4 (1998): 389-97 for an explanation of the father-son relationship alluded to in Book IX. Agamemnon singles out Akhilleus in the assembly of Book I as the object of abuse not simply because Akhilleus called the assembly and instigated the argument, but, as can be seen in his dismissive and patronizing tone, because he feels that he has some right to patronize the young Myrmidon. Avery offers one explanation for why the Greek king might feel that he has this right. See especially Avery, “Achilles’ Third Father,” 392.
- ¹⁹ Kirk, *Iliad*, 66.
- ²⁰ M. M. Willcock, *The Iliad of Homer: Books I-XII* (London: St. Martin’s Press, 1978), 189.
- ²¹ Kirk, *Iliad*, 66.
- ²² Akhilleus’ words, **triplēi tetraplēi t’ apoteisomen**, “We will repay [you] three and four fold,” indicate that Akhilleus perceives Agamemnon to be fundamentally acquisitive in nature. He has learned this from observation, as the audience later finds out (IX.328-33). Also note his direct reference to Agamemnon’s greed (I.171).
- ²³ The address and concession along with the modal negator also occur at XIX.155 in one of Odysseus’ speeches to Akhilleus:
ton d’ apameibomenos prosephē polumētis Odusseus
“mē dē houtōs, agathos per eōn, theoeikel’ Akhilleu. . .” (XIX.154-55)
 And replying to him Odysseus of the many wiles said
 “Godlike Akhilleus, though you are noble, do not [sc. act] thus...”
- ²⁴ Willcock, *Iliad*, 189-90.
- ²⁵ For the distinction between **muthos** and **epos** see Martin, *Language*, 12-26 and 37-42.
- ²⁶ Kirk, *Iliad*, 110.
- ²⁷ It makes more sense to understand the **thumos** in **kata thumon** (136) as belonging to Agamemnon, not the Greek soldiers, although the Greek is ambiguous. Of translators, Lombardo understands the **thumos** to belong to the soldiers, as opposed to Lattimore, Murray, Fagles, Butler and Rieu, who take it to be Agamemnon’s.
- ²⁸ See Kirk, *Iliad*, 67.
- ²⁹ The rhythmic cola can be divided thus:
hon de k’ egōn : apaneuthe theōn : ethelōmai noēsai /
mē ti su : tauta hekasta : dieireo mēde metalla./
- ³⁰ *Ibid.*, 18-24.
- ³¹ IV.50, XVI.439, XVIII.360, XX.309.
- ³² XVI.439 and XVIII.360.
- ³³ IV.25, VIII.462, XIV.330, XVI.440, XVIII.361.
- ³⁴ **ton d’ ar hupodra idōn prosephē podas ōkus Akhilleus** (I.148)
 And looking askance at him, swift-footed Akhilleus addressed him.
- ³⁵ Consider, for example, Zeus’ statement to Thetis near the end of the poem:
autar egō tode kudos Akhillēi protiptō,/
aidō kai philotēta teēn metopisthe phulassōn. (XXIV.110-111)
 “But I myself will extend this glory to Akhilleus,
 guarding my friendship and shame (i.e. sense of duty) toward you.”
- ³⁶ These are the only two occurrences of the full epithet for Thetis in the poem.
- ³⁷ Slatkin, *Power*, 6-7 and 17-28.
- ³⁸ See *ibid.*, 31-32 for a full discussion of the allusion to Indo-European myths of the dawn goddess.
- ³⁹ Martin, *Language*, 57-58.
- ⁴⁰ Avery, “Achilles’ Third Father,” 391-93 details the implications this rupture has for Akhilleus’ standing in society.
- ⁴¹ In line 559 I follow a variant reading that M. West ascribes to Aristarchus in his apparatus criticus. (Instead of **poleas** West prefers the reading **polus** based on the evidence of the Köln papyrus 1.22.)

- ⁴² For a full discussion of the theme of **akhos**, woe, in the *Iliad* and its connection to Akhilleus see G. Nagy, *Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 69-93, especially 78-93.
- ⁴³ Unlike Hektor, who drastically misreads the previous actions of Patroklos and Akhilleus (XVI.830-42), Hera shows clear insight into her husband's deeds and thoughts.
- ⁴⁴ Kirk, *Iliad*, 111.
- ⁴⁵ The term **rhigion**, which literally means chilly, evokes an image of shivering and chill bumps associated with cold and fear. The further connection of cold to the natural elements, which in the form of weather fall under the sky-god's jurisdiction, makes this particular formulaic threat quite appropriate to Zeus.
- ⁴⁶ For the connection of **psukhē** to mortality, see Michael Clarke, *Flesh and Spirit in the songs of Homer: A Study of Words and Myths* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999), 53-60.
- ⁴⁷ Agamemnon's inability to see through Zeus' false dream in Book II provides another example of this character's tragic lack of insight.
- ⁴⁸ Kirk, *Iliad*, 33 points out that Milman Parry referred to this type of enjambment as "necessary type 2."
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 70.
- ⁵⁰ Seth Schein, *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's Iliad* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), 56-60; and cf. III.65-66.
- ⁵¹ Quite striking is the similarity between these and Zeus' dismissive words to Hera: **sethen d'egō ouk alegizō / khōomenēs**, "I myself don't really care about your being angry" (VIII.477-8).
- ⁵² For the use of *mellein* as a probability verb, see Egbert Bakker, "Storytelling in the Future: Truth, Time, and Tense in Homeric Epic," in *Written Voices, Spoken Signs*, ed. Egbert Bakker and Ahuvia Kahane (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 20.
- ⁵³ Martin, *Language*, 53.
- ⁵⁴ Kirk, *Iliad*, 72.
- ⁵⁵ See Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire étymologique de la langue grecque, histoire des mots* (Paris: Klincksieck, 1968), 578-79.
- ⁵⁶ See Martin, *Language*, 33.
- ⁵⁷ See Mabel L. Lang, "Reverberation and Mythology in the *Iliad*," in *Approaches to Homer*, ed. Carl Rubino and Cynthia Shelmerdine (Austin: University of Texas at Austin Press, 1983), 140-64.
- ⁵⁸ All Hesiodic text is taken from *Hesiodi Theogonia, Opera et Dies, Scutum*, ed. Friedrich Solmsen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970). The translations are my own.
- ⁵⁹ In Greek mythology, however, divinity alone does not guarantee a stable power structure with an undisputed leader. The succession myths presented in the *Theogony* provide examples of gods who are overthrown, even imprisoned. For the overthrow of Ouranos by Kronos see *Theogony* 154-82, for the overthrow of Kronos by Zeus see *Theogony* 468-500.
- ⁶⁰ See Martin, *Language*, 12 and 22.
- ⁶¹ The boast and insult contests—labeled "flyting" by R. Martin—are closely akin to **neikos** language. See Martin, *Language*, 46-47 for his division of **muthoi** into these three genres.
- ⁶² For more on focalization with reference to this passage see Irene J. F. de Jong *Narrators and Focalizers: The Presentation of the Story in the Iliad* (Amsterdam: B. R. Grüner Publishing Co., 1987), 204.
- ⁶³ See Martin, *Language*, 54.
- ⁶⁴ See Lang, "Reverberation," 140-64.
- ⁶⁵ The linguistic resonance between the two passages points to their thematic connections: **seirēn khruiseiēn**, "golden chain," VIII.19 and **desmon . . . khruiseon**, "golden bond," XV.19-20; **kremassantes**, "suspended," VIII.19 and **krema'**, "hang," XV.18 and **ekrema'**, XV.21. Divine objects are often golden, most noticeably the scales of Zeus VIII.69 and XXII.209.
- ⁶⁶ Diomedes begins his response to Agamemnon: **Atriedē, soi prōta maxēsomai aphradeonti, / hē themis** : "Son of Atreus, I will contend with you planning foolishly first, as is proper."
- ⁶⁷ **boulēn d' Argeiois hupotēsometh', hētis onēsei**, "But we will suggest a plan to the Argives, whatever benefits them."
- ⁶⁸ See C. Whitman, "Hera's Anvils," *HSCP* 74(1970), 37-42.
- ⁶⁹ Cf. 46 with 148 "**hotti . . . anōgēi'**"
- ⁷⁰ See de Jong, *Narrators*, 180-92.

- ⁷¹ Martin, *Language*, 30-37, esp. 32.
- ⁷² The term **homophrosunē**, “like mindedness,” serves as an important theme in the *Odyssey*: see especially the comments of Odysseus to Nausikaa at vi.181. It is quite likely that the god of the underworld, Hades, whom Agamemnon calls the most hated of all the gods, does not figure prominently in the Homeric epics precisely because of an audience’s aversion to this unbending deity. Hera touts her own pedigree and marital status at IV.58-64. She even implies that her overall status is second only to Zeus’ supreme status.
- ⁷³ See Gerry Wakker, *Conditions and Conditionals: An Investigation of Ancient Greek* (Amsterdam: J. G. Gieben, 1994), 355.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid.
- ⁷⁵ See Ibid., 356-57.
- ⁷⁶ All of Zeus’ commands to Hera in this speech are contingent upon her cooperation and by extension upon the stability of the Olympian hierarchy.
- ⁷⁷ See Mary Louise Lord, “Withdrawal and Return: An Epic Story Pattern in the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter* and in the Homeric Poems,” in *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter: Translation, Commentary, and Interpretive Essays*, ed. Helene P. Foley (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 182-89.
- ⁷⁸ See M. Lord, “Withdrawal and Return” and O’Brien, *Transformation*, 77-94.
- ⁷⁹ Because the phenomenon of a message going through two separate messengers occurs only once in the *Iliad* (XVII.654-55 repeated at XVII.689-93 and again by a second messenger at XVIII.19-21; see de Jong, *Narrators*, appendix V.A.) the question of Zeus’ trust is difficult to answer.
- ⁸⁰ For Ares’ marginal position see V.889-998; Athena’s reaction occurs at XV.128-41, Hera’s at XV.148.
- ⁸¹ Themis’ question is: “**Hērē, tipte bebēkas? atuzomenēi de eoikas. / ê mala dē s’ ephobēse Kronou pais, hos toi akoitēs?**” “Hera, why have you come? You seem confounded. Did the son of Kronos frighten you?”
- ⁸² **erdein hotti ke keinos epotrunēsi kai anōgēi** (148).
- ⁸³ Despite Janko’s (and Eustathius’) claim that Hera is trying to cause trouble at this divine counsel, by issuing these instructions that go beyond what Zeus commanded, she seems to have lost some of her antagonism. See Richard Janko, *The Iliad: A Commentary Vol. IV: Books 13-16*, ed. G. S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 236.
- ⁸⁴ Consider the dramatic tone of XX.47-74, which hints at a cataclysmic battle similar to the **thoemakhia** of the Hesiodic *Theogony*. The comic tone of the actual divine battle in the *Iliad* at XXI.379-513 contrasts sharply with the lofty and perilous language at XX.47-74, suggesting that there will be no real battle among the gods — the hierarchy on Olympos has become too stable by now.
- ⁸⁵ **oude sphōin idōn ekholōsato thumōi / hotti hoi ōk’ epeessi philēs alokhoio pithesthēn** (155-56) . . . nor was he angered in his **thumos**, seeing that they obeyed the words of his dear bedmate so swiftly.”
- ⁸⁶ Thus Zeus remains true to a pattern established early in the poem; for example, in his argument with Hera, he said that he would tell his queen any of his plans which it was seemly for her to hear sooner than he would disclose them to anyone else (I.541-43). But he argues that these current plans are difficult for her, “even though she is his bedmate,” **aloukhōi per eousēi**.
- ⁸⁷ For **pherteros** see Pierre Chantraine, 1188; for **krateros** see Chantraine, *Dictionnaire*, 578-79.
- ⁸⁸ The latter passage is particularly pertinent here. At XXI.440 Poseidon tells Apollo that he is older and knows more (**proteros genomēn kai pleiona oida**). He then proceeds to remind the younger god that the Trojans mistreated the two of them in the past and thus do not deserve their support. Consider also the prophecy to Hera in XV; Zeus intends it to appease Hera, but it displays his superior knowledge as well.
- ⁸⁹ **ēpeilei kai keinos enantibion ptolemixōn / enthade eleusesthai** XV.179f.
- ⁹⁰ Consider V.238, XIV.477,836; but contrast these with XVIII.546.
- ⁹¹ See Pierre Chantraine, *Grammaire Homérique* (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1958), 338 for these and three other uses of third person imperatives.
- ⁹² Janko, *Iliad*, 248.
- ⁹³ See Kirk, *Iliad*, 110 on the divine quarrel at I.540-70.
- ⁹⁴ See J. D. Denniston, *Greek Particles* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1954), 77 on **gar** in rhetorical questions.
- ⁹⁵ Compare 163-5 with 179-81 and see de Jong, *Narrators*, 185.

- ⁹⁶ See Janko, *Iliad*, 248-49.
- ⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 245.
- ⁹⁸ Consider the examples at I.275-6, II.79-83, IV.350-55, IX.32-49, and especially XIV.65-81 and Odysseus' response at XIV.83-102.
- ⁹⁹ Antenor gives the most thorough evaluation of Odysseus' rhetorical style and ability at III.204-24.
- ¹⁰⁰ . . . **egō de k' agō Brisēida . . . / autos iōn klisiēnde, teon geras, ophr' eu eidēis / hosson pherteros eimi sethen, stugeēi de kai allos / ison emoi phasthai kai homoiōthēmenai antēn.** (I.185-87)
 "And I, coming to your hut myself, will lead off Briseis, your war-prize, so that you may see well how superior I am to you and so that even another man may hesitate to claim that he is equal to me and liken himself to me face-to-face."
- ¹⁰¹ See Martin, *Language*, 117.
- ¹⁰² *Ibid.*, 30-7.
- ¹⁰³ Kirk's definition for the epithet **kerdaleophron**, "crafty" rather than "avaricious," at I.149 seems too neutral, or even laudatory, considering the scornful context. See Kirk, *Iliad*, 68. Here also the term appears to carry negative rather than positive connotations.
- ¹⁰⁴ "Ὁ huie Peteōio diotrephēos basilēos, / kai su, kakoisi doloisi kekasmene, kerdaleophron . . ." (338-39) "O son of the god-nourished king Peteos, / and you (sc. Odysseus), surpassing in evil tricks, and greedy for gain..."
- ¹⁰⁵ For an explication of this formula and treatments of many of its occurrences, see James P. Holoka, "'Looking Darkly' (ΥΠΟΔΡΑ ΙΔΩΝ): Reflections on Status and Decorum in Homer," *TAPA* 113(1983): 1-16.
- ¹⁰⁶ For an example of the Trojans' hatred for Paris see III.56-7. And consider also III.146-53, which could represent a Trojan **gerousia**. William Merritt Sale "The Government of Troy: Politics in the *Iliad*," *GRBS* 35(1994)1:62-80, especially 64, interprets the passage at XI.123-5 as proof of factionalism in Troy.
- ¹⁰⁷ For the division into three sections (49-63, 64-82 and 83-100) see Dieter Lohman, *Komposition der Reden in der Ilias* (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1970), 60-64.
- ¹⁰⁸ The phrase is used negatively by Akhilleus with reference to Diomedes at XVI.75; he claims that Tydeus' son, unlike himself, does not suffice to ward off destruction from the Greeks.
- ¹⁰⁹ See Morrison, *Misdirection*, 73-83 on the thematic importance of the Greek ships and the prophetic warnings of their possible destruction.
- ¹¹⁰ The fact that this is not just a command speech but also a warning underscores Akhilleus' concern for his friend.
- ¹¹¹ See scholia bT ad loc.
- ¹¹² For Janko's argument see Janko, *Iliad*, 327. See William Sale, "Achilles and Heroic Values," *Arion*, vol. II, No. 3: 86-100 for one interpretation of what Akhilleus' new insights entail. See Adam Parry, "The Language of Achilles," in *The Language of Achilles and Other Papers* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 1-7 for a discussion of how Akhilleus' new insights cannot be expressed by Homer's traditional diction because of its formulaic nature. Martin, *Language*, 148-54 evaluates and critiques A. Parry's thesis, pointing out that he used the term "language" to refer to both the signifiers, the Homeric vocabulary, and the signified, the heroic code.
- ¹¹³ **de** for **gar** see Denniston, *Particles*, 169.
- ¹¹⁴ Consider Diomedes' wish at IX.44-9.
- ¹¹⁵ See Martin, *Language*, 52-3.
- ¹¹⁶ Examples include XXIII.236-48, 272-86, 558-62, 653-63, 700-7, 735-37, 740-53, 795-6, 798-810, 824-25, 826-35, 850-8, 884-94.
- ¹¹⁷ **Atreidē, idmen gar hoson probēbēkas hapantōn / ēd' hosson dunami te kai ēmasin eple' aristos.** (XXIII.890-91), "Son of Atreus, we know how much you exceed all / and by how much you are the best in forces with spears."
- ¹¹⁸ See Macleod, *Iliad XXIV*, 127.
- ¹¹⁹ Richard John Cunliffe, *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1963), 381 translates **tēlikos** as "of my own years" for this particular passage. Examples from the *Odyssey* occur at i.297, xvii.20, xviii.175, xix.88.
- ¹²⁰ The form **teirousi** is also used to describe the Greeks harassing Priam and Troy VI.255.

- ¹²¹ Compare **lusomenos para seio, pherō d' apereisi' apoina** (XXIV.502) and **lusomenos te thugatra pherōn t' apereisi' apoina** (I.13).
- ¹²² On kissing the son-killing hand, consult C. W. Macleod, *Homer, Iliad Book XXIV* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 130 and Nicholas Richardson, *The Iliad: A Commentary Vol. VI: Books 21-24*, gen. ed. G. S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 326-27.
- ¹²³ The participle **oiktirōn** is applied to Akhilleus at XXIV.516.
- ¹²⁴ Again, see Martin, *Language*, 32.
- ¹²⁵ See Macleod, *Iliad XXIV*, 132.
- ¹²⁶ **a deil', ê dē polla kak' anskheo son kata thumon.**
- ¹²⁷ See Sale, "Heroic Values," 95-98.
- ¹²⁸ See Holoka, "Looking Darkly," 15-16.
- ¹²⁹ Consider Nestor's speech at I.254-84 or Zeus' at XV.14-33.
- ¹³⁰ See Jasper Griffin, "Words and Speakers in Homer," *JHS* 106(1986): 53.
- ¹³¹ Sarpedon gives the most concise summary of the heroic code at XII.310-328.
- ¹³² Allusions to tales from the more distant mythic past function similarly in the poem. See Lang, "Reverberation," 140-64.
- ¹³³ James Morrison, in his discussion on epic suspense, argues that the audience gains "knowledge of later events" from both "the narrator's comments" and from "overhearing divine counsels." See James Morrison, *Misdirection*, 53. Morrison goes on to argue, however, that "the narrator brings the heroes' situation in the *Iliad* into closer agreement with the audience's position" by only using prophetic speeches rarely. See *ibid.*, 104; see also Hermann Fränkel, *Early Greek Poetry and philosophy; A History of Greek Epic, Lyric, and Prose to the Middle of the Fifth Century*, tr. Moses Hadas and James Willis (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1975), 55n.7.
- ¹³⁴ Even though the narrator — an imaginary entity situated between the story and the external audience — offers the most authoritative predictions in the poem, in this inquiry we will focus primarily upon the story's characters and their words. We will, for the purposes of this inquiry, assume a reasonable level of reliability on the part of the narrator. For the possibility of a deceptive narrator, see Morrison, *Misdirection*, 79, 101-2.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 17-19. See also de Jong, *Narrators*, 44-45.
- ¹³⁶ Examples include Agamemnon's harsh reply to Kalkhas in the *Iliad* (I.106-20), on which see De Jong, *Narrators*, 175-6; consider also Oedipus's treatment of Tiresias in the *Oedipus Rex* (300-461) of Sophocles.
- ¹³⁷ A. Bouché-leClercq, *Histoire de la divination dans l'antiquité* (Brussels: Culture et Civilisation, 1963 [reprint of 1879 ed.]), 7, 14-18 and 107-110.
- ¹³⁸ The following are scenes in which characters react to portents: II.299-332, II.350-53, IV.73-84, IV.381, IV.397-98, IV.406-8, VI.179-83, VII.476-82, VIII.75-77, VIII.130-56, VIII.167-71, VIII.245-52, IX.233-39, X.274-95, XI.3-14, XII.195-250, XII.253-55, XIII.820-23, XV.377-80, XXIV.314-21; see Madeleine S. Kaufman, *Prophecy in Archaic Greek Epic* (Ph.D. diss., State University of New York at Buffalo, 1979), 203 n.67 for a list of twenty-seven scenes in which signs and portents appear but no human reaction is recorded. And see Mark W. Edwards, "Type-Scenes and Homeric Hospitality," *TAPA*, 105 (1975): 56 on the "omen type-scene".
- ¹³⁹ Humans who are near death utter prophecies twice (XVI.351-54 and XXII.358-60). Akhilleus' horse, Xanthos, makes a brief prediction at XIX.408-417 (this scene is anomalous and will be dealt with as such); and Helenos does not explicitly interpret any portent to formulate his prophetic advice at VI.77-101. His only other prophetic scene (VII.17-61) closes with an image which implies to the external audience that, indeed, there was a bird sign; it will be considered below.
- ¹⁴⁰ For examples see Cicero *de Divinatione* I.vi.11-12 and Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* 1072-1172. LeClercq refers to the two methods as *la méthode artificielle* and *la méthode naturelle ou spontanée*. See LeClercq, *Histoire*, 107-110.
- ¹⁴¹ In addition to Zeus' predictions (VIII.470-77, XI.186-94, XV.59-77, XVI.201-8, XVII.443-54), Poseidon predicts Aeneas' future role as Trojan leader to Hera (XX.293-308).
- ¹⁴² Poseidon appears as Kalkhas at XIII.45, however; and Odysseus quotes the prophet's interpretation of an omen at Aulis at II.323-29. For a list of other texts that mention Kalkhas, see Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 199 n.33.

- ¹⁴³ For an explanation of simple narration, complex narration and character speech see de Jong, *Narrators*, 36-40. For embedded speech, or tertiary narration focalization, see *ibid.*, 168-79.
- ¹⁴⁴ Willcock, explaining **prossō kai opissō** at I.343, claims that it refers to the near and distant future. Monro and Leaf both interpret the same phrase at XVIII.250 to mean “taking a wide view, not narrowly focused.”
- ¹⁴⁵ A minor character, Phereclus, provides us with another example of someone who, although knowledgeable, does not know the **thesmata** of the gods (V.59-68). For the formulaic description associated with Polydamas, consider Akhilleus denigrating Agamemnon at I.343 and Menelaus referring to older, and thus wiser men at III.1. See also Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 79-80. For the distinction between the two descriptions see Mark W. Edwards, *The Iliad: A Commentary, Volume V: books 17-20*, general ed. G. S. Kirk (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 176.
- ¹⁴⁶ Akhilleus earlier words are “**ei tar ho g’ eukhōlēs epimemphetai ēd’ hekatombēs**,” (I.65) “whether he (Apollo) blames (sc. us) concerning a vow or hekatomb.”
- ¹⁴⁷ See Pierre Chantraine, *Grammaire*, 314-15.
- ¹⁴⁸ Kaufman’s interpretation of this prophecy, in which she claims that the plague is the omen, seems strained. It serves her argument, but, as Bouché-leclercq points out, is not explicitly supported by the text; see Bouché-leclercq, *Histoire*, 274-5.
- ¹⁴⁹ The false dream demonstrates that Zeus is both willing and able to issue false or misleading omens to human characters. Agamemnon cannot see through Zeus’ ruse, thus proving his inability to benefit personally from prophecy.
- ¹⁵⁰ See the scholia ad loc., and Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 34.
- ¹⁵¹ See Martin’s discussion of heroic speech genres, Richard Martin, *Language of Heroes*, 44-45 and 89-90.
- ¹⁵² Concerning the omission of Iphigenia, see Morrison, *Misdirection*, 128n.7, Kirk ad loc., and scholia.
- ¹⁵³ For the prevalence of bird and snake portents in ancient near-eastern myths, see *Ancient Near Eastern Texts*, ed. James B. Pritchard (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 3rd edition, 1969), 114-118.
- ¹⁵⁴ See Kirk, *Iliad*, ad loc.
- ¹⁵⁵ It is generally agreed that 319 is a gloss for the variant reading of 318, **ton men arizēlon thēken . . .**; the vulgate text, which West does not follow here, retains **arizēlon**, “conspicuous.” Aristarchus, who read **aizēlon**, “invisible,” obelized, but did not athetize, 319. See Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 45 and Kirk, *Songs of Homer*, 323, and Willcock *Iliad*, ad loc.
- ¹⁵⁶ It should be noted that Odysseus’s reliability, even though he is acting as a narrator here, calls for much more scrutiny than that of the *Iliad*’s narrator. Unlike in the case of that entity, who is situated between the story and the external audience, in the case of our Ithakan story-teller, we can discern personal motives for his being less than completely honest.
- ¹⁵⁷ On the possible distinction between **sēma** and **teras**, see Emile Benveniste, *Indo-European Language and Society*, tr. Elizabeth Palmer (London: Faber, 1973), 508.
- ¹⁵⁸ The other occurrence is at I.109.
- ¹⁵⁹ See Kirk, *Iliad*, ad loc. and Michael M. Kumpf, *Four Indices of the Homeric Hapax Legomena* (New York: G. Olms, 1984), 81-2.
- ¹⁶⁰ For a rather esoteric elaboration of the portent’s meaning, see the scholia ad loc.
- ¹⁶¹ For a description of the “implied audience,” and their knowledge of the epic tradition, see Morrison, *Misdirection*, 13. For traditional versus untraditional scenes, see Nagy, *Best of the Achaeans*, 40-41, 81-2 n.2, 134 n.2, 268 n.9.
- ¹⁶² Whether the Cassandra figure only took on the role of a prophet in the later poetic tradition, or whether Homeric poetry is simply uninterested in and thus silent about her prophetic powers, is unclear. Nowhere in the *Iliad* does she show any signs of such powers. See Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 205-6n.80, for discussion and a list of post-Homeric appearances of the character.
- ¹⁶³ He is first mentioned at XI.57.
- ¹⁶⁴ His four speeches occur at XII.60f., XII.210f., XIII.725f., XVIII.249f.
- ¹⁶⁵ Susan T. Edmunds, *Homeric Nēpios* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1990), 92 is incorrect in stating that Polydamas is the official Trojan seer; he never claims this status nor does the narrator refer to him as a seer.
- ¹⁶⁶ Apollo does take an active interest in Polydamas’ survival at XV.521-22, but there is no explicit mention of any oracular powers bestowed upon him by the god.

- ¹⁶⁷ The scholiast's words are "**kai mē Hellēsin.**" An example of someone interpreting an omen meant for others occurs at XIII.821-32, when Hektor appears to interpret a sign meant for the Greeks, thus showing his weakness in matters prophetic.
- ¹⁶⁸ See Bryan Hainsworth, *The Iliad: A Commentary Vol.3 Books 9-12* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 341.
- ¹⁶⁹ For **nēpios** < **nē-** + **epos** see LSJ; but consult Pierre Chantraine, *Dictionnaire*, who says, "Le sens <<qui ne sait pas parler>> ne s'appuie sur aucune tradition ancienne (cf. portant **nēputation**, **nēpion**, **aphōnon** Hsch.), et bien entendu aucun rapport ne doit être établi avec (**w**)**epos** etc."
- ¹⁷⁰ Edmunds, *Nēpios* 10-25. Edmunds would like to derive **ēpios** from the Proto-Indo-European root *eH₁p-, "reach, attain." But according to Andrew L. Sihler, *New Comparative Grammar of Greek and Latin* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 122-23, the root *eH₁p-, which results in Latin **āpiscor** and Sanskrit **āpnoti**, does not occur in Greek. See also R. S. P. Beekes, *The Development of the Proto-Indo-European Laryngeals in Greek* (The Hague: 1969), who claims that there is no trace of PIE *nē- in Greek — part of the original problem with deriving **nēpios** from **epos**.
- ¹⁷¹ Sihler's claim, an argument of absence rather than presence, could easily be refuted with new findings. And while Beekes' claim may apply to the majority of extant Greek material, the presence of *nē- in the earliest stages of the language's development with a subsequent loss should not be totally ruled out.
- ¹⁷² See Edmunds, *Nēpios*, 96-7.
- ¹⁷³ Following are the four references to gods as **nēpios**: XV.104, in which Hera refers to all of the gods except Zeus; XXI.410, Athena referring to Ares; XXI.441, Poseidon referring to Apollo; and XXI.474, Artemis referring to Apollo. The last three all appear in the **theomakhia**.
- ¹⁷⁴ **nēpie, mēketi tauta noēmata phain' eni dēmōi** (295), "fool, no longer reveal these ideas among the men (/in public)." For other instances of Hektor's growing overconfidence see James Redfield, *Nature and Culture in the Iliad*, expanded edition (Durham: Duke University Press, 1994; original, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975), 145-50 and Malcolm M. Willcock, *A Companion to the Iliad and Odyssey* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), ad loc.
- ¹⁷⁵ On the narratological significance of past counterfactuals in the *Iliad*, see Morrison 60 and on this scene 66. Also see De Jong, *Narrators*, 68-81.
- ¹⁷⁶ For a detailed semantic analysis of this term see Clarke, *Flesh and Spirit*, 61-128.
- ¹⁷⁷ Kaufman, *Prophecy*, 70-1, following Eustathius, also adopts this interpretation.
- ¹⁷⁸ See, for instance: Xenophon, *Cyr.* 8.7.21; Plato, *Apol.* 39c; Aristotle frag. 10; Artemon of Miletus in AT; Cicero, *De Divinatione* 1.63; Genesis 49.
- ¹⁷⁹ The shared lines, which occur just after the dying men's final words, are: **hōs ara min eiponta telos thanatoio kalupsen, / psukhē d' ek rhetheōn ptamenē Aidosde bebēkei / hon potmon gooōsa, lipous' androtēta kai hēbēn.** The image of the **psukhē** actually moving from the character's physical remains to the underworld, though not unique, is unusual in Homeric poetry. For a semantic analysis of this term and its significance in Homeric language, see Clarke, *Flesh and Spirit*, 53-60, and on these two scenes see 129-56.
- ¹⁸⁰ See Anne A. Parry, *Blameless Aegisthus: A Study of Amumōn and Other Homeric Epithets* (Leiden: Brill, 1973) for an extensive examination of this epithet.
- ¹⁸¹ Euchenor (XIII.663-6) presents us with a similar situation: a son gains prophetic insight from his parent and goes to a "glorious" death in battle rather than die at home.
- ¹⁸² Martin, *Language*, 52-53.
- ¹⁸³ For Morrison's view on the oral tradition and the various levels of knowledge among the members of the implied audience, see Morrison, *Misdirection*, 95-97 and 105-8. On the fluidity of the oral tradition, see Albert B. Lord, *Singer of Tales* (New York: Athenaeum, 1968), 150-57. For a view of the epic tradition's stability that differs somewhat from Morrison, see Nagy, *Best of the Achaeans*, 5-7, 71-2, 115-17 and 265-75.
- ¹⁸⁴ Hera's speech occurs at VIII.462-68; Athena's at VIII.31-7. The narrative introduction of Hera's speech (VIII.457-61) repeats IV.20-25, which also introduces an indignant reply by Hera to her brother and mate.
- ¹⁸⁵ See scholia ad loc.

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- ¹⁸⁶ On the importance of the ships in the *Iliad*'s predictive language see Morrison, *Misdirection*, 74-6.
- ¹⁸⁷ See *ibid.*, and W. Schadewaldt, *Iliasstudien* (Leipzig: Abhandlung Sachs Ak. d. Wiss., 1938), 68.
- ¹⁸⁸ Frazer, "The Crisis of Leadership among the Greeks and Poseidon's Intervention in *Iliad* 14," *Hermes* band 113. heft 1(1985): esp. 1-3.
- ¹⁸⁹ For a useful, if dated, historical study that addresses aspects of performance, see James A. Notopoulos, "Studies in Early Greek Oral Poetry," *HSCPh*, 68 (1964): 1-77, esp. 1-18.
- ¹⁹⁰ Bruce Heiden, "The Three Movements of the *Iliad*," *GRBS*, 37 (1996): 17-22, esp. 21-2.
- ¹⁹¹ See n.55 above for pertinent references.
- ¹⁹² Frazer, "Crisis," 1-5.
- ¹⁹³ In his speech to Akhilleus Patroklos not only rouses his leader to action, he voices concerns about prohibitive prophecies from Thetis and Zeus (XVI.36-45) — prophecies of which Akhilleus denies any knowledge (49-55).
- ¹⁹⁴ The double **prin** also occurred in both Kalkhas prophecy at I.93-100 (on which see *supra*, pp. 3-5), and in Zeus' first prophecy at VIII.470-77 (on which see *supra*, pp. 26-28).
- ¹⁹⁵ The *kholos* ends at XIX.56.
- ¹⁹⁶ See Morrison, *Misdirection*, 73-83.
- ¹⁹⁷ B. Dietrich, "Oracles and Divine Inspiration," *Kernos*, 3 (1990), 160-62.

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