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Repetition and Iconicity in Homer

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**Abstract**

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This dissertation investigates the iconic function of repetitions of words and other units of speech in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as a component of the structural stylistics and aesthetics of Homeric epic. While these works are famously repetitive on a number of scales, I focus on small-scale patterns of repetitions that have received comparatively little attention in modern scholarship and argue that such patterns frequently reflect or enact aspects of the content of the lines or passages in which they appear. Because certain types of patterns pervasively correlate with certain types of content, for example ring composition with language of roundness, the resemblance between form and content allows for an examination of content as an implicit source of information about the Homeric conception of poetic structure and composition. Chapter 1 lays the groundwork for the rest of the dissertation by discussing what constitutes a pattern and considering issues of intentionality and perceptibility in an oral-poetic context; Chapter 2 takes a nuanced look at the relationship between sound, structure, and sense by examining the role of paronomasia and other phono-semantic complexities in broader structures; the third and final chapter presents case studies that investigate thematic categories and their correlation with patterns of repetitions,

showing how Homeric verse presents itself as a finely-crafted product of virtuosic artistic skill. The intersections of small-scale repetitive structures and content in Homeric epic ultimately reveal a narrative pervasively concerned with itself as a built medium for conveying its traditional content. By refining our understanding of the relationship between form and content, this work strengthens the basis of and broadens the horizon for claims about Homeric epic's self-awareness and self-referentiality in the use of language.

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the noteworthy characteristics of Homeric epic style is its repetitiveness, its tendency to repeat words and roots and phrases, lines and passages, syllables and sounds. This work examines the phenomenon of small-scale patterns of lexical and phonetic repetitions and their role as an active component of Homeric artistry and aesthetics, centered around the question of how the Homeric poet or poets use and conceptualize such repetition. The answer that this work takes up concerns iconicity, that is, the capacity of repetition to reflect or enact an aspect of the content of the statement in which it occurs.<sup>1</sup> The pervasive correlation of certain types of patterns with certain types of content – for example, lexical ring structures with imagery of roundness or turning, or dense sequences of repetitions with language of thickness, joining, or frequency – suggests that a mimetic function of repetition relying on varying degrees of conceptual abstraction is a widespread and energetically deployed component of the structural stylistics of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. The aim of this work is to explore these relationships of form and content on the basis of a close observation of repetitions of, in the first place, words, as they appear in lines and short passages; and ultimately of roots, syllables, and phonetic sequences, when the everyday concept of the ‘word’ proves of limited utility for a full description of the interplay of sound, structure, and sense that the texts reveal.

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<sup>1</sup> The notion of iconicity derives from Charles S. Peirce’s definition of the *icon* as a sign (a ‘signifier’) that resembles the concept or object to which it refers (the ‘signified’), as opposed to the *symbol*, whose relationship to the signified is arbitrary (see e.g. Peirce’s definition from the early 1900s reprinted in Hoopes 2014: 239-240); in semiotics, iconicity is “the idea that a formal property in a sign corresponds through similarity to a property of its referent” (Haiman 2006: 457). The principle was applied to linguistics by Roman Jakobson (Jakobson 1965; see Nöth 1999: 613; Watkins 1995: 29 with note 2), in which domain it has been argued to play a role at every level of language structure (phonology, morphology, syntax, discourse, etc.); literary criticism has explored its creative and expressive function in literary and other texts (Nänny and Fischer 2006; Fischer 2014).

## LEXICAL REPETITIONS AND MODERN HOMERIC SCHOLARSHIP

The bulk of scholarly attention in discussions of Homeric structure through repetition has focused on phenomena of a larger scale than what is addressed here, larger in terms of the length of text spanned or the length of repeated units or both. I emphasize the lexical and the small-scale not to rule out or disregard the existence and relevance of larger structures, but to remedy the relative lack of sustained attention to this feature of Homeric epic. A survey of titles that treat “Homeric repetition” vel sim. makes clear the overwhelming influence the concept of the Homeric formula has had on where scholars have cast their gaze and how they have framed the question of Homeric repetition over the past century, with repeated phrases, lines, passages, and type scenes, within and across books, receiving the majority of attention.<sup>2</sup> The question of intentionality and perceptibility is often raised by those dealing with Homeric repetition, with respect to which Hainsworth may be cited as a representative of the extreme negative position: “The Homeric audience were too thoroughly accustomed to repetition for any particular instance to have been significant to them.”<sup>3</sup> His comment is prompted by the repetition of an extended simile in the *Odyssey* seventeen books after its initial appearance, at the larger end but within the normal range of units and spans concerning which debates about the intentionality of repetitions

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<sup>2</sup> Many inquiries attempt to address the question of what the formulaic repetitions throughout the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* mean for the Homeric texts in light of Milman Parry’s observation that such repetitions are typical of oral poetic production; some emphasize the stylistic implications of such repetitions. Hutchinson’s recent “Repetition, Range, and Attention: The *Iliad*” (2017) briefly considers the perceptibility of small-scale lexical repetitions (146-148) before turning to recurring phrases. Minchin in “Repetition in Homeric Epic” (2016) is primarily concerned with repetitions “at a larger, structural level” than the formula (17), namely type scenes, repeated elements in stories, and parallels between imagery and narrative in similes. Mueller’s statistically-oriented chapter ‘Homeric repetitions’ (2009) focuses on phrasal repetitions, following the Chicago Homer database in defining repetitions as “any string of two or more words that occurs more than once” (135, cf. Mueller 2011: 739-742). Nagy’s 2004 ‘Poetics of Repetition in Homer’ (engaging with Eide 1999) discusses passages repeated verbatim or close to verbatim; Bannert’s 1988 *Formen des Wiederholens bei Homer: Beispiele für eine Poetik des Epos* deals with the structural function of repeated verses in and across scenes; Lowenstam in *The scepter and the spear: studies on forms of repetition in the Homeric poems* (1993) is concerned with repeated epithets and motifs. Calhoun 1933 “Homeric Repetitions” focuses on repetitions of a line or more. This list is not comprehensive, and much work on Homeric repetitions in a similar vein can be found in studies that do not highlight “repetition” in the title.

<sup>3</sup> Hainsworth 1988 *ad Od.* 6.232-235, given as an example by Lowenstam (1993: 3).

play out. One might reasonably attribute the relative silence concerning small-scale lexical repetitions – repetitions within a handful of lines rather than across scenes or books – to a sense that because repetitions of individual words within passages are so common in Homer, their ability to rise to salience and pass the threshold at which they become more than background noise is limited.

This is not to say that lexical repetitions are never noticed or discussed. As a recent example, Hutchinson 2017 devotes several pages to an argument for the perceptibility of small-scale lexical repetitions.<sup>4</sup> Ahuvia Kahane makes the case that the recurrence at any point in the text of a thematically significant individual word in the same morphological form and metrical position as its first appearance can evoke the original appearance of that word, so that, for example, every instance of accusative singular  $\mu\eta\eta\nu\nu$  ‘wrath’ in verse-initial position in the *Iliad* hearkens back to the verse-initial  $\mu\eta\eta\nu\nu$  in *Il.* 1.1.<sup>5</sup> Detlev Fehling’s book on figures of lexical repetition in early Greek literature treats repetitions outside the framework of the formula, but his emphasis on the figure largely binds him to classifications that descend from the Greek rhetorical tradition, and his consideration of their function within context is limited; the utility of his work lies more on the side of collection than of stylistic analysis, and he does not address lexical sequences like ring structures.<sup>6</sup> It should scarcely need mentioning that lexical repetitions are often observed in close readings of Homeric passages in studies that do not take up the question of lexical repetition *per se*.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> Hutchinson 2017: 146-148.

<sup>5</sup> Kahane 1994: 43-79 (50-58 on *menis*).

<sup>6</sup> Fehling 1969; cf. Edwards 1991: 59-60; Gygli-Wyss 1966 on *polyptoton* in early Greek literature, including 60 instances in Homer (89-95).

<sup>7</sup> Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000 is a fine example.

With one partial exception, discussed below, repetitions of individual words have also generally been downplayed in the study of Homeric ring composition, although their existence is not infrequently acknowledged. The traditional characterization of ring composition is that Homeric rings are formed of parallels of themes or ideas that are sometimes reinforced by repetitions of words;<sup>8</sup> this was most emphatically articulated by Dieter Lohmann in his 1970 book *Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias*:

Es war mehrfach zu betonen, daß nicht die wörtlichen Entsprechungen das spezifische Merkmal der homerischen Ringkomposition sind, sondern thematische Zusammenhänge. Das heißt, daß Ringkomponenten und Zentrum in ihrer thematischen Substanz für die Gesamtstruktur relevant sind, wobei die wörtlichen Anklänge eine Klammerfunktion haben, aber nur selten den eigentlichen Ring bilden.<sup>9</sup>

This view may in turn have had some influence on the rings he tends to find: his focus on speeches, in which rings formed of ideas developed over one or more lines are common, leads him to underestimate the potential of smaller units of speech to be bearers of significant parallels. Although he recognizes that the center or surrounding rings of a ring structure may themselves be divided into ring structures,<sup>10</sup> he overlooks or excludes from consideration smaller lexical structures that extend into the central sections of broader annular patterns. For example, in his discussion of the speech in *Il.* 24.253-64, he labels the center of the ring structure “Klage” (lament), the next ring “Verfluchung” (curse), and the outer ring “Aufforderung” (exhortation),

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<sup>8</sup> In his seminal work on ring composition, Van Otterlo 1944: 3 defined ring composition as the repetition of a thematic sentence from the beginning of a unit of text at its end, “so dass der ganze Abschnitt durch Sätze gleichen Inhalts und mehr oder weniger ähnlichen Wortlauts umrahmt und so zu einem einheitlichen ... Gebilde geschlossen wird” (cf. 43-44). Gaisser 1969: 4 follows van Otterlo; Thalmann 1984: 8 (cf. 28) is similar (“the repetition... of an idea,” sometimes with verbal repetition). Stanley 1993 focuses on echoes between scenes in terms of themes and motifs (cf. Whitman 1958, Cook 2014), but notes that “verbal parallels may also be evident in these pairs” (36; see e.g. his analysis of ring composition, including lexical repetitions, in the Shield of Achilles pp. 9-13).

<sup>9</sup> Lohmann 1970: 26.

<sup>10</sup> Lohmann 1970: 28.

but makes no mention of further rings contained in these lines that are based on parallels between the ideas contained in individual words:<sup>11</sup>

	<b>II. 24.252-264 ABCDDEEDCBA</b>	
	έννεα τοῖς ὃ γεραιὸς ὁμοκλήσας ἐκέλευε·	
	σπεύσατέ μοι κακὰ τέκνα κατηφόνες· αἴθ' ἅμα <u>πάντες</u>	Aufforderung (253a)
	Ἔκτορος ὠφέλετ' ἀντί θοῆς ἐπὶ νηυσὶ πεφάσθαι.	Verfluchung (254b-254)
A	ὦ μοι ἐγὼ πανάποτμος, ἐπεὶ τέκον υἱὰς <u>ἀρίστους</u>	255 Klage (255-259)
B	Τροίη ἐν εὐρείῃ, τῶν δ' οὐ τινά φημι <u>λελειφθαι</u> ,	
C	Μήστορά τ' ἀντί <u>θεον</u> καὶ Τρωῖλον ἰπιοχάρμην	
C, D	Ἔκτορά θ', ὃς <u>θεὸς</u> ἔσκε μετ' <u>ἀνδράσιν</u> , οὐδὲ ἐόκει	
D, C	<u>ἀνδρός</u> γε θνητοῦ πάϊς ἔμμεναι ἀλλὰ <u>θεοῖο</u> .	
B	τοὺς μὲν ἀπόλεσ' Ἄρης, τὰ δ' ἐλέγγεα πάντα <u>λέλειπται</u>	260 Verfluchung (260-262)
A	ψεῦσταί τ' ὀρχησταί τε χοροῖτυπήσιν <u>ἄριστοι</u>	
	ἀρνῶν ἠδ' ἐρίφων ἐπιδήμιοι ἀρπακτῆρες,	
	οὐκ ἂν δὴ μοι ἅμαξαν ἐφοπλίσσαιτε τάχιστα,	Aufforderung (263-264)
	ταῦτά τε <u>πάντ'</u> ἐπιθεῖτε, ἵνα πρήσσωμεν ὁδοῖο;	

These nine did the old man call near him and enjoined:

"Come to me quickly, worthless sons who do me shame; would that you all had been killed at the swift ships rather than Hector.

Miserable man that I am, since I begat the best sons in broad Troy, of whom I say not one is left – godlike Mestor, Troilus the dauntless charioteer, and Hector who was a god among men, nor seemed he likely to be the son of a mortal man, but of a god.

Ares has slain them and those of whom I am ashamed are alone left me.

Liars, and light of foot, best heroes of the dance, robbers of lambs and kids from your own people, why do you not get a wagon ready for me at once, and put all these things upon it that I may set out on my way?"

If we follow the lexical rings, the ring structure centers on the recently deceased Hector and, even more narrowly, on his mortality as a man in contrast with his divine characteristics (the repetition of the name 'Hector' admittedly does not fit the structure). Similar examples of the tendency to overlook lexical patterns can be found in other frequently-cited accounts of Homeric ring composition.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Lohmann 1970: 21.

<sup>12</sup> E.g. Gaisser 1969 (on ring composition in Homeric digressions), who makes no mention of the lexical pattern at the center of the ring structure in *Il.* 7.123-160 ("How Nestor Slew Ereuthalion" 8) δουρί-σιδηρεῖη κορύνη-

An exception to this tendency is Martin Steinrück's treatment of lexical ring structures in his under-cited 1997 book *Kranz und Wirbel: Ringkompositionen in den Büchern 6-8 der Odyssee*. Steinrück undertakes an analysis and cataloguing of ring composition on all scales in *Odyssey* 6 through 8, and the smallest of these structures, the category he labels Ringkomposition 1 (RK1), designating ring structures that cannot be broken into smaller units of ring structures, overlaps with the structures examined here.<sup>13</sup> His analysis of their composition focuses on parallels and oppositions of meaning (semantic rings) and those that are reinforced by the repetition of words (lexical rings), with the added observation that a lexical repetition is always also a semantic repetition in and of itself.<sup>14</sup> Steinrück's sustained attention to the role of lexical repetitions as constitutive elements of ring composition is a salubrious improvement on the norm, but his analyses display on occasion the usual prioritization of semantic import over lexical repetition. Here is a passage that Steinrück identifies as containing a ring structure (the markup is mine):<sup>15</sup>

**Od. 6.112-117 ABCCBA**

ἔνθ' αὐτ' ἄλλ' ἐνόησε θεά, γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη,  
 A, B ὡς **Ὀδυσσεύς** **ἔγροίτο**, ἴδοι τ' ἐνώπιδα κούρην,  
 ἢ οἱ Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν πόλιν ἠγήσαιτο.  
 c, D σφαῖραν ἔπειτ' **ἔρριψε** μετ' **ἀμφίπολον** βασιλεια· 115  
 D, c **ἀμφιπόλου** μὲν ἄμαρτε, βαθείη δ' **ἔμβαλε** δίνην·  
 B, A αἰ δ' ἐπὶ μακρὸν ἄυσαν· ὁ δ' **ἔγρετο** δῖος **Ὀδυσσεύς**...

But then the goddess bright-eyed Athena began to consider  
 how Odysseus should wake up and see the handsome girl  
 who was to conduct him to the city of the Phaeacians.

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Λυκόοργος-στεινωπῶ ἐν ὀδῶ-κορύννη-σιδηρεΐη-Λυκόοργος-δουρι (140-145 ABCDCBDA), or in *Il.* 18.393-409 ("Hephaestus' Debt to Thetis" 9), Εὐρυνόμη τε Θέτις θ'-Εὐρυνόμη-ἀφορρούου Ὠκεανοῖο-ρόος Ὠκεανοῖο-ρέεν-Θέτις τε καὶ Εὐρυνόμη (398-405 ABACDCDCBA); or Thalmann 1984: 17 on the ring composition in *Il.* 16.364-393, in the center of which can be observed the sequence *ιαχὴ τε φόβος τε ἵπποι-ὠκύποδες-λείπε-ὄρυκτὴ τάφρος* ἔρυκε-τάφρω ἐρυσάρματα ὠκέες ἵπποι-λίπον-ιαχὴ τε φόβω τε (365-373 ABCDEFEFECBDA).

<sup>13</sup> Steinrück 1997: 93. In the books of the *Odyssey* on which he concentrates, RK1 covers on average nine to ten lines and contains two to three rings.

<sup>14</sup> Steinrück 1997: 88 and 97. He also acknowledges the possibility of other kinds of echoes, such as those based on phonetic similarity, metrical form or position, and syntax (87).

<sup>15</sup> Steinrück 1997: 30, 73, 111.

The royal girl, therefore, threw a ball at one of the attendants,  
 which missed the attendant and fell into a deep eddy.  
 On this they all shouted greatly, and divine Odysseus woke...

Steinrück schematizes the ring structure as follows (in his notation, underlined words mark semantic repetition, bold a lexical repetition):<sup>16</sup>

Athene plant: Od. soll aufwachen: <b>ἔγροιτο</b>	112f.
Nausikaa <u>wirft</u> den Ball (ἔρριψε)	114
verfehlt	115
Nausikaa <u>wirft</u> den Ball ins Wasser (ἔμβαλε)	116
Plan erfüllt (Odysseus wacht auf): <b>ἔγρευτο</b>	117

Steinrück omits from his account two of the three lexical repetitions (Ὀδυσσεύς, ἀμφίπολος) in the passage. He identifies the semantic echo of ‘throwing’ (ἔρριψε 114, ἔμβαλε 116) as the internal echo (“einem nur semantischen inneren Echo”), and makes no mention of, in the schema or the attending discussion, the lexical repetition of ἀμφίπολος in the same lines. But this repetition occurs over a narrower span than the semantic echo, separated by a single word – ‘queen’ – and the semantic and the lexical echoes are not mutually exclusive. Further, while Steinrück sees in this passage a resonance between the eddy (δίνη 116) into which the ball falls and the ring structure of the passage – a narrative eddy, as it were<sup>17</sup> – there is a similar iconicity at play in the repetition of ἀμφίπολος ‘attendant’ (etymologically, ‘one who turns around another’) on either side of the word designating the person she attends (βασίλεια).

This last observation touches on another aspect of Steinrück’s book that is significant for the present study. Steinrück devotes his third chapter to a demonstration that the language and imagery of roundness and turning served in ancient Greece as metaphors for ring composition; he makes this case by gathering a number of poems and passages from Homer to the Roman era in which round language – the titular crowns and whirlpools included – corresponds to the

<sup>16</sup> Steinrück 1997: 30; again, with slight changes, at 111.

<sup>17</sup> Steinrück 1997: 73

structure of the poem or passage in which it occurs. The following late epigram is his first (and most incontrovertible) example (markup his):<sup>18</sup>

**Rufinus (AP 5.74) c. 100 CE**

πέμπω σοι, Ῥοδόκλεια, τόδε **στέφος**, **ἄνθεσι** καλοῖς  
 αὐτὸς ὑφ' ἡμετέροις πλεξάμενος παλάμαις  
 ἔστι κρίνον ῥοδέη τε κάλυξ νοτερή τ' ἀνεμώνη  
 καὶ νάρκισσος ὑγρὸς καὶ κυαναυγὲς ἴον.  
 ταῦτα στεφασμένη λήξον μέγαν λαυχὸς ἐοῦσα·  
**ἄνθεϊς** καὶ λήγεις καὶ σὺ καὶ ὁ **στέφανος**.

I send to you, Rhodokleia, this crown, with beautiful flowers  
 That I myself twined in my palms  
 There is lily and a calyx of rose and dewy anemone,  
 and damp narcissus and dark-shining violet.  
 Crowned with these things, cease to boast greatly:  
 both you and the crown flourish and cease.<sup>19</sup>

The speaker sends ‘this crown’ (τόδε στέφος) of flowers to his addressee; the references to the crown at the beginning and end suggest that the poem itself is the ‘crown.’ The confirmation of the equation between crown and poem comes from the list of flowers in the second and third lines: the first letter of each of the flowers and the whole of the last – κρίνον ῥοδέη ἀνεμώνη νάρκισσος ἴον – spells κράνιον, ‘skull,’ as the commentaries note.<sup>20</sup> The lexical references to the crown, that is to say, surround the hidden ‘skull’ in an iconic imitation of a crown on a head.

Steinrück is not the first modern scholar to suggest a correlation between ring composition and ‘round’ content. Probably the two most well-known Iliadic passages for which the same correlation has been suggested are the Shield of Achilles in Book 18, in which the river Ocean, depicted encircling the shield, is mentioned at the beginning and end of the description of scenes on the shield,<sup>21</sup> and Nestor’s speech to Antilochus advising him in charioteering in *Il.*

<sup>18</sup> Steinrück 1997: 53-54

<sup>19</sup> Translation mine.

<sup>20</sup> Steinrück 1997: 54; Höschele 2006: 127-129.

<sup>21</sup> E.g. Becker 1995: 148; Stanley 1993: 9-10; DuBois 1982: 17; cf. Thalmann 1984: 10 on the *Shield of Herakles*, with note 33 on the Shield of Achilles.

23.306-348,<sup>22</sup> in which the structure of the speech itself parallels the description of the oblong race-course. There are indications from poetic traditions cognate to that of ancient Greece that the metaphor of roundness for ring composition was a common Indo-European inheritance.<sup>23</sup> Steinrück's work shows that the metaphor is widespread in Greek poetry, and that it also applies on smaller scales than, for example, the Shield of Achilles or Nestor's speech. But he devotes only a page and a half to the metapoetic implications of this correspondence,<sup>24</sup> and when he turns from a (relatively brief) list of metaphors to the comprehensive structural analysis of ring composition in Books 6-8 of the *Odyssey*, he largely sets aside the considerations previously discussed.

Scholars have sometimes suggested other intersections of form and content in Homer and archaic Greek poetry. Norman Austin considers Hesiod's "spiral composition" in the *Theogony*'s "Hymn to the Muses" a "verbal mimesis of that ring dance the Muses perform when they sing and inspire mortal singers."<sup>25</sup> Erwin Cook argues that the *Odyssey*'s large-scale structures correlate with themes of cyclicity in the narrative, while Justin Arft labels Odyssean structure a "*sēma*" ('sign') insofar as the middles of ring structures "highlight and signal the prominent themes and characters of the epic."<sup>26</sup> Alex Purves fruitfully draws a connection between repetitive language and language denoting 'thickness' in Homer.<sup>27</sup> The iconicity of lexical repetitions for multiplicity, iterative or continuative actions ('again and again'), distribution (ἐνθα καὶ ἐνθα 'here and there,' ἄλλος ἄλλο 'each another'), and reciprocity (ἀλλήλων 'each

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<sup>22</sup> E.g. Lohmann 1970: 15-17; Richardson 1993 *ad loc.*; Steinrück 1997: 60-64; Forte and Smith 2014: 62-64.

<sup>23</sup> Forte and Smith 2014; Watkins 1995: 37.

<sup>24</sup> Steinrück 1997: 51-52.

<sup>25</sup> Austin 1975: 130-131.

<sup>26</sup> Cook 2014: 93; Arft 2017 (quote 6).

<sup>27</sup> Purves 2013.

other’) is a noted linguistic phenomenon in Indo-European languages and beyond.<sup>28</sup> More broadly, narrative-internal acts of craftsmanship such as metalworking (e.g. Hephaistos and the Shield of Achilles)<sup>29</sup> or weaving (e.g. Penelope and the shroud)<sup>30</sup> have often been seen as analogies for the production of epic verse.

Many of the structural metaphors I propose are thus not new, but I propose all of them solely on the basis of what appears and recurs in the contexts of small-scale patterns of lexical repetitions in Homer. Because these lexical structures have largely been overlooked, their relationship to narrative content has also largely been overlooked. Attention to repetitions of small units of speech offers a means to establish a consistent, cross-Homeric basis for the sometimes piecemeal connections already made, and to strengthen, refine, and go beyond them.

## ORGANIZATION

The first chapter of the dissertation provides an overview of types of lexical patterns, considers problems of the production and perception of repetitions in an oral-poetic context, and discusses what “counts” as a pattern on a sliding scale from symmetry to disorder; the passages discussed offer a series of examples of the ways lexical structures can iconically reflect content. The second chapter problematizes the term ‘lexical’ by examining wordplay and the role of phonetic echoes in patterns of repetitions, including assonance, alliteration, and homeoteleuton. It gathers passages in which the poetry displays awareness through self-annotation of the presence of repeated sounds such as syllables, phonemes, and homophonous words. I argue that

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<sup>28</sup> West 2007: 106; Gonda 1959 *Stylistic Repetition in the Veda* 324-335; cf. Gygli-Wyss 1966: 9 and 11 (on archaic Greek), 89-95 (on Homer). Wills’ useful remarks in the context of Latin poetry apply to Greek as well (1996: 6-8).

<sup>29</sup> E.g. Schadewaldt 1965, Marg 1971, Becker 1990 and 1995, Hubbard 1992, Stanley 1993, Nagy 2010.

<sup>30</sup> E.g. Clayton 2003, Nagy 2010: 274-307, Edmunds 2012.

the frequency of paronomastic echoes in broader lexical patterns suggests the importance of repetitions of sound as such, in contrast to the usual approach to Homeric ring composition that sees repeated words as serving primarily to strengthen an underlying alignment of thought or theme. At the same time, the chapter examines how paronomastic connections can establish semantic associations between superficially unrelated words, and the potential implications for how we understand the content of the narrative.

The third chapter is devoted to an investigation of thematic categories and their correlation with structures of repetition; it builds on the foundations laid in the previous two chapters and constitutes the core of the dissertation. The chapter consists of six case studies that focus on specific images or vocabulary and explore from a variety of angles the interpretive possibilities of different kinds of structural correlations with content: 1) shields and ring structures (and circles and equality); 2) ornaments, along with language of order (κόσμος) and signs (σημα); 3) ‘holding’ (ἔχω) and the Achaean gates; 4) numeral iconicity, namely doublets and triplets; 5) multiplicity (πολύς) and the proem of the *Odyssey*; 6) turning and whirling. Many other examples of structurally relevant images are discussed as they appear in the above contexts, images such as folding, joining, and flowing, which together with the other categories discussed in the chapter and in Chapters 1 and 2 offer an implicit characterization of Homeric verse as a finely-crafted, orderly, and cohesive, but also much-twisting, multifarious, and fluent product of artistic skill.

## NOTATIONAL CONVENTIONS

The notational conventions I employ for marking patterns can be summarized as follows:

1) Lexical repetitions are underlined and labelled on the left-hand side of the passage with capital letters. 2) Paronomastic repetitions, repetitions of non-root morphemes, and etymologically unrelated synonyms, antonyms, or otherwise conceptually related pairs (e.g. ‘night’ and ‘day,’ ‘hands’ and ‘feet,’ or pairs of names or places) are marked with dotted underline. The same applies to words for which an etymological link is possible but not certain. These are labelled on the left-hand side of the passage with lowercase letters. The use of the dotted underline is intended to acknowledge the greater degree of subjectivity involved in identifying non-lexical pairs, and the designation should be understood as suggesting anything between the probability and the possibility of an intentional echo. 3) Words that may gesture metapoetically to the structure of the passage in which they occur are italicized. 4) When it is useful to draw attention to alliteration or recurring syllables, these are placed in bold.

For example:

	<b>II. 16.155-167</b>	AB c De FGFG eD c AB	
A, B	<u>Μυρμιδόνας</u> δ' ἄρ' ἐποικόμενος θώρηξεν <u>Ἀχιλλεύς</u>	155	
c	πάντας ἀνά κλισίας σὺν τεύχεσιν· οἱ δὲ λύκοι ὡς ὠμοφάγοι, τοῖσιν τε περὶ <u>φρεσὶν</u> ἄσπετος ἀλκή, οἱ τ' ἔλαφον κεραὸν μέγαν οὖρεσι δηῶσαντες		
De	δάπτουσιν· πᾶσιν δὲ παρήϊον <u>αἵματι φοινόν</u> ·		
FG	καὶ τ' ἀγεληδὸν ἴασιν ἀπὸ κρήνης <u>μελανύδρου</u>	160	
FG	λάψοντες γλώσσησιν ἀραιῆσιν <u>μέλαν ὕδωρ</u>		
eD, c	ἄκρον ἐρευγόμενοι <u>φόνον αἵματος</u> · ἐν δὲ τε <u>θυμὸς</u> στήθεσιν ἄτρομός ἐστι, περιστένεται δὲ τε γαστήρ·		
A	τοῖσι <u>Μυρμιδόνων</u> ἠγήτορες ἠδὲ μέδοντες		
B	ἀμφ' ἀγαθὸν θεράποντα ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο	165	
	ῥώνοντ'· ἐν δ' ἄρα τοῖσιν ἀρήϊος ἴστατ' <u>Ἀχιλλεύς</u> , ὀτρύνων ἵππους τε καὶ ἀνέρας ἀσπιδιώτας.		

Meanwhile Achilles bade his Myrmidons put on their armour going about among all the tents with their gear, and these like flesh-eating wolves, in whose hearts there is unceasing might, who are feasting upon a great horned stag which they have killed in the mountains, and all their cheeks are red with blood— they go in a pack to drink from a black-watered spring lapping with their long thin tongues the black water;

and they belch forth the gore of blood; and the spirit  
 in their chests is fearless, for their stomachs drive them—  
 even so did the leaders and counsellors of the Myrmidons  
 gather round the good squire of the fleet descendant of Aeacus,  
 and among them stood warlike Achilles himself  
 cheering on the horses and the men with shields.

Here φοινόν ('bloody' 159) and φόνον ('slaughter' 162), in corresponding positions adjacent to the repeated αἷμα 'blood,' form a paronomastic ring (ee),<sup>31</sup> while φρεσὶν ('heart, mind' 157) and θυμὸς ('spirit, heart' 162, cc) are conceptually parallel insofar as both refer to internal organs associated here with fearlessness and strength (ἄσπετος ἀλκή, ἄτρομός ἐστι).

It is worth keeping in mind that the ancient epic poet's conception of words may not correspond to our own. Among the Serbian bards with whom Albert Lord worked, the word closest in denotation to the English 'word' was closer in sense to the English 'utterance,' since it could refer to a word, a line's worth of words, or a whole song without distinction.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, as Foley emphasized, the 'word' as we understand it may not have been for the Homeric poet an overwhelmingly relevant unit of speech.<sup>33</sup> When μελάνυδρος is matched with μέλαν ὕδωρ at the center of the wolf simile at *Il.* 16.160-61, for example, it may miss the mark to say that two words are being paired with one. In such cases I apply the word 'term,' with some distortion of its normal sense, to any lexical match, regardless of whether it exists on the printed page as a part of a word, a word, or multiple words. It will nevertheless often be a matter of convenience to describe matching terms according to modern conventions.

I have opted to label each repeated root as its own repetition (e.g. μελάνυδρος/μέλαν ὕδωρ as FG-FG) in order to indicate something of the length of a repetition in terms of contiguous units. But this is not practical when entire lines are repeated, in which case I use a

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<sup>31</sup> But see the discussion of the ancient association between φοινός and φόνος in Chapter 2.

<sup>32</sup> Lord 1960: 25.

<sup>33</sup> Foley 1999: 201-240.

single letter in italics (e.g. *AA*). In the alphabetical labelling at the left-hand side of a quoted passage, I indicate the adjacency of repeated units in the same line by leaving no intervening space between the designating letters (e.g. FG for μελάνυδρος and μέλαν ὕδωρ in the examples above), while units that are not adjacent are separated by a comma and a space (e.g. A, B for Μυρμιδόνας... Ἀχιλλεύς). The salience of repetitions is also a factor in labelling: for a repeated phrase like παρθένος ἡϊθέος τε (*Il.* 22.126-130) I underline the enclitic τε in the passage, but do not label it with its own letter in the margin. This should be understood as a practical convenience of notation and not a dismissal of the possibility that small units of speech play a role in lexical patterns.

Closer examination of the role of paronomasia in “lexical” structures will reveal further shortcomings in the conceptualization of what I have called “lexical” repetitions as repetitions of words, and these and the attendant difficulties of notation are taken up in Chapter 2.

## Chapter 1. LEXICAL STRUCTURES AND ICONICITY: A PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

At the beginning of the *Odyssey*, Poseidon is absent from a divine assembly on Olympus while visiting the Aethiopians. The poet pauses to comment that there are two groups of Aethiopians, one in the east and one in the west (*Od.* 1.22-25):

***Od.* 1.22-25**

ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν Αἰθίοπας μετεκίαθε τηλόθ' ἔοντας,  
Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαΐαται, ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν,  
οἱ μὲν δυσομένου Ὑπερίονος οἱ δ' ἀνιόντος,  
ἀντιῶν τὰ ἄρων τε καὶ ἀρνειῶν ἑκατόμβης. 25

Now [Poseidon] had gone off to the Aethiopians far away,  
the Aethiopians who are divided in two, living at the world's end,  
some where Hyperion sets, some where he rises.  
He had gone there to accept a hecatomb of oxen and sheep.<sup>34</sup>

The scholia to the *Iliad* repeatedly assert that while there are many instances of the figure epanalepsis in the *Iliad*, there is only one in the *Odyssey*;<sup>35</sup> that purportedly unique case is here, in the repetition of Αἰθίοπας from line 22 at the beginning of line 23 (underlined in the passage above). A scholion to these lines states that the poet “repeats the name, so that he might show that there are two tribes of Aethiopians” (ἐπανάλαβε δὲ τὸ ὄνομα, ἵνα δείξῃ ὅτι δύο γένη Αἰθιόπων. Υ). The scholiast is commenting on one of the uses of epanalepsis, namely, to allow the narrator to give more information, but strictly speaking, the repetition is not necessary for *saying* that there are two tribes of Aethiopians. Why, then, should it appear here? One possibility

<sup>34</sup> The block-text *Iliad* and *Odyssey* translations in this dissertation are taken from or based on the public domain translations of these texts by Samuel Butler (*Iliad* 1898; *Odyssey* 1900). I have in all cases organized his prose by line to match the Greek, and have frequently made adjustments for the sake of clarity or style. All other translations in the dissertation are mine unless otherwise noted. The Greek text of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* is that of Monro and Allen's 1920 OCT editions.

<sup>35</sup> E.g. Scholion A *ad Il.* 6.154: καὶ ὅτι ἐν Ἰλιάδι συνεχῶς ταῖς ἐπαναλήψεσι κέχρηται, ἐν δὲ Ὀδυσσεΐα ἅπαξ κατ' ἀρχάς, “Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ”; A *ad Il.* 22.642.

is the iconic effect of the repetition as an enactment of the duality and division described in the phrase διχθὰ δεδαίαται (23, italicized above): framed a different way, διχθὰ δεδαίαται, literally ‘[they] have been divided in two,’ does double work as a reference to the two geographically disparate groups of Ethiopians within the narrative and to the poet’s repetition of Αἰθίοπας at the level of narrative structure.

This is a simple example of the underlying principle with which this dissertation is concerned: the capacity of small-scale lexical repetitions, in various patterns and degrees of complexity, to artistically reflect narrative content, and the capacity of narrative content to act as an embedded commentary on the structure created by such patterns. The following passage from *Iliad* 16 offers an expanded illustration (*Il.* 16.211-217; 215 = *Il.* 13.131 AABBC):<sup>36</sup>

***Il.* 16.211-217**                      AABBC  
 μᾶλλον δὲ στίχες ἄρθεν, ἐπεὶ βασιλῆος ἄκουσαν.  
 ὡς δ’ ὅτε τοῖχον ἀνήρ ἀράρη πυκνοῖσι λίθοισι  
 δώματος ὑψηλοῦ βίας ἀνέμων ἀλεείνων,  
 ὡς ἄραρον κόρυθές τε καὶ ἀσπίδες ὀμφαλόεσσαι.  
ἀσπίς ἄρ’ ἀσπίδ’ ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ’ ἀνήρ. 215  
 ψαῦον δ’ ἰππόκομοι κόρυθες λαμπροῖσι φάλιοισι  
 νεύοντων, ὡς πυκνοὶ ἐφέστασαν ἀλλήλοισι.

They fitted their ranks yet more closely when they heard their king.  
 As when a man fits with close-packed stones the wall  
 of some high house, warding off the force of the winds –  
 even so closely were the helmets and bossed shields fitted together.  
Shield leaned on shield, helm on helm, and man on man;  
 The horse-hair plumes on the gleaming ridges of their helmets touched  
 as they bent their heads, so close they stood to each other.

In line 215, the lexical structure consists of the repetitions of ἀσπίς, κόρυς, and ἀνήρ, underlined in the passage above (AABBC; I overlook for the moment the repeated words in previous and subsequent lines). The pattern of repeated words enacts structurally both the dense ranks of

<sup>36</sup> Cp. *Il.* 13.130-31 φράξαντες δόρυ δουρί, σάκος σάκει προθελύμνω. / ἀσπίς ἄρ’ ἀσπίδ’ ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ’ ἀνήρ.

armed men that the scene describes and the wall of close-packed stones to which the men are compared in the preceding simile; word leans on word (ἔρειδε), as it were.<sup>37</sup> But if the block structure of the words is like the wall (and the ranks of soldiers), we can press the language of the simile for further parallels: the wall is a built thing, and built by a builder (ἄνθρωπος ‘man’); the builder of the wall of words would, then, be the poet; just as the builder’s action is the fitting together of stones (ἀράρη), so the poet’s action is the fitting together of words; the stones are said to be densely packed (πυκνοῖσι, cf. πυκνοὶ in the narrative element), as are the repetitions of words in 215. In short, the correlation between form and content suggests an implicit analogy between poetic production through lexical repetitions and the act of building a wall. As the builder’s ability to fit stones together in a dense arrangement is the factor that determines the success of the wall, so the poet’s skill in arranging and repeating words can be understood as a factor in the passage’s success.

The aim of this work is to show that patterns of lexical repetitions within small units of text are a widespread feature of Homeric poetry, and that there is a pervasive correlation in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* between these lexical patterns and certain potentially self-referential categories of vocabulary and imagery such as craftsmanship, building, turning, roundness, joining, flowing, signs, and density. Since the patterns resemble their content, we can reverse the directionality of the comparison and read the content as an embedded commentary on the structures: we then have from Homeric poetry itself a view into one aspect of what the Homeric tradition valued in its own composition. These patterns of repetitions, a structural feature of epic poetry, have the potential to constitute a semantic valence beyond the content of the narrative, the meaning of which can be extrapolated from, and, perhaps, interpolated back into, the

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<sup>37</sup> Cf. Janko 1992 on *Il.* 13.130-131 (131=16.215): “These lines vividly depict the density of the formation.”

narrative itself. This “figurative” nexus mobilizes interpretive possibilities going in two directions: how can the content help elucidate the lexical patterns, and how, in turn, can the patterns help elucidate the content?

This chapter serves as a preliminary survey of the main characteristics of small-scale sequences of lexical repetitions in terms of formal features such as symmetry, length, and complexity, and explores their capacity to act as vehicles of semantic, artistic, and metapoetic import. I take up the question of what “counts” as a pattern and consider the factors that contribute to the perceptibility of patterns of lexical repetitions in an oral-poetic context. A number of the chapter’s discussions and conclusions are informed by analyses conducted in greater detail in subsequent chapters; the premise that these patterns are widespread finds corroboration there.

## 1.1 SMALL-SCALE LEXICAL PATTERNS

By ‘lexical pattern,’ I refer broadly to any orderly sequence of repeated words, roots, or syllables. I focus in this chapter on repeated words and roots; the role of paronomasia in these structures is treated in Chapter 2. The designation ‘small-scale’ refers to the appearance of these patterns in passages usually spanning between several and a dozen lines, sometimes more or fewer; they are thus larger than many rhetorical figures as transmitted by ancient manuals of rhetoric (epanalepsis, anaphora, etc.) and smaller than most ring composition (and other narrative structures) as treated by modern scholarship. My working assumption is that any proximate lexical or phonetic repetition has the potential to be raised to salience and significance by its context (cf. the *Odyssean* example given above), so the term ‘pattern’ should be heard as correspondingly capacious. In the first place, however, it refers to repeating sequences of

multiple terms. The wall simile described above (*Il.* 16.211-217) is a fairly clear-cut case of iconicity through repetition, but the AABBCC sequence – I will call it ‘block composition’ – is relatively uncommon in Homeric epic;<sup>38</sup> the predominant patterns of lexical repetitions that come to the fore in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are ring structures (ABCCBA, etc.) and parallelism or interlocking structures (ABCABC, etc.), with expansions and complications of the same. Nor are such “dense” concatenations the norm, although there are enough of these to prompt entirely on their own a suspicion that the Homeric poet deploys lexical repetitions strategically.<sup>39</sup>

One does not need to look far in Homeric epic to find an example of a lexical pattern that is more typical in terms of its structure and frequency of repetitions (*Il.* 1.5-10):

	<b>Il. 1.1-10</b>	ABcAcBA	
		μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος	
		οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἄχαιοῖς ἄλγε’ ἔθηκε,	
		πολλὰς δ’ ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν	
		ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν	
A		οἰωνοῖσί τε πᾶσι, <b>Διὸς</b> δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή,	5
B		ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε	
c, A, c		<b>Ἄτρεΐδης</b> τε ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ <b>διος Ἀχιλλεύς</b> .	
B		τίς τ’ ἄρ σφωε θεῶν <b>ἔριδι</b> ζυνέηκε μάχεσθαι;	
A		Λητοῦς καὶ <b>Διὸς</b> υἱός· ὃ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεὶς	
		νοῦσον ἀνὰ στρατὸν ὄρσε κακὴν, ὀλέκοντο δὲ λαοί...	10

Sing, O goddess, the anger of Achilles son of Peleus,  
destructive, that placed countless ills upon the Achaeans.  
Many a brave soul did it send down to Hades,  
heroes’ souls, and themselves made prey to dogs  
and all birds, for so were the counsels of Zeus fulfilled  
from the day on which first stood apart having quarreled  
the son of Atreus, king of men, and godlike Achilles.  
And which of the gods threw them together to fight in strife?  
It was the son of Zeus and Leto; for he was angry with the king  
and sent a pestilence upon the host, and the people were dying...

<sup>38</sup> Others at *Il.* 13.130-131, *Il.* 2.363, *Il.* 14.382, *Od.* 7.120-121. More diffusely: *Il.* 2.101-108.

<sup>39</sup> In addition to those listed in the preceding note, see *Il.* 2.835-838, *Il.* 2.870-871, *Il.* 4.62-63, *Il.* 6.154-155, *Il.* 7.428-432, *Il.* 20.371-372, *Il.* 22.127-128, *Il.* 22.157-158, *Il.* 22.199-202, *Il.* 23.641-642.

The lexical pattern is ABcAcBA. The external ring consists of the proper noun Διὸς ‘of Zeus’ in 5 and 9, followed by the ring that occurs when the noun ἔριδι ‘strife’ in 8 picks up the participle of the same root in 6 (ἐρίσαντε). As a conceptual pair, Ἀτρεΐδης and Ἀχιλλεύς in 7 are marked with dotted underline and assigned lower-case letters in the alphabetic labelling to the left (see the section on notational conventions in the introduction). Here, the names designating the two characters in conflict, Ἀτρεΐδης and Ἀχιλλεύς, occur in corresponding positions within the structure (cc); their conceptual collocation is phonically reinforced by the /a/s that begin and the /s/s that conclude each name, and the whole central line is further unified by alliteration. The adjective δῖος ‘godlike’ in 7 echoes Διὸς ‘of Zeus’ in 5 and is echoed in turn by Διὸς again in 9; the root of the two words is the same, hence the full underline.<sup>40</sup> In making such assessments the judgments of ancient folk etymology deserve greater weight than those of modern etymology, but since we lack a contemporaneous authority for the former, modern etymology will have to serve as a stand-in. In a case like δῖος and Διὸς, the homophony and connotative overlap of the words strengthen the echo.

Although lexical repetitions are sometimes discussed in terms of ‘density,’ ‘frequency’ is more apt to the oral-poetic circumstances in which Homeric poetry arose, insofar as the Homeric repetition was not in origin a page-bound spatial occurrence but an iteration of sound over time, a “demarcation of acoustic space,” to borrow a phrase from Jeffrey Wills.<sup>41</sup> If it is sometimes necessary to use spatial language interchangeably with temporal in descriptions of the text, this is not meant to suggest that Homeric epic was originally produced in or read from a physical document. Moreover, as we saw with block composition above, the passages in which lexical

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<sup>40</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. ‘belonging to heaven, godlike,’ also ‘belonging to Zeus.’ He cites Schwyzer 1950: 176ff for the possibility that the adjective replaces the genitive of the basic word (Ζεῦς).

<sup>41</sup> Wills 1996: 8.

patterns occur seem to suggest the aptitude of temporal frequency and sequence as metaphors for concrete or abstract spatial arrangement. In the proem of the *Iliad*, the position of Ἀτρεΐδης and Ἀχιλλεύς at opposing ends of the same line (7) enacts the proleptic dual verb διαστήτην in the preceding line (6): as the two ‘stood apart having quarreled,’ so their respective names stand apart to the greatest extent possible within the hexameter verse.<sup>42</sup> The line that follows conceptually reconfigures this relationship on both the narrative and the structural level: when the narrator asks which god ‘threw them together to fight in strife,’ the verb ξυνήμι recasts the relationship of the two characters as one not of separation but of proximity and antagonistic togetherness. In the same line, the repetition of ἔρις (ἔριδι 8, with ἐρίζω in 6) forms the next ring of the ring structure, a ring that frames within itself the line that names the quarreling characters (one may note in addition the chiasmus of the verbs δίστημι and ξυνήμι on either side of each ἔρις).<sup>43</sup> For all that the two names stand as far as possible within their line of hexameter, this external frame draws attention to the relative proximity of the names within a single verse, to their ‘thrown-together-ness.’ Iconically, Achilles and Agamemnon have been thrown together ‘with strife’: they have been thrown together in a ring structure that encloses them within a ring of the repeated word ἔρις. That the two characters quarrel but are unable to meaningfully separate from each other – literally, on the plain of Troy, and more abstractly, in terms of the Greek undertaking at Troy – is the essential condition that leads to the main events of the *Iliad*.

It should be made clear that my emphasis on lexicality is not intended to minimize the role of syntax, meter, or any other factor that we might include in the “structural” description of Homeric verse, just as it is not intended to bypass the semantic import of repeated terms. Many

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<sup>42</sup> This need not be considered less significant for the fact that these are common verse-positions for each name: Ἀτρεΐδης appears at the beginning of a line more than half the time; δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς always at the end of a line (Redfield 1979: 109).

<sup>43</sup> See Russo 1963: 246 on the unusual nature of the phrase ‘διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε’ from a formulaic standpoint.

instances of lexical parallelism, for example, are intertwined with syntactic parallelism, as in the following passage (*Il.* 9.410-416):

<b>II. 9.410-416</b>	AB C DEFG C DEFG BA	
	μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα	410
AB	διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν <b>θανάτοιο τέλος</b> δέ.	
C	<b>εἰ μὲν κ'</b> αὔθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,	
D, E, F, G	<b>ᾧλετο</b> μὲν <b>μοι</b> νόστος, ἀτὰρ <b>κλέος</b> ἄφθιτον <b>ἔσται</b> .	
C	<b>εἰ δέ κεν</b> οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,	
D, E, F	<b>ᾧλετό μοι κλέος</b> ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ <b>μοι</b> αἰὼν	415
G, BA	<b>ἔσσεται</b> , οὐδέ κέ μ' ᾧκα <b>τέλος θανάτοιο</b> κιχείη.	

My mother the goddess Thetis of the silver feet tells me  
that I bear a twofold destiny toward death's end.  
If I stay here and fight around the city of the Trojans,  
My homecoming is destroyed but my fame will last for ever:  
whereas if I go home to my dear fatherland,  
my fame is destroyed, but my life will be long  
nor swiftly will the end of death come upon me.

Achilles emphasizes the duality of his fates through parallel conditional constructions (εἰ δέ κ(εν) ... ᾧλετό in verse-initial position in 412-413 and 414-415), carried on by the repetitions of μοι, κλέος, and the verb εἰμί in the apodoses; this lexical parallelism to a large extent coincides with the syntactic parallelism. The equivalent metrical positions and forms of εἰ δέ κ(εν) ... ᾧλετό contribute to the salience of the echo. The poet has Achilles illustrate the διχθαδίας κῆρας (cf. *Od.* 1.22 διχθαῖα δεδαίαται, discussed above) not only in terms of content but on the level of form. The whole is framed by the lexical rings θανάτοιο τέλος - τέλος θανάτοιο (AB-BA 411, 416); the combination of ring-compositional and parallel elements occurs often, and I inclusively refer to patterns with such variations as 'ring structures' at the possible expense of descriptive accuracy on the grounds that this is preferable to a narrow definition of ring structure that leads to exaggerated emphasis on concentricity when other patterns are involved. Although this and the ring structure in the proem of the *Iliad* are relatively balanced in terms of the distribution of repetitions across lines (in this passage the second εἰμί, rather than concluding line 415, is

enjambement in the next), the terms that form the repetitions of lexical structures are more often than not spread unevenly over a number of lines: there is no systematic equation of one or at least one term per line in a ring structure. We may understand that the sequence of the repetitions, and not strictly the temporal distance between them, is the factor that evokes the notional symmetry of the pattern.

A more elaborate example of the correlation of lexical patterns with narrative-internal patterns appears in the description of the dancing scene fashioned by Hephaestus on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18:

**Il. 18.590-606** AB CDCDCDCD EFGFEFG BA G  
 ἐν δὲ χορὸν ποίκιλλε περικλυτὸς ἀμφιγυήεις, 590  
 τῷ ἴκελον οἶόν ποτ' ἐνὶ Κνωσῶ εὐρείῃ  
 Δαίδαλος ἤσκησεν καλλιπλοκάμῳ Ἀριάδνῃ.  
 ἔνθα μὲν ἦῖθεοι καὶ παρθένοι ἀλφεισίβοιοι  
 ὄρχευντ' ἀλλήλων ἐπὶ καρπῶ χειρᾶς ἔχοντες.  
 τῶν δ' αἱ μὲν λεπτὰς ὀθόνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ χιτῶνας 595  
 εἴατ' ἐϋννήτους, ἦκα στίλβοντας ἐλαίῳ·  
 καὶ ῥ' αἱ μὲν καλάς στεφάνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ μαχαίρας  
εἶχον χρυσείας ἐξ ἀργυρέων τελαμώνων.  
 οἱ δ' ότε μὲν θρέξασκον ἐπισταμένοιισι πόδεσσι  
 ῥεῖα μάλ', ὡς ὅτε τις τροχὸν ἄρμενον ἐν παλάμῃσιν 600  
 ἐζόμενος κεραμεὺς πειρήσεται, αἱ κε θέησι·  
 ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ θρέξασκον ἐπὶ στίχας ἀλλήλοισι.  
 πολλὸς δ' ἱμερόεντα χορὸν περίσταθ' ὄμιλος  
 τερπόμενοι· [μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο θεῖος ἀοιδὸς  
 φορμίζων·] δοιῶ δὲ κυβιστητῆρε κατ' αὐτοὺς 605  
 μολπῆς ἐξάρχοντες ἐδίνεον κατὰ μέσσους.

Furthermore the renowned god with crooked legs wrought a dancing place,  
 like that which once in broad Cnossus  
 Daedalus made for Ariadne of the lovely locks.  
 Hereon youths and maidens whom all would woo  
 danced holding each other's hands at the wrists.  
The maidens wore robes of light linen, and the youths wore shirts  
 well-woven, that were slightly gleaming with oil.  
The maidens had lovely crowns, while the young men had daggers  
 of gold that hung from silver straps.  
Sometimes they would run with skilled feet,  
 very easily, as when a potter makes trial of his wheel fit to his hands,

sitting at his work, to see whether it will run,  
 and sometimes they would run with each other in rows.  
 And a great crowd stood about the charming dancing place,  
 joyously. [There was a bard singing among them  
 and playing his lyre,] while two tumblers among them  
 led the dance and whirled in their midst.

Within a loose annular structure of χορὸν-ἀλλήλων-ἀλλήλοισι-χορὸν occur two lexical/syntactic sequences, first ἔχοντες / τῶν δ' αἰ μὲν λεπτὰς ὀθόνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ χιτῶνας - καί ρ' αἰ μὲν καλὰς στεφάνας ἔχον, οἱ δὲ μαχαίρας εἶχον (594-598), next οἱ δ' ὅτε μὲν θρέξασκον ἐπισταμένοισι πόδεσσι - ἄλλοτε δ' αὖ θρέξασκον ἐπὶ στίχας ἀλλήλοισι (599-602). The lines that contain the interlocking αἰ μὲν... οἱ δὲ... description of the young men and women's garb and accoutrements are themselves interlocking, in the sequence A (595) B (596) A (597) B (598). Lines 599-602 describe two patterns of dancing, centering in ring-composed fashion on the simile of the spinning potter's wheel (τροχός, related to θρέξασκον < τρέχω 'run'): sometimes the young men and women dance in a circle like a potter spinning a wheel, and sometimes they dance in rows. The two patterns described are reflected in the structural sequences just outlined: the interlocking description of the young men and women in 594-598 evokes the dance in rows, while the echoic lines that surround the simile of the potter's wheel, together with the resumption of ἀλλήλων and χορός in annular order from before, suggest a spinning of language to match both the wheel and the dance it illustrates. The two kinds of dancing, in rows and in circles, are thus imitated by the lexical structures of the passage in which they are described.

If the similarity of form and content were not in itself sufficient to draw an analogy between Hephaestus' depiction of the dancing scene in metal on the shield and the poet's depiction of that depiction in verse, the passage offers the listener a superabundance of cues for interpreting the content of the scene as a metapoetic commentary on its composition.<sup>44</sup> The verb

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Rutherford 2019: 30-31; Frontisi-Ducroux 2002: 482-483; Steiner 2015: 40-41.

ποικίλλω in 590 is unique among the verbs used to describe Hephaestus' creation of scenes on the shield and signifies the production of intricate and dynamic interplays of color and material; the corresponding adjective ποικίλος is often used abstractly for complexity, versatility, and variegation outside of the realm of the purely visual, and the verb here marks out both the scene and the account of the scene as artifacts of virtuosic skill.<sup>45</sup> Lines 591-592 compare the dancing place to the one the mythical Athenian inventor and craftsman Daedalus produced for Ariadne, and Daedalus connotes beyond all else intricate and cunning artistry, for example in the windings of the labyrinth he built to hold the Minotaur.<sup>46</sup> This simile has been understood as a reference to the "crane dance" that Daedalus is said to have taught the young men and women rescued from the Minotaur;<sup>47</sup> according to Plutarch, the dance imitated the paths of the labyrinth and consisted of alternations (παραλλάξεις) and spiral movements (ἀνελίξεις).<sup>48</sup> The simile of the potter turning the potter's wheel at the core of the description introduces another craftsman, one who fits the wheel into his palms to test how it runs at the moment when the ring structure starts to work back towards its beginning. This evokes an image of the poet-as-potter placing his hands on the verses to shape them (note the participle of ἀραρίσκω 'fit, join' in 600), and as the dancers dance 'easily' (ῥεῖα 600) just as the potter easily turns the wheel, we can hear an implicit boast about the ease with which the poet arranges his intricate verses.

Further, a plus verse (604b-605a) attested here only by Athenaeus introduces a singer, an ᾠοιδός, who sings and plays the lyre among the dancers and, with a slight adjustment of line 606 (ἐξάρχοντες → ἐξάρχοντος), leads the dance. The appropriateness of the line here, which appears

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<sup>45</sup> On the meaning of ποικίλος and the visual significance of ποικίλλω in this scene see Grand-Clément 2015: 407-408.

<sup>46</sup> On Daedalus as a figure for the poet here, see Frontisi-Ducroux 2002: 482-483. For the interpretation of χορός as dancing place rather than dance, see summaries in Coray 2018 *ad* 18.590, Edwards 1991 *ad* 590-592.

<sup>47</sup> See Coray 2018 *ad* 18.592; the crane dance is described by Scheid and Svenbro 1996: 101-103.

<sup>48</sup> Plutarch *Theseus* 21.

also in the *Odyssey*, is a matter of debate, but one of the arguments often used in its favor is the aptness of the self-referentiality of an embedded poet in an already metapoetic scene.<sup>49</sup> With or without this singer, however, the effect of the dance on those watching it is clear (603-604): the dance is lovely (ἰμερόεντα), and the crowd delights in it (τερπόμενοι).<sup>50</sup> This reaction serves as model for a notional reception of the poet’s verbal ‘dance’ of rings and parallelisms: the verses, like the dance, are implied to be a source of delight.

## 1.2 LEXICAL REPETITIONS AS CONSTITUENTS OF PATTERNS

In the introduction’s literature review, I discussed Martin Steinrück’s important assertion that lexical repetitions are always also semantic repetitions, an assertion that draws needed attention to the capacity of individual words to constitute rings in ring structures rather than solely to reinforce broader parallels of thought or theme.<sup>51</sup> But this notion of “semantic repetition” warrants elaboration. While a general correspondence of the broader idea behind the use of each word in a matching pair is common, there are also instances in which matching terms are used in different senses or contexts.<sup>52</sup> In the following passage, the verb ἵστημι in ἵστατο νεῖκος at *Il.* 13.333, ‘strife arose,’ is repeated in κόνις ἵστασιν ὀμίχλην at 336, ‘they send up a cloud of dust,’ as one ring in a larger structure:

	<b><i>Il.</i> 13.332-338</b>	<b>ABCDDCBA</b>
A	κεκλόμενοι <u>καθ’ ὄμιλον</u> ἐπ’ αὐτῷ πάντες ἔβησαν·	
B, C	<u>τῶν δ’ ὀμὸν ἵστατο</u> νεῖκος ἐπὶ πρυμνήσι νέεσσιν. ὡς δ’ ὄθ’ ὑπὸ λιγέων ἀνέμων σπέρχωνσιν ἄελλαι	
D	ἦματι τῷ ὅτε τε πλείστη <u>κόνις</u> ἄμφι κελεύθους,	335

<sup>49</sup> See summary in Coray 2018 *ad* 18.604b-605a, with extensive bibliography. Schadewaldt (1965: 367) was an early proponent of the idea that the αοιδός represents Homer.

<sup>50</sup> In another structural evocation of content, the words πολλός... ὄμιλος ‘a large crowd’ are arranged chiasmatically around the ‘lovely dancing place’ (ἰμερόεντα χορὸν) the crowd is said to stand around (περίσταθ’).

<sup>51</sup> See note 14 above.

<sup>52</sup> Contrast Gaisser’s “developing ring composition,” in which the situation has changed at the end of a ring, but the repeated idea remains fundamentally the same (1969:4-5); cf. Edwards 1991: 47.

D, C οἱ τ' ἄμυδις **κονίης** μεγάλην **ἰστᾶσιν** ὀμίχλην,  
 B ὥς ἄρα τῶν **ὀμόσ'** ἦλθε μάχη, μέμασαν δ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ  
 A ἀλλήλους **καθ' ὄμιλον** ἐναιρέμεν ὀξεί χαλκῷ.

They shouted and made towards him all in a crowd,  
 and a close fight arose under the ships' sterns.  
 As when under shrill winds the whirlwinds move rapidly  
 on a day when a large amount of dust lies on the roads,  
 and the gusts make the dust rise into a thick cloud—  
 even so their battle came together, and they were eager in their hearts  
 to hack at each other with sharp bronze throughout the crowd.

The sense of 'τῶν δ' ὀμὸν ἴστατο νεῖκος' (333) is repeated in 'ὥς ἄρα τῶν ὀμόσ' ἦλθε μάχη' (337), with a reinforcing lexical repetition in ὀμός and ὀμόσε, but the repetition of ἴστημι in 336 stands outside (or, structurally, inside) of this semantic ring, revealing a partial lack of alignment between the repeated “idea” and the passage’s lexical structure. The repeated verb helps align and emphasize the likeness of the two things being compared, the battle and the dust storm, but the simile establishes a relationship of similarity and not identity: a battle may be like a dust storm, but the simile only works because they remain two separate things. (The role of ring structures in similes in particular is the subject of section 1.5; see also below in this section.) At the same time, the lexical structure illustrates through its narrowing rings the very idea of ‘coming together’ expressed by ὀμὸν ἴστατο and ὀμόσ' ἦλθε.<sup>53</sup>

I have been including under “lexical repetitions” the repetitions of roots, because these appear frequently in corresponding positions in broader patterns and often align in sense, as in ἔρις and ἐρίζω in *Il.* 1.6 and 8. They can also produce substantial semantic incongruities. In *Il.* 3.121-129, Iris approaches Helen at her loom, and ἰστός ‘loom’ (125) is echoed by the related intransitive participle ἰσταμένη ‘standing’ (129), applied to Iris. This is not to say there is no inherent overlap in meaning between the two terms; probably the ring is an indication that the

<sup>53</sup> ὄμιλος may be related (Beekes 2010 s.v. ὀμός), or associated by folk etymology.

etymological ‘standing’ of the beams of the loom was heard as such. The point is that it is necessary to go beyond the assumption that each occurrence of a repeated term in a ring structure will necessarily mean the “same” thing each time, and not rely on equivalence of denotative meaning as the exclusive criterion for identifying a ring. The paronomastic pairs treated in Chapter 2 make the point even more clearly, and this thread will be taken up again there. For now it suffices to observe that such discrepancies in sense indicate the relative compositional importance of the completion of a ring structure by means of lexical or phonetic echoes, as opposed to echoes of meaning *per se*.

Even when a word or root denotes the same thing in each case, there are interpretive implications to the fact that two small units of speech can carry the whole of a parallel in sense that would not be present without the inclusion of those terms. The ring structure in *Iliad* 16.762-71 demonstrates how such a parallel may serve as an interpretive cue to the thematic and structural import of a sequence:

### ***Il.* 16.762-771**

	Ἴκτωρ μὲν κεφαλῆφιν ἐπεὶ λάβεν, οὐχὶ μεθίει· Πάτροκλος δ' ἐτέρωθεν ἔχεν ποδός· οἱ δὲ δὴ ἄλλοι	
A	<u>Τρῶες καὶ Δαναοὶ</u> σύναγον κρατερὴν ὕσμίνην.	
B	ὥς δ' Εὐρὸς τε Νότος τ' ἐριδαίνετον <u>ἀλλήλοιν</u>	765
	οὔρεος ἐν βήσσης βαθέην πελεμιζέμεν ὕλην, C φηγόν τε μελίην τε <u>τανύφλοιόν</u> τε κράνειαν,	
B', C'	αἶ τε πρὸς <u>ἀλλήλας</u> ἔβαλον <u>τανυήκεας</u> ὄζους ἠχῆ θεσπεσίη, πάταγος δέ τε ἀγνυμενάων,	
A', B''	ὥς <u>Τρῶες καὶ Ἀχαιοὶ</u> ἐπ' <u>ἀλλήλοισι</u> θορόντες	770
	δήουν, οὐδ' <u>ἕτεροι</u> μνώνοντ' ὀλοοῖο φόβοιο.	

Hector would not let him go when he had once got him by the head, while Patroclus from the other side kept fast hold of his feet, and all the other Trojans and Danaans came together in fierce battle.

As the east and south wind buffet one another when they beat upon some dense forest in a valley of a mountain—there is beech and ash and cornel with stretched bark; they hurl at one another their branches with stretched points, with an immense sound, and a crash of boughs breaking—

even so did the Trojans and Achaeans spring upon one another and lay about each other, and neither side paid mind to destructive flight.

The pattern of repetitions is ABCBCAB, with an interlocking element surrounding a ring structure. Rings A and B taken together form a motivic ring that constitutes the usual linking of the image of the simile (usually called the vehicle) to the narrative comparandum (usually called the tenor), but this expected linking does not account for other elements of the ring structure.<sup>54</sup> Although the repetition of the tenor (764 and 770), with some variation, is a common occurrence in Homeric similes, it is not strictly required by the nature of the simile itself and should not be confused with the ring that is (i.e. ὤς... 265, 270).<sup>55</sup> The term ἀλλήλων ‘each other’ occurs three times and marks the center of the ring structure (ἀλλήλας 768); this repetition and centrality of ἀλλήλων can be ascribed to the simile’s emphasis on interaction and taken as an indication of the equality of the opposed forces.<sup>56</sup>

Ring C, the innermost ring, is less conspicuous. Within the vehicle, the detail of the ‘stretched’ bark of the cornelian cherry (τανύφλοιόν... κρίνειαν 767) has no apparent connection with the slenderness of the branches hurled by the wind (τανυήκεας ὄζους 768) beyond that contained within the shared stem τανυ- (‘stretch’),<sup>57</sup> and unlike ἀλλήλων, this repetition does not have an obvious bearing on the relationship between the vehicle of the forest wind and the stated tenor of the conflicting armies. The imagery of stretching does sometimes occur in the *Iliad* in the context of evenly matched battle, and this association likely reinforces

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<sup>54</sup> The terminology of tenor and vehicle is that adopted by, e.g., Moulton 1977 and Ready 2011 (see especially page 4 of the latter with note); sometimes used as rough equivalents in this context are the terms “target domain” (= tenor) and “source domain” (= vehicle) from cognitive linguistics (see e.g. Minchin 2001a: 29).

<sup>55</sup> For the repetition of tenor cf. *Il.* 2.139-54 below; other examples occur at *Il.* 5.520-27, *Il.* 11.61-4, *Il.* 11.268-72, *Il.* 21.343-49.

<sup>56</sup> So Janko 1992 *ad Il.* 16.765-769.

<sup>57</sup> Janko 1992 *ad Il.* 16.765-769, remarking on the obscurity of τανύφλοιος, observes that the bark of the cornelian cherry is “not especially thin.” He endorses Leaf’s (1900-1902) reading, “with fine, smooth bark.”

the interaction suggested by the triple repetition of ἀλλήλων.<sup>58</sup> But similes in the *Iliad* often feature multiple points of comparison between an image and its narrative context,<sup>59</sup> and the repetition of τανυ- is significant beyond the boundaries of the vehicle and its explicit tenor. Although the simile describes the combat between the Trojans and Achaeans, it takes place while Hector and Patroclus are fighting over the corpse of Cebriones; in the lines preceding the simile, Hector takes hold of the dead man's head, and Patroclus holds his feet (762-3). The repeated τανυ- picks up the implicit stretching of the corpse between the opposing efforts of the two warriors. The appropriateness of this term for the scenario is confirmed in *Iliad* 17, where the image of stretching a corpse gives rise overtly to the simile in 17.389-95: the men fighting to carry away the body of Patroclus are compared to people standing in a circle stretching the hide of a bull; forms of the verb τανύω occur three times in the vehicle of the simile:

	<b>II. 17.389-395</b>	ABABCAC	
		ὡς δ' ὄτ' ἀνήρ ταύροιο βοῶς μεγάλοιο βοείην	
A, B		λαοῖσιν δῶη <b>τανύειν</b> , μεθύουσιν <b>ἀλοιφή</b> .	390
A		δεξάμενοι δ' ἄρα τοί γε διαστάντες <b>τανύουσι</b>	
B		κυκλός', ἄφαρ δέ τε ἰκμάς ἔβη, δύνει δέ τ' <b>ἀλοιφή</b>	
C, A		πολλῶν <b>ἐλκόντων</b> , <b>τάνυται</b> δέ τε πᾶσα διαπρό·	
		ὡς οἱ γ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα νέκυν ὀλίγη ἐνὶ χώρῃ	
C		<b>εἴλκεον</b> ἀμφοτέρου· μάλα δέ σφισιν ἔλπετο θυμός...	395

It was as when a man gives the hide of a great bull  
to the people to stretch, all drenched in fat;  
and receiving it they stand apart and stretch it  
in a circle, until the moisture leaves it, and the fat soaks in  
with so many tugging at it, and it is well stretched all throughout—  
even so hither and thither within a small space  
did the two sides tug the dead body: and their hearts greatly hoped...

<sup>58</sup> A verb of stretching (τείνω, related to τανυ-) appears in connection with the equality of opposing forces in battle in a line shared by two similes: ὡς μὲν τῶν ἐπὶ ἴσα μάχῃ τέτατο πόλεμός τε (*Il.* 12.436 = 15.413). This association occurs with the verb τανύω at *Il.* 11.336: ἔνθα σφιν κατὰ ἴσα μάχην ἐτάνυσσε Κρονίων. Cf. Fenno 2017.

<sup>59</sup> Edwards 1991: 30-31 following Fränkel 1921: 1-16 and *passim*; see also Scott 1974: 7-8, 57-58; Moulton 1977: 12.

A single instance of  $\tau\alpha\nu\upsilon$ - in the simile in 16.765-771 could also resonate with the stretching of the corpse in its narrative context, and the repetition itself lends emphasis to the occurrence. But the ring structure systematizes the bestowal of emphasis by placing any given lexical repetition within a broader framework of repetitions. The multiplicity of concentric rings reinforces the presence, and therefore the potential significance, of any single ring within the structure.<sup>60</sup> The concentricity of the repetitions also creates a center around which the matching terms are arrayed: in the forest simile, the occurrence of  $\tau\alpha\nu\upsilon$ - on either side of that center mimics the stretching of the corpse from both sides by Hector and Patroclus; in *Il.* 17.389-395 the stretching occurs in a circle ( $\kappa\upsilon\kappa\lambda\acute{o}\sigma\epsilon$ ), and the ring structure that spans the simile can accordingly be understood as an evocation of this circularity. The ring structures enable a simultaneous evocation of the centripetal motion of the armies clashing and the centrifugal motion of the struggle over the bodies. When the simile in 16.765-771 ends, the narrative resumes its direct focus on Cebriones and his central position among the fighters ( $\text{Κεβριόνην ἄμφ' 772; ἄμφ' αὐτόν 775}$ ).

### 1.3 INTENTIONALITY AND PERCEPTIBILITY

The lexical patterns discussed up to this point allow us to consider the extent to which conventional expectations about the intentionality and perceptibility of lexical repetitions do or do not align with the evidence of the texts. The markers of intentionality and perceptibility differ but overlap, since the essential faculty for both the intentional production and conscious reception of repetitions in an oral-poetic context would be memory over time. For perceptibility, one expects the characteristics of multiplicity and the temporal proximity of repetitions – in

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<sup>60</sup> Cf. Steinrück 1997: 95.

combination, frequency – to contribute to their audibility, with higher values corresponding to greater perceptibility.<sup>61</sup> So in the line ἀσπίς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ' ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυιν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνήρ (*Il.* 16.215), the three repeated terms within the span of a line draw attention to repetition in a way a single repetition across several lines might not. In the absence of such a marked structure, one may ask whether proximate repetitions arise simply because the same subject is being discussed, and whether these would register as repetitions in the first place.

We may also assume that the length of a repetition contributes to its salience: provided a reasonable degree of proximity, the repetition of several lines will be more salient than the repetition of a line, the repetition of a line more salient than that of a phrase, the repetition of a phrase more salient than that of a word, a part of a word, etc. Even a relatively inattentive listener is likely to notice the repetition in the following lines, which depict equivalent actions with identical language:

***Il. 7.427-432***

οὐδ' εἶα κλαίειν Πρίαμος μέγας· οἱ δὲ σιωπῇ  
νεκροὺς πυρκαϊῆς ἐπινήνεον ἀχνύμενοι κῆρ,  
ἐν δὲ πυρὶ πρήσαντες ἔβαν προτὶ Ἴλιον ἱρήν.  
 ὧς δ' αὐτως ἐτέρωθεν εὐκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ                    430  
νεκροὺς πυρκαϊῆς ἐπινήνεον ἀχνύμενοι κῆρ,  
ἐν δὲ πυρὶ πρήσαντες ἔβαν κοίλας ἐπὶ νῆας.

Great Priam did not allow the Trojans to wail aloud, so these in silence  
heaped their dead upon the pyre with sad hearts,  
and having burned them went back toward holy Iliion.  
 Just the same from the other side the well-greaved Achaeans  
heaped their dead upon the pyre with sad hearts,  
and having burned them went back to their hollow ships.

The same line-and-a-half from the description of the Trojans burning their dead is repeated for the Achaeans, with minor differences outside the repetitions: the Trojans work in silence and

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<sup>61</sup> Cf. Parks 1988: 243; Hutchinson 2017: 146-148.

depart for Troy when they are finished, while the Achaeans go back to their ships. The word *ἐτέρωθεν* ‘from the other side’ suggests how to conceptualize the spatial relationship between the two parts: the repetition sets up two ‘sides’ by means of the temporal ‘space’ that each repetition occupies. The phrase *ὡς δ’ αὖτως* ‘thus just the same way’ in 430 can be taken as a reflection on the repetitive structure of the description, in addition to commenting on the narrative-internal action: the content is the same, so the words are the same.

Features like metrical position, metrical or morphological form, and syntactic position may also contribute to the perceptibility of lexical repetitions, all of which join to make a sequence like the following, discussed in greater detail in Chapter 3.4.1, especially distinctive:

***Il. 2.671-674* AAA**

*Νιρεὺς* αὖ Σύμηθεν ἄγε τρεῖς νῆας εἴσας  
*Νιρεὺς* Ἀγλαΐης υἱὸς Χαρόποιό τ' ἀνακτος  
*Νιρεὺς*, ὃς κάλλιστος ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε  
 τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν μετ' ἀμύμονα Πηλεΐωνα.

Nireus led three equal ships from Syme—  
Nireus, son of Aglaia and lord Charopos,  
Nireus, who was the handsomest man that came up under Ilius  
 of all the Danaans after the blameless son of Peleus.

A correlation of a lexical repetition with a broader underlying thought is also likely to add weight both to the lexical repetition and to the thought: here, the ‘three equal ships’ led to Troy by Nireus find their structural equivalent in the balanced repetition of *Νιρεὺς* in three consecutive lines.

These various assumptions are reasonable in themselves, but it remains the case that modern readers are likely to carry with us, and apply to the Homeric texts, our own implicit standards of salience based on current usage and convention. The constitutive elements of the lexical ring structures discussed above (e.g. *τανυ-* in *Il. 16.762-771* or *Διὸς/δῖος* in *Il. 1.1-10*) and later in this work suggest that the Homeric poet and audience, or at least some part of it at some

point in time, were attuned to repetitions of lower frequency, shorter length, and less marked position than are likely to register as salient for the modern reader.

Several factors, in turn, point to the intentionality of these patterns. One is the complexity and symmetry of some patterns, and the fact that such complex patterns recur throughout the texts; another is the presence of semantically incongruent matching elements, as demonstrated in Chapter 2; a third the apparent correlation between form and content. The presence of semantically discrepant or paronomastic matching elements rules out the possibility that these repetitions are simply a by-product of ring composition on the level of thoughts or themes, and they accordingly cannot be fully explained by arguments that ring composition arises from the normal cognitive processes involved in the production of conversational speech.<sup>62</sup> Recent work has shown that patterns of repeated ideas such as *hysteron proteron* – for example, when a Homeric character asks a series of questions and these are answered in reverse order – resemble and likely arise from normal conversational structures.<sup>63</sup> According to Raymond Person, annular structures with up to three matching elements (ABCCBA) appear in normal conversational speech; Homeric structures that exceed that number, he suggests, represent formalized “exaggerations” of normal speech patterns.<sup>64</sup> If ring composition arises as an “adaptation or formalization of conversational structures,”<sup>65</sup> small-scale lexical ring structures reveal the extent to which these structures were stylized and aestheticized in the oral epic tradition:

## II. 2.835-839 ABCCBA

οἱ δ' ἄρα Περκώτην καὶ Πράκτιον ἀμφενέμοντο 835  
 A καὶ Σηστὸν καὶ Ἄβυδον ἔχον καὶ διὰν Ἀρίσβην,  
 B, C τῶν αὖθ' Ὑρτακίδης ἦρχ' Ἄσιος ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν,

<sup>62</sup> Person 2016 following Minchin 2001b and 2007.

<sup>63</sup> See Minchin 2007: 102-116 for examples of *hysteron proteron* in questions and responses.

<sup>64</sup> Person 2016: 173; cf. Minchin 2007. There is general acknowledgment of the potential for such structures to become formalized, and in some cases used intentionally for poetic effect in the epic tradition: See Arft 2017: 10-13 on Nimis 1999, Foley 1999b, Person 2016, Bakker 2013.

<sup>65</sup> Person 2016: 175; cf. Bakker 1997: 120-121.

C, B, A Ἄσιος Ὑρτακίδης ὄν Ἀρίσβηθεν φέρον ἵπποι  
αἰθωνες μεγάλοι ποταμοῦ ἅπο Σελλήεντος.

They that dwelt about Percote and Practius,  
and Sestos, Abydos, and shining Arisbe—  
these were led by the son of Hyrtacus, Asius, commander of men—  
Asius, the son of Hyrtacus, whom his horses carried from Arisbe,  
powerful bays of the breed that comes from the river Selleis.

II. 22.126-128 ABCBCA<sup>66</sup>  
οὐ μὲν πως νῦν ἔστιν ἀπὸ δρυὸς οὐδ' ἀπὸ πέτρης  
A, BC τῷ ἀριζέμεναι, ἅ τε παρθένος ἡϊθεός τε  
BC, A παρθένος ἡϊθεός τ' ἀρίζετον ἀλλήλοιν.

There is no way from oak or from stone  
to converse with him, as young men and maidens,  
young men and maidens converse with one another.

Patterns like these are likely to be labelled as rhetorical figures and, implicitly, placed in a different conceptual category than most ring composition, but they differ from typical lexical patterns only in density and are best viewed as manifestations of the same underlying phenomenon. It is worth considering the possibility that ring composition on the lexical level represents not so much an aid to composition but a stylization to the point of inefficiency, a structuring that complicates, rather than eases, the production of verse; this would accord with the embedded commentary that suggests lexical structures are the products of poetic skill.

How symmetrical is symmetrical enough to be recognized as a pattern? We can posit a scale between flawless symmetry and chaos, but if one grants that the symmetrical end of the spectrum is sufficiently salient, one must assume that even disorderly sequences of repetitions rise to salience as potential patterns as the audience listens, because the perception of the “symmetry” of a lexical pattern must be a perception through time. An audience of the oral performance of epic poetry would not know during the initial half of a ring structure that a ring

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<sup>66</sup> Discussed at 3.4.2.

structure would take place, although perhaps it would recognize narrative junctures at which a ring structure is more likely, such as those William Scott finds for similes.<sup>67</sup> Only the taking up of previously used terms by their repetition in subsequent lines retroactively establishes the center as the turning point and the ring structure as a ring structure.<sup>68</sup> The proximity of the innermost repetitions serves as a potential indication that a midpoint has occurred and a ring structure is underway.<sup>69</sup> For convenience, I call the first half of a ring structure the ‘approach’ and the second half the ‘return.’

Having considered synoptically a few examples of lexical ring structures, let us work from start to finish (after some introductory comments) through another example in order to consider how these structures can play out temporally:

**Od. 8.367-384** ABCDE FG EDB GF BA

A	ταῦτ' ἄρ' αἰοῖδός ἄειδε περικλυτός· αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεύς τέρπετ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶν ἧσιν ἀκούων ἠδὲ καὶ ἄλλοι Φαίηκες δολιχήρετμοι, ναυσίκλυτοι ἄνδρες.	
B	Ἀλκίνοος δ' Ἄλιον καὶ Λαοδάμαντα κέλευσεν	370
C	μουνὰξ ὀρχήσασθαι, ἐπεὶ σφισιν οὐ τις ἔριζεν.	
D, E	οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν σφαῖραν καλήν μετὰ χερσὶν ἔλοντο,	
F	πορφυρέην, τήν σφιν Πόλυβος ποίησε δαΐφρων, τὴν ἕτερος ρίπτασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκιόεντα	
G	ιδνωθεῖς ὀπίσω, ὁ δ' ἀπὸ χθονὸς ὑψός' ἀερθεῖς	375
E	ῥηιδίως μεθέλεσκε, πάρος ποσσὶν οὐδας ἰκέσθαι.	
D	αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ σφαῖρην ἄν' ἰθὺν πειρήσαντο,	
C, G, F	ὀρχεῖσθην δὴ ἔπειτα ποτὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρην ταρφέ' ἀμειβομένω· κοῦροι δ' ἐπελήκεον ἄλλοι ἔστεῶτες κατ' ἀγῶνα, πολὺς δ' ὑπὸ κόμπος ὀρώρει.	380
B, A	δὴ τότε ἄρ' Ἀλκίνοον προσεφώνεε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς· Ἄλκίνοε κρεῖον, πάντων ἀριδείκετε λαῶν, ἡμὲν ἀπείλησας βητάρμονας εἶναι ἀρίστους, ἠδ' ἄρ' ἑτοῖμα τέτυκτο· σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.	

<sup>67</sup> Scott 1974: Ch. 2.

<sup>68</sup> For the appropriateness of calling the center of a ring a ‘turning point,’ see, for example, the short ring structure of *Il.* 18.486-8.

<sup>69</sup> Arft 2017: 7-8 assumes that structural middles are perceptible if a) the structure is short; b) if they are performed in a traditionally recurrent genre or form, such as a type scene; c) if there is an “otherwise discernable pivot or shift at the midpoint of the structure.” Attention to lexical structures would go far in the direction of identifying such “pivots.”

Thus sang the renowned bard, and Odysseus was delighted in his heart as he listened, and the other seafaring Phaeacians, men renowned in sailing. Then Alcinous told Halios and Laodamas to dance alone, for none could compete with them. So they took a beautiful ball in their hands, purple, which skilled Polybus had made for them, and one of them threw it up towards the shadowy clouds, bending backwards, while the other jumped high off the earth and caught it with ease before his feet touched the ground. When they had done throwing the ball straight up in the air they began to dance then upon the much-nourishing earth, alternating closely, while all the young men applauded standing around the assembly, and made a great stamping with their feet. Then divine Odysseus addressed Alcinous: "King Alcinous, most glorious of men, you boasted that your people were the best dancers, and indeed they have proved themselves to be so. Amazement holds me as I watch."

After Odysseus has listened to a song by Demodocus in the court of the Phaeacians, Alcinous bids two Phaeacians dance, and these throw a ball back and forth with gymnastic prowess. The passage begins with Odysseus' delight in Demodocus' song and ends with his expression to Alcinous of his amazement at the dancers, creating a frame (Ὀδυσσεὺς - Ἀλκίνοος - Ἀλκίνοον - Ὀδυσσεύς, ABBA). The set-up leads us to expect that the narrative will return, at some point, to Odysseus and Alcinous, which establishes the potential framework for a ring structure; the return to the two realizes this expectation.

We learn first that Halios and Laodamas are the best dancers (370-371). These pick up a ball with their hands, specifically a beautiful ball made by someone named Polybos (372-373). The repetition of ἐπεὶ (371-372) seems incidental. There are no other lexical repetitions so far, although we may note the recurrence of the syllable πο (373, continuing through 376) and the alliteration of the labial stops π, φ, and β. In 374 one dancer (ἕτερος) is said to have kept throwing (ρίπτασκε, with the iterative suffix -σκε-) the ball toward the clouds, bending

backward; the subject changes in 375 (ὁ δ') and we find the other dancer, at the end of this line, lifting himself from the ground. The aorist participles that begin and end line 375, ἰδνωθεῖς and ἀερθεῖς, create a morphological and partially phonetic ring that balances the respective actions of the two dancers. The verb μεθέλεσκε at the beginning of line 376 then picks up the verb ἔλοντο from 372 and the iterative ending from ῥίπτασκει in 374.<sup>70</sup> The first rings that establish the return of what will become a larger ring structure thus center around the transfer of the ball from one dancer to another, and the turning point of the passage coincides with the implicit arc of the thrown and caught ball: the one dancer throws (ῥίπτασκει) and the other catches (μεθέλεσκε); the one leans back to throw (ἰδνωθεῖς), the other jumps to catch (ἀερθεῖς). The 'catching' coincides with the advent of the return as if metapoetically signaling the occurrence of a pattern: the approach has 'thrown' words up and the return 'catches' them, and moreover does it 'easily' (ῥηιδίως). The prefix μετα- 'after' of the verb μεθέλεσκε emphasizes the exchange of actions, but the verb μεθέλεσκε is also subsequent insofar as it follows, in the lexical structure, the initial instance of ἔλοντο; by 'catching' the previous instance of αἰρέω, the verb does on the structural level what it means.

The second dancer catches the ball before his feet touch the ground; ποσὶν 'feet' (376) is in the equivalent annular position with respect to μεθέλεσκε as χερσὶν 'hands' is with ἔλοντο in 372, forming a contrasting ring of hands and feet. The noun σφαίρη 'ball' in 377 picks up σφαῖραν in 372, with other syntactic echoes enforcing the repetition (οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ... ἔλοντο; αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ... περιήσαντο, resuming the plural verb after the individual actions of the dancers had been described). The ball game concluded, they dance alternating closely (ταρφέ' ἀμειβομένω 379) on

<sup>70</sup> Cf. Steinrück 1997: 196, who explicitly prioritizes the semantic opposition of throwing-catching over the lexical repetition of μεθέλεσκε and ἔλοντο. For the sequence ἔλοντο-ῥίπτασκει-μεθέλεσκε, cf. *Il.* 17.460-462 ἄσσων-φεύγεσκεν-ἐπαΐζασκε.

the ground; ὠρχείσθην in 378 echoes and fulfills Alcinous' command in 371. The reference to the 'much-nourishing earth' (χθονὶ πολυβοτείρη 378) chiastically picks up Πόλυβος (373) and χθονός (375). Other young men clap or beat time (379-380), and the narrative returns to Alcinous and Odysseus.

As the narrative proceeds through the scene of the dance, the lexical structure between ὀρχήσασθαι in 371 and ὠρχείσθην in 378 is symmetrical (CDEEDC etc.); the structural symmetry finds its narrative-internal correlate in the symmetry of the ball, which, when it first appears, may cue the audience to the development of a ring structure. The same structural maneuver appears in the passage quoted above in which Nausicaa throws a ball into an eddy (*Od.* 6.112-117); there also the ball, as well as the eddy, suggests the notional 'roundness' of the annular structure. Nor is it metapoetically insignificant in the current passage that the poet devotes a line (8.373) to describing the sphere and the craftsman who made the sphere. The adjective πορφυρέην marks the sphere (and the structure) as a valuable object of fine craftsmanship; this Polybus, mentioned nowhere else in Homeric epic,<sup>71</sup> is distinguished as δαΐφρων 'skillful,' and the poet may be understood as comparably skillful in his production of the passage.

The symmetry of the whole is interrupted only when we arrive at χθονὶ πολυβοτείρη in 378. But the sense in which it "interrupts" is retroactive, and therefore need not necessarily be heard as an interruption. The phrase χθονὶ πολυβοτείρη forms its own symmetrical lexical ring structure with Πόλυβος... χθονός (with a paronomastic echo in Πόλυβος and πολυβοτείρη), producing overlapping ring structures or spiral composition. To intentionally produce or consciously pick up every repetition, an ideal poet or audience would need to hold every word in

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<sup>71</sup> Other characters named Polybos, presumably unrelated, appear at *Od.* 4.126 (an Egyptian), *Od.* 15.519 (an Ithacan), *Od.* 22.243 (a suitor).

mind; the privileging of certain words in the initial ring structure does not rule out the possibility of privileging other words within that same span as the narrative continues. This shifting interplay of lexical sequences perhaps finds embedded annotation in the close alternation (ταρφέ' ἀμειβομένω 379) of the dancers, described immediately after the echo in χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρη. The metaphors of exchange (the throwing and catching of the ball, the dense alternation of the dance) and of roundness (the sphere) overlap, offering different ways of conceptualizing the activity of repetition: the latter presents a 'geometric' reckoning of sameness, the former the narrative necessity of change through time. The passage with its lexical repetition becomes for a moment the sphere the audience must 'catch,' and the dancers model that exchange. The implication of the iterative language describing the dance is that this does not just happen once: the narrative *keeps* throwing, and the audience, ideally, *keeps* catching.

If the association of lexical ring structures with symmetry or roundness was firmly enough established among the participants in the oral poetic tradition, it is possible that associations could be activated even when a pattern is only dubiously 'round' in the sense of symmetrically annular. Consider the following passage:

**II. 19.372-381**                    ABCDCEEDBAC  
 ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ὤμοισιν βάλετο ξίφος ἀργυρόηλον  
 χάλκεον· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα **σάκος** μέγα τε στιβαρόν τε  
 εἶλετο, τοῦ δ' **ἀπάνευθε σέλας** γένετ' ἠὔτε μῆνης.  
 ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἐκ **πόντοιο σέλας** ναύτησι φανήη                    375  
**καιομένοιο** πυρός, τό τε **καίεται** ὑψόθ' ὄρεσφι  
 σταθμῶ ἐν οἰπόλῳ· τοῦς δ' οὐκ ἐθέλοντας ἄελλαι  
**πόντων** ἐπ' ἰχθυόεντα φίλων **ἀπάνευθε** φέρουσιν·  
 ὡς ἀπ' Ἀχιλλῆος **σάκεος σέλας** αἰθέρ' ἴκανε  
 καλοῦ δαιδαλέου· περὶ δὲ **τρυφάλειαν** ἀείρας                    380  
 κρατὶ θέτο βριαρῆν· ἦ δ' ἀστήρ ὡς ἀπέλαμπεν

He slung the silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders,  
 and then took up the shield so great and strong  
 that shone afar with a gleam as of the moon.  
 As when from the sea a gleam appears to sailors

from a burning fire, and it burns high in the mountains,  
 in a lonely homestead: but the whirlwinds carry them unwilling  
 out on the sea full of fish, far away from dear ones—  
 even so did the gleam from Achilles' shield reach into the heavens,  
 the shield beautiful and finely worked. He lifted the mighty helmet  
 and set it upon his head, and it shone like a star.

The lexical pattern in this simile is symmetrical (ABDEEDBA) except for the repetitions of σέλας ‘gleam’ (C), which fit in in no apparent order. Several elements are evocative of roundness. For one, this simile appears in the description of the arming of Achilles’s shield, which is usually assumed to be round. The description of the shield as καλοῦ δαιδαλέου (380) brings to mind the lengthy account of the shield’s production by Hephaestus in *Iliad* 18. The explicit tenor of the long simile is not the shield itself, however, but the gleam (σέλας) that comes from it, which is compared to the moon in an additional short simile (ἤϋτε μήνης 374). Presumably the aptness of the short simile lies in both the quality of the light and the shape of the full moon; the one other time in the *Iliad* a short simile compares something to the moon, it describes a white mark on a horse’s forehead that is explicitly circular (λευκὸν σῆμα τέτυκτο περίτροχον ἤϋτε μῆνη ‘a white sign was fashioned round like the moon’ *Il.* 23.455).

Is the structure ‘annular’ enough to enable the perception of a connection between form and content? The simile’s temporary movement away from and back to the narrative, sharply delineated by the ὥς frame in 375 and 379, is its own kind of ring composition (see below on similes). The reference to the σάκος (‘shield’) preceding and following the simile is a reinforcing lexical ring, perhaps by its very repetition on either side of the simile suggestive of its own roundness, in the same way that phrasal repetitions frame the description of this shield’s construction in *Iliad* 18 (σάκος μέγα τε στιβαρόν τε 18.478 and 609). Within the vehicle of the simile, the narrow repetition in line 376 (καιομένοιο-καίεται) is typical of the internal repetition of a ring structure, and the whole simile moves from sea to sailors to mountain to sailors back to

sea, enforced by the repetition of πόντον. A memory good enough to keep track of the relative positions of repeated words would presumably allow one to recognize a certain symmetry in spite of the repetitions of σέλας that do not neatly fit, especially when combined with internal markers and expectations of the same. Whether a modern observer should count this simile in favor of an association between roundness and structure is a different matter.

To return to a point from earlier, if it were possible to perceive symmetrical lexical structures, then it would be possible to perceive any sequence of repetitions within the same parameters of length and frequency, orderly or not. Put another way, the kind of attention capable of noticing an individual lexical repetition A-A would be capable of noticing that repetition whether it stood in a sequence ABCCBA or in a sequence ABACCB, and if we believe that the former sequence was perceptible, we must believe that the repetitions in something like the latter were as well. Take a passage like the following, which, as far as I have been able to tell, lacks an overarching, internally consistent lexical structure, in spite of its many repetitions (*Il.* 8.553-565):

***Il.* 8.553-565**

οἱ δὲ μέγα φρονέοντες ἐπὶ πτολέμοιο γεφύρας  
 εἶατο παννύχιοι, πυρὰ δὲ σφισι καίετο πολλά.  
 ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐν οὐρανῷ ἄστρα φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην. 555  
 φαίνεται ἀριπρεπέα, ὅτε τ' ἐπλετο νήνεμος αἰθήρ·  
 ἔκ τ' ἔφανε πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καὶ πρόνες ἄκροι  
 καὶ νάπαι· οὐρανόθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ,  
 πάντα δὲ εἶδεται ἄστρα, γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα ποιμήν·  
 τόσσα μεσηγὺ νεῶν ἠδὲ Ξάνθοιο ροάων 560  
 Τρώων καιόντων πυρὰ φαίετο Ἴλιόθι πρό.  
 χίλι' ἄρ' ἐν πεδίῳ πυρὰ καίετο, πᾶρ δὲ ἐκάστω  
 εἶατο πεντήκοντα σέλα πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο.  
 ἵπποι δὲ κρῖ λευκὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι καὶ ὀλύρας  
 ἑσταότες παρ' ὄχεσφιν εὐθρονον Ἥῳ μίμνον. 565

Thus high in hope by the highways of war  
 they sat through the whole night, and many watchfires burned among them.  
 As when in the sky the stars around the bright moon

shine resplendent when the ether is windless,  
 and all the peaks and jutting headlands and glades  
shine out, and from the sky the endless ether is split;  
 the stars can all of them be seen and the shepherd is glad in his heart—  
 even thus midway between the ships and the streams of Xanthos  
shone the burning watchfires of the Trojans before Ilion.  
 A thousand camp-fires burned upon the plain, and by each  
 and in the glow of blazing fire there sat fifty men,  
 while the horses, champing oats and wheat  
 and standing beside their chariots, waited for fair-throned dawn.

The Trojan campfires in front of Troy are compared to stars in a clear night sky. At what point does it become clear to an ideal listener that there is no overarching symmetrical lexical structure? Perhaps around 558, because οὐρανῶ-φαινήν-φαίνετ’-ἔφανεν-οὐρανόθεν forms an annular ring (ABBBA) prior to the repetitions of αἰθήρ, πάντα, and ἄστρα (558-559). The reference to the moon in 555 might prime an audience to think of roundness, but unlike in the previous example, there are more repetitions in the course of the simile that do not array themselves annularly than those that do, forcing us either to abandon the search for a correlation, to look for it in a smaller section of text (the repetition φαινήν-φαίνετ’ on either side of σελήνην, for example?), or seek it on a level other than that of lexical repetitions (e.g the chiasmus in 555-556 of the stars around the moon, **ἄστρα** (A) φαινήν (B) ἀμφὶ σελήνην (B) / φαίνετ’ **ἀριπρεπέα** (A)).

But the obvious narrative-internal corollary for this disorderly mass of repetitions is the thousands of campfires on the plain and the stars in the sky. This multitude is the stated *tertium comparationis*, the point of comparison of the simile (τόσσα 560), and the sheer number of repetitions is iconic. The commensurability of the repetitions to the scene they represent is bolstered by the semantics of the repeated words: fire (πῦρ), blazing (καίομαι), sky (οὐρανός), stars (ἄστρον), shining (φαίνω), ether (αἰθήρ, etymologically from a root meaning ‘shine’). An

ideal listener, like the shepherd to whom all the stars are visible (πάντα δὲ εἶδεται ἄστρα 559),<sup>72</sup> notices every repetition, but in practice any given audience member may not have. For these, the sheer number of repetitions makes it more likely that any few might be heard, enough to make a connection between form and content; so in annular sequences, the greater the number of repetitions in the pattern, the more likely any few might suffice to make the connection. The effect of the star simile on an ideal audience is suggested by the shepherd's gladness at the starry sky (γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα ποιμήν), but an audience that catches enough repetitions for the correlation to make sense might feel its share of gladness as well.

#### 1.4 ON CORRELATION

The preceding discussion has considered some of the factors at play in the perception of lexical repetitions and of a correlation between structure and content. It is plausible that, if there was an expectation of an association between symmetrical lexical structures and symmetrical content, a pattern would not need to be symmetrical to activate that association in a given passage. Nor is interaction between form and content limited to elaborate symmetrical patterns, as the star simile and, earlier, the Aethiopian example showed. It is, however, more difficult to make the case for a correlation between disorderly or isolated repetitions and content than between orderly sequences of multiple repeated terms and content. This brings us to the related question of statistical correlation.

This study does not conduct a statistical analysis. The results of such an analysis would be informative, but the hypothesis that a correlation was perceived between, e.g., lexical ring structures and roundness is ultimately unfalsifiable, whether or not a positive statistical

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<sup>72</sup> Strictly speaking, the shepherd is not the subject of the verb εἶδεται, leaving open the possibility of other viewers.

correlation exists. A falsifiable null hypothesis would be that the correlation is neither intentional nor perceivable, and this study attempts to falsify this latter hypothesis by an accumulation of evidence.<sup>73</sup> My approach is to find patterns and, cautiously but not mathematically, look for trends in terms of content, but if we reverse the process by looking for the kinds of words that appear to correlate with patterns – σφαίρη or πυκνός or the like – and then look for lexical patterns in the contexts in which they appear, we run into the problem of the overall frequency of lexical repetitions in Homer. Sometimes the word in question will appear in or next to a recognizable ring structure or other pattern; sometimes it will appear with repetitions in no apparent order. But there will almost always be at least one lexical repetition within a few lines consisting of terms separated by no more than a few lines. When no multi-term annular structure appears, we are faced with the same dilemma as appeared in the discussion of the moon in the simile at *Il.* 8.555-565: either a) a single repetition suffices to evoke a correlation, but no statistical case can be made; b) a more substantial correlation exists, but not on the lexical level; c) there is no correlation between form and content in this case.

Let us consider the first possibility. If symmetrical annular structures suggest a correlation between form and content, there is no reason a single repetition could not do the same. Indeed, later Greek rhetorical terminology furnishes a number of metaphors for lexical repetition that, minus the precision of their definitions, were almost certainly already available to the participants in the Homeric tradition: ἀναδίπλωσις or ἐπαναδίπλωσις (*'folding up in two'*) for 'repetition' or 'duplication'; ἐπαναστροφή (*'turning back'*) for the 'repetition of the last word or words of a sentence at the beginning of the next';<sup>74</sup> ἀντιστροφή (*'turning against'*) for 'repetition

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<sup>73</sup> My gratitude to Olga Levaniouk for her help in formulating this expression.

<sup>74</sup> LSJ s.v.; Hermogenes *Id.* 1.12; see below in sections 3.4.3 and 3.5.3.

of closing words in successive members.<sup>75</sup> The Homeric scholia use ἀνακυκλέω (‘circle back’) to describe the multiple recurrence of a single word in a passage.<sup>76</sup> Hermogenes in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century CE defined the rhetorical κύκλος as the repetition of a word at the beginning and end of a unit of speech, illustrating his definition with the repetition of κύκλος in the same: κύκλος ἐστὶ τὸ ἀφ’ ὧν ἄρξῃται τις ὀνομάτων ἢ ῥημάτων εἰς τὰ αὐτὰ καταλήγειν δύνασθαι πάλιν· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐστὶν ὁ κύκλος (“a ‘circle’ is being able to end with the same [words] as the nouns or verbs from which one started, for this is a circle”).<sup>77</sup> Without explicit justification, Steinrück refers to any singular repetition as a καμπή (‘bend’), and this is unlikely to be far off the mark in terms of the ancient idea.<sup>78</sup>

If we look up in the Homeric corpus a word that denotes ‘bending’ or ‘turning,’ for example, the overabundance of lexical repetitions in Homeric verse almost guarantees that in the vicinity of each occurrence, there will be lexical repetitions with which those seeking might associate it. How, then, can we make any statement about the intentionality of such “correlations”? How can one be confident that one has recognized an intentional poetic maneuver rather than read something into the text? Is the pursuit of “correlations” a vacuous exercise in pareidolia?

Here it may be worthwhile to draw a distinction between what the poet intends and what the epic genre “intends.” Suppose there are widespread metaphors for structural features of epic verse that are well-known to its audience and that a poet can leverage for specific effect as he produces verse in performance. The poet’s keen awareness of repetitions does not necessarily

<sup>75</sup> LSJ s.v.; e.g. Phld.Rh. 1.195 S., Hermog. *Id.* 1.12

<sup>76</sup> A and bT scholia on *Il.* 1.287-9; bT scholia on *Il.* 1.510.

<sup>77</sup> Περὶ εὐρέσεως 171; cf. Steinrück 1997: 25n61. Eustathius would later apply a similar concept of rhetorical κύκλος to the Homeric texts (Steinrück 1997: 2n6).

<sup>78</sup> Steinrück 1997: 93.

entail that every time he repeats a word he does so intentionally to produce an effect. But because the association of form with content is a feature built into the system, as I will argue in later chapters, it would not be invalid for audience members (or the poet himself) to see a correlation between repetitions and content that was not consciously intended. Even if lexical repetitions are not invariably the product of the poet's intent, the genre validates them. That the Homeric narrative offers ready fodder for pareidolia is then not a defect of the system, but a sort of compositional reinforcement for the poet under the various pressures of (re)composing in performance, because any ensuing uncertainty about poetic intent leaves open the door in every case to the possibility that the poet did intend it.

A study like this one must navigate a course that is on the one hand conservative enough to render the proposed correlations plausible, but flexible enough to explore the parameters of plausibility given a probable discrepancy in perceptual habits between ancient audiences and today. An attempt to show that there is a correlation between lexical repetitions and content attributable to a poet's (or poets') intention is faced with the necessity of drawing lines between "probably intentional" and "probably unintentional," and every case study in this dissertation grapples with this boundary explicitly or implicitly. These considerations lead back to the statement, near the beginning of this chapter, that any repetition is potentially significant, but that the emphasis here is on patterns, both in terms of symmetrical sequences of repetitions and in terms of the recurrence of such sequences across the Homeric texts.

## 1.5 RING STRUCTURES AND THE HOMERIC SIMILE

The frequency of lexical ring structures in long similes warrants special consideration. The fact that Homeric similes have been catalogued makes it relatively easy to assess their

structures as a set, although the tendencies observed in similes may not apply to lexical structures in other contexts. I focus here on the similes of the *Iliad*. Since van Otterlo’s influential work in the 1940s on Greek ring composition, scholars have noted that Homeric similes inherently represent a kind of ring composition insofar as they consist of a movement away from a narrative subject, the ‘tenor,’ to an external image in the simile, the ‘vehicle,’ and then back to the narrative; in long similes this ring is marked by ὡς ὅτε...ὡς ἄρα or equivalent terms.<sup>79</sup> The alignment of tenor with vehicle is often emphasized with a repetition of the aligning thought and, at times, of the diction itself in the ‘just as...’ and ‘just so...’ clauses. Thus in the σέλας simile at *Iliad* 19.374-380, the clause ‘as when a gleam from the sea appears to sailors’ (375) is paired at the end of the vehicle with ‘thus from Achilles’ shield the gleam reached the ether’ (379), with a repetition of the noun σέλας. Frequently, as van Otterlo observed, the tenor itself is repeated in lexically similar ways before and after the vehicle.<sup>80</sup> The following simile is cited by van Otterlo as an example (*Il.* 11.267-274):

	<b><i>Il.</i> 11.267-274</b>	A BCABC A	
		αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τὸ μὲν ἔλκος ἐτέρσετο, παύσατο δ’ αἶμα,	
A		<u>ὄξεϊαι δ’ ὀδύναι δῦνον μένος Ἀτρεΐδαο.</u>	
BCA		ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἂν ὠδίνουσαν ἔχη βέλος ὄξυ γυναικα	
		δριμύ, τό τε προῖεῖσι μογοστόκοι Εἰλείθυια	270
BC		Ἥρης θυγατέρες πικρὰς ὠδῖνας ἔχουσαι,	
A		<u>ὡς ὄξεϊ’ ὀδύναι δῦνον μένος Ἀτρεΐδαο.</u>	
		ἔς δίφρον δ’ ἀνόρουσε, καὶ ἠνιόχῳ ἐπέτελλε	
		νηυσὶν ἔπι γλαφυρῆσιν ἐλαυνέμεν· ἤχθετο γὰρ κῆρ.	

<sup>79</sup> Van Otterlo 1948: 49-52. See e.g. Edwards 1991: 46, Steinrück 1997: 7, and Nimis 1998: 66-67, who argues that the ring structures apparent in elements of the narrative such as similes (the ‘just as...’ ‘just so...’ structure) are a by-product of the pragmatic integration of various units into a broader discourse. Stanley 1993: 7-8 describes the basic ring structure of similes as ABA, in which “the poet compares A to B and then describes B in greater or less detail, before resuming the narrative with a return to A...;” cf. Fehling 1969: 145-146 on the repetition of “key words” within this structure (albeit without mention of annular arrangement). This departure from and return to a specific tenor does not occur in every long Homeric simile, however. See note 54 above on the terminology of ‘tenor’ and ‘vehicle.’

<sup>80</sup> Van Otterlo 1948: 49-50. Steinrück 1997: 85-86, following the classification system of Otterlo 1944: 19ff and 1948: 10-69, calls a ring structure consisting of a narrative ring surrounding a digressive descriptive element “anaphoric ring composition,” which he labels “ndn” (narrative Ausenteile, deskriptiver Mittelteil); this pattern is typical for Homeric similes. Cf. Steinrück’s labeling of similes in the *Odyssey* on pp. 111 and 113.

But when the wound dried up, and the blood stopped flowing,  
sharp pains went down into the strength of the son of Atreus.  
 As when sharp pangs take hold of a woman in pain,  
 which the Eileithuiai, goddesses of childbirth, send forth,  
 daughters of Hera having charge of cruel pain,  
even so did sharp pains go down into the strength of the son of Atreus.  
 He sprang on to his chariot, and bade his charioteer drive  
 to the hollow ships, for his heart was in great agony.

But as we see in this and in other similes already mentioned, the alignment of tenor with vehicle or the return to the tenor after the vehicle does not account for repetitions of words or roots within the vehicle itself; here, the repetitions of ὠδίνουσαν ἔχη-ὄξυ-ὠδῖνας ἔχουσαι continue the pattern. Such lexical repetitions within the vehicle of an extended Homeric simile are very common. Out of a random sample of 100 long similes in the *Iliad*,<sup>81</sup> I find that at least 65 feature a lexical ring structure, provisionally defined as a sequence containing at least two prominent concentric lexical rings, not including the ὡς ring vel sim.<sup>82</sup> At least 89 out of the 100 long similes in the sample contain at least one lexical repetition (89%), among which are included similes that feature non-concentric lexical patterns (ABAB, AABB, etc.). A number of similes that display no lexical repetitions do feature paronomastic rings, and their inclusion in the tally would bring the percentage higher still.

The ring structure in the long simile in *Il.* 2.139-154 is exemplary, and will permit us to make some general comments about lexical ring structures in the context of long similes:

### ***Il.* 2.139-154**

A ἄλλ' ἄγεθ', ὡς ἂν ἐγὼ εἶπω, πειθόμεθα πάντες·  
 φεύγωμεν σὺν **νηυσὶ** φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν· 140  
 οὐ γὰρ ἔτι Τροίην αἰρήσομεν εὐρυάγυιαν.

<sup>81</sup> The random sample is drawn from William Scott's charts in *The Oral Nature of the Homeric Simile* (1974: 191-205 Appendix A). This is close to half of the long similes in the *Iliad*: D. J. N. Lee counts a total of 197 (1964: 3-4).

<sup>82</sup> By "prominent" lexical rings I mean primarily those consisting of at least a repeated root; for the sake of caution I have left out smaller units of speech such as particles and monosyllabic prepositions, but this does not rule out the possibility that they have a role to play. My assessment of the frequency of the ABBA structure includes annular rings involved in more complex sequences of repetitions, e.g., ABCCAB, ABCBCA, provided that the basic condition of annularity is met.

	ὡς φάτο, τοῖσι δὲ θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι ὄρινε πᾶσι μετὰ πληθὺν, ὅσοι οὐ βουλῆς ἐπάκουσαν·	
B, C	<u>κινήθη</u> δ' <u>ἀγορῇ</u> φη κύματα μακρὰ θαλάσσης, πόντου Ἰκαρίοιο, τὰ μὲν τ' Εὐρὸς τε Νότος τε	145
D	ὄρορ' <u>ἐπαίξας</u> πατρὸς Διὸς ἐκ νεφελῶν.	
B'	ὡς δ' ὅτε <u>κινήσει</u> Ζέφυρος βαθὺ λήϊον ἐλθὼν,	
D'	λάβρος <u>ἐπαιγίζων</u> , ἐπὶ τ' ἡμῦει ἀσταχύεσσιν,	
C', B''	ὡς τῶν πᾶσ' <u>ἀγορῇ κινήθη</u> . τοὶ δ' ἀλαλητῶ	
A'	<u>νήας</u> ἔπ' ἐσσεύοντο, ποδῶν δ' ὑπένερθε κονίη ἴστατ' ἀειρομένη· τοὶ δ' ἀλλήλοισι κέλευον	150
(A)	ἄπτεσθαι <u>νηῶν</u> ἢ δ' ἐλκέμεν εἰς ἄλα δῖαν, οὐρούς τ' ἐξεκάθαιρον· ἀϋτὴ δ' οὐρανὸν ἴκεν	
(A)	οἴκαδε ἰεμένων· ὑπὸ δ' ἦρεον ἔρματα <u>νηῶν</u> .	

“Now, therefore, let us all do as I say:

let us flee with our ships back to our own dear fatherland,  
for we shall not take Troy of the broad ways.”

Thus he spoke, and moved the hearts in the chests  
of the whole multitude, so many as had not heard his plan.

The assembly was stirred like the long waves of the Icarian Sea,  
which the east and south winds

rouse darting from the clouds of father Zeus;

or as when the west wind stirs a deep field of grain,  
violently rushing down, and the ears bow beneath it,

even so was the assembly stirred: and with loud cries

the flew towards the ships, and the dust from under their feet  
rose heavenward. They cheered each other on

to take hold of the ships and draw them into the shining sea;

they cleared the channels in front of them; their shout reached the sky

as they yearned to go home: they removed the stays from beneath the ships.

Following Agamemnon’s deceitful order to go home, the assembly is roused like waves or heads of grain blown by the wind. The repetition of the word for ship (νηῦς) belongs to the narrative frame from which the simile departs and to which it returns: Agamemnon’s order and the rush of the assembled men to carry it out. The next two pairs of matching terms form the tenor of the comparison: ‘the assembly was moved like... thus was the assembly moved.’ Eustathius identified the repetition here of κινήθη δ’ ἀγορῇ (AB) - κινήσει (A) - ἀγορῇ κινήθη (BA) as the rhetorical figure κύκλος ‘circle.’<sup>83</sup> As in *Il.* 11.267-274 above, the repetition of the narrative

<sup>83</sup> Steinrück 1997: 6n11.

element being compared is not essential to the basic nature of the simile, nor is the chiasm of κινήθη δ' ἀγορή/ἀγορή κινήθη. The active κινήση in 149 takes up κινήθη and marks the center point of the ring structure; a tripled repetition marking the center is not the norm, but occurs often enough to be worth noting.<sup>84</sup> The next pair – the participles ἐπαίξας and ἐπαιγίζων – may or may not derive from the same root, but the echo is easily discerned because they are partial homophones that share a metrical position and a prepositional prefix; Eustathius asserted the semantic equivalence of the two verbs.<sup>85</sup> The verb ἐπαιγίζω, derived from αἰγίς,<sup>86</sup> may connote Zeus in his aspect of storm god; this would create a further parallel to the description in 146 of wind rushing down from the clouds of Zeus (ἐπαίξας πατρός Διὸς ἐκ νεφελάων). The epithet αἰγίοχος ‘aegis-holder’ is applied to Zeus a few lines later in 157.

When a lexical ring structure occurs in a passage with a long simile, the center of the ring structure usually, although not always, coincides with the vehicle of the simile, consistent with Lohmann’s demonstration that the center of ring-composed speeches tends to feature a descriptive element.<sup>87</sup> The ring structure in these lines spans two similes, one of waves and one of grain, which are linked by the element of wind. That the ring structure develops over more than one simile demonstrates the compositional unity of the similes,<sup>88</sup> and it may be just as appropriate to say that many ring structures feature similes as it is to say that many similes feature ring structures.

<sup>84</sup> E.g. *Il.* 4.140-149 ἵππων/ἱππῆες/ἵππῳ; *Il.* 16.257-268 εἰνοδοίους/ὄδοι/ὄδίτης; *Il.* 17.389-395 τανύειν/τανύουσι/τάνυται; *Il.* 21.343-349 ἐξηράνθη/ἀγξηράνη/ἐξηράνθη. On the last, see Fehling 1969: 146.

<sup>85</sup> Steinrück 1997: 6n11. Cf. Kyriakidou 2000 on etymological cognates in Homeric similes.

<sup>86</sup> Chantraine 1968 s.v. αἰγίς. He tentatively suggests the influence of ἐπαίσσω on the meaning of ἐπαιγίζω.

<sup>87</sup> Lohmann 1970: 25.

<sup>88</sup> Scott 2005: 24-26 calls 2.144 and 147 “juxtaposed similes.” He rightly defends them from an old notion that one of the two should be rejected (48n11).

## Chapter 2. LEXICAL STRUCTURES AND PARONOMASIA

This chapter picks up from the observation in Chapter 1 that the lexical repetitions that in aggregation constitute lexical structures do not always denote the same thing with each occurrence of the same word or root, and that these repetitions therefore cannot always be said to undergird and arise from a repetition of a broader denoted theme or idea, as is usually assumed in discussions of Homeric ring composition. This observation finds support in the role of paronomastic echoes in “lexical” structures, in which not words but similar phonemic sequences in unrelated words or phrases form rings in broader structures. In terms of the arc of this dissertation, the paronomastic repetitions discussed here provide justification for the identification of paronomastic rings in the passages treated in Chapter 3, where such rings will not always receive comment. But the investigation of paronomasia in lexical structures is worthwhile in itself for what it reveals about Homeric wordplay and language use more generally. When phonetically similar but etymologically unrelated words or smaller units of speech occur in corresponding positions in an overarching lexical ring structure, this positioning increases the likelihood that the correspondence was both intended by the poet and perceptible to the audience. We can thus use lexical ring structures in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* to identify and substantiate instances of sound-based wordplay in these poems, supplementing important discussions of Homeric wordplay and etymologizing that have focused on classification over identification.<sup>89</sup> In turn, these paronomastic echoes demonstrate the importance of sound as a constitutive element of the structures, suggesting that the Homeric poet and audience were keenly attentive to repetitions of syllables and phonemic sequences. This bolsters the case for the

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<sup>89</sup> E.g. Louden 1995, Rank 1951.

importance of “lexical” patterns more broadly as intentional and perceptible repetitions of sound, consistent with the oral-poetic context in which the poems developed.

The previous chapter focused on the meaning of lexical “patterns;” this chapter problematizes the term “lexical” as a catch-all description of these Homeric patterns by posing the question of the minimal units capable of producing an echo in the context of a “lexical” structure. A putative scale of units might run from morphologically identical lexemes (and phrases, lines, or passages consisting of the same) through shared syllables to alliteration or assonance; what role, if any, can repetitions of phonemes have in broader lexical structures? Does assonance “count” as paronomasia, or as a constitutive element of “lexical” structures? The examples under discussion in this chapter follow a loose trajectory from the more paronomastic to the more alliterative, with due emphasis that a sharp taxonomic distinction between the two is not ultimately a useful reflection of the sound textures that would have been more intuitively perceptible to the ancient poet and audience (and to us, although we cannot assume that our perceptive apparatus for the sounds of the ancient poems allows us to “hear” the same things, in terms of salience, even aside from the questions of ancient pronunciation and orthography taken up below). The chapter concludes its investigation of minimal structural units with a discussion of Saussure’s anagrams (2.4), which offer a useful framework for thinking about intentionality with respect to repetitions of units of sound and meaning in light of how common unintentional phonetic repetition is in all language production.

If paronomasia forces us to think about sounds as such, it can also create associations of meaning between words not overtly semantically related, with potential implications for how we

understand the content of the narrative.<sup>90</sup> The linguistic self-awareness necessary for the production of (intentional) wordplay makes the intersection of structure and paronomasia a robust vehicle for poetic self-reflexivity. Far from being “plain in his words and style” and “simple in his ideas,” in the famous words of Matthew Arnold,<sup>91</sup> the Homeric poet that emerges engages nimbly and enthusiastically in phono-semantic complexity and nuance. There are much-discussed moments in Homeric epic where this characteristic shines through, of which the best-known example is probably Odysseus’ reference to himself as Outis (‘Nobody’) in the Cyclops episode in *Odyssey* 9, together with the wordplay on οὔτις/μήτις ‘nobody’ and μῆτις ‘skill, cleverness, plan.’<sup>92</sup> Another is the association between the name Odysseus and the verb ὀδύσσομαι ‘hate,’ explicitly joined by derivation at *Od.* 19.406-8 and implicitly associated elsewhere in the *Odyssey*, showing that the Homeric poet was not without an etymologizing impulse.<sup>93</sup> But it is rare that self-awareness in the use of language is highlighted as an essential component of Homeric epic the way it is for, e.g., Pindar or the Attic tragedians, perhaps because of enduring questions about the limitations imposed by composition and re-composition in an oral tradition.

Discussions of Homeric wordplay usually center on names and situate themselves around the conceptual rubric of etymologizing.<sup>94</sup> This was true of the first monograph on the subject, Rank’s 1951 *Etymologiseering en verwante verschijnselen bij Homerus*, in the first sentence of which he states his intention to examine Homer’s interest in names in particular.<sup>95</sup> If the science

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<sup>90</sup> Louden’s definition of wordplay in his discussion of its various manifestations in Homer is typical: “a connection between two similar-sounding words which invests the relationship between them with additional meaning” (1995: 27). Cf. Grieg 1923: 211 (quoted by Redfern 2000: 33) and Attridge 1987: 193 (quoted by Culler 1988: 2).

<sup>91</sup> Arnold 1861.

<sup>92</sup> *Od.* 9.408-414. See e.g. Peradotto 1990:46-47, 143-170, more briefly Miller 2014: 131-132.

<sup>93</sup> See e.g. Peradotto 1990: 118-142; Kanavou 2015: 90-97; Louden 1995: 34-37.

<sup>94</sup> E.g. Kanavou 2015, Liović 2012, Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000, Louden 1995, Peradotto 1990, Risch 1947: 79-91, Stanford 1939: 97-114, Sulzberger 1926.

<sup>95</sup> Rank 1951: 9; more than half of the text is devoted to proper names.

of etymology today is grounded in the methodologies of modern comparative and historical linguistics, etymologizing before the 19th century distinguished itself from wordplay only insofar as etymology entailed a “supposedly historical continuity between forms” (to quote Culler, who calls etymology “the diachronic version of punning”).<sup>96</sup> Etymology as practiced by the ancients did not rigidly maintain even this distinction. Recent accounts emphasize that, while the language of derivation is frequently bound up in the language of ancient etymologizing, the ancient practice is concerned more with the synchronic exploration of the interpretive possibilities of a word in relation to other words than with a word’s history; it is oriented towards the present, not the past, and explicit language of derivation may or may not come into play.<sup>97</sup> This means that any word can have multiple correct etymologies, which may in combination be heard as granting deeper insight into the word’s meaning.<sup>98</sup>

There have been attempts, especially in regard to Latin poetry, to identify textual markers and other factors that indicate that a collocation of similar-sounding words represents etymologizing as opposed to non-etymological wordplay (or mere chance), but if the above account of early etymologizing is correct, it is impossible not only in practice but in principle to draw a clear line.<sup>99</sup> Ancient Greek rhetoric developed its own terms for the use of words that sound similar (παρετυμολογεῖν, παρονομασία, παρήχησις, ἀναγραμματισμός), although there

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<sup>96</sup> Culler 1988: 2. On the development of modern etymology in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, see e.g. Sluiter 2015: 897, Sedley 1998: 145.

<sup>97</sup> Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002 esp. 478-481, 487; Sluiter 2015: 898; Sedley 1998: 145.

<sup>98</sup> Sluiter 2015: 902-903; Hinds 2006; Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002: 486-487.

<sup>99</sup> For discussions of the identification of etymology in Latin poetry, see e.g. Hinds 2006; Cairns 1996; O’Hara 1996 (further bibliography in 5n6); Maltby 1993; Ahl 1985: 22-60 and *passim*. For Greek, see Liović 2012; Nagy 1994: 5; Irigoien 1991. For etymological markers in both Greek and Latin, see Sluiter 2015: 904-905; Peraki-Kyriakidou 2002 esp. 484-486. O’Hara 1996: 3 acknowledges the fuzzy boundaries between etymology, non-etymological paronomasia, and euphony, but in his otherwise useful summary of Homeric etymologizing falls into a binary of etymology versus euphony (7-11).

was little consistency in usage across time and authors.<sup>100</sup> To avoid confusion, and because to speculate on the nature of archaic etymologizing is not the aim of this chapter, I use ‘etymology’ in the modern sense, and ‘paronomasia’ as an approximate equivalent to ‘pun,’ minus the implication of the latter term that the intended result is humor.

Because repetitions of roots (sometimes called *figura etymologica*) were counted under “lexical” repetitions in the previous chapter, I do not discuss them here under the heading of paronomasia. But as pointed out in section 1.1 and suggested above, the ancient assessment is more important in this regard than the modern one, and it is not always possible to know what roots an ancient poet and audience considered “the same.”<sup>101</sup> We saw in the introduction a ring consisting of the accusative singulars of φοινός ‘blood-red’ and φόνοϛ ‘gore’ (*Il.* 16.159/162);<sup>102</sup> the two words differ phonemically only by a vowel and in accentuation, and their annular positions adjacent to the repeated word ‘blood’ (αἷματι φοινόν-φόνον αἷματος) enforce the respension. We know the ancients interpreted φοινός as a variant of φόνοϛ, so a classification of the ring as paronomasia would avail only from the modern standpoint that the two words are etymologically unrelated (and the evidence for the ancient interpretation is at any rate post-Homeric).<sup>103</sup> A similar relation holds between ἐπάισσω ‘rush at’ and ἐπαίγιζω ‘rush upon’ in *Il.*

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<sup>100</sup> On the ancient rhetorical concept of paronomasia (Latin *annominatio*), etc., see Lausberg 1998: 285-288, 847; Stanford 1929: 33-34. The Latin *Rhetorica ad Herennium* (early 1<sup>st</sup> century BCE) defines paronomasia as “a figure in which, by means of a modification of sound or change of letters, a close resemblance to a given verb or noun is produced, so that similar words express dissimilar things,” as between *vincit* ‘defeat’ and *vincit* ‘bind’ (IV xxi 29; translation from Culler 1988: 5). Hermogenes of Tarsus (2<sup>nd</sup> century CE) defines *parechesis* as “an adornment consisting of similar words that, though different in meaning, sound the same. It comes about whenever someone says two or three or four expressions or words that sound alike but have a different sense” (translation mine). See Testenoire 2010: 223-227 on the figures of parechesis and anagram in Eustathius’ commentaries and the Homeric scholia.

<sup>101</sup> Cf. Louden 1995: 31.

<sup>102</sup> See under the heading “Notational Conventions.”

<sup>103</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. φοινός. The etymology of φοινός is unknown. Cf. Watkins 1995: 373 with note 3 on this passage.

2.146 and 148 (also in Chapter 1); whatever the linguistic relationship, they were likely heard as closely related by an early audience.<sup>104</sup>

The audience of Homeric epic would be accustomed to the fact that roots need not sound exactly the same to signify the same thing, because phonetic variance in words of the same root due to derivational processes and/or dialect was common. This variance can manifest in lexical/semantic rings, as in the ring composed of ἑπταβόειον ‘of seven bulls-hides’ and ἑβδομάτη ‘seventh’ in the following ring structure, both derived from the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root *\*septm-*.<sup>105</sup>

**II. 7.244-250 ABCDDCBA**

A	ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἀμπεπαλῶν <u>προῖει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,</u>	
B, C	καὶ βάλεν <u>Αἴαντος</u> δεινὸν <u>σάκος ἑπταβόειον</u>	245
D	ἀκρότατον κατὰ <u>χαλκόν</u> , ὃς ὄγδοος ἦεν ἐπ’ αὐτῷ.	
D	ἔξ δὲ διὰ <u>πτύχας</u> ἦλθε δαΐζων <u>χαλκός</u> ἀτειρής,	
C	ἐν τῇ δ’ <u>ἑβδομάτῃ</u> ῥίνῳ σχέτο· δεύτερος αὐτε	
B, A	<u>Αἴας</u> διογενῆς <u>προῖει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,</u>	
	καὶ βάλε Πριαμίδαο κατ’ <u>ἀσπίδα πάντοσ’ εἴσην.</u>	250

So he spoke, and brandished and threw his long-shadowed spear.  
It struck the fearsome seven-oxhide shield of Ajax  
in its outermost layer—the eighth, which was of bronze—  
and the untiring bronze went cleaving through six of the layers  
but in the seventh hide it stayed. Then in turn  
Ajax sprung from Zeus threw his long-shadowed spear  
and struck the shield of the son of Priam equal in all directions.

It is worth keeping in mind that Greek retains remnants of the old Proto-Indo-European ablaut system, and speakers of Greek would be accustomed to roots of the basic pattern consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) in which the vowel changed morphologically without altering the root’s basic meaning, for example in βέλος ‘bolt’ / βάλλω ‘throw, strike’ / ἔβλητο ‘was struck’ / βολή ‘throw,’ from the PIE root *\*g<sup>w</sup>elh<sub>1</sub>-* ‘hit by throwing,’ or πετεινός ‘winged’ / ποτάομαι ‘fly

<sup>104</sup> Chantraine 1968 s.v. αἰγίς tentatively suggests the influence of ἐπαίσσω on the meaning of ἐπαιγίζω.

<sup>105</sup> The stems ἑπτα- and ἑβδομ- are cardinal and ordinal, respectively. See Beekes 2010 s.v. ἑπτά, ἑβδομος. This passage is discussed in section 3.1.1 below.

about' / *πτέρυξ* 'wing,' from the PIE root *\*peth<sub>2</sub>*. 'fly.'<sup>106</sup> It should therefore be no surprise if paronomastic sequences appear with similar vowel alternation, or if a consonantal sequence (CC) echoes with a CVC sequence, which is perhaps less likely to register as an echo for a speaker of English.

Finally, a word is due on Homeric pronunciation and the orthography of the Homeric texts as they have come down to us. In more and less subtle ways, the spelling of our texts does not reflect pronunciation at earlier stages in the epics' complex history. This is in part because of language change, in part due to the fact that, while the Homeric dialect is to a large extent East Ionic, the orthography of our texts has a pervasive veneer of Atticism, almost certainly for reasons of transmission.<sup>107</sup> The phoneme /w/, represented by the letter digamma <Ϝ> and retained in most Greek dialects into the archaic and early classical periods, was lost in Ionic before the advent of alphabetic inscriptions; although digamma is absent from the Homeric texts, they contain frequent (but not invariable) metrical reflections of its presence.<sup>108</sup> In addition to digamma, East Ionic lost the initial phoneme /h/ before the alphabet reached it, but our texts regularly record aspiration, as in ἀφικάνω rather than Ionic ἀπικάνω. This lack of psilosis is considered either an Atticism, which would account for the aspiration of ἡμέρη 'day' (a word that existed in Attic) but not the cognate ἦμαρ (which did not),<sup>109</sup> or an archaic hold-over from a non-psilotic, West Ionic stage in the poems' development.<sup>110</sup> The Attic spellings κρείσσων, μείζων, δέχομαι, ἐνθαῦθα, οὔν, and χίλιοι replaced Ionic κρέσσων, μέζων, δέκομαι, ἐνθαῦτα, ὄν,

<sup>106</sup> The latter example comes from Katz 2010: 366 on *Il.* 2.459-462, in which all three words appear; they reflect the PIE *e*-grade, *o*-grade, and zero-grade ablaut forms of the root, respectively.

<sup>107</sup> Chantraine 1958: 5-16; Janko 1985: 32-37; Reece 2011.

<sup>108</sup> See e.g. Hackstein 2010: 415; Horrocks 1997: 204. Forms that preserve a reflection of digamma and forms that do not seem to have offered metrically useful alternatives.

<sup>109</sup> Janko 1985: 35; Chantraine 1958: 15.

<sup>110</sup> Hackstein 2010: 402 with bibliography.

and χείλιοι.<sup>111</sup> Evidence of vowel confusion in our texts can sometimes be attributed to the fact that the Old Attic alphabet used the characters E and O for several different vowels each (e.g. the spurious diphthongs ει and ου as well as the vowels later represented by η and ω), which were usually but not always transcribed correctly after the New Ionic alphabet was adopted in Athens at the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>112</sup> Iambic ἔως and τέως sometimes scan as trochees, reflecting the earlier, pre-quantitative metathesis forms ἦρος and τῆρος;<sup>113</sup> the preposition πρὸς often recovers the older form πός, to judge by the short scansion of a preceding vowel where one would expect long.<sup>114</sup> Metrically anomalous formulas sometimes conceal archaisms that point to their formation at older stages of the language. There are occasional metrical traces of word-initial /s/ before this changed to *spiritus asper* (e.g. the artificial lengthening of the second syllable in the phrase ὑπεῖρ ἄλλα, from ὑπερ \*σάλα, or the fact that a word with an original initial /s/ followed by a resonant sometimes makes position, as in ὄρεᾶ νιφόντα < \*σνιφόντα *Il.* 14.227, βέλῶς ἐχεπευκέες < \*σεχεπευκέες *Il.* 1.51).<sup>115</sup> Some formulas only fit the meter if assumed to recover syllabic resonants, which are usually thought to have resolved before the Mycenaean period and thus reflect a poetic currency older than the Homeric epics themselves in any recognizable form, e.g. Ἐνναλίῳ ἀνδρειφόντη for Ἐνναλίῳ ἀνηφόντη; δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσι for δειλοῖσι μῖτοῖσι; ἀσπίδος ἀμφιβρότης for ἀσπίδος ἀμφιμίτας (a type of shield that went out of use at the end of the Mycenaean period).<sup>116</sup>

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<sup>111</sup> Janko 1985: 34-35, cf. Chantraine 1958: 16.

<sup>112</sup> Janko 1985: 33-37. Cf. Katz 2019: 162 on the inconsistent representation of vowel quantity in ancient Greek orthography.

<sup>113</sup> Chantraine 1958: 11; Miller 2014: 67-68; Hackstein 2010: 406.

<sup>114</sup> Miller 2014: 323.

<sup>115</sup> Hackstein 2010: 415-416; Horrocks 1997: 211; an analogical rule developed that a vowel could lengthen before a resonant.

<sup>116</sup> Miller 2014: 303-307.

These are just a few examples out of many, and it is worth keeping in mind that even for Classical Attic we have no knowledge of exact phonetic values. Given the difficulties of dating the Homeric epics and their potential phases, obtaining an accurate synchronic snapshot of pronunciation at any specific time and place presents clear challenges. But all things considered, it is nevertheless not certain that any of the orthographic limitations of our texts would significantly alter our ability to identify similar phonemic sequences (as opposed to identical phonetic ones). The paronomasia of ἔσπεριος-εἴματα ἔσσε περι ('at evening'-'put clothes around [his flesh],' *Od.* 16.452/457) works better as \*φεσπεριος-\*φέσματα φέσσε περι, for example, but only marginally.<sup>117</sup> As a way of accommodating the possibility that relevant phonetic information has dropped from our texts, especially in light of the possibility that certain instances of paronomasia are conventional and date to earlier stages of the tradition, I include etymological information for key words in footnotes, when this is known and helpful; this information comes from Beekes' *Etymological Dictionary of Greek* (2010) unless stated otherwise.

## 2.1 PRELIMINARY EXAMPLES

A few examples will suffice to show that lexical structures can be useful for identifying paronomasia. Just as any lexical repetition in a ring structure is systematized and strengthened by its participation in that structure, so too do lexical structures allow for the identification of non-adjacent paronomastic rings, including across narrative spans larger than those in which Homeric wordplay tends to be identified.<sup>118</sup> In the ring structure ὄφελ'-**τέκε μήτηρ**-κακή-κῶμα-κῶμ'-κακὰ-**τεκμήραντο**-ὄφελλον (*Il.* 6.345-350, ABCDDCBA), for example, the corresponding

<sup>117</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. ἔννυμι (< \*φέσ-νυ-μι < IE \*ues-) and ἔσπερος (< IE \*ue-k<sup>w</sup>sp-er-o-), but the etymology of ἔσπερος is disputed.

<sup>118</sup> There are numerous exceptions, but the examples in Rank 1951: 31-35 are typical and rarely exceed three lines.

positions of τέκε μήτηρ ‘mother gave birth’ and τεκμήραντο ‘[the gods] ordained’ suggest that the latter echoes the former in spite of four lines of separation:<sup>119</sup>

**II. 6.344-351** ABcADDAcB

A	δᾶερ ἐμεῖο κυνὸς <i>κακομηχάνου</i> ὀκρυόεσσης,	
B, c	ὥς μ’ <i>ὄφελ’</i> ἦματι τῷ ὅτε με πρῶτον <i>τέκε μήτηρ</i>	345
A	οἴχεσθαι προφέρουσα <i>κακῆ</i> ἀνέμοιο θύελλα	
D	εἰς ὄρος ἢ εἰς <i>κῦμα</i> πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης,	
D	ἔνθά με <i>κῦμ’</i> ἀπόερσε πάρος τάδε ἔργα γενέσθαι.	
A, c	αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τάδε γ’ ὤδε θεοὶ <i>κακὰ τεκμήραντο</i> ,	
B	ἀνδρὸς ἔπειτ’ <i>ὄφελλον</i> ἀμείνονος εἶναι ἄκοιτις,	350
	ὄς ἦδη νέμεσίν τε καὶ αἴσχεα πόλλ’ ἀνθρώπων.	

Brother of mine, I who am a dog, abhorred and ill-devising,  
would that on the day when first my mother brought me forth,  
 an evil storm of wind had caught me up and had borne me  
 to some mountain or to the waves of the roaring sea,  
 then the waves could have swept me away ere these deeds had come about.  
 But, since the gods these evils have ordained,  
would that I had been wife to a better man—  
 to one who could smart under dishonour and the reproaches of men.

Phonic pairing like this is an invitation to look for latent semantic resonance, and the phonemic respiration between τέκε μήτηρ and τεκμήραντο seems to cast the birth of Helen as an event ordained by the gods to further their destructive plans.<sup>120</sup> This is interesting, because the D scholion on *Il.* 1.5 attributes to the *Cypria* an aitiology of the Trojan War in which Helen’s birth is one of the two means by which Zeus brings about the war in order to lighten the earth of the burden of humankind (the other being the marriage of Thetis to Peleus).<sup>121</sup> It is not necessarily to

<sup>119</sup> τεκμαίρομαι < τέκμαρ ‘sign, emblem’ < IE \*k<sup>w</sup>ek- ‘see, appear’ (s.v. τέκμαρ); τίκτω < IE \*tek- ‘produce’; μήτηρ < IE \*meh<sub>2</sub>ter- ‘mother.’

<sup>120</sup> Cf. the bT scholion on *Il.* 6.345: ὡς παρ’ αὐτὸ τῆς γενέσεως εἰμαρμένων τούτων, ἅπερ αὐτῆς ἐδόκει εἶναι πλημμελήματα (“these things were allotted at her birth, which seemed to be her own faults”).

<sup>121</sup> D scholion on *Il.* 1.5 (van Thiel 2014): Μώμου... ὑποθεμένου δὲ αὐτῷ γνώμας δύο, τὴν Θέτιδος θνητογαμίαν καὶ θυγατρὸς καλῆς γένναν, ἐξ ὧν ἀμφοτέρων πόλεμος Ἑλληνισί τε καὶ βαρβάρους ἐγένετο. ἀφ’ οὗ συνέβη κουφισθῆναι τὴν γῆν πολλῶν ἀναιρεθέντων. Cf. Eustathius *Ad Iliadem* 1.33.15 (TLG). There are problems with the scholion’s attribution of this account to the *Cypria*; see Marks 2002: 11 and n29; Scodel 1982: 39-40 and n15; Kullmann 1955: 179-184. This point owes much to a conversation with Professor Olga Levaniouk, to whom I am grateful.

this that the paronomastic ring refers, but it does hint at the potential centrality of Helen's birth in such an aitiology, and may be the only place in the *Iliad* to do so.<sup>122</sup>

Another example occurs when Menelaus is shot by Pandarus with an arrow in *Iliad* 4.

The description of the arrow piercing his layers of armor is framed by a ring structure containing the rings *χροὸς ...μήτηρ/μίτρης... χροὸς* (130/137), separated by seven lines:

**Il. 4.130-138**

ἦ δὲ τόσον μὲν ἔεργεν ἀπὸ *χροὸς* ὡς ὅτε *μήτηρ* 130  
 παιδὸς *ἔεργη* μυῖαν ὅθ' ἠδέϊ λέξεται ὕπνω,  
 αὐτὴ δ' αὐτ' ἴθυνεν ὅθι *ζωστήρος ὀχῆες*  
*χρῦσειοι σύνεχον* καὶ *διπλόος* ἦντετο *θώρηξ*.  
 ἐν δ' ἔπεσε *ζωστήρι ἀρηρότι* πικρὸς οἴστος·  
 διὰ μὲν ἄρ' *ζωστήρος* ἐλήλατο *δαϊδαλέοιο*, 135  
 καὶ διὰ *θώρηκος πολυδαϊδάλου* ἠρήρειστο  
*μίτρης* θ', ἦν ἐφόρει *ἔρυμα χροὸς* ἔρκος ἀκόντων,  
 ἦ οἱ πλεῖστον *ἔρυτο*· διὰ πρὸ δὲ εἴσατο καὶ τῆς.

She whisked it from his skin as when a mother  
 whisks a fly from off her child when it is sleeping sweetly;  
 she guided it straight to the part where the golden buckles  
 of the belt held together that passed over his double cuirass,  
 so the sharp arrow struck the tightly fitted belt.  
 It drove right through this well-crafted belt,  
 and through the cuirass very finely crafted it pressed,  
 and the mitre, which he wore next his skin to keep out darts;  
 it was this that protected him most, but the arrow went through even this.

In the first element, Athena deflects the arrow from a fatal trajectory like a mother brushing a fly from her son's skin: ἦ δὲ τόσον μὲν ἔεργεν ἀπὸ *χροὸς* ὡς ὅτε *μήτηρ*/ παιδὸς *ἔεργη* μυῖαν ὅθ' ἠδέϊ λέξεται ὕπνω (*Il.* 4.130-131); in the second element, the arrow reaches the *μίτηρ*, the piece of armor that lies closest to Menelaus' skin and protects him most: *μίτρης* θ', ἦν ἐφόρει *ἔρυμα χροὸς* ἔρκος ἀκόντων (*Il.* 4.137).

<sup>122</sup> On Helen's birth as a cause of the war more generally see Blondell 2013: 27-28; Christopoulos 2011; Mayer 1996.

The intervening description of the arrow passing through layers of armor contains a number of lexical and syllabic repetitions (e.g. ζωστήρ 132, 134, 135; θώρηξ 133, 136; the syllables αρ and ηρ; δαιδαλέοιο and πολυδαιδάλου 135-136), but is not internally ring-composed, although there is an aptness of the language of fitting and joining to the dense repetitions (ὄχηες... σύνεχον 132-133; ἀρηρότι 134). The μήτηρ is mentioned only once in the sequence. This piece of armor appears in the *Iliad* only three times outside of Book 4 and is poorly understood in terms of its form and function; its rarity in the epic alone makes it a point of interest.<sup>123</sup> Aside from phonemic similarity, the words μήτηρ and μήτηρ are aligned by the attendant vocabulary of deflection and defense (note the proliferation of the syllable ερ-): Athena wards off the arrow (ἄμυνεν 129, ἔεργεν 130) as the mother wards off a fly (ἔέργη 131); the μήτηρ is a guard (ἔρυμα 137) of the flesh and a barrier (ἔρκος 137) against darts, and it protects (ἔρωτο 138) Menelaos the most (the arrow passes through it, but only scrapes his skin). The whole sequence hinges on the implications of various kinds of likeness: the likeness established by the simile comparing Athena to a mother is furthered on the paronomastic level by the phonemic similarity of μήτηρ and μήτηρ, so that if Athena is (through the simile) like the μήτηρ as μήτηρ is (phonemically) like μήτηρ, a relationship is established between Athena and the μήτηρ. As μήτηρ is a permutation of μήτηρ, the defense provided by the μήτηρ can be understood as a permutation of the maternal defense afforded by Athena.

Ring structures also allow for the identification of paronomastic elements that are more trivial – that is, of less thematic importance for the scene or poem – than those that receive the most scholarly attention. To judge by the components of ring structures, the Homeric poet has a far more inclusive sense of what is suitable for paronomasia than is sometimes acknowledged by

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<sup>123</sup> The word appears at *Il.* 5.857, 5.707, 16.419, in the latter two in epithets. See Kirk 1985 on *Il.* 4.132-133 and 137-138.

the scholarship that gravitates towards proper names, and these rings do not always suggest semantic associations in the conventional sense. If there is narrative significance in the ring formed by ἔσκε ('it was,' iterative) and ἔσχατα ('last') in the following passage, I do not know what it is:

**Il. 11.3-12** (Il. 11.5-9 = Il. 8.222-226) AB CD EfggfE CD AB

A Ζεὺς δ' Ἐριδᾶ προΐαλλε θοὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν  
 B, C ἀργαλέην, πολέμοιο τέρας μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχουσαν.  
 D, E στή δ' ἐπ' Ὀδυσσεῖος μεγακῆτεϊ νῆϊ μελαίνῃ, 5  
 f ἦ ῥ' ἐν μεσσάτῳ ἔσκε γεγωνέμεν ἀμφοτέρωσσε,  
 g ἤμην ἐπ' Αἴαντος κλισίας Τελαμωνιάδαο  
 g, f, E ἦ δ' ἐπ' Ἀχιλλῆος, τοί ῥ' ἔσχατα νῆας εἴσας  
 C εἴρυσαν ἠνορέῃ πίσυνοι καὶ κάρτεϊ χειρῶν·  
 D ἔνθα στήσ' ἦυσε θεὰ μέγα τε δεινόν τε 10  
 A ὄρθι', Ἀχαιοῖσιν δὲ μέγα σθένος ἔμβάλ' ἐκάστω  
 B καρδίῃ ἄληκτον πολεμίζειν ἠδὲ μάχεσθαι.

Zeus sent fierce Eris to the ships of the Achaeans  
 holding the ensign of war in her hands.

She took her stand by the huge black hull of Odysseus' ship  
 which was middlemost of all, so that her voice might carry farthest on either side,  
on the one hand towards the tents of Ajax son of Telamon,  
 and on the other towards those of Achilles—for they had drawn up their ships at the ends,  
 well-assured of their own prowess and the strength of their hands;  
 There taking her stand, the goddess raised a cry great and terrible  
 and shrill, that filled each of the Achaeans with great courage  
 in their hearts to wage war unceasing and do battle.

It is not wholly appropriate to say that there is *no* semantic association, because there is always by default the association produced denotatively by the narrative: ἔσκε is related to ἔσχατα insofar as Odysseus' ship *was* in the middle of the ships, while those of Ajax and Achilles were at either *end*. But semantic association in terms of relevance to narrative content does not exhaust the interpretive possibilities of the correlation of two terms. In this case it may be relevant that verbs with the iterative suffix –σκ-, signifying repetition of action, tend to cluster in Homer;<sup>124</sup>

<sup>124</sup> See Miller 2014: 133-134. Further examples are σκήπτρῳ ἐλάσασκεν ὁμοκλήσασκέ τε Il. 2.199; κίκλησκον-μαχέσκετο- ῥήγγυσκε Il. 7.139-141; αὐδήσασκεν-εἶπεσκε-ὄρσασκεν Il. 17.423-435; εἶασκε-ἔσκε-ἔσκε Il. 20.408-

here, instead of another verb with the ending –σκε, the word ἔσχατα supplies the phonemic repetition of the iterative ἔσκε that enacts the recurrence signaled by the suffix.<sup>125</sup> On the structural level, the ring structure produces a middle that mirrors Eris’ central position among the ships, and the annular rings, including ἔσκε/ἔσχατα, reflect her ability to shout ‘to either side’ (ἦ ῥ’ ἐν μεσσήτω ἔσκε γεγωνέμεν ἀμφοτέρωσε 11.6).<sup>126</sup> The syntagm ἔσκε γεγωνέμεν ἀμφοτέρωσε especially suggests a metastructural interpretation (as if ‘to shout ἔσκε on either side’) in reference to the recurrence of ἔσκ/ἔσχ on either side of the center.

## 2.2 CASE STUDIES IN PARONOMASIA AND METASTRUCTURE

The following case studies feature passages in which paronomasia and structure intersect in ways that reveal the poet’s manipulation of and engagement with speech as sound. If paronomasia inherently requires an awareness of the use of words (or, better, sound-sequences) as such, these examples combine this linguistic orientation with a metastructural awareness by drawing attention to the arrangement of repeated sequences of sound. The linguistic foregrounding thereby achieved showcases the phono-semantic texture of the poem as a feature of the poet’s compositional artistry.

### 2.2.1 *The Circular ὦψ of the Cyclops*

#### **Od. 9.506-512** aBBCcCaBaa

ὡς ἐφάμην, ὁ δέ μ’ οἰμώζας ἠμείβετο μύθῳ·  
 a, BB ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δὴ με παλαίφατα θέσφαθ’ ἰκάνει.  
 C ἔσκε τις ἐνθάδε μάντις ἀνήρ ἠΰς τε μέγας τε,

410; μιμνησκόμενος- δινεύεσκ’- λήθεσκεν *Il.* 24.9-13; ἀπολέσκειτ’-φάνεσκε, καταζήνασκε *Od.* 11.586-587; ὄθεσκε- ἀποστρέψασκε- ὄσασκε *Od.* 11.596-599.

<sup>125</sup> Cf. θεοῖσι δὲ χεῖρας ἀνέσχον, / ὣδε δέ τις εἶπεσκεν *Il.* 3.318-319; ῥίπτασκε ποτὶ νέφεα σκίοντα *Od.* 11.592; κικλήσκουσιν/πολυσκάρθμοιο *Il.* 2.813-814.

<sup>126</sup> The symmetry holds even if the reference to the huts of Achilles and Ajax at the center of the structure inverts their spatial arrangement on the beach. Note also the repetition of νηῦς in the fifth foot of lines 5 and 8 (the ‘balanced ships,’ νῆας εἴσας?).

C Τήλεμος Εὐρυμίδης, ὃς μαντοσύνη ἐκέκαστο  
 C, a καὶ μαντευόμενος κατεγήρα Κυκλώπεσσιν. 510  
 B, a ὃς μοι ἔφη τάδε πάντα τελευτήσεσθαι ὀπίσσω,  
 a χειρῶν ἐξ Ὀδυσῆος ἀμαρτήσεσθαι ὀπωπῆς.

Thus I spoke, and he groaned, and answered with a word,  
 ‘Alas, alas, then the old tale about me is coming true.  
 There was at one time a prophet here, a man both brave and of great stature,  
 Telemus son of Eurymus, who was well skilled in prophecy,  
 and did all the prophesying for the Cyclopes till he grew old;  
 he told me that all this would happen to me some day,  
 and said I should lose my sight by the hand of Odysseus.

Polyphemus frames a lexically ring-composed address to Odysseus with the words ὦ πόποι (‘alas!’ *Od.* 9.507) and ὀπωπῆς (‘sight’ 512). This frame forges a paronomastic connection between the Cyclops’ grief and his loss of sight that underscores the explicit connection between the two elements in the lines: a seer told him that he would lose his sight at Odysseus’ hands, and now he laments that it has come to pass. The presence of the syllables *ωπ/οπ* in *Κυκλώπεσσιν* (510) and *ὀπίσσω* (511) in the two lines preceding *ὀπωπῆς* turns the three words into a line-final refrain, and the emphasis it produces suggests the thematization of these syllables and a play on the name Cyclops: Polyphemus is a Cyclops not only in the sense that he has a round eye (from *κύκλος* ‘circle’ and *ὄψ* ‘eye’), as the usual etymology holds, but in the fact that his speech ‘circles’ back to the syllables *ωπ/οπ*. On this point we may recall Hermogenes’ much later definition of the rhetorical *κύκλος* as the repetition of a word at the beginning and end of a unit of speech, discussed in section 1.4. The Cyclops’ speech continues with an insult and threat to Odysseus and a hope that his father Poseidon will heal his eye; the final phrase of the speech, *θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων* (521), echoes Odysseus’ previous words in 502 (*Κύκλωψ*, αἴ κέν τις σε *καταθνητῶν ἀνθρώπων / ὀφθαλμοῦ*) and circles back once again to the thematic syllable *ωπ*.

The paronomastic association between the Cyclops and the syllables *ωπ/οπ* occurs elsewhere. At *Od.* 2.15-24, in the ring structure *ἀγορεύειν- Ὀδυσῆι- Κύκλωψ- ὀπλίσσατο-*

ὄδυρόμενος- ἀγορήσατο,<sup>127</sup> the middle ring pairs the Cyclops with the verb ὀπλίζω (‘make ready,’ ‘prepare’) in a description of the preparation of his last meal (a companion of Odysseus):<sup>128</sup> τὸν δ’ ἄγριος ἔκτανε **Κύκλωψ** / ἐν σπηι γλαφυρῷ, πύματον δ’ **ὀπλίσσατο** δόρπον (“the savage Cyclops killed this man in his hollow cave, and prepared his last meal” 19-20). The same paronomasia appears at *Od.* 9.311/316 in the account of the events in the cave of the Cyclops:<sup>129</sup>

**Od. 9.310-317** a(BB)CDeFFeCDa  
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ σπεῦσε πονησάμενος τὰ ἄ ἔργα, 310  
 aB σὺν δ’ ὅ γε δὴ αὐτε δὺω μάρψας **ὀπλίσσατο** δεῖπνον.  
 B, CD **δειπνήσας** δ’ ἄντρου ἐξήλασε **πίονα μῆλα**,  
 e **ῥηϊδίως** ἀφελὼν θυρεὸν μέγαν· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα  
 F, F **ἄψ ἐπέθηχ’**, ὡς εἴ τε φαρέτρη πῶμ’ **ἐπιθείη**.  
 e, CD πολλῇ δὲ **ῥοίζω** πρὸς ὄρος **τρέπε** **πίονα μῆλα** ` 315  
 a **Κύκλωψ**· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ λιπόμην κακὰ **βυσσοδομεύων**,  
 εἴ πως τεισαίμην, **δοίη** δέ μοι εὖχος Ἀθήνη.

As soon as he had got through with all his work,  
 he clutched up two more of my men, and prepared his morning's meal.  
 When he had eaten he drove out his thick sheep,  
 with the utmost ease removing the great door-stone, but then  
 he at once put it back again—as easily as though he were putting the lid on to a quiver.  
 With a great shout he turned his thick sheep to the mountain,  
 the Cyclops, so I was left to ponder evils,  
 some way of taking my revenge, if Athena might grant me glory.

The verb ὀπλίζω is a common word for the preparation of food in Homer, especially in the *Odyssey*, and the repeated collocation of Κύκλωψ and ὀπλίζω may on the one hand have something to do with the frequency with which the Cyclops prepares meals. On the other hand, the frequency with which the Cyclops is described preparing meals with this verb in particular

<sup>127</sup> See e.g. Louden 1995: 34-35, Rank 1951: 51-52 for the paronomasia of Odysseus and ὄδυρομαι.

<sup>128</sup> ὦψ < IE \*h<sub>3</sub>ekw- ‘see,’ s.v. ὄψωπα, ὦψ. ὀπλίζω < ὄπλον ‘tool’ < IE \*sep- ‘care, prepare,’ \*sop-lo- ‘instrument’ (s.v. ὄπλον).

<sup>129</sup> Cf. *Od.* 9.344/345 ὀπλίσσατο-Κύκλωπα, not apparently part of a ring structure. The sequence ὀπλίσσατο-ὄρροσίτροφος-ἀνεσγέθομεν-σγέτλια-ὄροώντες-Κύκλωψ at *Od.* 9.291-296 is potentially a paronomastic ring structure.

may itself be influenced by the wordplay that aligns the two. The Cyclops does not have exclusive claim to the paronomasia; at *Od.* 2.294-295, ἐφοπλίσσαντες ‘having made ready [a ship]’ (ἐφ-οπλίζω) echoes ἐπιόψομαι ‘I will look over,’ the suppletive future of ἐποράω from the same root that appears in Κύκλωψ, spoken by Athena to Telemachus. But the name Κύκλωψ seems drawn to the ring-composed paronomasia in ωπ/οπ in ways that other names and epithets containing the syllable (e.g. γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη, Πηνελοπεΐη) are not.

Curious confirmation of the strength of the association between the words Κύκλωψ and ὀπλίζω comes from a fragment of Empedocles containing a Homeric-style extended simile illustrating the functioning of an eye:<sup>130</sup>

**Empedocles fr. B 84.1-8** (abCDEDECba)

ab ὡς δ' ὅτε τις πρόοδον νοέων ὀπλίσσατο λύχνον  
 C χειμερίην διὰ νύκτα, πυρὸς σέλας αἰθομένοιο,  
 DE ἄψας παντοίων ἀνέμων λαμπτήρας ἀμοργούς,  
 D οἳ τ' ἀνέμων μὲν πνεῦμα διασκιδνᾶσιν ἀέντων,  
 φῶς δ' ἔξω διαθρῶισκον, ὅσον ταναώτερον ἦεν,  
 E λάμπεσκεν κατὰ βηλὸν ἀτειρέσιν ἀκτίεσσιν·  
 C ὡς δὲ τότε' ἐν μήνιξις ἐργγμένον ὠγύγιον πῦρ  
 ba λεπτήσιν <τ'> ὀθόνησι λοχάζετο κύκλοπα κούρην...

As when someone contemplating a trip readies (ὀπλίσσατο) a lamp,  
 a beam of shining fire for a winter night,  
 attaching a screen to block winds from all directions,  
 which scatter the breath of gusty winds,  
 but light leaps out, insofar as it is more tenuous,  
 and it shines over the threshold with untiring rays;  
 just so primal fire confined in membranes  
 <and> fine tissues is hidden in a round-eyed (κύκλοπα) pupil...

Here the word κύκλοπα (8) is applied not to the mythological Cyclops but to the ‘cyclopean’ (literally ‘round-eyed’) pupil of the eye. As in the Homeric passages, the ring of ωπ/οπ enacts the

<sup>130</sup> Text and translation from Graham 2010: 395-397; the translation is lightly adapted.

circularity of κύκλοπα ('round-οπ'), but this time the eye *per se* is the subject of the passage, making the relation of form to content more overt.<sup>131</sup>

Either Empedocles borrowed this wordplay from Homer, or he invented it independently, or both the paronomasia and the structural conceit were common stock in the hexameter tradition. Any of the three possibilities has implications that cannot now be considered in full, but in short, the Homericity of Empedocles' similes, including this one, has long been recognized, and the first possibility is perhaps the most likely.<sup>132</sup> On the other hand, it is also possible that both paronomasia and content enactment through ring structures were so prevalent that an association between Κύκλωψ and the repetition of ωπ/οπ could have been invented many times over. Hesiod's etymology of the Κύκλωπες is worth quoting in this regard as a further demonstration of the Cyclopes' tendency to accrue "round" patterns of repeated units of speech in archaic epic:<sup>133</sup>

**Hesiod *Theogony* 142-146** A BCD EF AFE BCD A  
 A οἱ δὴ τοὶ τὰ μὲν ἄλλα θεοῖς ἐναλίγκιοι ἦσαν,  
 B, CD μῶνος δ' ὀφθαλμὸς μέσσω ἐνέκειτο μετώπῳ.  
 E, FAFΚύκλωπες δ' ὄνομ' ἦσαν ἐπώνυμον, οὐνεκ' ἄρα σφέων  
 E, B, CD κυκλοτερῆς ὀφθαλμὸς ἕεις ἐνέκειτο μετώπῳ. 145  
 A ἰσχὺς δ' ἠδὲ βίη καὶ μηχαναὶ ἦσαν ἐπ' ἔργοις.

These in all the rest of their shape were made like the gods,  
 But they had only one eye set in the middle of their foreheads.  
Kyklopes, wheel-eyed, was the name given them, by reason  
 Of the single wheel-shaped eye that was set in their foreheads.  
 Strength and force, and contriving skills, were in all their labors.<sup>134</sup>

<sup>131</sup> On Empedocles' use of repetitive structure to illustrate cosmological content, see Graham 1988 and Rosenfeld-Loeffler 2006.

<sup>132</sup> See Garani 2007: 95-150, esp. 100-101 on Homeric language in the lantern simile (λεπτήισιν <τ'> ὀθόνηισι); further O'Brien 1970: 154-157, Snell 1955: 284-298, Kranz 1938: 100-109 (the lantern simile at 106).

<sup>133</sup> The passage is located at the center of a broader ring structure: see Vergados 2013: 2-6; Thalmann 1984: 13-14 and 191-192 notes 38-39.

<sup>134</sup> Translation adapted from Lattimore 1959.

The Homeric poet's version is more subtle in all respects, but the underlying principle is the same: the Cyclops is attended by a thematics of 'circular' sound through ring composition that plays off the syllable ωπ/οπ.

### 2.2.2 *The Boulder, ῥέα and οἶος (Il. 12.442-455)*

#### **Il. 12.445-454 ABCD EfEfEf ACBD**

A, BC, D Ἔκτωρ δ' ἀρπάξας λᾶαν φέρεν, ὃς ῥα πυλάων 445  
 ἐστήκει πρόσθε πρυμνὸς παχύς, αὐτὰρ ὕπερθεν  
 ὀξύς ἔην· τὸν δ' οὐ κε δύ' ἀνέρε δῆμου ἀρίστῳ  
 E ῥηϊδίως ἐπ' ἄμαξαν ἀπ' οὐδεὸς ὀχλίσσειαν,  
 f, E, f οἶοι νῦν βροτοὶ εἰς· ὃ δέ μιν ῥέα πάλλε καὶ οἶος.  
 τὸν οἱ ἐλαφρὸν ἔθηκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω. 450  
 E, f ὡς δ' ὅτε ποιμὴν ῥεῖα φέρει πόκον ἄρσενος οἶος  
 χειρὶ λαβὼν ἐτέρῃ, ὀλίγον τέ μιν ἄχθος ἐπείγει,  
 A, CB ὡς Ἔκτωρ ἰθὺς σανίδων φέρει λᾶαν ἀείρας,  
 D αἶ ῥα πύλας εἴρυντο πόκα στιβαρῶς ἀραρυίας

Hector lifted a stone that lay just outside the gates  
 and was thick at one end but pointed at the other;  
 not even two of the best men in a town  
 could easily lever it from the ground and put it on to a wagon,  
such as men now are, but this man picked it up easily by himself,  
 for the son of scheming Cronus made it light for him.  
 As when a shepherd easily lifts the fleece of a male sheep  
 taking it up with one hand, and little burden presses upon him,  
 so easily did Hector lift the stone and drive it right at the doors  
 that closed the gates so strong and firmly set.

This passage appears in the lead-up to the description of Hector's destruction of the Achaean gates with a large stone. The passage is framed by the image of Hector lifting the stone, accompanied by the lexical repetitions Ἔκτωρ-λᾶαν φέρεν-ῥα πυλάων ... Ἔκτωρ-φέρει λᾶαν-ῥα πύλας (445/453-4). Within this frame is the conventional statement that no two men could lift the stone today,<sup>135</sup> and a unique simile comparing the ease with which Hector carries the stone to

<sup>135</sup> Cf. *Il.* 5.302-304, *Il.* 20.286-287.

that of a shepherd carrying a sheep's fleece.<sup>136</sup> In the course of this section appears the lexical/paronomastic sequence ῥηϊδίως 'easily'-οἴοι 'such'-ῥέα 'easily'-οἴος 'alone'-ῥεῖα 'easily'-οἴος 'sheep' (EfEfEf). The variations on the root 'easy'<sup>137</sup> are echoed in φέρει in 451 and ἐτέρῃ in 452. A continuous thread of thought binds the three instances of ῥέα: it is precisely this 'easiness' on which the poet has chosen to dwell in his deployment of the simile.

At the ends of lines 449 and 451 appear the homophonous οἴος 'alone' (449) and οἴος 'sheep' (451), respectively; the genitive singular of the noun οἴς 'sheep' and the nominative masculine singular of the adjective differ phonetically only in accent.<sup>138</sup> The broader syntax of the lines supports the parallel: [Hector] easily wielded it (the stone) alone – a shepherd easily carries a fleece (ὃ δέ **μιν ῥέα πάλλε** καὶ **οἴος** – ποιμὴν **ῥεῖα φέρει** πόκον ἄρσενος **οἴος**, phonemic echoes in bold).<sup>139</sup> The parallel syntax mirrors the parallel intended by the analogy. The syllable οι- appears doubly in οἴοι 'such,' nominative plural, at the beginning of line 449, and recurs in βροτοί (οἴοι νῦν βροτοί εἰς') and in the first syllable of ποιμὴν (451).<sup>140</sup>

The repetition οἴοι-οἴος-οἴος (I will refer to them as first, second, and third, respectively), as well as the other echoes, thematizes and foregrounds the syllable οι in the passage. In light of the first and third οι(ος), we can interpret the clause containing the second as not only 'he easily wielded it even alone' but 'he easily wielded it and οἴος,' that is, the syllable οι or the word-form οἴος. The ease with which Hector lifts the boulder becomes, metapoetically, the ease with which the poet constructs the passage and in particular his deployment of soundplay based on οι.

Sequentially, the repetition of οι in line 449 sets up the syllable as a thing easily wielded; when

<sup>136</sup> Is there a possible submerged pun on the accusative singular of λᾶας 'stone' and λῆνος 'wool' (although the latter does not appear in Homer)?

<sup>137</sup> Beekes (2010) reconstructs PG \*wrāha or \*wrāja.

<sup>138</sup> οἴος < IE \*Hoi-uo- 'one, only'; οἴς < IE \*h<sub>3</sub>ei- 'sheep.' Cf. *Od.* 11.32: Τειρεσίη δ' ἀπάνευθεν **οἴν** ἱερευσέμεν **οἴφ**.

<sup>139</sup> The phonetic parallel extends to the sequence voiceless plosive-liquid in πάλλε and φέρει.

<sup>140</sup> οἴος (via \*h<sub>1</sub>iosio- or \*h<sub>1</sub>ioiso-, s.v. τοῖος) from οἴς < IE \*h<sub>1</sub>i-o- 'which.'

the poem comes to οἶος ‘sheep,’ a sort of punchline, we find the word οἶος itself as the thing easily wielded. We can understand οἶος synecdochally as a reference to the simile that enables the sheep to appear in the narrative in the first place, a creature otherwise out of place in a battle scene: retroactively, the sense becomes, “easily he (the poet) wielded the unit οἶος in his construction of the narrative such that a sheep appeared (in a place it really should not have), by means of a cleverly deployed simile.”

Further, the emphasis in the passage, as noted above, is on the ease with which Hector lifts the boulder; the unit οἶος or the simile or the whole passage itself is like a sheep’s fleece is like the rock Hector lifts insofar as each is easy to wield. On the metapoetic level, the poet gestures to the ease with which he has conducted this verbal cleverness. But the passage is marked internally not just by οἶος but by the alternating repetitions ῥῆιδίως-οἶοι-ῥέα-οἶος-ῥεῖα-οἶος, so we can hear the clause containing the second οἶος a third way: “he wielded it, ῥέα, and οἶος.”<sup>141</sup> Thus ‘ῥέα,’ as a spoken unit, and not just the semantics of ease, becomes thematized through repetition in the passage. The ring structure with these internal repetitions enacts the boulder Hector lifts: “[Hector] wielded it [the stone] consisting of ῥέα and οἶος.” At the same time, the layered meanings in line 449 self-referentially superimpose: “*easily* he [the poet] *alone* wielded ῥέα and οἶος [in his deployment of them in this passage].”

What should lead the poet to play off of these units in particular? Line 449 occurs two other times in the *Iliad*, and contains the kernels of thematization already in the repetition οἶοι-οἶος;<sup>142</sup> the clause ‘he alone wielded οἶος’ applies also to the οἶοι at the beginning of the line and the -οι of βροτοί. In *Il.* 20.285-287 (= *Il.* 5.302-304), in which the line constitutes the center of a

<sup>141</sup> It is not necessary to press the grammar of the sentence too hard, but it is possible to take μιν ‘it’ as standing in apposition to ῥέα and οἶος, or the units ῥέα and οἶος as accusative of respect.

<sup>142</sup> *Il.* 20.287 = *Il.* 5.304.

lexical ring structure, the self-referential clause is anticipated in the preceding line by φέροιεν, such that within four words the syllable οι appears four times (φέροιεν/ οἷοι νῦν βροτοῖ) before arriving at the statement that it is easy to wield:<sup>143</sup>

**II. 20.284-291** aBcDeeDacB  
 a, B ἐμμεμαῶς ἐπόρουσεν ἐρυσσάμενος ξίφος ὄξυ  
 c σμερδαλέα ἰάχων· ὃ δὲ χερμάδιον λάβε χειρὶ 285  
 D Αἰνεΐας, μέγα ἔργον, ὃ σὺ δύο γ' ἄνδρε φέροιεν,  
 e, e οἷοι νῦν βροτοῖ εἰς· ὃ δέ μιν ῥέα πάλλε καὶ οἷος.  
 D, a, c ἔνθά κεν Αἰνεΐας μὲν ἐπεσσύμενον βάλε πέτρῳ  
 ἢ κόρυθ' ἢ ἐ σάκος, τό οἱ ἤρκεσε λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον,  
 τὸν δέ κε Πηλεΐδης σχεδὸν ἄορι θυμὸν ἀπηύρα, 290  
 B εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὄξυ νόησε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων·...

Then Achilles sprang furiously upon him, with his keen blade drawn and a terrible cry, and Aeneas seized a boulder with his hand, a great deed, so huge that two men would be unable to lift it, such as men now are, but he wielded it easily even alone. Aeneas would then have struck him with the stone as he was springing towards him, either on the helmet or on the shield that kept him from grim destruction, and the son of Peleus would have come close and dispatched him with his sword had not Poseidon lord of the earthquake been quick to notice...

Even without such echoes, however, the clause, taken alone, could be considered self-referential: in simply saying ‘easily (ῥέα) he wielded it alone (οἷος),’ the poet has in fact ‘wielded’ those terms, and every other word and sound in the statement. But this alone seems insufficient to catalyze a conceptual leap between hearing the clause for its narrative content and hearing a self-referential description of the verbal texture of the narrative itself. That shift is facilitated by repetitions outside of the clause, and especially, in the example from Book 12, by the presence of ῥέα and οι(ος) both before and after the clause, bolstered by their participation in an overarching ring structure. But in *Iliad* 12, the poet seems to have amplified and elaborated on a wordplay already suggested within the recurring line 449.

<sup>143</sup> For the anagrammatic ring λάβε-βάλε, see Testenoire 2010: 224, 228 on Eustathius (*II.* 11.104-109 λαβόν/βάλε/ἔβαλ'), *Eustathius Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* I, 194.

The boulder passage sheds light on one of the most famous cases of Iliadic wordplay:

*Il.* 16.139-144 (*Il.* 16.141-144 = *Il.* 19.388-391)  
 εἴλετο δ' ἄλκιμα δοῦρε, τά οἱ παλάμηφιν ἀρήρει.  
 ἔγχος δ' οὐχ ἔλετ' οἷον ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο 140  
 βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν· τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν  
πάλλειν, ἀλλὰ μιν οἷος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς.  
Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν πατρὶ φίλω πόρε Χείρων  
Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς, φόνον ἔμμεναι ἠρώεσσιν.

He grasped two mighty spears that fit well in his palms,  
 but alone he did not take the spear of noble descendent of Aeacus,  
 so stout and strong, for none other of the Achaeans were able  
 to wield it, but Achilles alone understood how to wield  
 the Pelian ash spear, which Chiron had given to his dear father  
 From the Pelian peak, wherewith to deal out death among heroes.

The collocation Πηλιάδα ‘Pelian’ and Πηλίου ‘Mt. Pelion’ has suggested to many the latent name of Achilles’ father (πατρὶ φίλω 143), Peleus, with further play on πῆλαι ‘wield.’<sup>144</sup> The clause ὁ δέ μιν ῥέα πάλλε καὶ οἷος (‘and easily he wielded it even alone’) in the boulder passages and ἀλλὰ μιν οἷος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς (‘but Achilles alone knew how to wield it,’ 16.142 = 19.389) bear semantic and lexical similarities, the latter marked in bold. In this case, the poet leverages the paronomastic potential of πάλλω and ἀλλά rather than ῥέα and οἷος, playing off the verb πάλλω as if it meant ‘to wield the sounds (π)αλλ/πηλ.’<sup>145</sup> One gets the impression that Achilles’ exclusive knowledge of how to wield the spear is directly related to the paronomasia of πάλλω, Peleus, and the spear of Pelian ash from Mt. Pelion: only Achilles’ family is productive of a suitable paronomastic nexus for the verb πάλλω, so only Achilles can wield the spear. In addition to hinting at the name Peleus (Πηλεύς - πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς), the phrase πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς echoes Αἰακίδαο (‘descendent of Aeacus,’ i.e. Achilles) in 140 (and Ἀχαιῶν in

<sup>144</sup> See e.g. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000: 5 and nn25-31 (with bibliography); Louden 1995: 30; Edwards 1987: 122; Rank 1951: 37-38, 65, 93-94.

<sup>145</sup> Cf. *Od.* 10.206-207 κλήρου δ' ἐν κυνέη χαλκῆρεϊ πάλλομεν ὄκα· / ἐκ δ' ἔθορε κλῆρος μεγαλήτορος Εὐρυλόχοιο.

141), such that the collocation encodes two generations of Achilles' ancestry, his father Peleus and his grandfather Aeacus. It is hardly surprising that such a densely suggestive passage was considered worth repeating.

### 2.2.3 Paronomasia at (as) the Spindle

<b>Od. 4.133-140</b>	abccba b	
	τόν ῥά οἱ ἀμφίπολος Φυλῶ παρέθηκε φέρουσα νήματος ἀσκητοῖο βεβυσμένον· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' αὐτῶ	
ab	ἤλακάτη τετάνυστο ἰοδνεφές εἶρος ἔχουσα.	135
c	ἔζετο δ' ἐν κλισμῶ, ὑπὸ δὲ θρήνυς ποσίην ἦεν.	
cb	αὐτίκα δ' ἦ γ' ἐπέεσσι πόσιν ἐρέεινεν ἕκαστα·	
a	ἴδμεν δὴ, Μεγέλαε διοτρεφές, οἳ τινες οἶδε ἀνδρῶν εὐχετόωνται ἰκανέμεν ἡμέτερον δῶ;	
b	ψεύσομαι ἢ ἔτυμον ἐρέω; κέλεται δέ με θυμός.	140

The attendant Phylo now placed this by her side,  
full of fine spun yarn, and on top of it  
a distaff stretched with violet-coloured wool was laid.  
Then Helen took her seat, put her feet upon the footstool,  
and began to question with words her husband on each point.  
"Do we know, Zeus-nourished Menelaus, who they are,  
these men who have come to visit us at our house?  
Shall I speak falsely or the truth?—but my hearts bids me to speak.

As long as poet and audience were attuned to paronomastic echoes, nothing bars the production or reception of ring structures consisting entirely or primarily of paronomastic rings. In one of the less urgently conducted debates of modern Homeric scholarship, several scholars in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries addressed their attention to the question of whether the homophonous ποσίην ('feet,' dative plural) in *Od.* 4.136 and πόσιν ('spouse,' accusative singular) in the subsequent line represent an intentional echo. Holzapfel identified it as wordplay in 1851; thirty years later, Hecht replied derisively: *Facetus, mehercle, lusus, et qui docto viro suo merito placuit!* ('Elegant play, by God, and one which was pleasing to a learned man on its own merits!').<sup>146</sup> I can find no

<sup>146</sup> Holzapfel 1851: 34; Hecht 1882: 12.

more recent commentator than Rank (1951), who comes down on the side of unintentionality.<sup>147</sup> In favor of Holzapfel's judgement is the location of the two words at the center of a paronomastic ring structure. On either side of ποσὶν/πόσιν, the word ἐρέεινεν ('she asked,' 137) paronomastically picks up εἶρος ('wool,' 135),<sup>148</sup> and a loose responsion between the line-final ἔχουσα (135) and ἕκαστα (137) extends the phonemic parallel. In the outer ring, διοτρεφές (138) echoes ἰοδνεφές (135) in the same metrical form and position, with metathesis in the initial syllables ἰοδ-/διο- (picked up also in the ἴδ- of ἴδμεν).

Helen is going to spin wool while she addresses her husband. The paronomastic ring structure reflects this spinning;<sup>149</sup> by including the echo of εἶρος and ἐρεείνω, the poet can be said to have 'spun' εἶρος, the word 'wool' as such. And Helen's speech becomes itself a kind of 'spinning': the meaning of εἶρος bleeds into the meaning of ἐρεείνω, implying a connection between woolworking and intellectual activity that appears more overtly in Homeric phrases such as μητρίν ὕφαινειν, 'weave wiles,'<sup>150</sup> or in Penelope's semi-figurative use of the verb τολυπεύω, 'to wind off carded wool into a ball for spinning,' in reference to her deceitful weaving of the funeral shroud: ἐγὼ δὲ δόλους τολυπεύω ('I spin out/accomplish deceits,' *Od.* 19.137).<sup>151</sup> That the passage in *Odyssey* 4 taps into an underlying association between woolworking and wiliness is indicated by Helen's brief deliberation of whether to tell the truth or lie

<sup>147</sup> Rank 1951: 33. Stanford 1939: 103 counts it among "unemphatic parecheses and puns."

<sup>148</sup> Cf. the genitive of the related ἔριον ('wool,' derived from εἶρος) in line 124 as an indication that the length of the initial vowel (ἐρ-/εἶρ-) would not hinder the echo. The metrical environment of εἶρος shows that it does not here retain a trace of its original initial digamma (εἶρος < \*φέρρος < IE \*ueru-os- 'wool'; cf. ἐρεείνω < \*ἐρεφ- < IE \*h<sub>1</sub>r(e)u- 'ask, inquire'; s.v. εἶρος, ἐρεείνω, εἶρομαι), since the final syllable in ἰοδνεφές scans short.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. spinning imagery and ring structures at *Il.* 6.488-493 ἀνδρῶν- οἴκον- ἔργα- ἠλακάτην- ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι- ἄνδρεςσι; *Od.* 6.305-310 μητέρ' -ἦσται- ἠλάκατα στροφῶσ' -κεκλιμένη-εἶατ' -ποτικέκλιται- ἐφήμενος-μητρός; *Od.* 17.95-99 εἶδατα-χαριζομένη-κλισμῶ-κεκλιμένη, λέπτ' ἠλάκατα στροφῶσα-χεῖρας-ἐδητύος; *Od.* 21.349-352 τόξα-οἴκον-ἔργα-ἠλακάτην-ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι-τόξον.

<sup>150</sup> This phrase appears with minor variations at *Il.* 7.324, 9.93, *Od.* 4.678, 9.422, 13.303, 13.386. See Snyder 1981: 194, Lowenstam 2000: 346 with note 31 on 'weaving wiles' in Homer.

<sup>151</sup> On τολυπεύω, see Lowenstam 2000: 341, 345-346, Clayton 2003: 32-33.

in line 140 (ψεύσομαι ἢ ἔτυμον ἐρέω);<sup>152</sup> her use of the verb ἐρέω (‘I will say’) phonetically picks up εἶρος and ἐρεείνω, drawing it into the same associative nexus.<sup>153</sup> The whole scene of *Od.* 4.120-136 prepares Helen to spin wool, but at the moment when we might expect her to pick up a spindle and start, the narrative moves into direct speech, and Helen’s (literal) spinning goes un-narrated: the ring structure facilitates a shift to figuratively ‘spun’ language.

#### 2.2.4 *Paronomasia at (as) the Turning-Post*

In a well-known instance of the correlation of form with content in the *Iliad*, Nestor addresses a ring-composed speech to his son in *Iliad* 23 that imitates the chariot race it describes.<sup>154</sup> Before Antilochus takes part in the race in the funeral games of Patroklos, Nestor spends 42 lines suggesting strategies for winning despite Antilochus’ inferior horses. Lohmann’s classic delineation of the speech’s ring structure is summarized by Richardson as follows:<sup>155</sup>

306-8: introduction

(a) 309-12: you are a good charioteer, but your horses are slower than the rest

(b) 313-18: you must make use of ingenuity (μητις)

(c) 319-25: contrasting descriptions of the bad and good driver

(d) 326-33: description of the turning-post

(c) 334-43: positive and negative advice on how to round it

(b) 343: use your intelligence and take care!

(a) 344-8: if you turn the post well even the best horse in the world will not catch you

<sup>152</sup> On the question of the truthfulness of Helen’s narrative later in *Odyssey* 4, see Bertolín 2016: 88-90.

<sup>153</sup> The verb ἐρέω is the future of (φ)εἶρω < \*uerh<sub>1</sub>- ‘speak (solemnly)’ (s.v. εἶρω). The original digamma is metrically reflected in the length of the final syllable of the preceding word (ἔτυμον). It does not strain credulity to posit a folk-etymological connection between \*φέρφος ‘wool’ and \*φείρω ‘say.’

<sup>154</sup> Lohmann 1970: 15-18; Richardson 1993: 208-209 (ad 23.301-50); Steinrück 1997: 64 (other Greek examples of the race-course/ring composition correlation 60-64); Forte and Smith 2014: 63-64.

<sup>155</sup> Richardson 1993 ad 23.301-50 following Lohmann 1970: 15-16; cf. Forte and Smith 2014: 63.

Lohmann identifies the midpoint of the speech as the description of the marker that designates the race's turning point (d. 326-333). Forte and Smith refine this by noting the lexical repetition of σῆμα 'sign/tomb' within this passage (326/331), but commentators have overlooked a paronomastic ring structure within the description that enacts the marker itself at the turning point in the path:<sup>156</sup>

**II. 23.322-334** AB CDe (F) ghijji (F) hg eDC AB etc.

A, B	ὄς δέ κε κέρδεα εἰδῆ <u>ἐλαύνων</u> ἥσσαναζ <u>ἵππους</u> ,	
C	αἰεὶ <u>τέρμ'</u> ὀρόων <u>στρέφει</u> ἐγγύθεν, <u>οὐδέ</u> ἐ λήθει	
D, e	<u>ὄππως</u> τὸ <u>πρῶτον</u> <u>τανύση</u> βοέοισιν ἰμᾶσιν,	
	ἀλλ' <u>ἔχει</u> ἀσφαλέως καὶ τὸν <u>προὔχοντα</u> δοκεύει.	325
F	<u>σῆμα</u> δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, <u>οὐδέ</u> σε λήσει.	
	ἔστηκε ξύλον αὖτον ὅσον τ' ὄργυι' ὑπὲρ αἴης	
g, h	ἢ δρυὸς ἢ πεύκης· τὸ μὲν οὐ <u>καταπύθεται</u> <u>ᾄμβρω</u> ,	
i, j	<u>λαε</u> δὲ τοῦ <u>ἐκάτερθεν</u> ἐρηρέδαται <u>δύο</u> λευκῶ	
j, i	ἐν <u>ζυνοχῆσιν</u> <u>όδοῦ</u> , <u>λεῖτος</u> δ' ἵππόδρομος <u>ἀμφίς</u>	330
F, h, g	ἢ τευ <u>σῆμα</u> <u>βροτοῖο</u> πάλαι <u>κατα</u> τεθνηῶτος,	
e, D	ἢ τό γε <u>νύσσα</u> τέτυκτο ἐπὶ <u>προτέρων</u> ἀνθρώπων,	
C	καὶ νῦν <u>τέρματ'</u> ἔθηκε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.	
A, B	τῷ σὺ μάλ' <u>ἐγχιρίμω</u> ς <u>ἐλάαν</u> σχεδὸν ἄρμα καὶ <u>ἵππους</u> ...	

Whereas a man who knows what he is doing may drive worse horses, but he will turn tightly when he sees the turning post, nor will it escape him how to stretch first with the oxhide rein, and always he keeps his eye well on the man in front of him. I will give you this certain sign which cannot escape your notice. There is a stump of a dead tree some six feet above the ground—either an oak or a pine—and not yet rotted away by rain; it has two white stones set one on each side at the joinings of the road; and there is a smooth course for horses all round it, either a monument to a mortal long since dead, or it was fashioned as a turning mark by men of a former time; now swift Achilles has fixed it as the turning post. Therefore drive as close as you can your chariot and horses...

The innermost rings of the ring structure take place in lines 328-331 (καταπύθεται-ᾄμβρω-λαε-δύο-(ζυνοχῆσιν) όδοῦ-λεῖτος-βροτοῖο-κατατεθνηῶτος). The σῆμα consists of a tall stump of dry,

<sup>156</sup> The etymologies of λαῶς and λεῖος are unknown; Mycenaean evidence shows the former had no digamma. λεῖος < \*λεῖφος, possibly from IE \*lei- 'smooth.' ὄδος < IE \*sod- 'course'; δύο < IE \*duuo, duu-eh<sub>3</sub>. (?) 'two.'

unrotted wood with two white stones fixed or leaned against it on either side; iconically, the ring structure expands outward from either side (ἐκάτερθεν) of this description. The center is marked by the noun συνοχή, literally a ‘holding-together’ (συνέχω) in the path, which aptly annotates the narrowest rings.<sup>157</sup> The innermost ring, δύο-όδοῦ (the ‘joinings of (ὁ)δοῦ’?), creates an approximate reduplication of δύο as if saying “two” twice,<sup>158</sup> while the syntactic parallelism of λαε δὲ-λεῖος δ', both of which respond to the τὸ μὲν in 328 (referring to the stump), enforces their rough phonemic similarity. Not only does the ring structure as a whole enact the turning point represented by the σῆμα, but the rings λαε-δύο-όδοῦ-λεῖος imitate the two stones leaned against the monument.

Moving out from the center, the word βροτοῖο (‘mortal,’ 331) picks up ὄμβρω (‘rain,’ 328) and κατατεθνηῶτος ‘having died’ picks up καταπύθεται ‘rots,’ contrasting the mortality of humankind with the endurance of the monument that, for reasons unspecified, has not rotted in the rain.<sup>159</sup> The repetition of the word σῆμα, first meaning ‘sign’ (326), then ‘tomb’ (331), does not fit the annular structure of καταπύθεται-ὄμβρω-βροτοῖο-κατατεθνηῶτος, but could hardly have failed to register as an echo even if the others did, producing an alternative annularity around the central repetitions of λαε-δύο-όδοῦ-λεῖος. Further echoes from the latter part of the description of the turning-post pick up elements from the passage preceding the description, extending the ring structure into Lohmann’s section (c) 319-325, which describes the actions of a skilled charioteer. Lines 323-326 contain their own clear lexical structure consisting of the line-

<sup>157</sup> The word συνοχή appears only here in Homer; Richardson 1993 *ad loc.* offers the translations “at the place where the track narrows” or “at the point where the two laps of the race meet,” citing the AT scholia and Eustathius 1304.17. Perhaps there is a further echo in λευκῶ-ξυνοχῆσιν?

<sup>158</sup> This furnishes a possible answer to Leaf’s queries about the phrase (1900 *ad loc.*): “at the joinings of the road, whatever that may mean; whether a place where two roads meet (then why not ‘ὄδων’?), or where the two ‘laps’ of the ‘δίαιλος’ join (why not ‘δρόμου’?).”

<sup>159</sup> Βροτός derives from IE \**mr-tó-* ‘dead, mortal’; the etymology of ὄμβρος is unknown. There may be further echoes in πεύκης-λευκῶ (338/339) and δρυὸς-ἵππόδρομος (308/330).

final repetition οὐδέ ἐ λήθει-οὐδέ σε λήσει (323/326), such that the subsequent echoes of words that first appeared in this structure represent a case of spiral composition.<sup>160</sup> The words προτέρων ‘former’ and τέρματ’ ‘turning post’ at the end of the description of the monument (332-333) pick up τέρμ’ and πρῶτον, respectively, in 323-324. A reference to ‘driving horses’ appears in the lines preceding the first and following the second occurrence of τέρμα (ἐλαύνων ἤσσαναζ ἵππους 322/ ἐλάαν σχεδὸν ἄρμα καὶ ἵππους 334).<sup>161</sup>

In the vicinity of the rings of πρῶτος/προτέρων and τέρμα are potential paronomastic rings: νύσσα (332) bears a resemblance to ταγύση (324);<sup>162</sup> a connection between ὄππως (324) and ἀνθρώπων (332) has little on the surface to recommend it, but it occupies a neatly parallel position between the other lexical rings (τέρμ’- ὄππως τὸ πρῶτον ταγύση-νύσσα...προτέρων ἀνθρώπων-τέρματ’; note that the repetition of σῆμα fits within this structure).<sup>163</sup> How plausible is it that these rings were intentional? Discussion of structure has led us away from the meaning of the lines, and this is a good point to return to it.

The monument is said to be either the tomb of a mortal who died long ago (ἦ τευ σῆμα βροτοῖο πάλαι κατατεθνηῶτος 331), or it was fashioned as a turning-post in the time of men of old (ἦ τό γε νύσσα τέτυκτο ἐπὶ προτέρων ἀνθρώπων 332). Because the paronomastic structure imitates the monument, these alternative explanations can also be heard as alternative accounts of the ring structure. In the first, the monument represents the tomb of a mortal (σῆμα βροτοῖο), but by playing off the polysemy of σῆμα as ‘tomb’ and as ‘sign,’ the phrase can do double duty as a reference to the ring composed of ὄμβρω-βροτοῖο, the ‘sign of βρο(τοῖο).’ The second

<sup>160</sup> Cf. the discussion of *Od.* 8.367-384 in section 1.3.

<sup>161</sup> Cf. the ‘smooth running for horses on either side’ (λεῖος δ’ ἵππόδρομος ἀμφίς 330, trans. Richardson 1993 *ad loc.*).

<sup>162</sup> The etymology of νύσσα is unknown.

<sup>163</sup> Aristarchus, known for his disfavor of repetitions, had instead of 332-333 the single line ἠὲ σκῆρος ἔην, νῦν αὖ θέτο τέρματ’ Ἀχιλλεύς.

hypothesizes an old turning-post, but this *νύσσα* can also be construed as the figurative turning-post created by the echo *τανύση-νύσσα*, the completion of which occurs with the phrase *νύσσα τέτυκτο* ('[it] had been made a turning-post,' 332). This old turning-post was made *ἐπὶ προτέρων ἀνθρώπων*, 'in the time of people of old,' but the prepositional phrase contains echoes of the phrase *ὅπως τὸ πρῶτον τανύση*; structurally, the ring *τανύση-νύσσα* is completed 'on' (*ἐπὶ*) the rings formed by phrase *προτέρων ἀνθρώπων*. The context of the initial sequence is also metapoetically suggestive: the thing that does not escape the notice of the skilled horseman (*οὐδέ ἐλήθει*, 323) is *ὅπως τὸ πρῶτον τανύση βοέοισιν ἱμάσιν* ('how first he should stretch [the horses] with the oxhide reins'). Does the skilled horseman – and keep in mind that this is addressed to Antilochus – also take note of the words *ὅπως τὸ πρῶτον τανύση* as sequences of sound, and as the potential 'first stretching' of the first half of a ring structure? Even the word *προτέρων* in 332 looks back to the "former" repetend, which represents the "first" of the "stretched" pair (*πρῶτον* 324).

The passage's emphasis on the skilled production and reception of signs favors the intentionality of the poet and the receptiveness of the audience to these rings, or at least to enough of them to trace the structural 'turning' around the *συνοχή* of the path. "I will tell you a very clear sign, nor will it escape your notice," says Nestor (326). Whether the paronomastic ring structure just described constitutes a 'clear' (*ἀριφραδές*) sign may be open to debate, but the point of the passage is entirely the perception of the turning-post: the skilled horseman "always watches the turning-post and turns close to it" (323). The alternative explanations of the monument further the paronomastic ring structure, gesturing toward the 'sign' of *βροτοῖο* and the 'turning-post' of the ring *τανύση-νύσσα*. Nestor's speculation about the nature of the monument frames the alternatives as mutually exclusive, but in terms of the verbal play, an audience

attentive to paronomastic ring structures does not have to choose: the ‘monument’ accommodates both.

As a brief coda, the line σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει (*Il.* 23.326) appears also at *Od.* 11.126, when the seer Teiresias advises Odysseus to go inland until someone mistakes his oar for a winnowing-fan, at which sign he should sacrifice to Poseidon and return home:<sup>164</sup>

	<b><i>Od.</i> 11.126-137</b>	AbCdEffE(G)dc(G)bA	
A	σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει·		
b	ὀπότε κεν δὴ τοι συμβλήμενος ἄλλος ὀδίτης		
C	φήη ἀθηρηλοιγὸν ἔχειν ἀνά φαιδίμῳ ὤμῳ,		
d	καὶ τότε δὴ γαίῃ πήξας ἐνήρες ἐρετμόν,		
E, f	ρέξας ἱερά καλὰ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι,	130	
	ἀρνειὸν ταῦρόν τε συῶν τ' ἐπιβήτορα κάπρον,		
f, E	οἴκαδ' ἀποστείχειν ἔρδειν θ' ἱεράς ἑκατόμβας		
G, d, c	ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι,		
G	πᾶσι μάλ' ἐξείης. θάνατος δέ τοι ἐξ ἀλὸς αὐτῶ		
b	ἀβληχρὸς μάλ' αὐτὸς ἐλεύσεται, ὅς κέ σε πέφνη	135	
	γήραι ὑπο λιπαρῶ ἀρημένον· ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ		
A	ὄλβιοι ἔσσονται. τὰ δέ τοι νημερτέα εἴρω.		

I will tell you this certain sign which cannot escape your notice.  
 When another wayfarer meets you  
 and says that you have a winnowing shovel upon your bright shoulder,  
 then you must fix the well-fitted oar in the earth  
 and make lovely holy sacrifices to lord Poseidon,  
 a ram, a bull, and a boar that mates with sows.  
 Then go home and offer holy hecatombs  
 to the immortal gods, who hold broad heaven,  
 for all in order. As for yourself, death shall come to you from the sea,  
 and your life shall ebb away very gently when you  
 are full of rich old age, and your people  
 shall bless you. All that I have told you will come true.

The ring structure in this passage centers on the line listing the animals Odysseus is to sacrifice; the performance of the sacrifice (ἱερά καλὰ Ποσειδάωνι) enables the return journey (οἴκαδ' ἀποστείχειν), while the paronomasia connects Poseidon and the return home on the phonemic

<sup>164</sup> The passage is repeated with minor changes at *Od.* 23.273-284.

level. The return journey is modeled by the second, constitutive half of the ring structure, which returns to the present (and the beginning of the structure) with the statement τὰ δέ τοι νημερτέα εἶρω (137).

### 2.2.5 *Kaí and καίομαι*

<b>II. 1.48-56</b>		abCdebFFedCba
a	ἔζετ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε νεῶν, μετὰ δ' ἰὸν ἔηκε·	
b	δεινὴ δὲ κλαγγὴ γένετ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο·	
C, de, b	οὐρῆας μὲν πρῶτον ἐπώγετο καὶ κύνας ἀργούς,	50
F	αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' αὐτοῖσι βέλος ἔχεπευκὲς ἐφίεις	
F, ed	βάλλ'· αἰεὶ δὲ πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί.	
C	ἐννῆμαρ μὲν ἀνά στρατὸν ὄγετο κῆλα θεοῖο,	
b	τῇ δεκάτῃ δ' ἀγορὴν δὲ καλέσσατο λαὸν Ἀχιλλεύς·	
a	τῷ γὰρ ἐπὶ φρεσὶ θῆκε θεὰ λευκώλενος Ἥρη·	55
	κῆδετο γὰρ Δαναῶν, ὅτι ῥα θνήσκοντας ὀράτο.	

He sat himself down away from the ships and sent an arrow among them and terrible was the clang from his silver bow.  
First he smote their mules and their swift hounds,  
but then he aimed his pointed shafts at the people themselves,  
striking them, and always the pyres of corpses were burning thickly.  
For nine whole days the arrows of the god went among the people,  
but upon the tenth day Achilles called them in assembly—  
the white-armed goddess Hera put it in his mind,  
for she cared for the Danaans, since she saw them dying.

The description of Apollo's attack on the Achaean camp contains a ring structure consisting largely of paronomastic rings.<sup>165</sup> The god strikes mules and dogs (οὐρῆας... καὶ κύνας, 50) before turning his plague arrows against the Achaeans themselves, who are forced to burn pyres of corpses (πυραὶ νεκύων καίοντο, 52).<sup>166</sup> The genitive plural νεκύων 'of corpses' not only echoes κύνας 'dogs,' but reproduces in the last two syllables the nominative singular of the word, κύων. Given the placement of the syllable καί- immediately before κύνας (as the conjunction) and immediately after νεκύων (as part of the verb καίομαι, 'burn'), the sequence

<sup>165</sup> For the ring ἀργούς- ἀγορὴν 50/54, cf. ἀγορὴν- κύνες ἀργοὶ *Od.* 2.10-11.

<sup>166</sup> Κύων < IE \*kuon- 'dog'; νέκυς < IE \*nek-(u)- 'violent death, corpse,' s.v. νεκρός.

νεκύων καίοντο θαμειαί takes on a self-referential cast: the paronomastic structure can be said to have repeated ‘καί,’ to have ‘καί’-ed, ‘thickly’ (θαμέες ‘crowded, thick, frequent’), especially with respect to the adjacent ‘κύ(ω)ν’ element.<sup>167</sup>

The association between καί and καίοντο finds support in other passages:

## II. 21.348-356

...ὡς ἐξηράνθη πεδίον πᾶν, κὰδ δ’ ἄρα νεκρούς  
κῆεν. ὁ δ’ ἐς ποταμὸν τρέγχε φλόγα παμφανόωσαν.  
καίοντο πετέλει τε καί ἰτέαι ἠδὲ μυρῖκαί, 350  
καίετο δὲ λωτός τε ἰδὲ θρύον ἠδὲ κύπειρον,  
 τὰ περι καλὰ ῥέεθρα ἄλις ποταμοῖο πεφύκει.  
τείροντ’ ἐγγέλυές τε καί ἰχθύες οἱ κατὰ δίνας,  
οἱ κατὰ καλὰ ῥέεθρα κυβίστων ἔνθα καί ἔνθα  
 πνοιῆ τειρόμενοι πολυμήτιος Ἥφαιστοιο. 355  
καίετο δ’ ἰς ποταμοῖο ἔπος τ’ ἔφατ’ ἔκ τ’ ὀνόμαζεν...

...even so the whole plain was dried and the dead bodies burned. Then he turned the shining flame on to the river. He burned the elms and the willows and the tamarisks, burned the lotus also, with the rushes and marshy herbage that grew abundantly by lovely currents of the river. The eels and fishes suffered in the eddies, tumbling about here and there in the lovely currents, suffering under the blast of cunning Hephaestus, and the river himself was burned, so that he spoke...

As Hephaestus’ flame scorches the river Xanthus and everything in and around it, the phonemic sequence *καί* occurs seven times in eight lines (three in *καίω*, three as the conjunction *καί*, and one as part of the word *μυρῖκαί*), in addition to the aorist *κῆεν* in 349 and further assonance of *κα-* in *καλὰ* (352 and 354) and *κατὰ* (353 and 354).<sup>168</sup> The repetition of line-initial *καίω* in 349-351 and, resumptively, in 356 hammers home the repeated and continuous action of burning that is illustrated by the list of things burned. The soundplay is most salient in line 350, which contains three *καί*-s from three etymologically unrelated words.

<sup>167</sup> *καίω* < *κάϜ-ιω* < IE? \**keh<sub>2</sub>u-* ‘burn’; all forms go back to *καυ-*, *καϜ-*; *καί* < \**κασι* < \**κατι* < IE \**k<sub>1</sub>mt-* ‘along with, downwards.’

<sup>168</sup> Cf. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000: 16 on the accumulation of ‘burning’ words in *Il.* 21.330-81.

**Od. 24.62-70**

...τοῖον γὰρ ὑπόρωρε Μοῦσα λίγεια.  
 ἐπτά δὲ καί δέκα μέν σε ὁμῶς νύκτας τε καί ἡμαρ  
κλαίομεν ἀθάνατοί τε θεοὶ θνητοί τ' ἄνθρωποι·  
 ὀκτώκαιδεκάτη δ' ἔδομεν πυρί· πολλά δ' ἐπ' αὐτῷ 65  
 μῆλα κατεκτάνομεν μάλα πίονα καί ἔλικας βοῦς.  
καίεο δ' ἐν τ' ἐσθῆτι θεῶν καί ἀλείφατι πολλῶ  
καί μέλιτι γλυκερῷ· πολλοί δ' ἦρωες Ἀχαιοὶ  
 τεύχεσιν ἐρρώσαντο πυρὴν πέρι καιομένοιο,  
 πεζοὶ θ' ἰππῆές τε· πολύς δ' ὀρυμαγδὸς ὀρώρει. 70

...the clear-voiced Muse stirred them so.  
 Days and nights seven and ten we mourned you,  
 immortal gods and mortal men,  
 but on the eighteenth day we gave you to the flames, and many  
 fat sheep and many an ox did we slay in sacrifice around you.  
 You were burnt in raiment of the gods, and with rich resins  
and with honey, while many Achaeans heroes  
 clashed their armour round the pile as you were burning,  
 horse and foot fighters, and much din arose.

Agamemnon describes to Achilles their funeral for him; a handful of καί-s lead up to the description of the funeral pyre in 65-69 and the list of assorted items burned with Achilles, with καίω once again given prominence at the beginning of line 67. This time the Achaeans themselves (Ἀχαιοὶ 68) are drawn into the paronomasia.<sup>169</sup> In both passages, the cumulative structure of the lists of things that burn enables the repetition of καί: the elms burn *and* the willows; the eels *and* fish tumbling here *and* there are distressed; the corpse of Achilles was burned in divine clothing *and* much oil *and* sweet honey.<sup>170</sup> There are metrical constraints on the choice of word for ‘and’ (cf. τε ἰδὲ... ἠδὲ above in *Il.* 21.351), but one may assume a poet who wished to add more καί-s to a sequence could find a way to do so, if by no other means than by continually listing items. Each καί in the sequence takes on something of the semantics of καίω,

<sup>169</sup> Cf. *Il.* 21.376 καιομένη, καίωσι δ' ἀρήϊοι νῆες Ἀχαιῶν.

<sup>170</sup> Cf. the following passages that deal with fire and contain repetitions of καί ‘and,’ although not in a list of things burned: *Il.* 8.554-563 πυρὰ δὲ σφισι καίετο πολλά- ἔκ τ' ἔφανεν πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καί πρόνες ἄκροι / καί νάπαι - καίόντων πυρὰ -πυρὰ καίετο; *Il.* 24.34-38 Ἐκτώρ μηρί' ἔκκε - ἦ τ' ἀλόχῳ ἰδέειν καί μητέρι καί τέκεϊ ᾗ / καί πατέρι Πριάμῳ λαοῖσι τε τοί κέ μιν ᾄκα / ἐν πυρὶ κῆαιεν καί ἐπὶ κτέρεα κτερίσαιεν.

so that the repetition becomes the burning of the items described therein. When the strength of the river burns, we hear it overburdened with blazing καί's, and Achilles' pyre is full of them. Just as in the plague scene in *Iliad* 1, the conjunction in turn rubs off on the verb, so that καίω takes on a reflexive meaning like 'to καί,' 'to deploy the word (or sound) καί.' In imitation of the subject at hand, the καί's proliferate like flame.

The word καί is not the only conjunction whose paronomastic potential is explored by the poet. The adversative ἀλλά ('but') takes part in the wordplay surrounding Achilles' spear (οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν / πάλλειν, ἀλλά μιν οἷος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεὺς *Il.* 16.141-142 = 19.388-389), discussed above, in which context the phonemic juxtaposition of ἀλλά, the adjective ἄλλος 'other,' and πάλλειν is enabled on the level of content by the discrepancy between Patroclus' inability and Achilles' ability to wield the spear. In *Il.* 8.300-301 and 309-312, the poet plays off ἄλλος, ἀλλά, and ἵαλλεν ('send forth') in Teucer's repeated *but* failed attempts to hit Hector with an arrow (e.g. Τεῦκρος δ' ἄλλον οἷστον ἀπὸ νευρῆφιν ἵαλλεν / ... ἀλλ' ὅ γε καὶ τόθ' ἄμαρτε, *Il.* 8.309/311).<sup>171</sup> The verb μεταλλάω ('ask, inquire') frequently appears in the vicinity of ἄλλος or ἀλλά (e.g. τῷ ἐμὲ νῦν τὰ μὲν ἄλλα μετάλλα σῶ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ, *Od.* 19.115).<sup>172</sup> At the beginning of *Iliad* 24, Achilles spends a sleepless night mourning Patroklos:

#### *Il.* 24.3-14

...αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλλεὺς  
 κλαῖε φίλου ἐτάρου μεμνημένος, οὐδέ μιν ὕπνος  
 ἦρει πανδαμάτωρ, ἀλλ' ἐστρέφετ' ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα 5  
 Πατρόκλου ποθέων ἀνδροτιτήτα τε καὶ μένος ἦϋ,  
 ἦδ' ὅποσα τολύπευσε σὺν αὐτῷ καὶ πάθεν ἄλγεα  
ἀνδρῶν τε πολέμους ἀλεγεινά τε κύματα πείρων·  
 τῶν μιμνησκόμενος θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυον εἶβεν,  
ἄλλοι' ἐπὶ πλευρὰς κατακείμενος, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε 10  
 ὕπτιος, ἄλλοτε δὲ πρηγῆς· τοτὲ δ' ὀρθὸς ἀναστὰς

<sup>171</sup> ἵαλλω < \*i-αλ-ιω < IE? \*sel- 'set in motion'; ἄλλος, ἀλλά (acc. pl.) < IE \*h<sub>2</sub>el-io- 'other.'

<sup>172</sup> Etymology unknown; Buttman *Lexilogus* 1.139 derives it from μετ' ἄλλα '(search) for other things,' following Eustathius 148.10. Beekes (s.v. μετάλλον) finds the explanation "hardly convincing," but whether real or folk, the Homeric texts seem to endorse it.

δινεύεσκ' ἀλύων παρὰ θῖν' άλός· οὐδέ μιν ἠὼς  
 φαινομένη λήθεσκεν ὑπεῖρ ἄλα τ' ἠϊόνας τε.  
ἄλλ' ὅ γ' ἐπεὶ ζεύξειεν ὑφ' ἄρμασιν ὠκέας ἵππους...

...but Achilles  
 still wept remembering his dear comrade, and sleep,  
 before whom all things bow, did not take him, but he *turned* this way and that  
 as he yearned after the might and manfulness of Patroclus;  
 he thought of all they had done together, and all they had gone through  
 both on the field of battle and on the waves of the weary sea.  
Remembering these things he shed a blooming tear,  
sometimes lying on his side, sometimes  
 on his back, and sometimes face downwards, till at last he rose  
 and went out whirling to wander upon the seashore. Nor did dawn  
 escape him when it appeared over land and sea,  
but he yoked his swift horses to his chariot...

Achilles tosses and turns (ἀλλ' ἐστρέφεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα, 5); after a four-line description of his yearning for Patroklos,<sup>173</sup> the narrative elaborates on his restlessness by listing his various sleepless postures, each introduced by ἄλλοτε ('at another time'): sometimes he lies on his side, at other times on his back, at other times face down. The repetitions of ἄλλοτε suggest a retroactive interpretation of the clause ἀλλ' ἐστρέφεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα in line 5 as '[the word/sound] 'ἀλλ' was twisted this way and that.' The phrase δινεύεσκ' ἀλύων ('he whirled distraught') in line 12 paronomastically takes up the same conceit (as if 'he whirled with respect to the sound ἀλ-'), closely followed by ἄλός and ἄλα ('sea,' 12 and 13; cf. ἄλγεα and ἀλεγεινά in 7 and 8).<sup>174</sup> The structural twisting of the narrative through the repetition of ἀλλ/αλ- enacts Achilles' sleepless tossing and turning and then pacing on the beach, as if encoding in the proliferation of ἄλλος/ἀλλά ('but...!') his psychological dismay at the loss of his closest friend;

<sup>173</sup> Aristophanes of Byzantium and Aristarchus athetized lines 6-9; one of the grounds given by the A scholion (6-9a1) is that with these removed Achilles' grief is displayed more "suggestively": ἀρθέντων δὲ αὐτῶν καὶ ἐμφαντικώτερον δηλοῦται ἢ τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως λύπη· "ἀλλ' ἐστρέφεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα," "ἄλλοτ' ἐπὶ πλευράς."

<sup>174</sup> ἄλω may be from ἀλάομαι 'wander, roam' < IE \*h<sub>2</sub>elh<sub>2</sub>-; ἄλος < IE \*seh<sub>2</sub>-l- 'salt'; ληίς < \*λαῖφ-ιδ- < IE \*leh<sub>2</sub>u- 'capture, seize' (s.v. λεία 'spoils'). Cf. ἀλαλητῶ-ἀλλήλοισι-ἄλα Il. 2.149-152.

according to Michael Nadler, the repetitious and ring-composed language in this passage is connected to the passage's "many images of circularity and cyclical futility."<sup>175</sup>

### 2.3 LEXICAL DECONSTRUCTIONS AND ASSONANCE

A large portion of Homeric wordplay can be described as the breaking down of words into their constituent semantic and/or phonemic parts. This can be overt and hard to miss, as when the deconstruction consists of roots connected in etymologically transparent ways: *θῆκεν ἐν ἄκμοθέτω μέγαν ἄκμονα* (Hephaestus 'placed the anvil on the anvil-place,' *Il.* 18.476 and *Od.* 8.274);<sup>176</sup> *κύνας κηρεσσιφορήτους*, / οὓς *κῆρες φορέουσι* ('dogs borne on by the Keres, whom the Keres bear,' *Il.* 8.527-528).<sup>177</sup> These components sometimes participate in ring structures: in *Il.* 14.470-474, Ajax suggests that the man (ἄνῆρ) they have just slain was a fit requital for the dead Prothoënor (Προθοήνορος ἀντί), and looks like a relative of Antenor (Ἀντήνορος, from ἀντί and ἀνῆρ):

#### *Il.* 14.470-474 ABCDDCBA

A φράζο Πουλυδάμα καί μοι νημερτὲς ἐνίσπες  
 B, C ἦ ῥ' οὐχ οὗτος ἀνῆρ Προθοήνορος ἀντί πεφάσθαι  
 D, D ἄξιος; οὐ μὲν μοι κακὸς εἶδεται οὐδὲ κακῶν ἔξ,  
 C, B, A ἀλλὰ κασίγνητος Ἀντήνορος ἵπποδάμοιο  
 ἦ πάϊς· αὐτῷ γὰρ γενεὴν ἄγχιστα ἐφκει.

Think, Polydamas, and tell me truly  
 whether this man is not as well worth killing as Prothoenor was:  
 he seems not of poor means, nor from a poor family,  
 a brother, it may be, of the horse-tamer Antenor,  
 or son, for he is very close to him in kind.

<sup>175</sup> Nagler 1974: 167-170 (quote 168-169); cf. Miller 2014: 133.

<sup>176</sup> In the same *Iliad* passage, compare *πυρὶ-ἄργυρον-πυράγρην* (18.474-477).

<sup>177</sup> See Rank 1951: 77-78; Irigoien 1991: 131-133.

At *Il.* 13.663-666, the seer Polyidos knows well (εὖ εἰδῶς) his son's fate and therefore addresses him often (πολλάκι), which separates the two elements in the name Πολύιδος ('much-seeing'):

***Il.* 13.663-666** ABcAcABA

A ἦν δέ τις Εὐχίγηωρ Πολυΐδου μάντιος υἱὸς  
 B, c ἀφνειὸς τ' ἀγαθός τε Κορινθόθι οἰκία γαίων,  
 A, c ὅς ρ' εὖ εἰδῶς κῆρ' ὀλοῖν ἐπὶ νηὸς ἔβαινε· 665  
 ABA πολλάκι γάρ οἱ ἔειπε γέρων ἀγαθός Πολυΐδος...

Now there was a certain man named Euchenor, son of Polyidus the prophet, a good man and wealthy, whose home was in Corinth. He had set sail for Troy well knowing that it would be the death of him, for his good old father Polyidus had often told him...

At other times, as we have seen in examples like in καί and καίομαι or δύο-όδοῦ (*Il.* 23.329-330), words are broken down to produce paronomastic echoes in which one element rearranges the phonemic components of another or contains them embedded in a longer sequence, as in *Od.* 3.72-73 = 9.253-254: ἦ τι κατὰ πρῆξιν ἦ μασιδίως ἀλάλησθε / οἷά τε ληϊστῆρες ὑπεῖρ ἄλα, τοί τ' ἀλόωνται. The words ληϊστῆρες 'pirates' and ἄλα 'sea' suggest a division of ἀλάλησθε ('you wander,' perfect of ἀλάομαι) into ἄλα-ληϊστῆ-, turning wandering at random into a preeminently piratical activity. The paronomasia of πέτρης-ἀπέτραπε ('stone'-'turned away') in *Il.* 11.757-758 combines an anagrammatic echo (πέτρη/τραπε) with a direct one (πέτρ/πέτρ) enabled by the affixation of the prefix ἀπο- to the verb τρέπω:

***Il.* 11.754-761** ABC dd ABC

...τόφρα γὰρ οὖν ἐπόμεσθα διὰ σπιδέος πεδίοιο  
 A κτείνοντές τ' αὐτοὺς ἀνά τ' ἔντεα καλὰ λέγοντες, 755  
 B, C ὄφρ' ἐπὶ Βουπρασίου πολυπύρου βήσαμεν ἵππους  
 d πέτρης τ' Ὠλενίης, καὶ Ἀλησίου ἔνθα κολώνη  
 d κέκλιται· ὄθεν αὐτὶς ἀπέτραπε λαὸν Ἀθήνη.  
 A ἔνθ' ἄνδρα κτείνας πύματον λίπον· αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ  
 B, C ἄψ ἀπὸ Βουπρασίου Πύλονδ' ἔχον ὠκέας ἵππους, 760  
 πάντες δ' εὐχετόωντο θεῶν Διὶ Νέστορί τ' ἀνδρῶν.

...so long we chased them far over the plain,  
killing the men and bringing in their armour,  
 till we had brought our horses to Buprasium, rich in wheat,

and to the Olenian rock, with the hill that is called Alesion,  
 at which point Athena turned the people back.  
 There I killed the last man and left him; then the Achaeans  
 drove their horses back from Buprasium to Pylos  
 and gave thanks to Zeus among the gods, and among mortal men to Nestor.

Other examples of the reshuffling of syllables or phonemes include the sequence ἴκοιτο (‘might reach’)-κοῖτος (‘bed’)-οἴκτιστα (‘most pitiable’) in the passage in *Odyssey* 22 comparing the hanged slave women to birds caught in a snare (*Od.* 22.467-472),<sup>178</sup> and the sequence ἄν ἔγωγε (‘I’)-ἀνώγοιμι (‘I would command’)-ἄν ἔμοιγε (‘to me’) in a speech addressed by Achilles to Agamemnon in *Il.* 19:205-209.<sup>179</sup>

### 2.3.1 *Semantic Diffusion*

A number of passages already discussed contain paronomastic rings in which phonemic similarity forges a semantic connection between the elements. This section collects further examples of paronomastic deconstruction that suggest such semantic bleed-over.

In *Il.* 23.210-216, Achilles prays to Boreas and Zephyros to come to Troy so that the funeral pyre of Patroklos will catch fire (ὄφρα πυρῆν ὄρσητε **καήμεναι** 210), and the arrival of the winds in Troy enables the flame to take hold (ἴκανον **ἀήμεναι**... ἐν δὲ πυρῆ πεσέτην, μέγα δ’ ἴαχε θεσπιδαῆς πῦρ 214-216). The paronomasia enforces the explicitly causal relationship between burning and the arrival of the blowing winds: when one puts ἴκανον ‘arrived’ and **ἀήμεναι** ‘blowing’ together, one gets **καήμεναι** (‘burning’).

In *Odyssey* 23, Penelope’s gladness at the return of her husband is compared to the gladness of shipwrecked swimmers at the sight of land; there is no neat lexical ring structure in the passage, but the basic frame of the simile aligns the opening lines ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἄν ἀσπάσιος γῆ

<sup>178</sup> In the ring structure ποσὶν-ἴκοιτο-κοῖτος-οἴκτιστα-πόδεσσι (AbbbA), *Od.* 22.467-473.

<sup>179</sup> In the ring structure κέαται δεδαῖγμένοι-βρωτῶν -ἄν ἔγωγε-ἀνώγοιμι -ἄν ἔμοιγε-βρωῶσις -δεδαῖγμένος -κεῖται (ABCdddCBA), *Il.* 19.203-212.

νηχομένοισι φανήη, /ῶν τε Ποσειδάων εὐεργέα νῆ' ἐνὶ πόντῳ... (“as when the land appears welcome to swimmers, whose well-built ship Poseidon [has broken] in the sea,” *Od.* 23.233-235) with the concluding line ὡς ἄρα τῆ ἄσπαστος ἔην πόσις εἰσοροῶση (“thus was her husband welcome to her looking on,” 240). The phonemic respiration between Ποσειδάων and πόσις εἰσοροῶση underscores the fact that Poseidon’s anger at Odysseus has prevented his return home and, accordingly, his ability to stand in Penelope’s sight. The participle of the verb εἰσοράω ‘look into, behold’ suggests a deconstruction of the name Ποσειδάων into ποσ- (as if ‘spouse’) and εἶδον ‘saw.’

A similar deconstruction can be heard in the passage at *Od.* 5.364-376 in which Poseidon sends a wave to destroy Odysseus’ skiff: the earth-shaker Poseidon (Ποσειδάων ἐνοσίχθων 366) sends a wave in lines 365-366, then, following a simile comparing the boards of the broken skiff to chaff and Odysseus’ plunge into the water, the narrative returns to Poseidon with ἴδε δὲ κρείων ἐνοσίχθων (‘and the mighty earth-shaker saw,’ 375). The phrase ‘mighty earth-shaker’ replaces ‘Poseidon earth-shaker,’ but the presence of ἴδε (‘saw,’ the unaugmented third person singular of εἶδον) in the resuming clause again urges an interpretation of Ποσειδάων as a speaking name pertaining to sight. One of Socrates’ proposed etymologies for Poseidon in Plato’s *Cratylus* utilizes the same root: the name (he suggests) can derive from his ‘knowing many things’ (ὡς πολλὰ εἰδότος τοῦ θεοῦ, with the perfect of εἶδον).<sup>180</sup> Socrates’ proposal may be light-hearted, but it participates in the same phono-semantic breakdown at play in the Homeric ‘deconstruction’ of words. In Homeric epic, however, the narrative context justifies and reinforces the implicit breakdown, making the connection between, for example, Ποσειδάων and

<sup>180</sup> Plato *Cratylus* 402e-403a. His other suggestions are ‘shaking’ (ὁ σείων) or a ‘foot-bond’ (ὡς ‘ποσίδεσμον’ ὄντα).

πόσιν εἶδον ‘I saw my spouse’ meaningful in the context of Odysseus’ homecoming after years at sea.

As we saw with e.g. καί and καίομαι, sometimes a root syllable infuses surrounding repetitions of that syllable with its own significance:

**Il. 3.60-63** aBc Deed caB  
 a, B, c αἰεί τοι **κ**ραδίη πέλεκυς ὡς **έ**στιν **ά**τειρής 60  
 D, e ὅς τ’ εἶσι· διὰ δουρὸς ὑπ’ **ά**νέρος ὅς ρά τε **τέ**χνη  
 e, e, D **νή**ϊον **έ**κτάμνησιν, ὀφέλλει δ’ **ά**νδρὸς ἐρωήν·  
 c, a, B ὡς σοὶ ἐνὶ στήθεσσι· **ά**τάρβητος **νό**ος **έ**στι·

Always your heart is untiring as the axe  
 that cleaves through a timber in the hands of a man skilled  
at cutting out boards for ships, and aids the force of the man:  
 so fearless are the thoughts in your chest.

The parallelism between lines 60 and 63 in this ring structure is semantic, enforced by lexical (έστιν), morphological (alpha privative), and phonemic echoes (κραδίη-έστιν άτειρής/ άτάρβητος νόος έστι). The repetition of άνέρος-άνδρὸς extends the structure inward,<sup>181</sup> where it centers on the jingle of τέχνη / νήϊον έκτάμνησιν (‘he cuts out a ship-board with skill’), containing the syllable νη three times in short succession. The phonemic components of τέχνη are broken down (cut apart?) in **έκ-τάμ-νησιν**. Only the νη in νήϊον carries inherent semantic weight (‘ship’),<sup>182</sup> but its proximity to the others imbues them with something of itself: τέχνη ‘craftsmanship’ in this context refers precisely to the skill of shipbuilding, and the word offers itself as a compound of τεκ- ‘build’ (its etymological root)<sup>183</sup> and νη ‘ship,’ together ‘build-ship.’ By the same diffusion, the verb **έκτάμνησιν** breaks down into **έκ-** ‘out’ –**τάμ-** ‘cut’ –**νησιν** ‘ship,’ reproducing within itself the same meaning that it has in combination with the direct object νήϊον. On the

<sup>181</sup> Is it possible that δ’ άνδρὸς puns on δένδρον ‘tree,’ the latter likely from the same root as δόρυ (δουρὸς) in line 61 (IE \**doru* ‘tree, wood’: s.v. δόρυ, δένδρον)?

<sup>182</sup> Νήϊος ‘pertaining to ships,’ here used substantively, from νηῦς < IE \**neh<sub>2</sub>u-* ‘ship.’

<sup>183</sup> τέχνη from IE \**tek-* or the reduplicated \**te-tk-*.

metapoetic level, the syllable νη is thematized as such: τέχνη is the skill appropriate to the use of ‘νη’; νήϊον is ‘a νη-thing’; ἐκτάμνησιν pertains to the cutting-out of ‘νη.’ The whole phrase can be heard as ‘with skill he (the poet) cuts out a νη.’

Something similar occurs in another Iliadic simile with shipbuilding in the vehicle, this time referring to the equality of the battle around the Achaean ships:

**II. 15.408-414** Abbbbb(CDDCC)A

...οὐδέ ποτε Τρῶες Δαναῶν ἐδύναντο φάλαγγας  
 A ῥηξάμενοι κλισίησι μιγήμεναι ἠδὲ **νέεσσιν**.  
 b, b, b ἀλλ’ ὥς τε **στάθμη** δόρυ **νήϊον ἐξιθύνει** 410  
 τέκτονος ἐν παλάμῃσι δαήμονος, ὅς ρά τε πάσης  
 b, b, b εὖ εἰδῆ σοφίης **ὑποθημοσύνησιν Ἀθήνης**,  
 ὥς μὲν τῶν ἐπὶ ἴσα **μάχη** τέτατο **πτόλεμός** τε·  
 A **ἄλλοι** δ’ ἀμφ’ **ἄλλῃσι μάχην ἐμάχοντο** **νέεσσιν**

...neither could the Trojans break the ranks of the Danaans and make their way in among the tents and ships.  
 As a carpenter's line makes straight a piece of ship's timber,  
 in the hand of some skilled workman, who  
 has learned every wise art by Athena's inspiration—  
 even so level between them was the battle stretched, and the fight,  
 as they fought some round one and some round another by the ships.

The word νέεσσιν (‘ships’ 409) before the vehicle of the simile emphasizes the narrative importance of the ships at this juncture and anticipates the ship-board (νήϊον) in the vehicle; at the conclusion of the simile, νέεσσιν is repeated in identical form and position in 414. The latter part of the phrase ὑποθημοσύνησιν Ἀθήνης (‘by the advice of Athena’ 412) loosely echoes νήϊον ἐξιθύνει (‘straightens out a ship board’ 410); here the νη of νήϊον is picked up in ἐξιθύνει ‘makes straight,’ ὑποθημοσύνησιν ‘advice, suggestion’ (a *hapax* in the *Iliad*), and Ἀθήνης. Athena’s urging appears appropriate for shipbuilding because it contains the thematically nautical syllable νη, and Athena is the appropriate divinity because her name contains the very thing in which she inspires skill.<sup>184</sup> The long syllables in ὑποθημοσύνησιν (from τίθημι ‘put, place’) phonemically

<sup>184</sup> On Athena’s mythological associations with shipbuilding, see Detienne and Vernant 1978: 215, 233-237.

anticipate Ἀθήνης, rendering her the goddess who ‘places ships’ (compare the Odyssean instance of the phrase and its context: νηῖ- κάτθεσαν- ὑποθημοσύνησιν Ἀθήνης, *Od.* 16.229-233).<sup>185</sup> It is metapoetically suggestive that ὑποθημοσύνη means ‘suggestion,’ literally the ‘placing-under’ of something; is the nature of Athena’s inspiration the wordplay she inspires? The root that appeared in τέχνη in the previous passage appears again here in τέκτονος (‘craftsman’ 411); as before, the skill required for the craft of shipbuilding is reflected in the skill of the poet in playing off of the syllable νη.

The simile at *Il.* 4.75-78 compares Athena’s movement down Mt. Olympus to a shooting star (ἀστήρ), the phonemic components of which recur several times in the course of the vehicle:

***Il.* 4.73-80** AB cDceecD BA  
 A Ὡς εἰπὼν ὄτρυνε πάρος μεμαυῖαν Ἀθήνην,  
 B βῆ δὲ κατ’ Οὐλύμποιο καρήνων ἀΐξασα.  
 cD οἶον δ’ ἀστέρα ἦκε Κρόνου πάϊς ἀγκυλομήτεω 75  
 c, e ἠ ναύτησι τέρας ἦε στρατῶ εὐρέϊ λαῶν  
 e, cD λαμπρόν· τοῦ δέ τε πολλοὶ ἀπὸ σπινθήρες ἴενται·  
 B, A τῶ ἔϊκυϊ’ ἦἴξεν ἐπὶ χθόνα Παλλὰς Ἀθήνη,  
 κάδ δ’ ἔθορ’ ἐς μέσσον· θάμβος δ’ ἔχεν εἰσορόωντας  
 Τρῶάς θ’ ἱποδάμους καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδας Ἀχαιούς· ...

This was what Athena was already eager to do,  
 so down she darted from the topmost summits of Olympus.  
 As the son of scheming Cronus sends a star  
 as a sign to mariners or to some broad army of people,  
 bright, and from it many sparks are sent forth,  
 like this Pallas Athena darted to the earth,  
 and leapt into their midst: and amazement held those watching,  
 the Trojans tamers of horses and well-greaved Achaeans...

The word ἀστέρα ‘star’ in 75 is echoed by τέρας ‘sign’ in the following line, which stands in apposition to it.<sup>186</sup> The meteor appears as a sign either to sailors or to a host of people, and these alternatives allow the approximate phonemic sequence of ἀστέρα to be encoded twice, in

<sup>185</sup> The passage further repeats the θη/θε syllables in ἐσθῆτά (*Od.* 16.231) and θεῶν (232). Similar, but without the word ὑποθημοσύνη, is νηῖ / κάτθεσαν- νηὸς -Ἀθήνη-νηῖ-πρυμνή -πρυμνήσι’ *Od.* 2.414-418.

<sup>186</sup> ἀστήρ < IE \*h<sub>2</sub>ster- ‘star’; τέρας < IE? \*k<sup>w</sup>er- ‘magical sign, omen.’

ναύτησι τέρας and ἠὲ στρατῶ (for the latter, cf. the plural form ἄστρα).<sup>187</sup> A similar sequence can be picked out of ἀπὸ σπινθήρες (‘sparks’ 77), more diffusely (ἀ-σ-θῆρ-);<sup>188</sup> on the one hand, the diffusion of the phonemes in this phrase offers an apt reflection of the image of a shooting star disintegrating, on the other, one may reasonably doubt whether the sequence is pronounced enough to be perceptible to an audience in an oral poetic context. The syllable θῆρ, at any rate, was likely a sufficient echo of the syllable τέρ in ἀστέρα and τέρας to produce a phonemic connection between the semantically related words, yielding a stellar refrain that can itself be heard as an imitation of the diffusion of sparks from the meteor. The assonance of π in lines 77-78 contributes to this effect.

A two-way semantic blending accompanies a paronomastic reshuffling of syllables in the following passage:

**II. 7.207-213** AbccAb

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντα περὶ χροῖ ἔσσατο τεύχεα,  
 Ab, c σεύατ' ἔπειθ' οἴός τε πελώριος ἔρχεται Ἄρης,  
 ὅς τ' εἴσιν πόλεμον δὲ μετ' ἀνέρας οὓς τε Κρονίων  
 θυμοβόρου ἔριδος μένει ζυνέηκε μάχεσθαι. 210  
 c, Ab τοῖος ἄρ' Αἴας ὄρτο πελώριος ἔρκος Ἀχαιῶν  
 μειδιῶν βλοσυροῖσι προσώπασι· νέρθε δὲ ποσσὶν  
 ἦϊε μακρὰ βιβάς, κραδάων δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος.

When he had put all his armor around his flesh,  
 he sprang forward like monstrous Ares  
 when he takes part among men whom Zeus  
 has set fighting in heart-destroying strife with one another—  
 even so did monstrous Ajax, bulwark of the Achaeans, spring forward  
 with a smile on his face under his brows: with his feet  
 he strode onward and brandished his long spear.

The basic structure of the simile is οἴός Ἄρης..., τοῖος Αἴας..., each of whom is described as πελώριος (208, 211). The presence of ἔρχεται and ἔρκος after πελώριος phonetically extends the

<sup>187</sup> Στρατός < IE \*ster- ‘camp, spread out.’

<sup>188</sup> Σπινθήρ etymology unknown, perhaps Pre-Greek.

lexical and metrical parallelism (πελώριος ἔρχεται-πελώριος ἔρκος), and within the ring so formed is a ring consisting of the proper nouns Ἄρης and Αἴας.<sup>189</sup> The phonemic environments of each suggestively enhance the echo: in ἔρχεται Ἄρης appear the first two syllables of Αἴας (with a difference of accent);<sup>190</sup> τοῖος ἄρ' Αἴας in turn offers the first syllable of Ἄρης before revealing it to be a particle before Αἴας. Ares and Aias merge into Ἄιαρης and Ἀραίας; the phonetic blending assimilates the figures paronomastically at the same time the simile compares them explicitly.

Given the emphasis of this section, it is worth reiterating that not every paronomastic echo forges a semantic connection beyond its surface-level connection in the text. Some instances of paronomasia seem to exist for the sound's sake, like in *Il.* 21.405-6: τόν ρ' ἄνδρες πρότεροι θέσαν ἔμμεναι οὔρον ἀρούρης· τῷ βάλε θοῦρον Ἄρηα ('which men of old placed to be the boundary-marker of a field: with this he struck impetuous Ares').<sup>191</sup> Although one can extract οὔρον from θοῦρον and combine θοῦρον and Ἄρης to produce ἀρούρης, the only evident connection between a field's boundary marker and impetuous Ares is what is explicit in the text; the soundplay is likely its own motivation. Again, it is difficult to see what latent semantic connection there could be between Odysseus' hyacinthine hair and his walk on the beach in the paronomasia of ὑακινθίνῳ ἄνθει and κίων ἐπὶ θίνα (*Od.* 6.231 and 236) or between silence and walking (ἀκέων/κίων) in *Il.* 1.33-36:

***Il.* 1.33-36** AbCCbAc

A ὡς ἔφατ', ἔδεισεν δ' ὄ γέρων και ἐπέιθετο μύθῳ·  
 b, C βῆ δ' ἀκέων παρὰ θίνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης·  
 C, b, A πολλὰ δ' ἔπειτ' ἀπάνευθε κίων ἠρᾶθ' ὄ γεραιὸς 35

<sup>189</sup> ἔρχομαι < IE \**h<sub>1</sub>erg<sup>h</sup>*-, \**h<sub>1</sub>er*- 'move, go'; ἔρκος < IE? \**serk*- 'twine.'

<sup>190</sup> Because the verbal ending -αι can elide in Homer, one might on first hearing parse ἔρχεται Ἄρης as ἔρχετ' Ἄιαρης, although the accent would in theory disambiguate.

<sup>191</sup> οὔρος 'border, boundary mark' < γόρφος (Mycenaean evidence), possibly < IE \**ueru*- 'draw.' θοῦρος 'rushing, impetuous' < \*θόρ-φος < IE \**d<sup>h</sup>erh<sub>3</sub>*- 'jump.' ἀρούρη < \*ἄρο-φαρ 'plowing' < IE \**h<sub>2</sub>erh<sub>3</sub>*- 'plow.' Cf. *Il.* 12.421-422 οὔροισι-ἀρούρη.

c Ἀπόλλωνι ἄνακτι, τὸν ἠϋκόμος τέκε Λητώ·...

Thus he spoke, and the old man feared him and obeyed his word.  
But went in silence by the shore of the much-sounding sea  
And going much apart the old man prayed  
to lord Apollo whom lovely-haired Leto had borne...

In this passage, κῖὼν forms a semantic ring with βῆ ('went') but a paronomastic ring with ἀκέων, illustrating once again the importance of repetitions of sound in the construction of ring structures.<sup>192</sup>

### 2.3.2 *Non-Root (Bound) Morphemes*

While paronomasia is not limited to the repetition or rearrangement of syllables, this is the unit into which much of the paronomasia so far discussed breaks down, sometimes with variation of vowels. It is not wholly surprising that syllables should often serve as a basic unit of repetition, since Greek inherited the Indo-European root system in which roots of the basic form consonant-vowel-consonant (CVC) are modified with derivational and inflectional morphemes to produce various words and inflected forms. Enough of the system is preserved in Greek that it might yield to a speaker the impression that semantic meaning inheres in certain syllables. Patterns of lexical repetitions are often better described as patterns of repeated roots, which means that what is strictly repeated in a "lexical" repetition is often an individual syllable: so in *Il.* 11.3-12, quoted in full above, the repetitions *χερσῖν/χειρῶν*, *στῆ/στᾶσ'*, and *νηῖ/νηας* are, phonemically, repetitions of *χερ/χειρ*, *στῆ/στᾶ*, and *νη/νη*, respectively.

But previous examples have also shown that paronomasia is not limited to root morphemes in the production of echoes, and can draw on any phonemic component of a word (e.g. *νηῖον ἐκτάμνησιν*, *Il.* 3.62). Sometimes these phonemic sequences cross morphological

<sup>192</sup> *παρὰ θῖνα* and *ἀπάνευθε*, in equivalent positions metrically and in the ring structure, create a looser echo.

boundaries, like in the example just cited; at other times, affixes themselves play a significant role in the echo. A case for a connection between morphological form and the Homeric poet's pursuit of soundplay has been made by Olav Hackstein, who argues that certain morphologically aberrant forms in Homer are not errors of transmission but can be explained as reshaping on the part of the poet in order to play off the sound of another word in close proximity (the anomalous ἐδήδοται 'has been eaten' at *Od.* 22.56 was modelled on the morphologically normal ἐκπέποται 'has been drunk' in the same line; ἐληλέδατ' 'have been driven' at *Od.* 7.86 anticipates and imitates ἐρηρέδατ' 'have been planted' ten lines later, etc.).<sup>193</sup> The following ring structures do not feature these kinds of abnormalities, but document the role repetitions of affixes can play in producing ring structures.

The superlative ending -ιστος (-α, -ον) forms a ring in the following passage, which links Thersites' physical ugliness (αἴσχιστος) with the enmity others feel for him (ἔχθιστος).<sup>194</sup>

***Il.* 2.216-220 abba**

a ...ἔμμεναι· αἴσχιστος δὲ ἀνήρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε·  
 b φορκὸς ἔην, χολὸς δ' ἕτερον πόδα· τῷ δέ οἱ ὄμω  
 κυρτῷ ἐπὶ στήθος συνοχωκότε· ἀτὰρ ὕπερθε  
 b φοξὸς ἔην κεφαλὴν, ψεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη.  
 a ἔχθιστος δ' Ἀχιλῆϊ μάλιστ' ἦν ἠδ' Ὀδυσῆϊ· ... 220

...he was the ugliest man of all those that came before Troy—  
 squint-eyed, lame of one foot, with his two shoulders  
 rounded and holding together over his chest.  
 Pointed was his head, but there was little hair on the top of it.  
 Most hated he was by Achilles and Odysseus...

The same ending contributes to the paronomastic sequence Ἡφαιστος - ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν οὐρανῷ ἴσταται ἀστήρ - μάλιστα at *Il.* 22.316-321. In *Il.* 14.440-458, Σάτινιον... ὀξυόεντι (443) is echoed

<sup>193</sup> Hackstein 2007.

<sup>194</sup> The etymology of αἴσχος is unknown. ἔχθος < IE \*h<sub>1</sub>ǵʰs-to- 'outsider.' The etymologies and original meanings of the *hapax legomena* φορκός and φοξός are unknown, but it is clear the choice of words was at least in part motivated by the similarity of their forms. The assonance at the center of this ring structure is discussed below.

two lines later by ὄχθας Σατνιόντος (445), which combines the name Σάτνιον with the ending -εις, -εντος from ὄξυόεντι:<sup>195</sup>

**Il. 14.440-448** aB CDEF gHHg DCFE Ba

a	Ἀργεῖοι δ' ὡς οὖν ἴδον Ἴκτορα νόσφι κίοντα	440
B	μᾶλλον ἐπὶ Τρώεσσι θόρον, μνήσαντο δὲ χάρμης.	
C	ἔνθα πολὺ πρῶτιστος Οἴληος ταχὺς Αἴας	
DEF, g	Σάτνιον οὔτασε δουρὶ μετάλμενος ὄξυόεντι	
H	Ἥνοπίδην, ὃν ἄρα νύμφη τέκε νηῖς ἀμύμων	
H, gD	Ἥνοπι βουκολέοντι παρ' ὄχθας Σατνιόντος.	445
CF	τὸν μὲν Οἰλιάδης δουρὶ κλυτὸς ἐγγύθεν ἐλθὼν	
E	οὔτα κατὰ λαπάρην· ὃ δ' ἀνετράπετ', ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' αὐτῷ	
Ba	Τρῶες καὶ Δαναοὶ σύναγον κρατερὴν ὑσμίνην.	

When the Argives saw Hector leaving the field,  
they took heart and set upon the Trojans yet more furiously.  
Ajax fleet son of Oileus began by springing  
on Satnius, and wounding him with his sharp spear,  
the son of Enops. A fair naiad nymph had borne him  
to Enops as he was herding cattle by the banks of the river Satnioeis.  
The renowned son of Oileus came up to him closely and with his spear  
struck him in the flank so that he fell, and around him  
raged a fierce fight between Trojans and Danaans.

Reduplication in the perfect tense can enhance phonetic echoes that would otherwise be weak.

When Polyphemus says that his ram was never formerly left behind (λελειμμένος) by the others,  
but is the first to long (λιλαίει) to go home, the reduplicated perfect of λείπω ‘leave’ creates an  
echo with the present λιλαίομαι ‘long, desire’:

**Od. 9.447-452** AbcDDDcbA

	κρίε πέπον, τί μοι ὄδε διὰ σπέος ἔσσοιο μήλων	
A, b, c	ὔστατος; οὐ τι πάρος γε λελειμμένος ἔρχεται οἴων,	
D	ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρῶτος νέμει τέρεν' ἄνθεα ποίης	
D	μακρὰ βιβιάς, πρῶτος δὲ ροὰς ποταμῶν ἀφικάνεις,	450
D, c	πρῶτος δὲ σταθμόνδε λιλαίει ἀπονέεσθαι	
b, A	ἔσπεριος· νῦν αὖτε πανύστατος...	

My good ram, what is it that makes you the last to leave my cave?  
You are not wont to let the ewes go before you,  
but far the first would graze the flowery mead

<sup>195</sup> An A-X-A structure (a ring of basic information framing an anecdote) is identified in Il. 14.442-448 by Parks 1998:244; cf. van Otterlo 1948: 42. The patronymics Ἥνοπίδην/Οἰλιάδης form their own echo.

stepping with long strides, and first would reach the streams of rivers,  
and are the first to desire to come home again at night;  
but now you lag last of all...

In *Il.* 3.134-138 the perfects **κεκλιμένοι** (κλίνω, ‘lean’) and **κεκλήση** (καλέω, ‘call,’ future perfect) frame a ring structure; the use of the perfect tense contributes not only the reduplicated syllable κε-, but the κλη- rather than the καλ- form of the root ‘call,’ so that each word shares the sequence κεκλ-.<sup>196</sup>

Although such morphemes can contribute to ring structures, the nature of language guarantees that there will always be morphological components in ring-composed passages that do not contribute to the overall structure. In each of the previous examples, the strength of the echo is enforced by semantic, syntactic, or metrical parallelism, all of which may enhance the salience of the echo without one necessarily being conscious of their contribution.

### 2.3.3 *Paronomasia and Assonance in Ring Structures*

We have seen a few examples of ring structures in which a paronomastic element occupies a central position (τέχνη/ νήϊον ἐκτάμνησιν *Il.* 3.61-62, ἐχεπευκὲς ἐφίεις *Il.* 1.51); the proximity of these repeated elements makes them especially prominent. Some center on the direct repetition of one or more syllables: **κινήση** πυκινήν *Il.* 16.298; **καλύψη/ ὕψηλῶν** *Il.* 12.281-2; **θέλγει,/ ὄν ἐθέλει** *Od.* 5.47-8. Others feature looser echoes, such as **πρώτα** **προσώπατα** *Od.* 18.192; **λωτὸν ἐρεπτόμενοι ἐλεόθρεπτόν** *Il.* 2.776; **ἐπιλεύσσει ὅσον τ’ ἐπὶ** **λᾶαν ἴησιν** *Il.* 3.12; **ἐπειγόμενος συνέπηξεν** *Il.* 5.902;<sup>197</sup> **ἐξ ἀρχένα ἄζη** *Il.* 5.161; **εἵνατός ἐστι** **περιτροπέων ἐνιαυτός** *Il.* 2.295; **ἐλκόμενος Ἑλικώνιον.../... ἐλκόντων** *Il.* 20.404-405; **ἀμφορφέα τε φαρέτην** *Il.* 1.45. As with νήϊον ἐκτάμνησιν, an element of self-annotation

<sup>196</sup> The ring structure is κεκλιμένοι -ἔγχεα μακρὰ- μακρῆς ἐγγείησι- κεκλήση. κλίνω < IE \**klei-* ‘lean’; καλέω < IE \**klh<sub>1</sub>-* ‘call.’ Note also the alliteration of κ in 138: τῷ δέ κε νικήσαντι φίλη κεκλήση ἄκοιτις.

<sup>197</sup> Cf. *Od.* 23.235 ἐπειγόμενήν ἀνέμω καὶ κύματι **πηγῷ**.

suggests itself in some of these sequences. **κινήση πυκινήν** νεφέλην (‘[Zeus] stirred up a dense cloud,’ *Il.* 16.298) ‘densely’ collocates the sound κινή; **ἐπειγόμενος συνέπηξεν** (describing the curdling of milk, *Il.* 5.902) phonetically ‘sticks together’ (συμπήγνυμι) the sounds πειγ/πηκ, so that the language itself ‘congeals’ at the center of a ring structure. In **εἵνατός** ἐστι περιτροπέων **ἐνιαυτός** (*Il.* 2.295), the ‘revolving year’ is reflected by a ‘revolution’ of the word εἵνατός (‘ninth’) into ἐνιαυτός (‘year’), while the paronomasia in **ἐλκόμενος Ἐλικώνιον.../... ἐλκόντων** (*Il.* 20.404-405) ‘draws out’ the sounds ἐλ(ι)κο-. The phrase **ἀμφηρεφέα τε φαρέτρην**, together with the lexical ring structure in which it occurs, may connote the symmetry of the ‘quiver covered on both sides’ or ‘covered in a circle’ (the adjective ἀμφηρεφέα itself is quasi-palindromic).<sup>198</sup>

There is only a small step, in some cases none at all, from examples like these to the phonemic patterns we designate with terms like assonance, alliteration, consonance, and homoioteleuton.<sup>199</sup> Alliterative lines sometimes appear at the center of ring structures: **Ἄτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἄχιλλεύς** (discussed in Chapter 1) appears at the center (and contains the central δῖος) of the sequence **Διὸς -ἐρίσαντε-δῖος-ἔριδι-Διὸς** (*Il.* 1.5-9);<sup>200</sup> the line **αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἄρηϊφίλος Μενέλαος** marks the center of **κεκλιμένοι-ἔγχεα μακρὰ-μακρῆς ἐγχείησι-κεκλήση** (*Il.* 3.135-138, discussed above). In *Il.* 6.47-48, the alliteration of the

<sup>198</sup> The latter is Eustathius’ explanation (τὴν κύκλω ἐρεφομένην, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* vol. 1 p.63. line 4, 7).

<sup>199</sup> Cf. Culler 1988: 5 on paronomasia (“this sort of repetition is but an intensification of assonance, consonance or alliteration”) and Macleod 1982: 51, in a useful summary of Homeric assonance and wordplay (50-53). On Homeric alliteration see further Packard 1974 and Guilleux 2007; for Greek alliteration, see Silk 1974: 173-193, 224-228 (covering Aeschylus and the lyric poets), Bader 1993 and Watkins 1995: 23 (from an Indo-European perspective). Tsagalis 2017 gives a detailed account and classification of sound-repetitions in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, with categories drawn from Silk *OCD* s.v. ‘assonance,’ p. 186.

<sup>200</sup> Cf. **αὐτὰρ ὁ μακρὸν ἄϋσεν ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων** at the center of **Ἔκτωρ-Ἀχαιοὶ-ἔβαλλον-βάλλετε-Ἀχαιῶν-Ἔκτωρ**, *Il.* 3.76-83.

etymologically linked phrase κειμήλια κεῖται is extended by the repetition of κ and χ in the following lines:

**II. 6.46-50** ABCDEECDBA  
 A, B ζώγρει Ἀτρέος υἱέ, σὺ δ' ἄξια δέξαι ἄποινα·  
 C, D, EE πολλά δ' ἐν ἄφνειοῦ πατρὸς κειμήλια κεῖται  
 C χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολὺ κμητός τε σίδηρος,  
 D, B τῶν κέν τοι χαρίσαιο πατὴρ ἄπερείσι' ἄποινα  
 A εἴ κεν ἐμὲ ζῶδ'ν πεπύθοιτ' ἐπὶ νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν 50

Take me alive, son of Atreus, and you shall have a full ransom for me:  
 my father is rich and has much treasure laid by in his house,  
 of gold, bronze, and iron wrought with much effort.  
 From this store my father will give you a large ransom  
 should he hear of my being alive and at the ships of the Achaeans.

The homoioteleuton of the repeated ending –ος and the tripled conjunction τε phonetically unify the string of nominative singular nouns in line 48. This central alliteration is flanked before and after by the assonance of π/φ: ἄποινα·/πολλά δ' ἐν ἄφνειοῦ πατρὸς... πατὴρ ἄπερείσι' ἄποινα. Not every word in the passage containing π, φ, κ, or χ fits into these sequences, but the general alliterative contours produced by the phonemic repetitions coincide to a large extent with the phases of the lexical (and here, also semantic) ring structure.

The ring structure in the passage describing Thersites (*II.* 2.216-220, above) moves from repetitions of ην/νη (ἀνήρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε· / φορκὸς ἔην) to a preponderance of ω (χωλὸς δ' ἕτερον πόδα· τὼ δέ οἱ ὄμω / κυρτὼ ἐπὶ στήθος συνοχωκότε) back to ην/νη (φοξὸς ἔην κεφαλῆν, ψεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε λάχνη). The assonance of the repetition of ω unifies the description of Thersites' shoulders at the center of the ring structure in an iconic illustration of the shoulders' 'holding-together' (συνοχωκότε; there is also symmetry in the consonants that precede the ω-s: χωλὸς- τὼ... ὄμω / κυρτὼ - συνοχωκότε).

In the scene in *Iliad* 3 in which Iris approaches Helen while the latter is weaving, a string of genitive plural nouns in the central line produces homoioteleuton in –ων; note also the alliteration of **καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων** in the second half of the line:<sup>201</sup>

**II. 3.124-129** aBcdeedcBa

a Λαοδίκην Πριάμοιο θυγατρῶν εἶδος **ἀρίστην**.  
 B τὴν δ' εὖρ' ἐν **μεγάρῳ**· ἦ δὲ **μέγαν ἱστὸν** ὕφαινε 125  
 c, d, e **δίπλακα πορφυρέην, πολέας** δ' **ἐνέπασσεν ἀέθλους**  
 Τρώων θ' ἵπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,  
 e, d, c οὓς **ἔθεν εἶνεκ' ἔπασχον ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων**.  
 B, a ἀγχοῦ δ' **ἱσταμένη** προσέφη πόδας ὠκέα **Ἴρις**·...

Laodice, the best in beauty of Priam's daughters.  
 She found her in her own room, working at a great cloth  
 twofold and purple, into which she was sprinkling the battles  
 between the horse-taming Trojans and bronze-armored Achaeans,  
 which they suffered at the hands of Ares for her sake.  
 Swift-footed Iris then standing close to her said...

This passage puts on display some of the difficulties of attempting to schematize small-scale ring structures. The rings **ἱστὸν- ἐνέπασσεν - εἶνεκ' ἔπασχον- ἱσταμένη** are clear enough. **ἀρίστην** in 124 paronomastically anticipates **ἱστὸν** and **ἱσταμένη**, and it possible to hear an echo between **ἀρίστην** and **Ἴρις** (or **ὠκέα Ἴρις**) in 129 as a framing ring.<sup>202</sup> But a problem of classification arises when we come to the phonic correspondence between **δίπλακα πορφυρέην, πολέας** (126) and **ὑπ' Ἄρηος παλαμάων** (128). Should **δίπλακα, πολέας**, and **παλαμάων** on the one hand and **πορφυρέην** and **ὑπ' Ἄρηος** on the other be described as paronomastic echoes? How similar are the phonemes represented by λ and ρ? Or are the sequences better described in terms of the assonance of recurring πς (including ὕφαινε, ἐνέπασσεν, ἔπασχον), λς and ρς? I ask these

<sup>201</sup> Cf. the accusative neuter/masculine singular in ἀρνεῖον ταῦρόν τε συῶν τ' ἐπιβήτορα κάπρον (quoted above, *Od.* 11.131 = *Od.* 23.278); the dative masculine singular in ὄζῳ ἐνὶ βλαφθέντε μυρικίνῳ ἀγκύλον ἄρμα/ ἄξαντ' ἐν πρώτῳ ῥυμῷ αὐτῷ μὲν ἐβήτην (*Il.* 6.39-40); the nominive feminine singular in ἐν δ' Ἴρις, ἐν δ' Ἀλκίη, ἐν δὲ κρυόεσσα Ἰωκίη./ ἐν δὲ τε Γοργεῖη κεφαλὴ δεινοῖο πελώρου (*Il.* 5.740-741); the accusative feminine plural in στήλας τε προβλήτας ἐμόχλεον, ἄς ἄρ' Ἀχαιοὶ/ πρώτας (*Il.* 12.259-260). For repeated verbal endings, see e.g. τινάσσεται - δεύεται- ἐπιπίλναται- πέπταται- τέρπονται (*Od.* 6.43-46).

<sup>202</sup> Ἴρις < \*f̄ĩris; cf. εἶδος < f̄eĩδος in 126.

questions not so much to suggest an answer as to illustrate the fuzzy line between assonance and paronomasia; as with the previous examples, the general sound contours created by the phonemic sequences in the passage follow the movement of the “lexical” structure, regardless of how one categorizes the various units. Assonance can participate in small-scale ring structures insofar as it represents its own kind of phonemically unifying structure, which may arise from and reinforce lexical and paronomastic echoes.

Assonance also occurs within ring structures without contributing to their annularity, interacting or not with other structural features like meter and formula. Different phonemic features of the same line or formulaic sequence may be highlighted at different times: *Il.* 3.127 above, which marks the center of its lexical structure, recurs at *Il.* 3.251, where it contributes to the framing rings of another ring structure:<sup>203</sup>

<b><i>Il.</i> 3.250-258</b>	cABC DEF GHHG FED ABCH	
c	ὄρσοο Λαιομεδοντιάδη, <u>καλέου</u> σιν ἄριστοι	250
A, B, C	<u>Τρώων</u> θ' ἵπποδάμων <u>καὶ Ἀχαιῶν</u> χαλκοχιτώνων	
DEF	ἔς πεδίον καταβῆναι ἴν' ὄρκια πιστὰ <u>τάμητε</u> ·	
G	αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος καὶ ἀρηϊφίλος Μενέλαος	
H	μακρῆς ἐγχείησι μαχήσοντ' ἀμφὶ <u>γυναίκε</u> ·	
H	τῷ δέ κε νικήσαντι <u>γυνή</u> καὶ κτήμαθ' ἔποιτο·	255
G, DEF	οἱ δ' ἄλλοι <u>φιλότητα</u> καὶ ὄρκια πιστὰ <u>ταμόντες</u>	
A	ναίοιμεν <u>Τροίην</u> ἐριβάλακα, τοὶ δὲ νέονται	
B, CH	Ἄργος ἐς <u>ἵππόβοτον</u> καὶ <u>Ἀχαιίδα</u> <u>καλλιγύναικα</u> .	

Rise, son of Laomedon, the best men are calling you  
of the horse-taming Trojans and bronze-armored Achaeans  
to come down on to the plain and swear to a solemn covenant.  
Alexandrus and Menelaus dear to Ares  
are to fight for the woman with long spears,  
that the woman and all her wealth may go with him who is the victor.  
We others are to swear to a solemn covenant of friendship  
to dwell here in Troy of the rich soil, and these to return  
to horse-feeding Argos and Achaea, land of beautiful women.

<sup>203</sup> The line also appears at *Il.* 3.131 and 8.71.

This time, the assonance of κ/χ comes to the fore in the echo of καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων (251) and καὶ Ἀχαιῖδα καλλιγύναϊκα (258), with paronomasia in the first syllables of καλέουσιν (250), χαλκοχιτώνων, and καλλιγύναϊκα.

The broader takeaway from this discussion of assonance is the importance of a comprehensive approach to the role of soundplay in lexical and paronomastic structures. My convention of underlining lexical and paronomastic repetitions is an expedient that fails to capture the overall phonic texture of a passage; while much that is useful can be said about such structures without going into granular detail about the sound sequences at play in their environmental contexts, it would be an unfortunate oversimplification to suppose that phonetic context is never relevant either to the ring structures with which this work is primarily concerned or to other structural features of the narrative.

#### 2.3.4 *Shifting Patterns of Sounds*

It goes without saying that paronomasia and assonance can operate as unifying devices with or without the framework of a lexical structure: see e.g. καί/καίωμα (*Il.* 21.348-356 and *Od.* 24.62-70) and πάλλω/Πηλεΰς (*Il.* 16.141-144 = 19.388-391) discussed above for the latter, to say nothing of the examples gathered by Rank 1951 and others. A passage sometimes features a paronomastic nexus in which a set of phonemes are reshuffled in various words to produce a shifting play of sound within a brief narrative span. The simile at *Il.* 2.87-91 comparing the Achaeans streaming from their huts to bees contains a ring structure that plays off the words ἔθνεα (‘tribes’ 87 and 91), ἄνθεσιν (‘flowers’ 88), and ἔνθα (‘here and there’ 90):

***Il.* 2.87-93**    AbCdDCDAb  
 A     ἦϋτε ἔθνεα εἶσι μελισσάων ἀδιγάων  
 b     πέτρης ἐκ γλαφυρῆς αἰεὶ γέον ἐρχομενάων,  
 C, d    βοτρυδὸν δὲ πέτονται ἐπ’ ἄνθεσιν εἰαρινοῖσιν·  
 D, C, D αἶ μὲν τ’ ἔνθα ἄλις πεποτήταται, αἶ δέ τε ἔνθα.     90  
 A, b    ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ γέων ἄπο καὶ κλισιάων

ἤϊόνος προπάροιθε βαθείης ἐστιχόωντο  
 ἰλαδὸν εἰς ἀγορήν· μετὰ δέ σφισιν ὄσσα δεδήει...

They swarmed like tribes of bees that sally  
 from some hollow cave always streaming  
 and flit bunched in clusters around the spring flowers  
 some flying here in a cluster, some there;  
 even so did the many tribes pour from ships and tents  
 and range themselves upon the wide-watered shore  
 for the assembly: while among them ran wildfire Rumour...

Later in *Iliad* 2, a series of similes comparing the arrayed Achaeans to raucous birds, flowers,  
 and flies makes use of the same paronomastic elements:<sup>204</sup>

**II. 2.459-470**

τῶν δ' ὡς τ' ὀρνίθων πετεηνῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ  
 χηνῶν ἢ γεράνων ἢ κύκνων δουλιχοδείρων 460  
 Ἀσίῳ ἐν λειμῶνι Καῦστρίου ἀμφι ῥέεθρα  
ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ποτῶνται ἀγαλλόμενα περύγεσσι  
 κλαγγηδὸν προκαθίζόντων, σμαραγεῖ δέ τε λειμῶν,  
 ὡς τῶν ἔθνεα πολλὰ νεῶν ἀπο καὶ κλισιάων  
 ἐς πεδῖον προχέοντο Σκαμάνδριον· αὐτὰρ ὑπὸ χθῶν 465  
 σμερδαλέον κονάβιζε ποδῶν αὐτῶν τε καὶ ἵππων.  
 ἔσταν δ' ἐν λειμῶνι Σκαμανδρίῳ ἀνθεμόεντι  
 μυρίοι, ὅσα τε φύλλα καὶ ἄνθεα γίγνεται ὄρη.  
 ἤϋτε μυιάων ἀδινάων ἔθνεα πολλὰ  
 αἶ τε κατὰ σταθμὸν ποιμνήϊον ἠλάσκουσιν... 470

They were like many tribes of winged birds,  
 of geese, or cranes, or long-necked swans  
 on the Asian plain about the waters of Cayster,  
 that wing their way hither and thither, glorying in the pride of flight,  
 and crying as they settle till the plain is alive with their screaming.  
 Even thus did their many tribes pour from ships and tents  
 on to the plain of the Scamander, and the ground rang  
 as brass under the feet of men and horses.  
 They stood as thick upon the flower-bespangled field  
 as leaves and flowers that bloom in summer.  
 As many tribes of swarming flies  
 buzz around a herdsman's homestead...

<sup>204</sup> The homoioteleuton of -ων in the crane simile is particularly prominent (the syllable appears 18 times in 8 lines). See Katz (2010: 362-363, 366-368) on the Indo-European features in this passage, including stylistics (366-368); phonetic repetitions are noted at 366.

In these cases, the paronomasia can be said to be based off the thematic word ἔθνεα ‘tribes,’ the tenor of each simile, but in terms of composition, it is possible that the choice of the word ἔθνεα was itself influenced by its paronomastic potential in connection with the imagery in the vehicles of the similes.

A more elaborate case of the phenomenon appears in Odysseus’ exchange with Eumaeus in *Odyssey* 14:

**Od. 14.119-132**

Ζεὺς γάρ που τό γε οἶδε καὶ ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι,  
εἴ κέ μιν ἀγγείλαιμι ἰδών· ἐπὶ πολλὰ δ’ ἀλήθην. 120  
τὸν δ’ ἠμείβετ’ ἔπειτα συβώτης, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν·  
‘ὦ γέρον, οὗ τις κείνον ἀνήρ ἀλαλήμενος ἐλθὼν  
ἀγγέλλων πείσειε γυναῖκά τε καὶ φίλον υἱόν,  
ἀλλ’ ἄλλως κομιδῆς κεχρημένοι ἄνδρες ἀλήται  
ψεύδοντ’, οὐδ’ ἐθέλουσιν ἀληθέα μυθήσασθαι. 125  
ὃς δέ κ’ ἀλητεύων Ἰθάκης ἐς δῆμον ἵκηται,  
ἐλθὼν ἐς δέσποιναν ἐμὴν ἀπατήλια βάζει·  
ἢ δ’ εὖ δεξαμένη φιλέει καὶ ἕκαστα μεταλλά,  
καὶ οἱ ὀδυρομένη βλεφάρων ἄπο δάκρυα πίπτει,  
ἢ θέμις ἐστὶ γυναικός, ἐπὴν πόσις ἄλλοθ’ ὄληται. 130  
αἰψά κε καὶ σύ, γεραιέ, ἔπος παρατεκτῆναιο,  
εἴ τίς τοι χλαῖνάν τε χιτῶνά τε εἵματα δοίη.

“Zeus perhaps knows and the other immortal gods,  
but I may be able to give you news of him, for I have travelled much.”  
Eumaeus the swineherd answered, leader of men:  
"Old man, no traveller who comes here with news  
will get the man’s wife and son to believe his story.  
Nevertheless, tramps in want of a lodging keep coming  
with their mouths full of lies, and not a word of truth;  
every one who in their travels reaches Ithaca  
goes to my mistress and tells her falsehoods,  
whereon she takes them in, cares for them, and asks many questions,  
and tears fall from her cheeks as she grieves,  
as women will when they have lost their husbands.  
And you too, old man, would doubtless alter your story  
If someone might give you a shirt and a cloak.

This passage features a series of words that, starting with ἄλλοι in 119, undergo what we might call paronomastic permutation over the course of the passage. Rank observes the sound repetition

of ἀλαλήμενος ... ἀλλ' ἄλλως ... ἀλῆται ... ἀληθέα ... ἀλητεύων ... ἀπατήλια in lines 122-127, but the wordplay is more extensive than that.<sup>205</sup> Odysseus sets the pattern with ἄλλοι-ἀγγεῖλαιμι-ἀλήθην (119-120);<sup>206</sup> the first person singular aorist ἀλήθην (from ἀλάομαι 'wander') resembles the adjective ἀληθής 'true,' the wordplay implying that Odysseus' wanderings have given him a special claim to the truth.<sup>207</sup> Eumaeus' skeptical reply picks up Odysseus' wordplay to argue that wanderers tend *not* to tell the truth. The passage in which Eumaeus' paronomasia plays out is framed by the vocatives addressing the 'old man,' ὦ γέρον and γεραιέ. Within this frame, lexical and phonemic echoes of Odysseus' words establish a pattern of αλ(λ)-s and ελ(λ)-s that continues through line 130. The paronomastic words can be grouped loosely into these two groups: ἀλάομαι, ἀλῆται (the agent noun related to ἀλάομαι), ἀληθής, ἀλλά, μεταλλά, etc. form one group,<sup>208</sup> while ἀγγέλλων, ἐλθὼν, and ἐθέλουσιν form another.<sup>209</sup> But there are extensive echoes that bridge the two groups, such as the consonantal metathesis in the phrase ἐθέλουσιν ἀληθέα (125, with the θ emphatically reiterated in μῦθήσασθαι) or in ἀλητεύων/ἀπατήλια (126/127). The concluding phrase ἄλλοθ' ὄληται contains a similar anagrammatic reshuffling, while the verb ὄληται differs only in its initial vowel from ἀλῆται in 124.<sup>210</sup> Eumaeus sets up a lexical and thematic contrast between the wanderer (ἀλήτης) who tells falsehoods (ψεύδοντ', οὐδ' ... ἀληθέα) and Odysseus, whom he claims has perished elsewhere (ἄλλοθ' ὄληται). Any given word in the nexus is phonetically more or less similar to any other word, yielding a shifting

<sup>205</sup> Rank 1951: 34; he compares *Od.* 17.576-580: ἀλήτης ... δεῖσας ... ἄλλως ... αἰδεῖται ... αἰδοῖος ἀλήτης ... καὶ ἄλλος. Cf. *Od.* 3.239-252.

<sup>206</sup> ἄλλος < IE \**h<sub>2</sub>el-io-* 'other'; ἀληθής < IE \**leh<sub>2</sub>dʰ-* 'be hidden' with alpha privative.

<sup>207</sup> ἀλάομαι (of which ἀλάλημαι 'wander' is the perfect, used with present meaning) < IE \**h<sub>2</sub>elh<sub>2</sub>-* 'wander, roam about'; ἐλθεῖν: etymology unknown; ἄγγελος is a loanword.

<sup>208</sup> ἀπατήλιος < ἀπάτη < PG; μεταλλάω: etymology unknown (s.v. μέταλλον); Chantraine considers a connection between μεταλλάω and μέταλλον ('mine, quarry') "very probable" (s.v. μέταλλον); Buttman *Lexilogus* 1.139 derives it from μετ' ἄλλα '(search) for other things,' following Eustathius 148.10.

<sup>209</sup> ἐθέλω < IE \**h<sub>1</sub>gʷh<sub>1</sub>el-* 'wish.' Cf. *Od.* 3.230-238 ἐθέλων-τηλόθεν-ἐλθέμεναι-ἐλθὼν-ἀπολέσθαι-καθέλησι, etc.

<sup>210</sup> ὄλλυμι, -μαι < IE \**h<sub>3</sub>elh<sub>1</sub>-* 'destroy.'

continuum of wordplay in which ἀγγέλλων and ἐθέλουσιν, ἐλθὼν and μεταλλᾶ – words for which one might otherwise hesitate to assert a paronomastic resonance – are brought by means of phonetic intermediaries into a paronomastic relationship.<sup>211</sup>

The phrase ἔπος παρατεκτῆναι in 131 is a fitting description of the soundplay in the passage: the poet has ‘worked an utterance into another form, transformed it.’ In his commentary on the one other Homeric passage in which the verb appears, Eustathius says παρατεκταίνομαι (‘alter,’ so sometimes ‘falsify’) is a metaphor from woodworking (ἐκ τῶν τεκτονικῶς τεχνωμένων παραποιεῖν τὰ κατ’ αὐτοὺς ἔργα).<sup>212</sup> In the Iliadic passage, the sense ‘alter’ is primary: ‘not even Zeus himself could change it.’<sup>213</sup> In the Odyssean passage, in light of the account preceding it, the verb παρατεκταίνομαι bears denotatively the ‘falsifying’ sense: ‘wanderers tell falsehoods, and you might also construct a speech deviating from the truth.’ But this does not hamper the applicability of the sense ‘alter’ for the paronomastic metamorphoses in the passage; rather, it suggests that paronomastic wordplay (like Odysseus’ ἀλήθην ‘wandered’/ ἀληθῆς ‘true’) has the potential to be a vehicle for dishonesty and deceit. The poet has the swineherd Eumaeus become an illustrative carpenter of words in his reply to Odysseus.

<sup>211</sup> Other soundplay in the passage includes Ἰθάκης... ἵκηται... ἕκαστα (126/128, ἵκηται rhyming with ἀλήται and ὀληται) and the alliteration in ἀγγέλλων... γυναικῶν (123) and κομιδῆς κεχηρημένοι (124).

<sup>212</sup> The verb παραποιέω likewise means ‘alter slightly’ or ‘make falsely.’ Pausanias uses this verb to describe the derivation of the toponym Altis from the noun ἄλσος, 5.10.1: τὸ δὲ ἄλσος τὸ ἱερὸν τοῦ Διὸς παραποιήσαντες τὸ ὄνομα Ἄλτιν ἐκ παλαιοῦ καλοῦσι.

<sup>213</sup> *Il.* 14.53-56, with its own wordplay:

ἦ δὴ ταῦτά γ’ ἐτοῖμα **τετεύχεται**, οὐδέ κεν ἄλλως  
 Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης αὐτὸς **παρατεκτῆναιτο**.  
**τεῖχος** μὲν γὰρ δὴ κατερήριπεν, ᾧ ἐπέπιθμεν 55  
 ἄρρηκτον νηῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν εἰλαρ ἔσεσθαι.

Indeed, these things have been done, and not otherwise  
 could Zeus himself the high-thundering shape it differently.  
 The wall has fallen that we trusted  
 to be an unbreakable defence for ourselves and the ships.

Note also the alliteration of τ throughout the lines. τεύχω < IE \*d<sup>h</sup>euǵ<sup>h</sup>- ‘hit the mark’; τεκταίνομαι < τέκτων < IE \*te-tk-n- ‘carpenter’ (s.v. τέκτων, cf. s.v. τέχνη); τεῖχος < IE \*d<sup>h</sup>eig<sup>h</sup>- ‘knead, form, fashion.’

### 2.3.5 Clustering Tendencies

The observation of paronomastic rings across multiple ring structures allows for the identification of recurring trends, as already noted at several points. I mention here only a few. A marked example is the tendency of words beginning with ορ-, ωρ-, and ουρ- to cluster, either as part of a ring structure or not;<sup>214</sup> especially frequent in such rings are the words οὔρος/ὄρος ('mountain'), ὄρνυμι ('urge on, incite' and its reduplicated pluperfect ὀρώρει), ὄρνις 'bird,' οὐρανός 'heaven,' and ὀρυμαγδός 'din'; others include οὔρος 'fair wind' and ὀρμάω 'rush.' The ορ- syllables in many of these words (ὄρνυμαι, ὄρνις, ὄρος, οὔρος, possibly ὀρμάω) derive from the same root, the Indo-European \**h<sub>3</sub>er-* '(a)rise.'<sup>215</sup> The etymology of οὐρανός is unknown (it probably comes from a form \*(F)ορσανός),<sup>216</sup> but the word was evidently a sufficient phonemic fit to contribute to rings such as the following:

**Od. 12.312-315** ABCCBbA  
 A ἦμος δὲ τρίχα **νυκτός** ἔην, μετὰ δ' ἄστρα βεβήκει,  
 B, C **ὄρσεν** ἐπι ζαῆγ ἄνεμον **νεφελιγερέτα** Ζεὺς  
 C λαίλαπι θεσπεσίη, σὺν δὲ **νεφέεσσι** κάλυψε  
 Bb, A γαῖαν ὁμοῦ καὶ πόντον· **ὀρώρει** δ' **οὐρανόθεν** **νύξ**. 315

In the third watch of the night when the stars had shifted their places,  
Cloud-gathering Zeus raised a great gale of wind  
 that flew a hurricane and with thick clouds covered  
 land and sea and night rose forth out of the heavens.

**Il. 2.455-458** aBccBa  
 ἦ ὅτε πῦρ ἀΐδηλον ἐπιφλέγει ἄσπετον ὕλην  
 a, B, c **οὔρεος** ἐν κορυφῆς, ἕκαθεν δέ τε **φαίνεται αὐγή**,  
 ὥς τῶν ἐρχομένων ἀπὸ χαλκοῦ θεσπεσίοιο

<sup>214</sup> Cf. ὄρεος-ὄρνυτ' *Il.* 3.10-13; ὄρσεν-ὄρεσίτροφος *Il.* 12.293-299; ὄρεος-οὐρανόθεν *Il.* 16.297-300; οὐρηάς-ὄτρυνε-ὀρώρει-ἀγαπήνορος-οὐρήες *Il.* 23.111-115; ὀρινόμενοι-οὐρανόν *Il.* 14.59-60; ὄρμενον-ὀρυμαγδός-ὄρεος *Il.* 17.738-743; δυσωρήσονται-ὄρεσφι-ὀρυμαγδός *Il.* 10.183-5; ὄρσασκεν-ὀρυμαγδός-οὐρανόν-Ἔκτορος *Il.* 17.420-425; ὀρυμαγδός-ὀρώρει-οὔρεος-ὄρνυτο *Il.* 16.633...; ὀρόθυνον-ὀρυμαγδόν-ὄρινε *Il.* 21.312-313; οὔρος-εὔορμος-ὔδωρ-οὔροι *Od.* 4.357-360; ὀροφῆς-ἐφορμηθεῖς-ὄρη- ἐξ ὀρέων ἐλθόντες ἐπ' ὀρνίθεσσι θόρωσι *Od.* 22.298-303. See Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000: 16 on the clustering of words beginning with ορ- in *Il.* 21.235-327.

<sup>215</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. ὄρνυμαι, ὄρνενον, ὄρος, οὔρος, ὀρμή (ὀρμάω < IE \**sor-meh<sub>2</sub>*- 'flow' or \**h<sub>3</sub>(o)r-sm-* 'uprising'). Cf. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000: 15-17 on the tendency of etymological cognates to cluster in Homer.

<sup>216</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. οὐρανός.

c, B, a αἴγλη παμφανόωσα δι' αἰθέρος οὐρανὸν ἵκε.<sup>217</sup>

As when some great forest fire  
is raging upon a mountain top and its light shines afar,  
even so from their armor as the marched  
a shining gleam reached the firmament of heaven.

In *Il.* 3.2-3, the parallelism of the lines is enhanced by the paronomasia of ὄρνιθες-οὐρανόθι in the same metrical position: Τρῶες μὲν κλαγγῇ τ' ἐνοπῆ τ' ἴσαν ὄρνιθες ὦς / ἦϋτε περ κλαγγῇ γεράνων πέλει οὐρανόθι πρό. The alliterative formula ὄρουμαγδὸς ὄρώρει 'a din arose' occurs six times in Homer,<sup>218</sup> the variation ὄρουμαγδὸν ὄρινε once;<sup>219</sup> the dense repetition of the syllable ορ- perhaps suggests its own kind of din.<sup>220</sup> Formulaic phrases often seem to represent a crystallization of syllabic soundplay. The word οὔρος 'watcher' appears in the recurring sequence Νέστωρ... Γερήνιος οὔρος Ἀχαιῶν, as, for example, in *Od.* 15.370-371 Νέστωρ αὔτε μάλιστα Γερήνιος οὔρος Ἀχαιῶν / εὔχετο χεῖρ' ὀρέγων εἰς οὐρανὸν ἀστερόεντα.<sup>221</sup> Any name in -ωρ can be drawn into play with these syllables, including Hector's:<sup>222</sup>

*Il.* 13.188-191<sup>223</sup> ABBA  
A, B Ἔκτωρ δ' ὀρμήθη κόρυθα κροτάφοις ἀραρυῖαν  
κρατὸς ἀφαρπάξει μεγαλήτορος Ἀμφιμάχιο·  
B Αἴας δ' ὀρμηθέντος ὀρέξατο δουρὶ φαεινῶ 190  
A Ἔκτορος· ἀλλ' οὔ πη χροὸς εἴσατο, πᾶς δ' ἄρα χαλκῶ...

Hector charged forward to take the helmet well-fitted to the temples  
from the head of great-hearted Amphimachus,  
and in a moment Ajax threw a spear at charging  
Hector, but did not reach his flesh, for he was all encased in bronze...

*Il.* 11.196-197<sup>224</sup>  
βῆ δὲ κατ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων εἰς Ἴλιον ἱρήν.  
εὔρ' υἶὸν Πριάμοιο δαίφρονος Ἔκτορα δίον...

<sup>217</sup> For ἀυγή/αἴγλη, cf. αἰγλήεντος-αυγαί *Il.* 13.243/244.

<sup>218</sup> *Il.* 2.810; *Il.* 4.449; *Il.* 8.63; *Il.* 8.59; *Il.* 16.633; *Od.* 24.70.

<sup>219</sup> *Il.* 21.313.

<sup>220</sup> Cf. Guilleux 2007: 97.

<sup>221</sup> *Il.* 8.80, *Il.* 11.840, *Il.* 15.370, *Il.* 15.659, *Od.* 3.411. οὔρος 'watcher' < IE \*uer- 'observe'; Mycenaean /worwos/.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. the formulaic κορυθαίολος Ἔκτωρ.

<sup>223</sup> Cf. *Il.* 13.179-183.

<sup>224</sup> Cf. *Il.* 15.237-239.

Down she went from the crests of Ida to strong Iliu,  
and found the son of wise Priam, shining Hector...

At *Il.* 13.754, an improbable and much-discussed simile compares the running and shouting Hector to a snowy mountain:<sup>225</sup>

***Il.* 13.754-757** aaabbaba

aa ἦ ῥα, καὶ ὄρμηθη ὄρεϊ νιφόνεντι ἔοικῶς  
a κεκλήγων, διὰ δὲ Τρώων πέτετ' ἠδ' ἐπικούρων. 755  
bba οἱ δ' ἐς Πανθοῖδην ἀγαπήγορα Πουλυδάμαντα  
ba πάντες ἐπεσσεύοντ', ἐπεὶ Ἴκτορος ἔκλυον αὐδὴν.

Thus he spoke, then sped onward like a snowy mountain,  
and with a loud cry flew through the ranks of the Trojans and their allies.  
They all hastened to gather round Polydamas,  
the excellent son of Panthous, when they heard Hector's voice.

Whatever it may mean for Hector to speed onward like a snowy mountain, the phonetic echo between Ἴκτορος in 757 and ὄρεϊ in 754 offers its own kind of likeness; the genitive Ἴκτορος contains the sequence ὄρος 'mountain.'<sup>226</sup>

The sounds πολ(λ)/πωλ/παλ tend to cluster, especially but not exclusively in connection with the word πολὺς ('many, much'):<sup>227</sup>

***Il.* 13.795-801**

οἱ δ' ἴσαν ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἀτάλαντοι ἀέλλη, 795  
ἦ ῥα θ' ὑπὸ βροντῆς πατρὸς Διὸς εἴσι πέδον δέ,  
θεςπεσίῳ δ' ὀμάδῳ ἀλὶ μίσγεται, ἐν δέ τε πολλὰ  
κύματα παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης  
κυρτὰ φαληριόωντα, πρὸ μὲν τ' ἄλλ', αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλα·  
ὡς Τρῶες πρὸ μὲν ἄλλοι ἀρηρότες, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλοι, 800  
χαλκῷ μαρμαίροντες ἅμ' ἠγεμόνεσσιν ἔποντο.

<sup>225</sup> See e.g. Bradley 1967, Lane 2005. At *Il.* 7.4-7 Hector is compared to a fair wind, οὖρος, but there is no noteworthy clustering of ορ-/ωρ-/οὐρ- syllables.

<sup>226</sup> Cf. *Il.* 22.91-96, in which Hector is compared to a mountain serpent (δράκων...ὄρεστερος 93).

<sup>227</sup> Cf. πολέ-μάλα πολλὸν ἀπό-πολλέων-ἀπόλεσα *Od.* 4.811-14; πολλά-πολίων-παλίλλογα-πόλιν *Il.* 1.124-129; ἀκρόπολιν-ἄκριτα πόλλ' *Od.* 8.404-405; πολλά-τεύχων ἢ πολὺν-τε χιῶν ἐπάλυνεν *Il.* 10.4-7; ἐφοπλίσαι-πέπλους-πολὺν-πολλὸν γὰρ ἄπο πλυνοὶ εἰσι πόληος *Od.* 6.37-40; πόλιν καὶ ἀπόλεσε λαοὺς / πολλοὺς *Od.* 9. 265-266; ἀπειλεῖς-πολλὰ-πτολίεθρον-πλεῖον πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο-πολὺν-πολεμίζων-πολὺν *Il.* 1.160-169; πολλοὶ-πω-πεδῖον πεπόλιστο πόλις μερόπων ἀνθρώπων-ὑπωρείας-ἀνθρώπων-ἵπποι-πόλοισιν *Il.* 20.214-222 (on the alliterative line 217 see Packard 1974: 243-244).

They flew forth like the blasts of some fierce wind  
 that strike earth in the van of a thunderstorm from Zeus—  
 they buffet the salt sea into an uproar; many  
 are the great waves of the much-sounding sea that come crashing  
 with their arching heads all crested with foam, some in front, some after—  
 even so did the fitted ranks of Trojans, some in front, some after,  
 arrayed in gleaming armour follow their leaders onward.

The scholia note the onomatopoeic quality of *παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο* (798) and the similar endings of *κύματα παφλάζοντα* and *κυρτὰ φαληριόωντα*.<sup>228</sup> The elisions in *ἐπ' ἄλλα* and *ἐπ' ἄλλοι* echo *πολλά* (797, also *παφλάζοντα*, etc.), and extend the paronomasia; like the waves described by the simile, the *πολ/παλ/φ(α)λ* sounds come crashing one after another (*πρὸ μὲν τ' ἄλλ', αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλα*).<sup>229</sup> The tenor of the simile is the onward motion of the dense, 'fitted' (*ἀρηρότες* 800) formation of the Trojan ranks. As in the simile comparing ranks of soldiers to a tightly-joined stone wall at *Il.* 16.211-217, where the verb *ἀραρίσκω* 'fit, join' plays a prominent role, the repetitions, and especially the close parallelism between lines 799 and 800, enact the 'fitted' ranks.<sup>230</sup>

Apollo is sometimes brought into the *πολ(λ)/πωλ/παλ* nexus, as at *Il.* 1.33-36 (quoted above):<sup>231</sup> *ὁ γέρων- ἀκέων- θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο- πολλά- κίων- ὁ γεραῖος- Ἀπόλλωνι*. The similarity of the words *Ἀπόλλων* and *πολλά* did not escape notice in post-Homeric antiquity; Macrobius cites several Greek philosophers who etymologized the former in terms of the latter, including as *ἀ-πολλῶν* or *ἀπὸ-πολλῶν* ('without' or 'away from the many,' respectively).<sup>232</sup>

<sup>228</sup> bT 13.798-799: *δειξαι θέλει καὶ φύσιν κυμάτων. καὶ μοι δοκεῖ καὶ τὸν ἦχον μιμήσασθαι διὰ τῆς περὶ τὴν σύνθεσιν τῶν στοιχείων τραχύτητος, παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο*. Cf. Janko 1985 *ad loc*; Guilleux 2007: 100.

<sup>229</sup> *ἄλλα* < IE \**h2el-io-* 'other'; *πολύς* < o-grade of IE \**p(e)lh2-u-* 'many.'

<sup>230</sup> See the discussion of the wall simile at *Il.* 16.211-217 in the introduction to Chapter 1.

<sup>231</sup> Cf. οὐδ' εἴ κεν μάλα *πολλά* πάθοι ἐκάεργος *Ἀπόλλων Il.* 22.220; ἵππους-πόλεμον-*Ἀπόλλων Il.* 16.728; ἵππους ἐς πόλεμον πεπληγέμεν. αὐτὰρ *Ἀπόλλων Il.* 16.728; ἐπέπλεον-ἀπολυμαίνεσθαι-ἀπελυμαίνοντο-*Ἀπόλλωνι Il.* 1.312-315; *Ἀπόλλων-πολλῆ-πολέμου-ἀποέργαθε λαοῦ Il.* 21.596-599. See above on the *ἀκέων* / *κίων* paronomasia.

<sup>232</sup> Macrobius *Saturnalia* 1.17.7, as follows: Chrysippus: ὡς οὐχι τῶν πολλῶν καὶ φαυλῶν οὐσιῶν τοῦ πυρὸς ὄντα (with alpha privative), or ὅτι μόνος ἐστὶ καὶ οὐχι πολλοί; Sreusippus: ὡς ἀπὸ πολλῶν οὐσιῶν πορὸς οὐτοῦ

Ἀπόλλων creates a ring with ἀπόλλυμι ‘destroy’ in a ring structure at *Il.* 5.757-760 (Ζεῦ πάτερ- Ἄρη- ἀπόλεσε- Ἀχαιῶν- ἄχος- Ἀπόλλων - Ζεῦ πάτερ - Ἄρη),<sup>233</sup> anticipating the much-cited wordplay of Aeschylus at *Agamemnon* 1080-1082: ὄπολλον ὄπολλον, / ἀγυῖατ', ἀπόλλων ἐμός· / ἀπόλεσας γὰρ οὐ μόλις τὸ δεύτερον.<sup>234</sup> The same paronomasia is obliquely referenced by Socrates in Plato's *Cratylus*.<sup>235</sup> The presence of the pair in corresponding positions in a ring structure make it likely that the two would be heard as producing an echo any time they appeared in proximity, as in:

**Od. 17.248-253**      aaBaBaBa  
 a, a      ὃ πόποι, οἷον ἔειπε κύων ὄλοφώϊα εἰδώς,  
             τόν ποτ' ἐγὼν ἐπὶ νηὸς εὐσσέλμοιο μελαίνης  
 B, a      ἄξω τῆλ' Ἰθάκης, ἵνα μοι βίοντον πολὸν ἄλφοι.      250  
 B, a      αἶ γὰρ Τηλέμαχον βάλοι ἀργυρότοξος Ἀπόλλων  
             σήμερον ἐν μεγάροις, ἧ ὑπὸ μνηστῆρσι δαμείη,  
 B, a      ὡς Ὀδυσῆϊ γε τηλοῦ ἀπόλετο νόστιμον ἦμαρ.

You ill conditioned cur, what are you talking about?  
 Some day or other I will put you on board ship and take you  
far from Ithaca, where I can sell you for much money.  
 I wish I were as sure that Apollo of the silver bow would strike Telemachus dead  
 this very day, or that the suitors would kill him,  
 as I am that the homecoming of distant Odysseus is destroyed.

Louden discusses the wordplay of Τηλέμαχος ‘far-fighting’ and τηλοῦ ‘far’ in this passage, but the sequence ὄλοφώϊα-πολὸν-Ἀπόλλων-ἀπόλετο was likely to have been equally perspicuous.<sup>236</sup>

The cluster recurs in the central section of Achilles' speech to Priam in the final book of the *Iliad*, in which he urges Priam to eat by adducing the mythical exemplum of Niobe and the death

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συνεστῶτος; Cleanthes: ὡς ἀπ' ἄλλων καὶ ἄλλων τόπων τὰς ἀνατολὰς ποιουμένου (referring to Apollo as god of the sun).

<sup>233</sup> For the paronomasia of the central ring Ἀχαιῶν- ἄχος see Louden 1995: 33, Nagy 1979: 69-93.

<sup>234</sup> Cf. Euripides *Phaethon* 224-226 ὡς μ' ἀπόλεσας / καὶ τόνδ', Ἀπόλλων δ' ἐν βροτοῖς ὀρθῶς καλῆ, / ὅστις τὰ σιγῶντ' ὀνόματ' οἶδε δαιμόνων.

<sup>235</sup> Plato *Cratylus* 405e. Tsitsibakou-Vasalos 2000: 10-11 finds embedded etymologizing of Apollo in *Il.* 21.139-383.

<sup>236</sup> Louden 1995: 38. Cf. εἰ δ' ὁ μὲν ὡς ἀπόλεσε καὶ οὐκέτι νόστιμός ἐστιν, / ἀλλ' ἤδη παῖς τοῖος Ἀπόλλωνός γε ἔκρητι *Od.* 19.85-86; λαιψηροῖς ὀλέεσθαι Ἀπόλλωνος βελέεσσι *Il.* 21.278.

of her children at the hands of Apollo and Artemis (ὄλοντο- Ἀπόλλων- πολλούς- ἀπὸ πάντας ὄλεσαν *Il.* 24.603-609).<sup>237</sup>

The words θώρηξ ‘breastplate,’ θρώσκω ‘leap, attack,’ Τρῶες ‘Trojans,’ and ἐτέρωθεν ‘from the other side’ cluster, as in *Il.* 20.1-3:<sup>238</sup> Ὡς οἱ μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσι θωρήσσαντο / ἀμφὶ σὲ Πηλέος υἱὲ μάχης ἀκόρητον Ἀχαιοί, / Τρῶες δ’ αὐθ’ ἐτέρωθεν ἐπὶ θρωσμοῶ πεδίοιο. The words θώρηξ and θρώσκω produce the charming paronomasia in the following simile:<sup>239</sup>

***Il.* 13.586-592** ABc dad AcB  
 Πριαμίδης μὲν ἔπειτα κατὰ στήθος βάλεν ἰῶ  
 A, B θώρηκος γύαλον, ἀπὸ δ’ ἔπτατο πικρὸς οἶστός.  
 c, d ὡς δ’ ὅτ’ ἀπὸ πλατέος πτυόφιν μεγάλην κατ’ ἀλώην  
 a θρώσκωσιν κύαμοι μελανόχροες ἢ ἐρέβινθοι  
 d πνοιῆ ὑπο λιγυρῆ καὶ λικμητήρος ἔρωη, 590  
 A ὡς ἀπὸ θώρηκος Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο  
 c, B πολλὸν ἀποπλαγῆθεις ἐκάς ἔπτατο πικρὸς οἶστός.

The son of Priam hit his chest with an arrow  
 in the breastplate of his corselet, but the sharp arrow glanced off it.  
 As on to a threshing-floor from the broad winnowing-shovel  
 black beans or pulse come leaping down,  
 blown by shrill winds and shaken by the shovel—  
 even so from the corselet of renowned Menelaus  
 did the sharp arrow glance off, recoiling much.

Mt. Ida (Ἴδη) appears on a number of occasions in proximity to the verb εἶδον, especially in its unaugmented form ἶδον.<sup>240</sup> In *Il.* 15.4-13, the mountain serves as Zeus’ vantage point for watching the battle below:

***Il.* 15.4-13** aB ACdaAdCA AB  
 ...ἔγρετο δὲ Ζεὺς  
 a, B Ἴδης ἐν κορυφῆσι παρὰ χρυσοθρόνου Ἴηρης, 5  
 A, C στή δ’ ἄρ’ ἀναΐξας, ἶδε δὲ Τρῶας καὶ Ἀχαιοὺς  
 τοὺς μὲν ὀρινομένους, τοὺς δὲ κλονέοντας ὀπισθεν

<sup>237</sup> The speech is a locus classicus for ring composition as traditionally construed; see Lohmann 1970: 13.

<sup>238</sup> The half-line Τρῶες δ’ αὐθ’ ἐτέρωθεν recurs at *Il.* 8.55, 11.56 (Τρῶες δ’ αὐθ’ ἐτέρωθεν ἐπὶ θρωσμοῶ πεδίοιο / Ἐκτορά), 14.388, 18.243. Cf. Τρώων-Ἀχαιῶν-θρόνου-ἱαχε, *Il.* 20.60-62.

<sup>239</sup> θρώσκω < IE \*d<sup>h</sup>(e)rh<sub>3</sub>- ‘leap, mount’; θώραξ etymology unknown. μελανόχροες is marked with dotted underline as an echo of θρώσκω, cf. *Il.* 13.314-317 θρωσκον- χροῖ- χροά- χροός.

<sup>240</sup> Ἴδη ‘wood, wooded hill’ (Pre-Greek); εἶδον < IE \*ueid- ‘see, know’ (s.v. ἰδεῖν).

d, a Ἀργείους, μετὰ δὲ σφι Ποσειδάωνα ἄνακτα.  
 A Ἔκτορα δ' ἐν πεδίῳ ἶδε κείμενον, ἀμφὶ δ' ἑταῖροι  
 d εἶαθ', ὃ δ' ἀργαλέῳ ἔχετ' ἄσθματι κῆρ ἀπινύσσων 10  
 C αἴμ' ἐμέων, ἐπεὶ οὐ μιν ἀφαιρότατος βάλ' Ἀχαιῶν.  
 A τὸν δὲ ἰδὼν ἐλέησε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε,  
 A, B δεινὰ δ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν Ἥρην πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπεν· ...

...Zeus now woke

on the crests of Ida, where he was lying with golden-throned Hera by his side,  
 and starting to his feet he saw the Trojans and Achaeans,  
 the one thrown into confusion, and the others driving pell-mell before them  
 the Argives, with lord Poseiidon in their midst.  
 He saw Hector lying on the ground with his comrades gathered round him,  
 gasping for breath, wandering in mind and vomiting blood,  
 for it was not the feeblest of the Achaeans who struck him.  
 The sire of gods and men saw this and had pity on him,  
 and looked fiercely on Hera, and spoke to her...

Mt. Ida is a good place to see or be seen: at *Il.* 14.293-294 Zeus is overcome with desire when he sees Hera approach the summit of Mt. Ida (Ἰδης-ἶδε-ἶδεν). The syllable *ιδ* creates further soundplay in sequences such as Ἰδομενῆος-πολυπίδακος Ἰδης (*Il.* 23.113-117) and εἰδῆς-ἴσασι-πολυπίδακος Ἰδης (*Il.* 20.213-218).<sup>241</sup> The epithet πολυπίδαξ ‘with many springs’ is applied only to Mt. Ida in Homer, and one suspects its aptness for the mountain has something to do with the jingle it creates.<sup>242</sup>

The phoneme represented by *β* is one of the rarer sounds in Homer, and repetitions of the phoneme in close proximity were likely to have been noteworthy, as in the cloddy Βώρου-Τάρνης ἐριβώλακος (‘[the son of] Borus [from] Tame rich in clods’) in *Il.* 5.44 or βεβλήκει βουβῶνα (‘had struck his groin’) in *Il.* 4.492.<sup>243</sup> The poet brings βουῶς ‘cow’ and βοή ‘shout’ together by means of similes: Menelaus ‘good at the battle-cry’ is like a lion going after a cow

<sup>241</sup> On Idomeneus’ connection with sight and the verb *ιδεῖν* in the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women*, see Peradotto 1990:109-110. Kanavou 2015: 52-53 discusses the possibility of etymological connections of the name to *ιδ-* ‘see’ or the (Cretan) Mt. Ida.

<sup>242</sup> See *Il.* 8.47, 14.157, 14.283 (at the center of a ring structure), 14.307, 15.151, 20.59.

<sup>243</sup> Packard 1974: 241-242 and 253. Cf. βέβρουχεν-βοόωσιν *Il.* 17.264-265; βεβρωκὼς βοὸς *Od.* 22.403; ἔβραχε-βριθοσύνη *Il.* 5.838-839.

(βοῆν-βοῶν-βοῆν *Il.* 17.656-665); Polypoites throws a lump of iron as far as a cowherd can throw a staff, and the onlookers shout (βουκόλος-βοῦς-βόησαν *Il.* 23.845-847).<sup>244</sup>

Various iterations of κ(V)λ- tend to cluster or produce rings, as in κεκλιμένοι-κεκλήση *Il.* 13.135-138; κελεύων-κεκλήγων *Il.* 11.165-168, κλαίουσ'-κέκλετο *Il.* 22.437-442.<sup>245</sup> An association between καλός 'beautiful' and καλέω 'call' in particular recurs: καλῶ-καλέεσκε *Il.* 6.401-403; καλέουσιν-χαλκοχιτώνων-καλλιγύναικα *Il.* 3.250-258; περικαλλές- καλέσσαι *Od.* 23.50-51.<sup>246</sup>

Paronomasia associates old men (γέρον) like Gerenian Nestor (Γερήνιος) with gathering (ἀγείρω), the agora (ἀγορά), and other words in γ(V)ρ, for example in οἱ δ' ἀγορὰς ἀγόρευον ἐπὶ Πριάμοιο θύρησι / πάντες ὀμηγερέες ἡμὲν νέοι ἠδὲ γέροντες (*Il.* 2.788-789).<sup>247</sup> The soundplay is fixed in the formula ἤγερθεν ὀμηγερέες τ' ἐγένοντο ('they were gathered and became gathered,' five times in Homer).<sup>248</sup> The sense of the formula may represent "typical epic redundance," in the words of Kirk, but the repeated "gathering" words in lines such as these both contribute to and act as an embedded annotation of the iconic 'gathering' of γερ syllables.<sup>249</sup>

This sampling of recurring clusters of phonemes, syllables, and paronomastic lexemes reveals patterns of associations that would have been available to the poet(s) and audience; recurring exposure to such clusters would inculcate participants in the Homeric tradition in a kind of phono-semantic literacy, in which the appearance of a single word might bring to mind a whole familiar paronomastic nexus. At any given narrative juncture, the poet might choose

<sup>244</sup> βοῦς < IE \*g<sup>w</sup>eh<sub>3</sub>-u- 'cow'; βοή onomatopoeitic (s.v. βοάω).

<sup>245</sup> Further κληῖσιν-ἀνακλινθέντες *Od.* 13.76-78; κῆλα-καλέσσατο-λαὸν -Ἀχιλλεύς *Il.* 1.53-54.

<sup>246</sup> καλός < καλρός; etymology unknown; καλέω < IE \*klh<sub>1</sub>- 'call.'

<sup>247</sup> Cf. ἀνέγειρε Γερήνιος *Il.* 10.138 and 157; γέρας-ἐπαγείρειν *Il.* 1.123-126; ἡγείροντο-γερόντων *Il.* 2.52-53; γέρον-ἡγειρα *Od.* 2.40-41; ἀγέροντο-γέροντες *Od.* 11.36-38; τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ γερόντων *Il.* 4.323 and *Il.* 9.422 (cf. Rank 1951: 82). γέρον < IE \*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>- 'be(come) old'; ἀγείρω < IE \*h<sub>2</sub>ger- 'gather.'

<sup>248</sup> *Il.* 1.57, *Il.* 24.790, *Od.* 2.9, *Od.* 8.24, *Od.* 24.421.

<sup>249</sup> Kirk 1985 *ad Il.* 1.57.

whether and to what extent he wished to engage with a relevant nexus. The presence of paronomasia or assonance in formulaic phrases likely represents a crystalized version of the same tendency, and these formulas can participate in or serve as catalysts for further paronomasia in the passages in which they appear. But the tendency of certain words or sounds to cluster seems not to have been restrictive or exclusive, and the possibilities for paronomasia appear to have been open-ended.

#### 2.4 INTENTIONALITY AND SAUSSURE'S ANAGRAMS

I have made the case in this chapter that patterns of repeated syllables and phonemes can contribute to ring and other structures, and that the poet by these means and through further self-annotation shows his deliberate use of such patterns. But it is also natural for sounds to cluster in spoken language, often without the speakers' awareness; even if we charitably imagine that the epic poet was always aware of the sound sequences he produces, to suppose that every instance of phonemic or syllabic repetition was intentional would require imputing to the poet a degree of phonetic micromanagement that exceeds all plausibility. We would run up, essentially, against the problem that faced Saussure's anagrams.<sup>250</sup>

Saussure's theory, which he pursued obsessively from 1906 to 1909 and then abandoned, was that the alliterative patterns that appear in a certain lines of Indo-European poetry encode a 'keyword' (*mot-thème*) either expressed in or pertinent to that line; often, the only means of access to this keyword is through the extraction and reconfiguration of the repeated sounds, which when reassembled produce the word (always a noun or adjective) precisely or, more often,

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<sup>250</sup> The following account owes much to the chapter on Saussure's anagrams in Gasparov 2013 and to Testenoire 2010.

approximately. In ancient poetry, these ‘anagrams’ or ‘hypograms’ were said almost always to encode the name of a divinity or hero. Although inspired by Latin Saturnians, Saussure focused on Homer in the first phase of his anagrammatic studies, before moving on to Latin poetry and Neo-Latin; he also dealt with the Rig Veda, Germanic poetry, and prose. A Homeric example considered by Saussure one of his best occurs in the speech of Agamemnon to Odysseus in the underworld in *Odyssey* 11: the line ὄρσας ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον ἀϋτμήν (*Od.* 11.400 = 11.407) contains in the last four words the alliterative phonemes *a-ag-ga-am-me-em-mn-on*, which combine to produce the name Agamemnon.<sup>251</sup> According to Saussure, the Homeric poems consist of groups of verses (*morceaux*) that anagrammatically encode the same keyword. The problem, as often noted, is that there are a limited number of phonemes in a language, and necessarily fewer than the words that can be expressed, with the result that it is possible to pull any number of disassembled “words” out of any sufficiently long phonemic sequence like a line or passage of poetry.<sup>252</sup> When Saussure presented his findings to select acquaintances, the reception was not wholly encouraging; Charles Bally wrote that Saussure’s readings made Homer look like a “strange, frivolous and futile character.”<sup>253</sup>

Saussure’s work on anagrams came to broader public awareness in 1971 with the publication of a collection of extracts from his copious notebooks.<sup>254</sup> Most scholarly attention

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<sup>251</sup> Saussure’s further observations include that all four words start with *α* and end with *ν*, like Ἀγαμέμνων; –γα– appears in both ἀμέγαρτον and ἀργαλέων; –αμε– in ἀμέγαρτον, –εμ– in ἀν–έμ–ων, –μν– indirectly in ἀνέ–μῶν, ἀϋτμήν. ἀϋτμήν resembles –μνων in μ + long vowel + ν. –ων appears in ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων. The vowels in ἀργαλέων reproduce the vowel sequence *α-α-έ-ω* of Ἀγαμέμνων. ἀνέμων also contains same vowels as Ἀγαμέμνων. “Il paraît plutot evident que personne ne meconnatra, des le premier moment, toute la relation du ν. 407 avec les sons d’Agamemnon” (Saussure, BGE, Ms. Fr. 3963/15, fol. 13-14v.). See Saussure 2013: 89-90, 213-216; discussion in Gasparov 2013: 143, Testenoire 2010, Bader 1993: 6-7.

<sup>252</sup> E.g. Testenoire 2010: 220.

<sup>253</sup> Quoted in Gasparov 2013: 145.

<sup>254</sup> Starobinski 1971, translated into English by Emmet in 1979 as *Words upon Words: The Anagrams of Ferdinand de Saussure*. A complete edition of Saussure’s Homeric material appeared in 2013, representing the first unified set of anagrams to be published in full (Saussure 2013 ed. Testenoire, with Testenoire 2013; previewed in Testenoire 2010, reviewed and summarized by Murano 2014).

thereafter focused on the Latin anagrams. Though the anagram theory had a significant nachleben in the field of literary theory,<sup>255</sup> it has largely been treated with skepticism due to the clear inadequacy of Saussure's approach in terms of what it claimed to find. Calvert Watkins adopted the Saussurian language of 'anagrams' and 'hypograms' in his discussion of Indo-European poetic style, adducing the following Greek examples:<sup>256</sup>

- 1) *Homeric h.Ap.* 362 PHOI-non APO-pneiousa... PHOI-bos APO-llon
- 2) Hesiod *Works and Days* 1-2, 10: MOUSAI ...OUSAI,... OUSAI..., MUtheSAImhn
- 3) Pindar *Olympian* 3.4: MOISA...pOI...MOI neoSigAlon
- 4) Sappho 1: POikiloTHrON' ... POTnia THumON
- 5) Pindar *Olympian* 2.2 (for Theron of Akragas): tina THEon, tin' hEROa, tina d' aNdra  
keladhsomen.
- 6) Pindar *Olympian* 2.87/91: korakes hos **akranta** garueton ... **Akraganti** tanusais

But the impact of Saussure's anagram theory on Homeric studies has been limited.<sup>257</sup>

The similarity of Saussure's account of phonemically fragmented and embedded words to my argument for, to give one example, the reverberations of the word ἀστέρα in ναύτησι τέρας ἦε στρατῶ (and maybe ἀπὸ σπινθήρες, *Il.* 4.73-80) will be evident. A measured assessment would be that what Saussure was finding was sometimes the result of chance, sometimes conscious euphony, and sometimes the kind of phono-semantic play described in this chapter, most of which runs its course beyond the confines of individual verses (and Saussure's readings did sometimes draw from multiple lines). His observation that anagrams often feature a word that resembles the keyword in general form (the *mot-mannequin*) sounds like a description from

<sup>255</sup> See Wunderli 2004.

<sup>256</sup> Watkins 1995: 101, 107-108, 188-190 (the Greek examples at 189-190). For 6, see Lloyd-Jones 1985.

<sup>257</sup> A notable exception is Bader 1993, who uses Saussure's anagrams as a starting point for a discussion of Indo-European alliteration.

a different standpoint of the paronomasia discussed here;<sup>258</sup> Testenoire has compared it to identifications of parechesis and anagrams in Eustathius' commentaries and the Homeric scholia.

Saussure's work highlights some of the pitfalls of any attempt to identify intentional patterns at the phonemic or syllabic level, but it also throws into relief some of the benefits of the approach outlined in this chapter. Saussure's attention to phonic repetition was not misplaced,<sup>259</sup> but his undue emphasis on the primacy of the keyword led to untenable readings. A more organic approach would center on and start with the observable repetition of various units (lexemes, syllables, phonemes), and only secondarily attempt to determine whether structural and semantic factors warrant an interpretation of the repetitions as intentional and, finally, whether there are indications that one phonic component hierarchically motivates another in the manner of a keyword. The framework of the lexical-paronomastic ring structure is a useful tool for assessing potential relationships between similar-sounding words and sequences; from another angle, the mechanism offered the poet a systematic means of deploying sound-play that could ease its perceptibility. Structural patterns are nevertheless not an infallible guide. Inevitably, matching sounds will sometimes occur in corresponding positions within a broader ring structure purely by chance. A variety of criteria beyond position within a broader structure must therefore be taken into consideration, including some used by Saussure: the extent and similarity of the repeated sound sequence; the proximity or frequency of the repetitions (but not necessarily limited to a line or several lines); metrical position and/or form; syntactic roles; the recurrence in other passages of corresponding words or sounds (e.g. Κύκλωψ/ὀπλίζω); and embedded annotation or

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<sup>258</sup> Saussure, BGE, Ms. fr. 3969, fol. 10v<sup>o</sup>: «Beaucoup d'anagrammes s'accompagnent d'un mot qui imite dans sa physionomie générale le mot servant de thème à l'anagramme, et qu'on pourrait appeler, quand il se présente, le «mot-mannequin» -(reproduisant grosso modo, comme dans une maquette, le mot visé.)».

<sup>259</sup> Cf. Testenoire 2010: 223.

other contextual language that semantically supports a relationship between the repeated elements.

#### 2.4.1 *A (Partial) Rehabilitation of Saussure's Agamemnon Anagram*

With these criteria in hand, let us revisit Saussure's Agamemnon anagram (*Od.* 11.400 = 407) from the framework of the lexical-paronomastic structure. Lines 399-401 of Odysseus' questioning are repeated in 406-408 in Agamemnon's reply; I start with the former. Françoise Bader rejects Saussure's characterization of the line 400 as an anagram, and describes it rather in terms of alliteration as a "phonological inventory" of liquids and nasals.<sup>260</sup> Marked as a ring structure, the passage looks like this:

**Od. 11.397-403**      AbCDCDbCA  
 A, b    Ἀτρεΐδη κύδιστε, ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον,  
 C, D    τίς νύ σε κήρ ἐδάμασσε τανηλεγέος θανάτιο;  
 C, D    ἦε σέ γ' ἐν νήεσσι Ποσειδάων ἐδάμασσε  
 b        ὄρσας ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον ἀυτμήν; 400  
 C, A    ἦέ σ' ἀνάρσιοι ἄνδρες ἐδηλήσαντ' ἐπὶ χέρσου  
        βούς περιταμνόμενον ἠδ' οἰῶν πάεα καλά,  
        ἠέ περι πτόλιος μαχεούμενον ἠδὲ γυναικῶν;

Renowned son of Atreus, Agamemnon lord of men,  
 what fate overcame you of mournful death?  
 Did Poseidon overcome you in your ships,  
 raising the unenviable blast of fierce winds against you?  
 Or did hostile men make an end of you on the mainland  
 when you were cattle-lifting or sheep-stealing,  
 or while they were fighting in defense of their wives and city?

The center of the ring structure is formed from the parallelism of the repeated σε... ἐδάμασσε(ν) (398-399), with the echo of the first syllable in the formula τανηλεγέος θανάτιο marking the middle (ἦε σέ and νήεσσι also produce a particularly close echo in 399).<sup>261</sup> The sequence σε/σει/σι appears six times in the two lines (twice as 'you'), suggesting wordplay in σέ ...

<sup>260</sup> Bader 1993: 6-7.

<sup>261</sup> Both had digamma: ἦε < \*ἦε < IE \*h<sub>1</sub>ē-ue.

Ποσειδάων ἐδάμασσε, Poseidon being the hypothetical agent of the act of ‘overcoming you [sc. Agamemnon].’ The frame rings are more alliterative than lexical (although ἀνὴρ repeats, 397 and 401), with six α-s in line 397 and seven in 400, continued in the first half of 401 with ἀνάρσιοι ἄνδρες; once again, alliterative patterns map onto the contours of the whole lexico-phonemic ring structure.<sup>262</sup> The syllable ἄν is especially prominent, appearing in (F)ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν, τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο, ἀνέμων, and ἀνάρσιοι ἄνδρες ἐδηλήσαντ’. There is a closer respiration between the sequences ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον and ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον (with vowel and consonant metathesis in Ἀγάμε- and ἀμέγα-), enough to call the latter a paronomastic echo of the former and the pair a ring (with a further loose echo between -άμεμνον and ἀνέμων).<sup>263</sup> Once again, as with the turning-post (*Il.* 23.331-332) and the simile of the star that appears as a sign (*Il.* 4.76), the use of hypothetical alternatives (ἦε 309, 401, 403) provides the space for the poet to engage in wordplay. The prefix ἀγά- ‘very’ in Ἀγά-μεμνον is cognate with the root μέγα ‘great’ in ἀ-μέγαρτον, although it is not clear that this connection would have been available to an ancient poet and audience.<sup>264</sup> If it was, the description of the blast of winds as ἀμέγαρτον could be heard as a negation (with its alpha privative) of the ἀγά- of Agamemnon and therefore of the man himself, mirroring the content of the lines. Even if not, the reshuffling of phonemes in the sequence ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον can still be heard as a phonetic undoing of the name Ἀγαμέμνων and an illustration of how the man himself is ἀμέγαρτος for his ‘unenviable’ fate.

<sup>262</sup> There are also echoes in κῆρ/χέρσου, τανηλεγέος/νήεσσι, Ἀγάμεμνον/περιταμνόμενον.

<sup>263</sup> Cf. Bader 1993: 7, who notes the similarity: “Dans ce dernier exemple, la double articulation a ce que j’appellerai une fonction anaphorique, au double sens où l’on peut employer ce terme dans l’énoncé: fonction de liaison entre deux termes éloignés dans l’énoncé (ou ils sont séparés par plusieurs vers), par une répétition (anaphorique) que assure cette liaison.” ἄνεμος < IE \*h<sub>2</sub>enh<sub>1</sub>-mo- ‘wind.’

<sup>264</sup> ἀμέγαρτον < ἀ-μέγαρ-τος ‘not enviable, unpleasant,’ verbal adjective from μεγαίρω ‘grudge, envy, refuse’ < IE \*meg-h<sub>2</sub>- ‘great’; ἀγα- intensifying prefix < zero grade of the same root.

Nor is the same line in Agamemnon's subsequent speech paronomastically inert; here ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον / οὔτε μ' ἀνάρσιοι ἄνδρες (407-408) is followed, after a description of his and his companions' deaths, by echoes in 413-415:<sup>265</sup>

**Od. 11.413-415**

νωλεμέως κτείνοντο σύες ὡς ἀργιόδοτες,  
οἳ ῥά τ' ἐν ἀφνειοῦ ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο  
ἦ γάμῳ ἦ ἐράνῳ ἦ εἰλαπίνη τεθαλυίη. 415

All around me my comrades were slain like bright-toothed pigs  
in the house of a rich and greatly powerful man  
either for a wedding or a feast or a gorgeous banquet.

The simile compares the deaths of Agamemnon's men to the sacrifice of swine at a wedding or a feast at the home of a rich man.<sup>266</sup> Saussure describes ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο and ἦ γάμῳ ἦ ἐράνῳ as two “imitative complexes” that anagrammatically reproduce the name Agamemnon, with copious and not invariably persuasive phonetic analysis (e.g. ἀφνειοῦ supplies the -φν- that represents the otherwise missing -μν- in Ἀγαμέμνων; ἐράνῳ contributes the -νω); he finds in ἀργιόδοτες an anagram of Aegisthus (Αἴγισθος), who appears in line 409.<sup>267</sup> But the connections with 407-408 are phonetically and lexically stronger, especially collectively: ἀργαλέων ... ἀνάρσιοι and ἀργιόδοτες; ἀνέμων and δυναμένοιο; ἀμέγαρτον and μέγα... ἦ γάμῳ; ἄνδρες and ἀνδρὸς.

There are reasons to think that lines 414-415 do look back to the name Agamemnon, but not solely on the basis of their internal phonetics, taken in isolation. The simile's reference to a ‘rich and powerful man’ is generic, but the image bleeds over to Agamemnon himself, in whose wealthy house the men were killed; Agamemnon's own ill-starred marriage to Clytemnestra lies

<sup>265</sup> Line 407 is given in only one manuscript (Heubeck 1989 *ad loc.*).

<sup>266</sup> ἀφνειοῦ ἀνδρὸς is itself taken up in spiral composition by φόνῳ ἀνδρῶν in 416, forming a small ring structure around μέγα δυναμένοιο / ἦ γάμῳ (cf. ἀνδροφόνους- κτάνον- ἄνδρ'- κατακτείνας- ἀνδρὸς ἐς ἀφνειοῦ, AbCACAb at *Il.* 24.479-482).

<sup>267</sup> Saussure 2013: 222-227.

just below the simile's surface. Pertinent is Achilles' pun on the name Agamemnon in *Iliad* 9, in his rejection of the offer of marriage to Agamemnon's daughter:

**II. 9.388-392** AaBcdcdBA

Aa κούρην δ' οὐ **γαμέω** Ἀγαμέμνωνος Ἀτρεΐδαο,  
 B, c, d οὐδ' εἰ χρυσεῖη Ἀφροδίτῃ κάλλος ἐρίζοι,  
 c, d ἔργα δ' Ἀθηναίῃ γλαυκώπιδι ἰσοφαρίζοι. 390  
 B, A οὐδέ μιν ὄς **γαμέω**· ὃ δ' Ἀχαιῶν ἄλλον ἐλέσθω,  
 ὅς τις οἷ τ' ἐπέοικε καὶ ὃς βασιλευτέρός ἐστιν.

I will not marry the daughter of Agamemnon son of Atreus,  
 not even if she contends with Aphrodite in beauty,  
 and equals grey-eyed Athena in handiwork,  
 not even so will I marry her: let another Achaean take her,  
 who may be a good match for her and who rules a larger kingdom.

Ἀγαμέμνων becomes Ἄ-γαμ-έμνων, as if the initial alpha were privative and attached to the root meaning 'marriage.'<sup>268</sup> This rendering of Agamemnon's name is strikingly germane to the Odyssean passage, in which Agamemnon details the fatal conclusion of his own "un-marriage" at the hands of his wife's lover; the phrase ἢ γάμῳ in *Od.* 11.415 gestures toward the same etymology. Between the denotation of the words ἀφνειοῦ ἀνδρὸς μέγα δυναμένοιο / ἢ γάμῳ (414-415), the context in which they appear, their phonetic echo of ἀνέμων ἀμέγαρτον /... ἄνδρες in lines 407-408 (which repeats lines 400-401, which in turn echoes ἀνδρῶν Ἀγάμεμνον in 397), and the attestation of the wordplay on Ἄ-γαμ- elsewhere in Homer, it becomes hard not to hear in the whole sequence a cascading play on the name of Agamemnon. As a point of contrast, while it is impossible to rule out an audible phonetic link between Aegisthus and ἀργιόδοντες four lines later, nothing in or outside of the passage seems to urge a supra-explicit connection between the two words.

<sup>268</sup> See Louden 1995: 31. γαμέω < IE \*g(e)m- 'marry.'

## 2.5 CONCLUSION

I have argued for the capacity of paronomasia and, in a more limited way, assonance to participate in lexical structures and to form their own structures, and suggested that we hear lexical repetitions as repetitions of sound as much as of meaning. But a broader result from the investigations in this chapter is a sense for the extent to which epic diction and even content can be motivated by the impetus to produce wordplay. Why does the poet choose a shepherd simile to illustrate Hector's strength in lifting a stone by himself? One factor may be the homophony of οἶος and οἶος (*Il.* 12.442-455); at the very least, if the poet had already resolved to use a sheep simile, this homophony likely played a role in the choice of phrasing. Why should arrows rebounding from a breastplate be likened to leaping beans? Paronomasia does not explain the beans, but it does account for the collocation of 'leaping' and 'breastplate' (θώρηξ and θρώσκω *Il.* 13.586-592). A whole passage in *Iliad* 2 is structured to play off of the paronomasia of μήτηρ and μήτηρ (*Il.* 4.130-137).

Far from painting the Homeric poet as a "strange, frivolous and futile character,"<sup>269</sup> although that will be a matter of judgment, this verbal play reveals a poet and tradition aware of and interested in the suggestive potentialities of the language that serves as the vehicle for epic narrative content, and not merely in the realm of proper names. Later Greek developments like the speculation about language on display in Plato's *Cratylus* or Stoic etymological allegorizations of Homer appear in this light less innovative and more like occasionally baroque outgrowths in various directions of the same linguistic interest already manifest in Homeric epic. For the purposes of this dissertation, it is enough to observe that, while paronomasia factors into

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<sup>269</sup> See note 253 above.

Homeric composition in ways that exceed the purview of this dissertation to explore further, to exclude it from consideration in “lexical” structures going forward would be artificial and out of keeping with Homeric practice.

### Chapter 3. CASE STUDIES IN REPETITION AND ICONICITY

This chapter presents a series of studies centered around specific images, words, or themes, with the goals of demonstrating individually and collectively the correlation of those elements with structures of lexical, paronomastic, and/or morphological repetitions and exploring the interpretive potentialities of those correlations. The lines of interpretation taken up in the various studies are, accordingly, heterogeneous, approaching from different angles the question of what structural iconicity can do in Homeric epic, what it means for a scene or context or theme or character or Homeric epic as a whole, and what it implies about poet and audience. Some studies collect passages from across one or both Homeric texts to show the consistent use of a particular pattern with a particular image or theme (e.g. shields, numerals, turning, ornaments and order); some focus primarily on a specific scene or book (the breaking of the Achaean gate in *Iliad* 12; the language of multiplicity in the proem of the *Odyssey*; the river Xanthus in *Iliad* 21). Sometimes evidence from beyond Homeric epic is brought in to support an interpretation, for example in the discussion of κόσμος ‘order’ in the simile of a horse’s cheekpiece in *Iliad* 4, which draws from comparative oral poetics, Pindar, and other early Greek sources to make the case for the correlation of orderly language with orderly content.

The first study demonstrates that lexical ring structures are used throughout the *Iliad* in brief descriptions of shields and considers the metapoetic implications of the poet’s interest in the construction and constructors of those shields. The second focuses on two ring-composed passages describing ornaments, first the brooch of Odysseus at *Od.* 19.221-240 and its role as a sign to Penelope, then the simile comparing Menelaus’ wound to a dyed ivory cheekpiece for a horse at *Il.* 4.140-147, the explicit orderliness of which suggests that the simile and its lexical structure serve a comparable function with respect to the narrative as the ornament does for the

horse. The third study treats the scene at the end of *Iliad* 12 in which Hector breaks through the Achaean gates and the iconic use of lexical repetitions to enact first the gates as they ‘hold together’ and then their failure to hold under Hector’s onslaught. Fourth is an investigation of passages in which the numerals two or three are matched in a salient way with a commensurate number of repetitions, and includes discussions of syntactic reflections of duality and triplicity and of the iconicity of reduplication. There follows from that a study of the iconic multiplicity of repetitions of *πολύς* ‘many,’ focusing in particular on the proem of the *Odyssey* and Odysseus’ epithet *πολύτροπος* ‘of many turns,’ which can be interpreted in reference to the multiple repetitions of ‘many’ within and beyond the proem. This leads to the final study on the correlation of language of turning and lexical repetitions, which looks first at the verbs *τρέπω* and *στρέφω* ‘turn’ as they appear throughout Homeric epic, and finally at *δίνη* ‘whirl, eddy’ in descriptions of the river Xanthus in *Iliad* 21, in which shifting repetitions and recombinations of thematically relevant words and roots enact the turbulent flow of the river. Taken together, the studies yield insight into the underlying and implicit metapoetic currents of Homeric epic: the poetry becomes the breaking gate, the flowing river, the skillfully and intricately crafted shield or ornament, etc., and each in turn becomes a lense through which the poetry can be seen as, for example, well-fitted, fluent, and finely crafted. The characters in the epics are locked in a struggle against the structure of the narrative itself, and the poet is at every turn visible below the surface as a quasi-divine orchestrator of the multitudinous, well-crafted narrative that arises out of the careful arrangement of words and sounds.

Because structurally intricate passages often deploy metapoetic or metastructural language along multiple axes, a number of self-reflexive terms relevant to structural iconicity appear in the course of these studies that could in the fullness of time benefit from their own

studies. A few can be mentioned here for ease of tracing their thread through the dissertation. The language of joining (ἀραρίσκω) that has been discussed already in Chapters 1 and 2 (in the simile of the man building a wall at *Il.* 16.211-217 in the introduction of Chapter 1, the simile of the potter on the Shield of Achilles at *Il.* 18.590-606 in section 1.1, and the simile comparing ranks of men to waves at *Il.* 13.795-801 in 2.3.5) appears again in passages containing ‘well-fit’ repetitions in descriptions of shields (*Il.* 3.331 and 333, *Il.* 13.407) and the well-built Achaean gate (*Il.* 12.454 and 456), to leave out many instances not here discussed; this recurring language frames the poet as a craftsman whose art and skill involves the joining of various units into a coherent, well-arranged whole, and accords with explicit manifestations of the metaphor of poet as craftsman or carpenter elsewhere in Greek and Indo-European poetry.<sup>270</sup> The phrase ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ‘here and there’ that appeared in the ring-composed simile of stretching a hide in *Il.* 17.389-395 (1.2), the description of Achilles tossing and turning at *Il.* 24.3-14 (2.2.5), and the simile comparing the Greek forces to birds at *Il.* 2.459-470 (2.3.4, with paronomasia in ἔθνεα ‘tribes’ and ἄνθεα ‘flowers’) will appear several more times, including in a reference to the distribution of words and stories in a passage that deploys lexical repetitions iconically (*Il.* 20.249 of words and stories; further *Il.* 18.543 plowing a field, *Il.* 21.11 swimmers in a turbulent river, *Il.* 21.354 fish and eels tumbling, and three times in the simile for Odysseus tossing and turning at *Od.* 20.24-29). The language of density or thickness featured in the wall simile at *Il.* 16.211-217 (πυκνός ‘close, dense’, introduction of Chapter 1), the description of the swift alternations of dancers at *Od.* 8.367-384 (ταρφύς ‘thick, close,’ 1.3), and of the pyres of corpses at *Il.* 1.48-56 (θαμέες ‘crowded, thick, frequent,’ 2.2.5) occurs also in one of the descriptions of a shield

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<sup>270</sup> On the Greek and Indo-European metaphor, see Nagy 1999: 296-300 and 2009: 207-208; Schmitt 1967: 296–298. Nagy identifies in the name Homer (Ὅμηρος) the same root \*ar- ‘fit, join’ as in ἀραρίσκω and translates ‘he who fits [the song] together’; he interprets it as a speaking name associating the Homeric production of song with carpentry.

(θαμέες *Il.* 12.296) and in a simile of men casting spears at a wild beast (θαμέες *Il.* 12.44, ταρφύς 47); many passages from elsewhere in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* could be adduced in addition to make a case for a correlation between language of density, frequency, and thickness and close-packed sequences of lexical repetitions. The examples could be multiplied; the following studies offer many points of departure for further investigations.

### 3.1 SHIELDS

The subject of this section is the presence of lexical ring structures in the brief descriptions of shields that appear throughout the *Iliad*. I collect a number of passages describing or containing shields to survey the characteristics that are typical of their content and structure, and consider the metapoetic implications of the poet's interest in the craftsmanship involved in the production of the shields. The monumental Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 does not fit within the limits of this study due to its length and correspondingly expansive ekphrastic imagery, but because it looms large in scholarship on Homeric shields and Homeric metapoetics, and because it bears some important points of continuity with the shields under examination here, a few words on this most famous Homeric shield may serve as a useful entry point to the main topic. Discussions of specific scenes on the Shield of Achilles can be found in Chapter 1 and 3.6.

The 130-line description of Hephaestus' construction of the Shield of Achilles (18.478-608) has long attracted attention as a locus of potential poetic self-reference: in the usual formulation, the ekphrasis of the shield stands in relation to the depicted shield as the poet stands in relation to Hephaestus, such that the marvelous craft of the blacksmith god is a reflection of

and metaphor for the poet's own verbal art.<sup>271</sup> The poet shows Hephaestus working into the shield a series of scenes of generic human activity, but also the earth, sea, sky, and heavens, rendering the shield a microcosm of the world. Commentators often observe that at either end of the ekphrasis appears a reference to the world-surrounding River Ocean, which Hephaestus has depicted encircling the edge of the shield, and that this ring composition mirrors the described position of the river (οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο 18.489 - ἐν δ' ἐτίθει ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένοϛ Ὠκεανοῖο/ ἄντυγα παρ πυμάτην 18.607-608).<sup>272</sup> Artisans of a later era would play visual-textual games by recasting the Homeric shield in material form; a noteworthy example among the *Tabulae Iliacae* (1<sup>st</sup> century BCE or CE) inscribes the Homeric text of the Shield of Achilles around the circular edge of a carved representation of the shield.<sup>273</sup> As Michael Squire describes it, the artist, by placing the Homeric text where the River Ocean should be, plays off an ancient metaphor of Homer as Ocean and makes literal the figurative 'ring' composition of the passage,<sup>274</sup> such that the object offers evidence for the reception of a notional roundness in the Homeric poet's structuring of the ekphrasis.<sup>275</sup>

Because of the length and unity of the Shield of Achilles and the lack of explicit connection between the images displayed on it and the plot of the *Iliad*, scholars since antiquity have raised questions about its presence and role in the poem as a whole.<sup>276</sup> These questions will not be taken up here, but it can be noted that the lexical ring structures in the shorter descriptions

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<sup>271</sup> E.g. Stanley 1993: 12-13; Reinhardt 1961: 411; Marg 1971: 39-44; Schadewaldt 1965:300; Becker 1990 and 1995; Hubbard 1992: 17, 27-35.

<sup>272</sup> E.g. Squire 2012: 14, 2013; Stanley 1993: 5, 9-10 (noting also the anaphoric repetition of σάκος μέγα τε στιβαρόν τε at 478 and 609); Becker 1995: 147-148; DuBois 1982: 17; Konstan 2017: 28n3; Fanfani and Harlizius-Klück 2016: 86n132. Cf. Nagy 2009: 269-270 on the ring-compositional repetition of ἄντυξ 'edge.'

<sup>273</sup> Squire 2012.

<sup>274</sup> Squire 2012: 4-5. Richard Hunter (2018: 2-3) suggests that the metaphor of Homer as Ocean derives from the Iliadic reference to Ocean encircling the shield of Achilles, in addition to statements that Ocean is the source of all other waters at *Il.* 21.194-197 and simply of all at *Il.* 14.243-248.

<sup>275</sup> Squire 2012: 14.

<sup>276</sup> Hardie 1985: 11; Hubbard 1992: 16-17; Marg 1971: 24.

of shields on which I focus may offer structural context for and bear a conceptual continuity with the large-scale ring composition of the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18. In terms of imagery, the Shield of Achilles has much in common with extended similes, which are also usually ring-composed (see Chapter 1); in fact, when Achilles' shield is mentioned in his arming scene at *Il.* 19.374-380, an extended simile takes the place of a straightforward description.<sup>277</sup>

The final description of this shield in the *Iliad*, during Achilles' combat with Aeneas in Book 20, offers a good example of the kind of description with which this section is concerned:

*Il.* 20.267-274            ABCDEFGGFEEDcBBA  
 A, B   οὐδὲ τότε Αἰνείαιο δαΐφρονος ὄβριμον ἔγχος  
 c, D   ῥῆξε σάκος· χρυσός γὰρ ἐρύκακε, δῶρα θεοῖο·  
 E, F, G ἀλλὰ δύω μὲν ἔλασσε διὰ πτύχας, αἱ δ' ἄρ' ἔτι τρεῖς  
 G, F   ἦσαν, ἐπεὶ πέντε πτύχας ἤλασε κυλλοποδίων,            270  
 E, E   τὰς δύο χαλκείας, δύο δ' ἔνδοθι κασσιτέροιο,  
 D, c, B τὴν δὲ μίαν χρυσήν, τῇ ῥ' ἔσχετο μείλινον ἔγχος.  
 B   δεύτερος αὐτ' Ἀχιλεὺς προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,  
 A   καὶ βάλεν Αἰνείαιο κατ' ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' εἴσην...

Indeed skilled Aeneas's mighty spear did not then pierce the shield, for the layer of gold, gift of the god, stopped it. It went through two layers, but three remained, since the club-footed god had made the shield in five layers, two of bronze, the two innermost ones of tin, and one of gold; it was in this that the spear was stayed. Achilles in his turn threw his long-shadowed spear, and struck Aeneas' shield equal in all directions...

Aeneas' spear goes through two layers of the five of Achilles' shield, giving rise to an abbreviated account of the shield's construction by Hephaestus (κυλλοποδίων 270) out of layers of various metals. The repetition of πτύχας 'folds, layers' marks the turning (folding?) point of the ring structure, while the return picks up prior words in an iconic enactment of the shield's layers: as the poet and audience proceed through the description, they proceed through the figurative 'layers' of the shield. A paronomastic ring occurs at the transition into and out of the

<sup>277</sup> Also discussed in section 1.3.

description of the shield: Aeneas' spear did not break (ῥήξεε 268) the shield, because the layer of gold held it (ῥ' ἔσχετο 272). The ring structure leads into Achilles' attempt to strike Aeneas with his spear, which hits his opponent's shield with greater effect (the first two lines of the following are repeated from above):

**II. 20.273-281** ABCDDCBCA

A δεύτερος αὐτ' Ἀχιλεὺς προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,  
 B, C καὶ βάλεν Αἰνεΐαιο κατ' ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔϊσῃν  
 D ἄντυγ' ὕπο πρώτην, ἧ λεπτότατος θέε χαλκός, 275  
 D λεπτοτάτη δ' ἐπέην ῥινὸς βοός· ἧ δὲ διὰ πρὸ  
 C Πηλιᾶς ἠΐξεν μελίη, λάκε δ' ἀσπίς ὑπ' αὐτῆς.  
 B, C Αἰνεΐας δ' ἐάλῃ καὶ ἀπὸ ἔθεν ἀσπίδ' ἀνέσχε  
 A δείσας· ἐγγεΐν δ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ νώτου ἐνὶ γαίῃ  
 ἔστη ἰεμένη, διὰ δ' ἀμφοτέρους ἔλε κύκλους 280  
ἀσπίδος ἀμφιβρότης· ὃ δ' ἀλευάμενος δόρυ μακρόν...

Achilles in his turn threw his long-shadowed spear, and struck Aeneas' round shield equal in all directions at the very edge, where the bronze was thinnest, and thinnest was the oxhide; the spear of Pelian ash went clean through, and the shield rang under the blow; Aeneas was afraid, and crouched backwards, holding the shield away from him; the spear, however, flew over his back, and in the ground stuck quivering, after having gone through both circles of the sheltering shield. Aeneas though he had avoided the spear...

Like Achilles' shield before it, the description of Aeneas' shield is ring-composed; ἔγχος in 273 and Αἰνεΐαιο in 279 participate in each. Aeneas' shield is more humble than Achilles,' and Achilles' spear is able to break through because it hits where the shield is thinnest, under the rim. The turning point of the lexical structure is the repetition of λεπτότατος/-η, 'thinnest,' just where the lexical structure is at its figurative 'thinnest' – the narrow, temporally proximate repetition of λεπτότατος/-η enacts the superlative thinness it describes.

### 3.1.1 *Types of Shields and the Shield of Ajax*

Aeneas' shield, called an ἀσπίς (274, 277, 278, 281), is here described with the formula 'equal in all directions' (ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔϊσῃν 274) and is said to have 'circles' (κύκλους 280),

indicating the layers through which the spear passes. The word ἀσπίς is usually understood to denote a small, circular, bossed shield (its epithets include πάντος ἔϊση, εὐκυκλος ‘well-rounded,’ and ὀμφαλόεσσα ‘having a navel’), while the Homeric σάκος is interpreted as a rectangular or figure-of-eight body shield made of oxhide (μέγα στιβαρόν τε ‘great and strong,’ ἑπταβόειον ‘of seven oxhides’).<sup>278</sup> But, as Bershadsky has shown, Homeric descriptions of shields designated by the two labels are inconsistent in terms of size, shape, and material; while some characters are only ever shown with one type of shield or the other,<sup>279</sup> nothing conclusive can be said about the physical characteristics of the shields, including their shapes, on the basis of the terms ἀσπίς and σάκος alone.<sup>280</sup> Achilles’ divine circular shield, for example, is always called a σάκος, except when Thetis asks Hephaestus to make an ἀσπίς in 18.458.<sup>281</sup> Bershadsky concludes that the terms ἀσπίς and σάκος are associated with thematics of defeat and victory in the passages in which they appear and thus “constitute movable labels that can be applied to the same shield in different circumstances.”<sup>282</sup> This formulation offers license for thinking of these shields as loosely-delineated poetic constructs.

Labels aside, the description of Aeneas’ shield as ‘equal in all directions’ in the passage above is suggestive, given that the lexical ring structure in which it appears may notionally be considered symmetrical in ‘all’ directions. This image of balance appears again in the ἀμφι- of ἀμφιβρότης ‘mortal-surrounding’ (281), another Homeric epithet for shields.<sup>283</sup> As with the ‘circle-eyed’ Cyclops of the *Odyssey* discussed in Chapter 2, κύκλος in its most literal sense gestures toward the ‘roundness’ of the patterns at hand. The ambiguities in Homeric descriptions

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<sup>278</sup> Kirk 1985: 315 (cited by Bershadsky 2010: 2).

<sup>279</sup> Bershadsky 2010: 1-3.

<sup>280</sup> Bershadsky 2010 esp. 3, 15-16.

<sup>281</sup> Bershadsky 2010: 17.

<sup>282</sup> Bershadsky 2010: 15.

<sup>283</sup> Bershadsky 2010: 16n50 draws attention to the similarity of the two epithets in terms of their connotation of defense from all sides.

of shields allow space for an association between structure and content regardless of the name assigned to any given shield.

Ajax' shield, consistently called a σάκος, is twice described with ring composition in his combat with Hector in Book 7:

**II. 7.219-225** AB C(D)EFGG(D)FEC AB  
 A, B, C, D Αἴας δ' ἐγγύθεν ἦλθε φέρων σάκος ἠΰτε πύργον  
 E, F, G, G χάλκεον ἑπταβόειον, ὃ οἱ Τυχίος κάμε τεύχων 220  
 σκυτοτόμων ὄχ' ἄριστος Ἵλη ἐνὶ οἰκίᾳ ναίων,  
 D, F ὅς οἱ ἐποίησεν σάκος αἰόλον ἑπταβόειον  
 E ταύρων ζατρεφῆων, ἐπὶ δ' ὄγδοον ἤλασε χαλκόν.  
 C, A τὸ πρόσθε στέρνοιο φέρων Τελαμώνιος Αἴας  
 B στῆ ῥα μάλ' Ἔκτορος ἐγγύς, ἀπειλήσας δὲ προσήδα· ... 225

Ajax came up close bearing his shield in front of him like a wall—a shield of bronze with seven folds of oxhide—the work of Tychius, who lived in Hyle and was by far the best worker in leather. He had made the shield with the hides of seven full-fed bulls, and over these he had set an eighth layer of bronze. Bearing this shield before him, Ajax son of Telamon came close up to Hector, and menaced him saying...

**II. 7.244-250** ABCDDCBA<sup>284</sup>  
 A ἦ ῥα, καὶ ἀμπεπαλῶν προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,  
 B, C καὶ βάλεν Αἴαντος δεινὸν σάκος ἑπταβόειον 245  
 D ἀκρότατον κατὰ χαλκόν, ὃς ὄγδοος ἦεν ἐπ' αὐτῷ.  
 D ἔξ δὲ διὰ πύχας ἦλθε δαΐζων χαλκός ἀτειρής,  
 C ἐν τῇ δ' ἐβδομάτῃ ῥινῶ σκέτο· δεύτερος αὐτε  
 B, A Αἴας διογενῆς προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος,  
 καὶ βάλε Πριαμίδαο κατ' ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' εἶσιν. 250

So he spoke, and brandished and threw his long-shadowed spear. It struck the fearsome seven-oxhide shield of Ajax in its outermost layer—the eighth, which was of bronze—and the untiring bronze went cleaving through six of the layers but in the seventh hide it stayed. Then in turn Ajax sprung from Zeus threw his long-shadowed spear and struck the shield of the son of Priam equal in all directions.

<sup>284</sup> Cf. the brief discussion of this passage in the introduction to Chapter 2.

Both descriptions emphasize the material (bronze and oxhide) and construction (seven layers, with an eighth of bronze) of Ajax' shield. We hear in 7.220 of the shield's creator, an otherwise unknown Tychios whose name is paired in *figura etymologica* with the verb τεύχω, 'make.'<sup>285</sup> There may be a pun at play in the fact that Τυχίος... τεύχων marks the center of the first ring structure at 220, while πτύχας 'folds/layers' appears at the center of the second ring structure at 247. Although ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔϊσιν in 250 describes Hector's shield rather than Ajax's, the phrase remains apt for the structure that accompanies Ajax's shield and suggests that there may be a degree of leeway in the resonance between structure and content, to the effect that a phrase describing one thing in the narrative may act as an embedded annotation of a structure that accompanies the description of something else.

### 3.1.2 *Recurring Elements and the Shield of Sarpedon*

It is apparent from these four examples that the poet in composing descriptions of shields draws from a stock of vocabulary and imagery that includes driving (ἐλαύνω), folds or layers (πτύχες, κύκλοι, with the precise number sometimes specified), bronze (χαλκός) or other metals, oxhide (βοεΐη), craftsmen (κυλλοποδίων *Il.* 20.270, Τυχίος *Il.* 7.220), and balance (ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔϊσιν), although not all of these appear in every description. These recurring elements are sometimes leveraged as lexical repetitions in ring structures, as χρυσός/χρυσῆν *Il.* 20.268/272; ἑπταβόειον/ἑβδομάτη *Il.* 7.245/248; ἔλασσε διὰ πτύχας/πτύχας ἤλασε *Il.* 20.269/270.<sup>286</sup> A loosely ring-composed description of Sarpedon's shield in *Iliad* 12 bears this out:

***Il.* 12.290-299**                      ABCDCDcBA  
 Οὐδ' ἄν πω τότε γε Τρῶες καὶ φαίδιμος Ἴεκτωρ                      290  
 τείχεος ἐρρήξαντο πύλας καὶ μακρὸν ὀχῆα,

<sup>285</sup> Kirk 1990 *ad* 7.220-223.

<sup>286</sup> Further, ἁλάκρον/χαλκόν *Il.* 7.220/223; χαλκόν/χαλκός *Il.* 7.246/247; ἑπταβόειον *Il.* 7.220/222.

- εἰ μὴ ἄρ' υἷὸν ἐὼν Σαρπηδόνα μητίετα Ζεὺς  
 A, E ὄρσεν ἐπ' Ἀργείοισι **λέονθ' ὥς** βουσὶν ἔλιζιν.  
 B αὐτίκα δ' ἀσπίδα μὲν πρόσθ' ἔσχετο πάντοσ' εἴσην  
 C, D, C καλὴν **χαλκείην ἐξήλατον**, ἣν ἄρα **χαλκεύς** 295  
 D, E ἤλασεν, ἔντοσθεν δὲ **βοείας** **ράψε** θαμειὰς  
 χρυσεῖης **ράβδοισι** **διηνεκέσιν** **περὶ κύκλον**.  
 B τὴν ἄρ' ὅ γε πρόσθε **σχόμενος** δύο δοῦρε τινάσσων  
 A βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν **ὥς τε λέων ὄρεσί**τροφος, ὅς τ' ἐπιδευῆς...

Still the Trojans and brave Hector would not yet  
 have broken down the gates and the great bar,  
 had not wise Zeus stirred his son Sarpedon  
 against the Argives as a lion against a herd of horned cattle.  
 Before him he held his shield equal in all directions  
 of fair hammered bronze, that the bronzesmith  
 had hammered, and had lined with ox hides stitched  
 with rivets of gold all round the shield in a circle;  
 this he held in front of him, and brandishing his two spears  
 came on like some lion of the wilderness, who has been long famished...

Sarpedon's shield is 'equal in all directions' (294) and features circular layers (κύκλον 297), references a blacksmith (χαλκεύς 295), and repeats the elements 'bronze' and 'driving.' The verb ἐλαύνω is the favored verb for the craftsman's activity in producing shields, indicating "the process of working bronze into a convex sheet to form the outer cover of the shield";<sup>287</sup> in a brief, ring-composed description of Menelaus' shield in *Iliad* 13, the infinitive ἐλάσσαι forms a paronomastic ring with Μενελάου (13.606-607).<sup>288</sup> Whereas ἔχω 'hold' likewise formed a paronomastic ring in *Il.* 20.268/272 (ῥῆξε-ῥ' ἔσχετο), here it is repeated (294, 298) in a description of Sarpedon's action of holding out the shield.<sup>289</sup> It is not clear what technique is being described when the craftsman sews hides with golden rods or staples (ράβδοισι 297),<sup>290</sup> but the language of the craftsman 'stitching in a circle' (ράψε... περὶ κύκλον 296-297) seems appropriate as a metaphor for the production of lexical structures insofar as it hinges on a

<sup>287</sup> Hainsworth 1993 *ad* 12.294-296. The verb occurs also at *Il.* 20.269, 270; *Il.* 7.223.

<sup>288</sup> *Il.* 13.605-609 ἔγχος- σάκος Μενελάου- οὔτασεν, οὐδὲ- ἐλάσσαι- σάκος- ἔγχος (ABcddcBA).

<sup>289</sup> For the paronomasia of ὄρσεν (293) and ὄρεσίτροφος (299), see Chapter 2.

<sup>290</sup> Hainsworth 1993 *ad* 12.297.

repetition of units that yields a round shape in the end.<sup>291</sup> If there is an association here between the shield stitched in a circle and the (again, rather loose) pattern of lexical repetitions, the Homeric passage interestingly anticipates the elsewhere explicitly attested metaphor of stitching for poetic production that later gave rise to the term *ῥαψωδός* ‘rhapsode,’ literally ‘song-stitcher’ (from *ῥάψαι* and *ᾠοιδήν*), which designated reciters of epic verse.<sup>292</sup>

The phrase *ῥάβδοισι διηνεκέσιν* ‘with continuous staples’ is also interesting in this connection, because *(δι)ηνεκής* ‘continuous, unbroken’ was conceptually and lexically associated with rhapsodic performance in antiquity: a fragment ascribed to Callimachus describes ‘singing continuously (*ἦνεκῆς*) a story woven on a staff’ that has been taken up in sequence (*καὶ τὸν ἐπὶ ῥάβδῳ μῦθον ὑφαινόμενον / ἦνεκῆς ἀεῖδω δεδεγμένος*), referring to the practice of ‘relay poetics’ in which one rhapsode picks up the narrative where another leaves off.<sup>293</sup> Gonzales connects the fragment’s description to the use of *διηνεκές* and *διηνεκέως* in the *Odyssey* to describe continuous speech, for example when Odysseus tells the Phaeacian queen Arete that it would be difficult to recount all of his troubles continuously (*διηνεκέως* 7.241); Gonzales notes that Odysseus is elsewhere compared to a poet (*ᾠοιδός* *Od.* 11.368) and that this “encourages us to consider his narrative representative of good rhapsodic practice,” one that “reflects the tendency towards comprehensiveness characteristic of rhapsodic poetics.” If

<sup>291</sup> Cf. the chiasmus of *Od.* 24.227-229:

...ῥυπόωντα δὲ ἔστο χιτῶνα  
*ῥαπτὸν* ἀεικέλιον, περὶ δὲ *κνήμησι* βοείας  
*κνημίδας ῥαπτὰς* δέδετο, *γραπτῆς* ἀλεείνων...

...He wore a filthy tunic,  
 a shabby stitched one, and had bound stitched oxhide greaves  
 around his shins, to avoid scratches...

<sup>292</sup> Cf. the Hesiodic phrase ὕμνοις ῥάψαντες ᾠοιδήν (fr. 357 M.-W. = 297 Most). According to Fanfani and Harlitzius-Klück (2016: 87), “the relevant technological idea at work [in the metaphor] seems to be the condition of orderly structure and continuity of the threads/laces/ropes that enables such operations.” Ancient commentators explained the etymology of *ῥαψωδός* in terms of the gathering of the disparate parts of Homeric epic into a unified whole. See discussion in Nagy 1996: 61-79; differently Beekes 2010 s.v. *ῥαψωδός*.

<sup>293</sup> Scholia 1d to Pindar *Nemean* 2. See González 2015: §10.1-2; D’Alessio 1996: 409n92.

διηλεκτής is already used to characterize a rhapsodic kind of narrative within Homeric epic, the presence of the word in the description of Sarpedon's shield is another mark in favor of a metapoetic interpretation of the language in the passage.

### 3.1.3 *Shields and Craftsmen*

It is noteworthy that three of the above passages contain references to craftsmen. In the exigencies of combat, the strength and quality of a shield may contribute to the success or defeat of a warrior, and the poet's preferred way of characterizing a shield's strength is evidently by emphasizing its material and layers. But the Homeric product implicates its own production: the presence of folds or layers of hide or metal readily connotes for the poet the act of their creation, as when he describes Sarpedon's shield as 'driven bronze' (χαλκείην ἐξήλατον 12.295), then follows it immediately by a reference to the bronzesmith who has driven the bronze, with the passive adjective resurfacing as an active verb (ἦν ἄρα χαλκεύς/ ἤλασεν 12.295-6).<sup>294</sup>

All of the characteristics of ekphrastic representation identified by Andrew Becker in his analysis of the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 are at play in miniature in these three shorter descriptions of shields: a referent, a notionally real shield; the physical medium or material of the object; the creator and creation of the work; and the poet's reactions to the work, which guide the audience's response to the poet's own ekphrastic creation.<sup>295</sup> This last element manifests in the praise of Tychios as the 'best' of the hide-cutters at *Il.* 7.221 (σκυτοτόμων ὄχ' ἄριστος) and the description of Sarpedon's shield as 'beautiful' at *Il.* 12.295 (καλήν). Outside of *Iliad* 18, the superlative craftsmanship involved in the production of Achilles' shield is implied by the

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<sup>294</sup> Several scholia attest to an ancient debate over whether the adjective was the unaspirated ἐξήλατον 'driven out' or the aspirated ἐξήλατον 'six-driven.' Aristarchus privileged the aspirated form as a reference to the number of layers that make up the shield, while Zenodotus preferred the unaspirated form, followed by ἐξέλασ', ἔντοσθεν δέ in line 296. A scholiast compares ἐξήλατον to ἑπταβόειον (*Il.* 7.220) and the five layers of Achilles' shield (*Il.* 18.481, 20.270). See T 12.295-297, A 295, bT 295, A 296.

<sup>295</sup> Becker 1995: 42-44.

reference to Hephaestus (κυλλοποδίων 20.270) in the description of the shield in *Iliad* 20. When the poet takes the time to refer explicitly to a shield's creator, he does so with esteem for the creator's craftsmanship;<sup>296</sup> by contrast, no craftsman is mentioned when Achilles' spear crashes through Aeneas' flimsy shield at *Il.* 20.273-281. In addition to Becker's levels of representation, the fact that the poet devotes time to describing shields and in describing them devotes time to their creation and creator is itself noteworthy: the poet's interest in workmanship mediates the described objects through the appreciative lens of the craftsman.

The presence of craftsmen in passages containing these lexical structures supports on this small scale the same analogy between poet and craftsman that has been made by Becker and others in discussions of Hephaestus and the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18, namely that through structural reflections of content the narrative-internal craftsman becomes a metaphor for the poet's own production of the passage. The poet's recurring emphasis on the balance of shields and their 'circles' corresponds with the symmetry of the ring structures, while the enumeration of folds and layers corresponds with the multiplicity of repeated terms that form concentric 'rings' in the structures. If Sarpedon's shield can be called 'beautiful,' the poet seems to suggest, so is the passage that describes it; the 'best of the hide-cutters' who made Ajax' shield finds his correlate in a putatively 'best' poet, and all of the positive associations that redound to the credit of the poet reach their peak in the exalted Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18.

Any reference to a shield, however brief, may evoke for an audience the background of creation and creator that becomes explicit at certain points in the text. Because ring structures mirror content even when craftsmen are not explicitly mentioned in descriptions of shields, these too give us glimpses of the poet-craftsman, who can structurally imitate a shield breaking at its

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<sup>296</sup> Becker 1995: 152.

thinnest point as effectively as he can a fine shield that does not break. While the shield's failure might reflect poorly on its unmentioned creator—although in *Il.* 20.275-276, the thinness of the spot on the shield where the spear passes through is framed as a function of a seemingly typical (mortal) shield design—the poet's dexterous imitation of that thinness must be reckoned a success. We may note in this connection that the adjective *λεπτός*, the superlative of which describes the shield and marks the 'thinnest' point in the aforementioned ring structure, suggests fine or delicate craftsmanship when applied in Homeric epic to garments, and the word may simultaneously bear this resonance for the poet's artistry while having negative implications within the narrative itself.<sup>297</sup>

### 3.1.4 Other Shields

Some indication of the strength of the association between ring structures and shields is provided by passages that are not primarily concerned with a shield *per se*, but contain a reference to one:

***Il.* 5.793-800** ABC DEDE CBA  
 A, B **Τυδεΐδη** δ' ἐπόρουσε **θεά** γλαυκῶπις Ἀθήνη·  
 C εὔρε δὲ τόν γε ἄνακτα παρ' ἵπποισιν καὶ ὄχεσφιν  
 ἔλκος ἀναψύχοντα τό μιν βάλε Πάνδαρος ἰφ. 795  
 D, E ἰδρῶς γάρ μιν **ἔτειρεν** ὑπὸ πλατέος **τελαμῶνος**  
 D **ἀσπίδος ἐκύκλου**· τῷ **τείρετο**, κάμνε δὲ χεῖρα,  
 E ἂν δ' ἴσχων **τελαμῶνα** κελαινεφές αἶμ' ἀπομόργνυ.  
 C, B **ἱππέου** δὲ **θεά** ζυγοῦ ἦψατο φώνησέν τε·  
 A ἧ ὀλίγον οἷ παῖδα εἰκότα γείνατο **Τυδεύς**. 800

The goddess Athena sprang to the side of the son of Tydeus,  
 whom she found near his chariot and horses,  
 cooling the wound that Pandarus had given him with an arrow.  
 For the sweat hurt him beneath the broad strap  
 of his circular shield: by this he was hurt, and his hand grew weary,  
 and lifting up the strap he wiped away the blood.

<sup>297</sup> E.g. *Il.* 22.510-511 εἴματ'... λεπτά τε καὶ χαρίεντα ('clothing delicate and graceful'), *Od.* 7.96-97 πέπλου/λεπτοὶ εὐνήνητοι ('peplos delicate and well-spun'), *Od.* 10.543-544 φᾶρος... λεπτὸν καὶ χαρίεν ('cloak delicate and graceful').

The goddess laid her hand on the yoke of his horses and said,  
"The son of Tydeus is not such another as his father.

Here the shield is mentioned only in connection with the shield strap, but appears at the center of a lexical structure accompanied by the epithet εὔκυκλος ‘well-rounded.’

In his arming scene in *Iliad* 3, Paris’ shield is described minimally with the epithet ‘large and strong’ (μέγα τε στιβαρόν τε, *Il.* 3.334), but appears in a ring structure that spans the scene of

Paris arming:

***Il.* 3.330-336** AbCDDCbA

A	κνημίδας μὲν πρῶτα περὶ κνήμησιν ἔθηκε	330
b, C, D	καλάς, ἀργυρέοισιν ἐπισφυρίοις ἀραρυίας· δεύτερον αὖ θώρηκα περὶ στήθεσσι δύνειν	
D	οἷο κασιγνήτοιο Λυκάονος· ἤρμοσε δ’ αὐτῷ.	
C	ἀμφὶ δ’ ἄρ’ ὤμοισιν βάλετο ξίφος ἀργυρόηλον	
b	χάλκεον, αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα σάκος μέγα τε στιβαρόν τε·	335
A	κρατὶ δ’ ἐπ’ ἰφθίμῳ κυνέην εὐτοκτον ἔθηκεν...	

First he placed greaves on his legs,  
beautiful ones, and fitted with ankle-clasps of silver;  
after this he put around his chest the cuirass  
of his brother Lycaon, and fitted it to his own body;  
he hung his silver-studded sword of bronze about his shoulders,  
and then his shield great and mighty.  
On his comely head he placed his helmet, well-wrought...

It may be the case here that this ring structure has greater resonance with the language of fitting and joining (ἀραρυίας 331, ἤρμοσε 333, with further paronomastic echoes) applied to the breastplate at the center of the structure than with the unelaborated shield, but the two need not be mutually exclusive.

The shield of Agamemnon, the only shield in the *Iliad* besides Achilles’ that receives a description of the images worked upon it, lacks the kind of internal annular structure displayed by other descriptions of shields:

***Il.* 11.32-40**

ἄν δ’ ἔλετ’ ἀμφιβρότην πολυδαίδαλον ἀσπίδα θοῦριν

καλήν, ἦν πέρι μὲν κύκλοι δέκα χάλκεοι ἦσαν,  
 ἐν δὲ οἱ ὄμφαλοι ἦσαν ἐείκοσι κασσιτέριοιο 35  
 λευκοί, ἐν δὲ μέσοισιν ἔην μέλανος κυάνοιο.  
 τῆ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργῶ βλοσυρῶπις ἔστεφάνωτο  
δεινὸν δερκομένην, περὶ δὲ Δεῖμὸς τε Φόβος τε.  
 τῆς δ' ἐξ ἀργύρεος τελαμῶν ἦν· αὐτὰρ ἐπ' αὐτοῦ  
κυάνεος ἐλέλικτο δράκων, κεφαλαὶ δὲ οἱ ἦσαν  
 τρεῖς ἀμφιστρεφές ἐνὸς ἀνχένος ἐκπεφυῦται. 40

He took moreover the richly-decorated shield that covered his body—  
 fair to see, with ten circles of bronze running all round it.  
 On the body of the shield there were twenty bosses of white tin,  
 with another of dark cyanus in the middle:  
 this last a grim-looking Gorgon's head crowned,  
 glancing dreadfully, with Rout and Panic on either side.  
 The strap was of silver, on which  
 there was a writhing snake of cyanus with three heads  
 that sprang from a single neck, and went in and out among one another.

If there is structural iconicity in the passage, it is to be found beyond the boundaries of the description of the shield, possibly in the recurring language of serpents (δράκοντες 26, δράκων 40) that, in the descriptions of Agamemnon's breastplate and shield-strap, respectively, precede some lines before and then follow immediately after, so that the snake-haired Gorgo is narratively surrounded by snakes. The language of 'crowning' (ἔστεφάνωτο 36) certainly seems promising as a metastructural cue, but its presence alone cannot verify that there is any corresponding structure that 'crowns' the passage. The repetitions in Agamemnon's arming scene are complex, and perhaps more general reflections of the motifs of well-joined and well-fitting armor and the snaking imagery (e.g. ἐλέλικτο δράκων 39) that appears on his armor.

### 3.1.5 'Equal in All Directions'

Let us return for a moment to the formula *ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἕϊσην* ('shield equal in all directions') and its implications of structural balance, because there are several Iliadic passages that make the notional 'equality in all directions' more pointed by repeating the element *παντ-* 'all.' One of these appears in the combat between Deiphobus and Idomeneus in *Iliad* 13:

**Il. 13.404-410** AB cD EffE AB cD  
 AB ἀλλ' ὃ μὲν ἄντα ἰδὼν ἠλεύατο χάλκεον ἔγχος  
 c, DE Ἴδομενεύς· κρύφθη γὰρ ὑπ' ἀσπίδι πάντοσ' ἔϊση, 405  
 f τὴν ἄρ' ὃ γε ῥινοῖσι βοῶν καὶ νῶροπι χαλκῶ  
 f δινωτὴν φορέεσκε, δὺω κανόνεσσ' ἀραρυῖαν.  
 E, AB τῆ ὑπο πᾶς ἐάλη, τὸ δ' ὑπέρπτατο χάλκεον ἔγχος,  
 c, D καρφαλέον δέ οἱ ἀσπίς ἐπιθρέξαντος ἄυσεν 410  
ἔγχος· οὐδ' ἄλιόν ῥα βαρείης χειρὸς ἀφήκεν,  
 ἀλλ' ἔβαλ' Ἴππασίδην Ἵψηνορα ποιμένα λαῶν  
 ἦπαρ ὑπὸ πραπίδων, εἴθαρ δ' ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἔλυσε.

But Idomeneus was on the look-out and avoided the bronze spear,  
 for he was covered by the shield equal in all directions—  
 he was bearing a shield of oxhide and flashing bronze,  
 rounded, with two arm-rods on fitted on the inside.  
 He wholly crouched under cover of this, and the bronze spear flew over him,  
 but dryly the shield rang out as the spear grazed it,  
 and the weapon sped not in vain from the strong hand,  
 for it struck Hypsenor son of Hippiasus, shepherd of his people,  
 in the liver under the midriff, and at once his limbs failed beneath him.

The words ὑπ' ἀσπίδι πάντοσ' ἔϊση, / τὴν ('under the shield equal in all directions, which' 405-406) are picked up lexically and syntactically in the ring structure's return by τῆ ὑπο πᾶς ('under this [shield], all...' 408). If a correlation avails between the shield 'equal in all directions' and the lexical structure, the repetition of πάντ- contributes to the sense in which the structure is *all* equal, is equal in the direction of πάντ-. We find in addition the participle ἀραρυῖα 'fitting' at the center of the structure, as it was in Paris' arming scene at *Il.* 3.330-336, except here used of the shield itself. The sense of the adjective δινωτός 'turned, rounded' (407) in its application to the shield is obscure; Janko opines that it "probably means 'adorned' or 'faced' with leather and bronze," but that it "may have been reinterpreted as 'decorated with concentric circles', like many eighth-century round shields... or as 'turned (on the lathe).'"<sup>298</sup> Again, our inability to determine what this adjective tells us about the poet's imagined shield in terms of its material form or construction does not hinder us from hearing in its verbal root (δινεύω 'whirl, spin

<sup>298</sup> Janko *ad* 13.406-407.

around’) a commentary on the “whirling” lexical repetitions of the passage. The two ‘rods’ (κανόνεσσι 407) on the shield are something other than the staples (ράβδοι) that appeared on Sarpedon’s shield at *Il.* 12.294-297; the only other place they appear are on Nestor’s shield at *Il.* 8.193, on which line a scholion avers that they are rods crossed in an X, presumably some type of struts.<sup>299</sup>

In *Il.* 23.815-819, a passage that emphasizes the proximity of Ajax and Diomedes in combat through the iconic repetition of σχεδόν ‘close’ (related to ἔχω ‘hold’), the word πάντοσε in ἀσπίδα πάντοσ’ ἔϊσιν forms a ring with πάντας three lines prior:

***Il.* 23.815-819** ABCCBA

A ...δεινὸν δερκομένω· θάμβος δ’ ἔχε **πάντας** Ἀχαιοῦς. 815  
 B ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ **σχεδὸν** ἦσαν ἐπ’ ἀλλήλοισιν ἰόντες,  
 C, C, B **τρὶς** μὲν ἐπήϊξαν, **τρὶς** δὲ **σχεδὸν** ὀρμήθησαν.  
 A ἔνθ’ Ἀΐας μὲν ἔπειτα κατ’ ἀσπίδα **πάντοσ’** ἔϊσιν  
 νύξ’, οὐδὲ χρό’ ἴκανεν· ἔρυτο γὰρ ἔνδοθι θώρηξ· ...

...glancing fiercely, and amazement held all the Achaeans.  
 But when the two were now close up with one another,  
thrice did they spring forward and thrice come close to each other.  
 Ajax pierced Diomedes's shield equal in all directions,  
 but did not reach his skin, for the cuirass beneath the shield protected him...

The shared metrical form and position of the repeated πάντας/πάντοσ’ represent a further axis along which the repetitions may make a claim to the ‘equality’ indicated in πάντοσ’ ἔϊσιν.

Paronomasia is brought into play in *Iliad* 11 when Hector’s shield is described with the conventional formula before a ring-composed simile comparing Hector to a star:

***Il.* 11.61-66** AB CDDC AB D

A, B, c **Ἔκτωρ** δ’ ἐν **πρώτοισι** φέρ’ ἀσπίδα **πάντοσ’** ἔϊσιν,  
 C, D οἶος δ’ ἐκ **νεφέων ἀναφαίνεται** οὐλίος ἀστήρ  
 D, C **παμφαίνων**, τοτὲ δ’ αὐτίς ἔδου **νέφεα** σκιάοντα,  
 A, B, C ὡς **Ἔκτωρ** ὅτε μὲν τε μετὰ **πρώτοισι φάνεσκεν**,  
 c ἄλλοτε δ’ ἐν πυμάτοισι κελεύων· **πᾶς** δ’ ἄρα χαλκῷ 65  
 λάμφ’ ὧς τε στεροπὴ πατρὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο.

<sup>299</sup> Janko *ad* 13.406-407.

Hector in the first rank bore his shield equal in all directions,  
 and as some baneful star that appears through a rent in the clouds  
shining, and is again hidden beneath the shady clouds;  
 even so Hector appeared in the first ranks  
 and now again in the hindermost urging them on, and all in bronze  
 he gleamed like the lightning of aegis-bearing Zeus.

The simile plays off the sound similarity of *πάντος*’ in the phrase describing the shield and the verb φαίνω ‘shine, appear’ in the tenor and vehicle of the simile, especially as ring c/C in lines 61 and 64 in the parallel sequence Ἐκτῶρ- πρώτοισι- *πάντος*’/φάνεσκεν. The repetition of the syllable *πάν/φάν* creates a ring structure which situates *πάν/φάν* ‘equally in all directions.’ The sense of φάν- ‘shine’ bleeds into that of *πάν-*, as well, as the gleam from Hector’s armor and in particular his shield leads to the statement that he ‘shone *all* in bronze’ (*πᾶς δ’ ἄρα χαλκῶ/ λάμψ’* 65-66) like the lightning of Zeus. The extended simile is balanced all over in terms of its shining; it shines or makes manifest both ‘shine’ and ‘all’ all over.

### 3.1.6 *Summary and Conclusion*

The passages gathered here have served to demonstrate that the use of ring composition in descriptions of shields is a recurring tendency in the *Iliad*. Homeric digressions or descriptions that pause or slow down the action of the narrative are frequently ring-composed, so this is in many ways unsurprising.<sup>300</sup> But, as with extended similes, the presence of internal rings shows that these ring structures are not simply a matter of joining the digression to the narrative by smoothly facilitating the transition out of and back into it. The case for a correlation between form and content in descriptions of shields is strengthened by the recurring language and imagery that is used to build up the descriptions, and which is sometimes repeated to form lexical rings. This language includes the multiple folds or layers (*πτύχες, κύκλοι*) that make up a

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<sup>300</sup> Gaisser 1969; Stanley 1993: 6-9.

shield, sometimes numbered (e.g. ἑπταβόειος),<sup>301</sup> and circularity or balance (πάντοσ' ἔῖση, ἀμφιβρότης, εὐκυκλος); the structural unity of a passage may be reflected in verbs of holding or joining (ἔχω, ἀραρίσκω). The formula ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔῖσην gives rise on more than one occasion to a lexical ring consisting of the repeated element παντ-, demonstrating iconically the structural sense in which a passage may be considered 'equal in all directions.' Metrical considerations can also contribute to the sense of balance and symmetry: παντ- is sometimes repeated in the same metrical form and position (*Il.* 23.815/818, 11.61/65), but so are other repetitions in passages that feature the formula ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔῖσην, such as προΐει δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος at *Il.* 7.244 and 249 and Αἰνείαιο, ἔγχος, and χρυσὸς/χρυσῆν in *Il.* 20.267-272.<sup>302</sup>

The short descriptions of shields reveal on a small scale the same emphasis on craftsmanship that is evident in the account of Hephaestus' construction of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18; as there, the relationship between form and content suggests an analogy between craftsmanship and poetic production to the effect that descriptions of well-wrought objects serve as metapoetic reflections on the poet's skill in producing those descriptions. The poet's interest in the material, production, and producers of worked objects betokens a preoccupation with his own role in shaping ('driving,' ἐλάυνω) the poetic medium, which, like malleable bronze or stitchable oxhide, obtains its beauty and efficacy through his influence. The raw material with which the poet works must be understood as the words, roots, and sound-sequences that he places in such an order as to both create a coherent narrative through their denotations and connotations and to structurally imitate that narrative through their repetition and placement.

<sup>301</sup> One should not expect a correlation between the numbers indicated and the number of lexical repetitions that produce a ring structure in a description of a shield, however.

<sup>302</sup> Also γάλκεον ἔγχος at *Il.* 13.404/408.

Viewed within this context, the ring-composed account of Achilles' shield in *Iliad* 18 appears not as a relatively isolated moment of poetic self-awareness, but as an expansion and working-out of a structural-semantic interplay that pervades the *Iliad*, and, on the basis of art objects other than shields, the *Odyssey*. It may be taken as self-evident that monumentality was part of a poet's aim in producing the Shield of Achilles, and that this accounts for some of its noteworthy divergences from other Iliadic descriptions of shields. The poet here goes beyond the typical references to material and process by describing a series of images worked into the shield; whereas a physical shield offers limited space as a canvas for images, the poet's medium is subject to no such constraints, and the "space" it affords for description is theoretically limitless. The diverse but generic images that adorn the shield—warfare, city life, weddings, agriculture, and other scenes that span the range of human experience—have led modern interpreters to view the shield as "an epitome of everything that happens in the world," to use G. E. Lessing's formulation,<sup>303</sup> already in the Hellenistic period the celestial elements on the shield gave rise to an allegorization of the shield as a κόσμου μίμημα, an imitation of the cosmos.<sup>304</sup> In spite of deviations from the norm in terms of length and content, the poet does not leave aside the recurring elements of material and production: the scene that introduces the long description shows Hephaestus creating a five-layered shield (πέντε δ' ἄρ' αὐτοῦ ἔσαν σάκεος πτύχες 481) with a threefold rim (τρίπλακα 480); references to the metals of which the images are composed appear throughout;<sup>305</sup> and the description of images on the shield is punctuated by a refrain of 'and he made....,' ensuring that Hephaestus as creative agent, and by extension the poet himself,

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<sup>303</sup> Lessing (*Laokoon* 1766 = *Gesammelte Werke*, Berlin, 1995, V. 136, n12), quoted by Hubbard 1992: 16.

<sup>304</sup> Schol. *ad Arat. Phaen.* 26 (Maass 343.17), unattributed but likely derived from Crates of Mallos; see Hardie 1985: 15.

<sup>305</sup> *Il.* 18.517 Ares and Athena in gold; 549 a field of gold; 562-565 a vineyard scene of gold, tin, and cyanus 574-577 gold and tin cattle and shepherds.

is never far from view.<sup>306</sup> On the other hand, the shield famously depicts things that are impossible for static pictorial art to represent, like sound and movement.<sup>307</sup> As the poet encodes himself in the divine blacksmith, Hephaestus becomes, by a reversal of the same metaphor, a poet.

## 3.2 ORNAMENTS

This section discusses two Homeric descriptions of ornamental objects, the brooch of Odysseus in *Odyssey* 19 and the simile of the horse's cheekpiece in *Iliad* 4.

### 3.2.1 *Odysseus' Brooch*

#### **Od. 19.221-240** AB cD EFGDGFE c ACB

	ὦ γύναι, ἀργαλέον τόσσον χρόνον ἀμφὶς ἐόντα εἰπέμεν· ἤδη γάρ οἱ ἐεικοστὸν ἔτος ἐστὶν ἐξ οὗ κεῖθεν ἔβη καὶ ἐμῆς ἀπελήλυθε πάτρης·	
A	<b>αὐτὰρ τοι ἐρέω</b> ὡς μοι ἰνδ' <b>ἀλλ</b> εται ἦτορ.	
B	<b>χλαῖναν</b> πορφυρέην οὐλῆν ἔχε διὸς <b>Ὀδυσσεύς</b> ,	225
cD	<b>διπλῆν</b> · αὐτὰρ οἱ <b>περόνη χρυσοῖο</b> τέτυκτο αὐλοῖσιν διδύμοισι· <b>πάρ</b> οιθε δὲ <b>δαίδαλον</b> ἦεν·	
E	ἐν προτέροισι <b>πόδεσσι</b> κύων ἔχε <b>ποικίλον</b> ἐλλόν,	
FG	<b>ἀσπαίροντα λάων</b> · τὸ δὲ <b>θαυμάζεσκον ἅπαντες</b> ,	
D, G	ὡς οἱ <b>χρύσει</b> ἐόντες ὁ μὲν <b>λάε</b> νεβρόν <b>ἀπάγχων</b> ,	230
FE	αὐτὰρ ὁ ἐκφυγέειν μεμαῶς <b>ἦσπαιρε πόδεσσι</b> .	
C	τὸν δὲ <b>χιτῶν'</b> <b>ἐνόησα περὶ χροῖ'</b> σιγαλόεντα, οἷόν τε <b>κρομόιο λοπὸν κάτα ἰσχαλέοιο</b> · τῶς μὲν ἔην μαλακός, λαμπρὸς δ' ἦν ἠέλιος ὣς· ἦ μὲν πολλαὶ γ' αὐτὸν ἐθήησαντο γυναῖκες.	235
A	<b>ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω</b> , σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ <b>βᾶλλ</b> εο σῆσιν·	
C, B	οὐκ οἶδ' ἦ τάδε ἔστο <b>περὶ χροῖ'</b> οἴκοθ' <b>Ὀδυσσεύς</b> , ἦ τις ἐταίρων δῶκε θοῆς ἐπὶ νηὸς ἰόντι, ἦ τις που καὶ ξεῖνος, ἐπεὶ πολλοῖσιν Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔσκε φίλος· παῦροι γὰρ Ἀχαιῶν ἦσαν ὁμοῖοι.	240

<sup>306</sup> E.g. ἐν δ' ἐτίθει *Il.* 18.541, 550, 561, 607; ἐν δ' ... ποιήσε 490, 573, 587.

<sup>307</sup> E.g. *Il.* 18.493 πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει 'a great wedding song arose'; 18.570-571 ἡμερόεν κιθάριζε, λίνον δ' ὑπὸ καλὸν ἄειδε/λεπταλέη φωνῆ 'he played the lyre sweetly, and to it sang the Linos-song with a delicate voice.'

Madam, it is such a long time ago that I can hardly say.  
 Twenty years are come and gone  
 since he left my home, and went elsewhere;  
 but I will tell you as well as I can recollect.  
Odysseus wore a mantle of purple wool,  
 twofold, and it was fastened by a gold brooch  
 with twin catches for the pin. On the face it was finely decorated:  
 a dog held a spotted fawn between his forefeet,  
grasping it struggling. Everyone marvelled  
 at how in gold the dog grasped the fawn and strangled it,  
 while it was struggling to escape with its feet.  
 I noticed around his skin a shining shirt;  
 like the skin of a dried onion,  
 so soft it was, and it was bright like the sun:  
 all the women who beheld it admired it.  
 Furthermore I will tell you, and lay my saying to your heart,  
 that I do not know if Odysseus wore these things around his skin at home,  
 or whether one of his companions had given them to him on his voyage;  
 or possibly a guest-friend made him a present of them, for he was a man  
 of many friends and had few equals among the Achaeans.

When Odysseus in disguise as a beggar tells Penelope that he has seen her husband abroad, she seeks tokens from him that he is telling the truth. Odysseus tells her about his clothing: within a phrasal frame of *αὐτὰρ τοι ἐρέω... Ὀδυσσεύς* (224-225) and *ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω... Ὀδυσσεύς* (236-237),<sup>308</sup> he describes his cloak (*χλαῖναν* 225), his intricate brooch (*περόνη* 226), and his fine tunic (*χιτῶν* 232). Of these, the brooch receives the most elaboration. In a passage reminiscent of a simile in content and structure, Odysseus describes the brooch's imagery in gold of a dog chasing and strangling a fawn as the latter struggles to flee. The language with which the brooch is described contains often-noted peculiarities: the meaning of the verb *λάω* has been uncertain since antiquity (suggestions include 'to see,' 'to bark,' 'to cry,' and 'to grasp'), and *ἐλλός* (228) is a Homeric hapax remarkable for its exceeding rarity in Greek, although its meaning ('fawn') is clear.<sup>309</sup> The structural considerations that follow offer no aid on these

<sup>308</sup> With further echoes in *ἰδῶλλεται* 224 and *βῶλλεο* 236.

<sup>309</sup> Levaniouk 2011: 137-138 with bibliography nn3-8.

points, but adumbrate potential reasons that even an ancient audience for whom the semantics of the passage were no issue might find it a subject of special interest.

A lexical ring structure spans the description of the image on the brooch. The innermost repetition is that of the verb *λάω* in 229 and 230; the participle *ἀπάγχων* ‘squeezing, strangling’ that follows closely in line 230 annotates the narrowest lexical ring with its connotations of narrowness and tightening (*λάε νεβρόν ἀπάγχων* ‘he gripped (?) the fawn and strangled it’).<sup>310</sup> When Odysseus turns from the image on the brooch to the tunic in 232, the phrase *ἐνόησα περὶ χροῖ* (‘I noticed [the tunic] around his skin’) phonetically rearranges the syllables of the phrase introducing the pin, *περόνη χρυσοῖο* (‘pin of gold’ 226). The verb in the second phrase, *νοέω* ‘to perceive, take note,’ offers a metapoetic invitation to notice the paronomastic structural device. The syllable *περ-* in *περόνη* (226, from *πείρω* ‘pierce’) is picked up in 232 by the cognate *περί* ‘around,’ with looser non-etymological echoes in *πάροιθε* 227, *ἀσπαίροντα* 229, and *ἤσπαιρε* 231, all of which play off Penelope’s initial phrasing of *σευ, ξεῖνέ γ’, ὄτω πειρήσεσθαι* (‘I think I will make trial of you, stranger’ 215) and *περὶ χροῖ εἴματα ἔστο* ‘the clothing he wore around his flesh’ 218). Insofar as the words *περόνη*, *πειράομαι* ‘test, make trial of,’ and *περί* are etymologically related,<sup>311</sup> Odysseus, or at least the poet, can be understood as thematizing the notions of ‘piercing’ or ‘passing through’ (and, implicitly, ‘being tested’) in his response to Penelope’s ‘piercing’ question; the unit *πVρ-* is threaded through his speech like a pin through cloth.<sup>312</sup> Within his speech, the ring-composed description of the brooch figuratively ‘pins’ together the references that precede and follow to the two fabric garments worn by Odysseus, his

<sup>310</sup> *ἄγχω* < IE *\*h<sub>2</sub>emǵh-* ‘narrow, strangle’ (Beekes 2010); cf. the related adverb *ἄγγι* ‘near.’

<sup>311</sup> The words *περόνη* (from *πείρω* < *\*per-je/o-*), *πειράομαι* (from *πεῖρα* < *\*per-ja*), and *περί* derive from IE *\*per-* ‘cross, pass’ (Beekes 2010 s.v. *πείρω*, *πεῖρα*, *περί*).

<sup>312</sup> For a similar “permeation” of *πVρ-* syllables, cf. *Il.* 12.300-307, in which Sarpedon is compared to a lion attempting to get into a sheepfold: *θυμὸς-μήλων πειρήσοντα-περ-παρ’-περὶ* *μήλα- ἀπειρήτος-θυμὸς* ABCcccBCA.

cloak and his tunic: the ‘brooch’ that is the ring-composed description of the object holds the ‘fabric’ of his account together.

Odysseus’ detailed description of the brooch makes its fine workmanship apparent. The verb τέτυκτο (lit. ‘was made’) in 226 alludes vaguely to its creation, and the front of the brooch is called δαίδαλος, ‘cleverly worked’ (227). The adjective ποικίλος ‘variegated in an artistic way’ as applied to the deer in 228 works within the narrative on two levels, insofar as it aptly describes the spotted coat of a fawn and at the same time gestures towards the artistry with which the fawn has been rendered in gold. Odysseus leaves no doubts about the effects of the pin on those who see it: ‘everyone used to marvel’ at the vibrancy and vivacity of the image (τὸ δὲ θαυμάζεσκον ἅπαντες 229). The report of viewer’s amazement enables the recapitulation of the scene on the brooch that creates the ring structure’s return. Metapoetically, the judgments about the quality of the brooch characterize the figurative ‘brooch’ of the passage as a product of outstanding craftsmanship and a source of amazement for all who hear and “see” it.<sup>313</sup>

The cloak and tunic, as well, are marked out as fine objects: the cloak is πορφύρεος ‘purple/red’ (225), indicating an expensive dye, and the tunic is σιγαλόεις ‘shining,’ μαλακός ‘soft,’ and λαμπρός ‘bright’ like the sun (232-234). In particular, the tunic is said in a unique Homeric simile to shine ‘like the skin over a dried onion’ (οἷόν τε κρομύοιο λοπὸν κάτα ἰσχαλέοιο 233). The words κρόμυον ‘onion’ and λοπός ‘peel’ appear only here in the *Odyssey*; the latter is related to the adjective λεπτός (literally ‘peeled,’ figuratively ‘delicate, fine’), used elsewhere in Homer of fine cloth.<sup>314</sup> The simile can be explained as illustrating the luster and thinness of the garment, but the unusual image of the onion and its layers also suggest a

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<sup>313</sup> Similarly, the women who gaze at Odysseus in his finery in line 235 mark out the whole preceding description as something eye-catching.

<sup>314</sup> See note 297 for examples.

metaphor for the layers and notional roundness of the lexical ring structure that immediately precedes it.

In response to the account of Odysseus' clothing and other descriptive tokens – a report of what kind of man Odysseus was, and who his companions were – Penelope resumes her weeping, because she has recognized the 'signs' that Odysseus has given her (σήματα ἀναγνώσθη τά οἱ ἔμπεδα πέφραδ' Ὀδυσσεύς 250). As in Nestor's speech to Antilochus concerning chariot-racing in *Iliad* 23, the language of signs and their recognition occurs in the context of ring composition (σήμα δέ τοι ἐρέω *Il.* 23.326; see Chapter 2), suggesting a second, structural level of meaning to the production and reception of σήματα. It is therefore fair to ask what exactly the signs are that Penelope has recognized. Certainly the detailed description of Odysseus' raiment signals that her interlocutor is not lying about his familiarity with her husband. But has she recognized the finely-wrought token that is the account itself, and what information does she glean from it, if so?

This line of questioning raises the issue of whether lexical structures contribute to the characterization of Homeric speakers. One might learn something useful on this point from a study of whether and how Odysseus' speech is disambiguated from that of other characters in terms of its lexical patterning. That is a larger project than can be undertaken here, and the interpretive layer added by the lexical patterns in this scene would probably not in itself provide an answer to the long-standing question of whether Penelope recognizes her husband now and plays along with his deception, or whether true recognition comes only later.<sup>315</sup> We can, however, observe how Penelope's language interacts with that of Odysseus in ways suggestive of her attention to formal characteristics.

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<sup>315</sup> Overviews of the debate can be found in Emlyn-Jones 1984 and Doherty 1995.

Odysseus' description of the brooch is set up by Penelope's question about her husband's garments; the word *πειράομαι* 'test, make trial of' structurally anticipates the wordplay of Odysseus' response that allows him to pass that test. But is Penelope the unwitting vehicle for the poet's wordplay, or is there room for imagining that she already has the brooch in mind when she asks this question? If wordplay can reasonably be attributed to the character of Odysseus (one need only think of Odysseus' use of language in the Cyclops episode of Book 9), the latter possibility is not out of the question; it would then represent another way in which Penelope is a suitable match for her husband. Odysseus is typically the one who uses *πειράομαι* and related verbs of testing in the *Odyssey*, so Penelope's questioning in this scene has been described as "another sign of her own special gift for guile, which qualifies her perfectly to be Odysseus' wife."<sup>316</sup>

There is also structural resposion in Penelope's reply to Odysseus:

	<b>Od. 19.253-260</b>	ABccBa DeDe	
	νῦν μὲν δὴ μοι, ξεῖνε, πάρος περ ἔων ἐλεεινός,		
A	ἐν μεγάροισιν ἐμοῖσι φίλος τ' ἔση αἰδοῖός τε·		
B, c	αὐτὴ γὰρ τάδε εἶματ' ἐγὼ πόρον, οἷ' ἀγορεύεις,	255	
c	πτύζασ' ἐκ θαλάμου, περόνην τ' ἐπέθηκα φαεινὴν		
B	κείνῳ ἄγαλμ' ἔμεναι· τὸν δ' οὐχ ὑποδέξομαι αὐτίς		
A	οἴκαδε νοστήσαντα φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.		
D, e	τῷ ῥα κακῇ αἴσῃ κοίλης ἐπὶ νηὸς Ὀδυσσεὺς		
De	ᾧχετ' ἐποψόμενος Κακοῖλιον οὐκ ὀνομαστήν.	260	

Stranger, I was already disposed to pity you,  
but henceforth you shall be dear and welcome in my house.  
It was I who gave him the clothes you speak of.  
I folded them out of the store room, and I gave him also the shining brooch  
to wear as an ornament. Alas! I shall never welcome him  
returning home to his dear fatherland again.  
It was by an ill fate that Odysseus ever set out in a hollow ship  
to see Evil Ilium, whose very name I cannot mention.

<sup>316</sup> Russo et. al. 1992 *ad* 19.215.

Penelope answers Odysseus' response with a lexically ring-composed speech of her own. The similarity of sound between **περόνην** 'brooch' and πόρον 'I gave' (255-256) picks up Odysseus' πVρ- wordplay.<sup>317</sup> She reveals that she herself gave Odysseus the clothes and the pin; in the same metapoetic gesture as references to πτυχαί 'folds/layers' in ring-composed descriptions of shields, the participle πτύξασα 'having folded' marks the center of the lexical structure. Penelope describes the brooch as an ἄγαλμα, a 'source of delight' for Odysseus (257), which may be taken as yet another indication on the part of the poet of the expected effect of Odysseus' (and his own) verbal ornamentation. Penelope's response concludes with the wordplay **κακῆ... κοίλης-Κακοῖλον** (259-260), the latter neologism ('Evil Ilium') phonetically combining the elements of κακός 'evil' and κοῖλος 'hollow.' Even if Penelope does not recognize her husband at this point, the stylistics of her speech characterize her as a match for his verbal stylings, and the "beggar's" style may be taken to reveal to her that he is, if not her husband, at least a suitable intellectual match for him. It would be an uncharitable reading indeed to suppose that the poet's use of lexical patterning in this scene represents a surface veneer available to poet and audience but irrelevant to the production and reception of 'signs' on the part of the characters involved.

The broader premise that Odysseus employs speech in a way that communicates signs to a knowing audience is not novel. For example, Richard Martin demonstrates how Odysseus uses dictional markers from an Indo-European genre of the 'instruction of princes' in his address to Euryalus among the Phaeacians (*Od.* 8.166-177) to signal to Alcinous, king of the Phaeacians, that he, too, is a king, before his precise identity has been revealed.<sup>318</sup> Elements of the same genre, says Martin, appear in Odysseus' conversation with Penelope at *Od.* 19.106-119, so that in the course of their conversation he pairs the explicit sign of the brooch with the "undesignated

<sup>317</sup> From IE \**perh<sub>3</sub>*- 'give' (Beekes 2010 s.v. πορεῖν).

<sup>318</sup> Martin 1984.

use of a genre of discourse as a code to his listener” to reveal to Penelope his royal status.<sup>319</sup> As a queen herself, Penelope would understand how to interpret these signs. But she is also a skilled craftsman, a weaver, and the interweaving of words and sounds and themes in their exchange about Odysseus’ clothing and brooch aligns the two with respect to their identities as literal and figurative craftsmen. Odysseus as a craftsman of words rises to Penelopes’ thematically appropriate challenge.

### 3.2.2 *The Simile of the Horse’s Cheekpiece and the Homeric Concept of Order*

At *Il.* 4.141-7, Pandarus shoots Menelaus with an arrow and breaks the truce that had been established between the Trojans and the Achaeans. An extended simile, renowned for its unusual content and vivid detail, compares Menelaus’ injury to a horse’s ivory cheekpiece dyed red by a Maeonian or Carian woman:<sup>320</sup>

*Il.* 4.140-147                      ABbCDCDCBA  
 A     αὐτίκα δ’ ἔρρεεν αἶμα κελαινεφές ἐξ ὠτειλῆς.  
 B     ὥς δ’ ὅτε τίς τ’ ἐλέφαντα γυνὴ φοίνικι μύνη  
 bC    Μηονίς ἠὲ Κάειρα παρήϊον ἔμμεναι ἵππων·  
 D     κεῖται δ’ ἐν θαλάμῳ, πολέες τέ μιν ἠρήσαντο  
 C, D ἱππῆες φορέειν· βασιλῆϊ δὲ κεῖται ἄγαλμα,  
 C     ἀμφοτέρων κόσμος θ’ ἵππῳ ἐλατῆρί τε κῦδος·                      145  
 B, A τοῖοί τοι Μενέλαε μιάνθη αἵματι μηροῖ  
       εὐφυέες κνημαί τε ἰδὲ σφυρὰ κάλ’ ὑπένερθε.

Immediately dark blood began flowing from the wound.  
 As when some woman stains ivory with purple dye,  
 a Maeonian or Carian, to be the cheek-piece of a horse,  
 and it lies in a store room—many a horseman desires  
 to bear it, but it lies as a treasure for a king,  
 both an ornament for a horse and source of pride for the driver—  
 even so, O Menelaus, were your shapely thighs stained with blood  
 and your legs down to your fair ankles below.

<sup>319</sup> Martin 1984: 47.

<sup>320</sup> E.g. Kirk 1985 *ad. loc.* Cf. Fränkel 1921:54 (“ein Gleichnis... das zu den merkwürdigsten in *Ilias* und *Odyssee* gehört”).



adornments are described and to the language of the song that describes those details.<sup>324</sup> The examples repeatedly used by the interviewed singers are a hero's costume or a horse's trappings,<sup>325</sup> things such as a saddle of gold, amulets, and draperies hanging down to the hooves.<sup>326</sup> Further questioning brings out the fact that *kita* can apply to any verbal elaboration that extends a song, whether or not that elaboration describes physical adornments.<sup>327</sup>

Unlike *kita*, κόσμος does not mean ornament *per se*, but Elmer shows on the basis of Homeric evidence that the concepts are similar in that both apply to an orderly thing within the narrative and to the ordering of the narrative itself. He uses the Catalogue of Ships in *Iliad* 2 as an example: the chieftains' act of bringing their contingents into order is described with the verb κοσμέω or διακοσμέω,<sup>328</sup> and the carefully arranged account of those contingents represents a corresponding act of putting in order.<sup>329</sup> On the structural level, this arrangement plays out in the limited and recurring ways the various leaders, places, and numbers of ships are introduced; for example, the line τοῖς/τῷ δ' ἅμα τεσσαράκοντα μέλαινα νῆες ἔποντο ('together with them/him 40 black ships followed') occurs nine times, and this and other recurring lines contribute to the segmentation of the narrative in accordance with the segmentation of the army into contingents.<sup>330</sup> We may add that later Greeks would refer to Homer himself as a κοσμήτωρ, 'one who puts in order,' as in 'κοσμήτωρ of the Phrygian battle' (Φρυγίας κοσμήτορα μάχας Pindar Fr. 347) or 'divine Homer, κοσμήτωρ of heroic men' (ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων κοσμήτορα θεῖον *Vita Homeri* 20.18), descriptions that assimilate the poet's act to that of the leaders he describes.

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<sup>324</sup> Elmer 2010: 280.

<sup>325</sup> Elmer 2010: 281, 285-286, 288-9.

<sup>326</sup> Elmer 2010: 281.

<sup>327</sup> Elmer 2010: 282-283, 286-287, 290.

<sup>328</sup> *Il.* 2.476, *Il.* 3.1.

<sup>329</sup> Elmer 2010: 294.

<sup>330</sup> Kirk 1985: 170-173.

The twofold applicability of the concept of κόσμος in Homer comes to the fore in Odysseus' request to the Phaeacian bard Demodocus to sing the κόσμος of the Trojan horse in *Odyssey* 8:<sup>331</sup>

**Od. 8.486-498** ABCDCBDA  
 δὴ τότε Δημόδοκον προσέφη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς·  
 “Δημόδοκ’, ἔξοχα δὴ σε βροτῶν αἰνίζομ’ ἀπάντων.  
 A ἢ σέ γε μοῦσ’ ἐδίδαξε, Διὸς πάϊς, ἢ σέ γ’ Ἀπόλλων·  
 B, C, D λήν γάρ κατὰ κόσμον Ἀχαιῶν οἶτον αἰεΐδεις,  
 C ὅσσ’ ἔρξαν τ’ ἔπαθόν τε καὶ ὅσσ’ ἐμόγησαν Ἀχαιοί, 490  
 ὥς τέ που ἢ αὐτὸς παρεῶν ἢ ἄλλου ἀκούσας.  
 B, D ἀλλ’ ἄγε δὴ μετάβηθι καὶ ἵππου κόσμον ἄεισον  
 δουρατεύου, τὸν Ἐπειὸς ἐποίησεν σὺν Ἀθήνῃ,  
 A ὄν ποτ’ ἐς ἀκρόπολιν δόλον ἤγαγε Διὸς Ὀδυσσεὺς  
 ἀνδρῶν ἐμπλήσας οἳ ῥ’ Ἴλιον ἐξάλαπαξαν. 495  
 αἶ κεν δὴ μοι ταῦτα κατὰ μοῖραν καταλέξῃς,  
 αὐτίκ’ ἐγὼ πᾶσιν μυθήσομαι ἀνθρώποισιν,  
 ὥς ἄρα τοι πρόφρων θεὸς ὤπασε θέσπιν ἀοιδήν.”

Clever Odysseus said to Demodocus,  
 "Demodocus, there is no one in the world whom I admire more than I do you. You must have studied under the Muse, Zeus' daughter, and under Apollo, in such an orderly way you sing the return of the Achaeans, with all their sufferings and adventures.  
 As if you were there or heard it all from someone who was.  
 Now, however, change your song and sing the order of the wooden horse which Epeus made with the assistance of Athena, and which divine Odysseus got by stratagem into the fort of Troy after freighting it with the men who afterwards sacked the city.  
 If you will sing this tale aright,  
 Forthwith I will tell all the world  
 how magnificently a god has granted you divine song."

The word κόσμος in line 492 has been interpreted as a reference either to the physical construction of the horse or to the song describing it, but Elmer argues that it must be both: to

<sup>331</sup> The request is thematically ring-composed: it begins and ends with praise for the divinely inspired singer (487-488/497-498), followed internally by a reference to singing the story correctly (489/496) and a ring that contrasts the deeds of the Achaeans with those of Odysseus (490/494), at the center of which is the command to 'go over' (μετάβηθι 492) from the former subject to the latter. The lexical structure highlighted in the passage does not entirely map on to this thematic structure.

accurately sing about an orderly subject is to sing an orderly song about that subject.<sup>332</sup> Thus the Homeric phrase for speaking or singing convincingly is *κατὰ κόσμον*, as when Odysseus in line 489 praises Demodocus' song about the Achaeans: in Andrew Ford's translation, he sings "in accordance with the order of things."<sup>333</sup>

Elmer suggests that the cheekpiece in the *Iliad* 4 simile is indicative of order insofar as it represents a single piece in the more extensive tackle of a horse, but this falls short of explaining how the narrative itself is orderly in this case.<sup>334</sup> The simile's annular lexical pattern perhaps furnishes a structural complement to the underlying concept of orderliness in the noun *κόσμος*. But we may also press the more specialized sense of *κόσμος* in the passage and see the ring structure as a reflection not only of order, abstractly conceived, but of the ornament, of the cheekpiece itself as a physical object. There is no explicit indication of the physical shape of the cheekpiece in the *Iliad* simile; according to the usual definition, cheekpieces functioned to keep the bit from shifting around in the mouth of a horse, and examples surviving from antiquity display a variety of shapes, with disk-shapes common among them.<sup>335</sup> The word translated as cheekpiece, *παρήϊον*, is also, and primarily, a word for cheek, and a horse's cheek is, after all, rather round and convex.<sup>336</sup> But all that it is possible to say definitively about the object called *παρήϊον* in this simile is that it is an ornamented element of a horse's bridle, and as we saw in the discussion of shields, an object need not necessarily be round for the analogy between form and content to work.

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<sup>332</sup> Elmer 2010: 295-6.

<sup>333</sup> Ford 1992: 77.

<sup>334</sup> Elmer 2010: 292; cf. Diller 1956: 48-51 and Kerschensteiner 1962: 7-8.

<sup>335</sup> Anderson 1961: 59.

<sup>336</sup> The four other Homeric instances of the word *παρήϊον* refer to literal human or animal cheeks (*Il.* 16.159, *Il.* 23.690, *Od.* 19.208, *Od.* 22.404).

The notion that this simile is like an ornament, is ‘ornamental,’ may conjure to the modern mind the judgement of the later Greek and Roman rhetorical tradition that one of the primary functions of similes is to embellish speech.<sup>337</sup> It is therefore worthwhile to spend a moment disentangling what ‘ornamental’ means in its Homeric context from the assumptions and commonplaces of later tradition. If a simile is like an ornament, this does not necessarily imply that this or any other simile is conceived by the Homeric poet as a superficial and dispensable expansion of the narrative. The bT scholia to the *Iliad* contain two instances in which the noun κόσμος is applied to similes in this sense, but in each case, the term refers not to the simile as a whole, but to details deemed extraneous to the essential comparison.<sup>338</sup> More broadly, an Aristotelian view is prevalent in post-Aristotelian rhetorical and stylistic treatises throughout antiquity with regard to any language deemed ornamental, to the effect that embellishment, so long as it is used in a way appropriate to the medium and the context, serves to advance the aims of the poetry or prose that employs it.

The application of the word κόσμος to poetry in post-Homeric works of the Archaic and Classical periods evinces a semantic range similar to that suggested in the cheekpiece simile. In Nünlist’s collection of 22 passages in early Greek literature in which the word κόσμος or κοσμέω

<sup>337</sup> E.g. *Rhetorica ad Herennium* 4.45.59: Ea [similitudo] sumitur aut **ornandi causa** aut probandi aut apertius dicendi aut ante oculos ponendi (“[a simile] is employed either **for the sake of ornamentation** or of proving something or of speaking more clearly or of calling something to mind”) (see McCall 1969: 66); Quintilian *Institutio Oratoria* 8.3.74-75: sed illud quoque, de quo in argumentis diximus, similitudinis genus **ornat orationem** facitque sublimem, floridam, iucundam, mirabilem (“but that kind of simile also, about which we spoke in discussing arguments, **adorns a speech** and makes it sublime, florid, pleasant, and marvelous”) (see McCall 1969: 218-19).

<sup>338</sup> *Il.* 21.257-262: ἡ δὲ παραβολὴ πρὸς τὴν ταχεῖαν ἐπιφορὰν καὶ τὴν παραλλαγὴν τοῦ ὕδατος. **κόσμου δὲ ἔνεκα** παρεδιηγῆσατο τὰ λοιπὰ (“the simile refers to the sudden bursting forth of the water and its frenzy. The rest is related incidentally **for the sake of adornment**”); *Il.* 12.41-48: πρὸς ἓν μόνον ἤνεγκε τὴν εἰκόνα, πρὸς τὸν Ἑκτορα τὸν ἐν τοῖς Τρωσὶν εἰλούμενον. τὰ δὲ ἄλλα οὐδὲν αὐτῷ συντείνει πρὸς τὸν εἰκαζόμενον, ... ἀλλὰ **ποιητικὸς κόσμος** λαβὼν ἔχει (“[The poet] applied the simile to one thing only, to Hector turning about among the Trojans. The other details in no way apply to Hector... the rest is **ornamental**”) (trans. Snipes 1988: 215-216; emphasis mine). It is also worth noting that the scarcity of such comments in comparison with the total number of comments on similes in the Homeric scholia suggests that these represent only a single strand of interpretation among many (see Clausing 1913: 67, 108).

is used in reference to poetry,<sup>339</sup> the word is sometimes used with the general sense of ‘order,’ sometimes with the narrower sense of ‘ornament,’ although it is necessary to acknowledge the frequently limited context that fragmentary works provide. Solon announces in a fragment that he has “come in person as a herald from lovely Salamis, composing song, a κόσμος of words, instead of speech;”<sup>340</sup> Parmenides’ didactic goddess bids her addressee listen to the “deceitful κόσμος of my words;”<sup>341</sup> Democritus says that Homer built “a κόσμος of all sorts of words.”<sup>342</sup> At other times a poet has a more specific image in mind: Pindar in *Olympian* 11 tells a boxing victor “I shall sing a sweet κόσμος for your crown of golden olive.”<sup>343</sup> Here the meaning ‘ornament’ is readily available: Pindar construes his poem or a part of his poem as a decoration for a victory crown, in keeping with his favored metaphor of epinician poetry as a victory crown or headband. We may compare *Nemean* 8.14-16,<sup>344</sup> in which Pindar describes his song as a headband and (in apposition to this) as an ἄγαλμα, a word also applied to the cheekpiece in the *Iliad* simile (and to Odysseus’ brooch, discussed above):<sup>345</sup>

**Pindar *Nemean* 8.14-16**

...πόλιός θ' ὑπὲρ φίλας  
 ἀστῶν θ' ὑπὲρ τῶνδ' ἄπτομαι φέρων  
 Λυδίαν μίτραν καναξηδὰ πεποικιλμέναν,  
 Δείνιος δισσῶν σταδίων  
 καὶ πατρὸς Μέγα Νεμεαῖον ἄγαλμα.

...On behalf of his beloved city  
 and of these citizens I am bringing  
 a Lydian fillet embellished with ringing notes,  
 a Nemean *agalma* for the double stadion races  
 of Deinias and his father Megas.<sup>346</sup>

<sup>339</sup> Nünlist 1998: 90-97.

<sup>340</sup> Solon fr. 1.2 αὐτὸς κήρυξ ἦλθον ἀφ' ἡμερτῆς Σαλαμῖνος,/κόσμον ἐπέων ἴωιδὴν ἀντ' ἀγορῆς θέμενος.

<sup>341</sup> Parmenides B 8.51-2 DK κόσμον ἐμῶν ἐπέων ἀπατηλὸν ἀκούων.

<sup>342</sup> Democritus B 21 DK Ὅμηρος φύσεως λαχὼν θεαζούσης ἐπέων κόσμον ἐτεκτῆνατο παντοίων.

<sup>343</sup> *Olympian* 11.11-14 ἴσθι νῦν, Ἀρχεστράτου/.../ κόσμον ἐπὶ στεφάνῳ χρυσέας ἐλαίας/ἀδυμελῆ κελαδήσω. Trans. Race 1997, adapted. Cf. Nünlist 1998: 224-227 on Körperschmuck.

<sup>344</sup> Cf. Pindar *Nemean* 3.13.

<sup>345</sup> Cf. Nünlist 1998: 225, as well as 227 on Epicharmos VS 23 B 6.1-4 DK.

<sup>346</sup> Trans. Race 1997, adapted.

In later usage the word ἄγαλμα would develop an association with statues or images of divinities, but in early poetry it retains its etymological sense of ‘source of delight,’ from the verb ἀγάλλομαι ‘to delight in.’<sup>347</sup> It is another point of interest that both Pindar’s fillet (the μίτρα, a colorful woven headband) and the *Iliad*’s dyed cheekpiece have their artistic origins in the famed craftsmanship of Asia Minor: the Homeric poet nowhere mentions the Lydians by that name, but later Greeks understood Maeonia as an older name for Lydia.<sup>348</sup>

Pindar’s application of the word κόσμος to poetry may get us closer to the Homeric sense of ornamentation: when Pindar declares that he sings a κόσμος for a crown of golden olive, he is suggesting that the song that conveys glory for the boxing victor is analogous to the crown of leaves that serves as the prize of the athletic contests. The ornamental *is* the essential as an embodiment of that renown. A similar dynamic seems to be at play in the Iliadic simile when the cheekpiece is called not only a κόσμος and an ἄγαλμα but also a κῦδος, a glory for a charioteer;<sup>349</sup> elsewhere in Homer, κῦδος refers to fame and pride as broadcast by a visible manifestation of victory or success.<sup>350</sup> The beauty and delightfulness of the object are the characteristics that enable it to bestow honor on the one who owns it.

An athletic subtext is not wholly out of the question for the Iliadic simile: the noun ἐλατήρ ‘driver’ in line 145 is used in Homer only of the driver in a chariot race,<sup>351</sup> and the detail of the many horsemen who desire the cheekpiece may further suit a context of athletic competition. At any rate these covetous horsemen provide a foil for the ornament’s owner; as

<sup>347</sup> Day 2010: 87-89. The word ἄγαλμα appears only here in the *Iliad*, seven times in the *Odyssey*.

<sup>348</sup> E.g. the D scholion *ad Il.* 4.142: *Μηονίς. Λυδῆ. Κάειρα. Καρίνη. ἀπὸ Καρίας, ὡς τῶν χωρίων τούτων τὸ παλαιὸν καλαῖς βαφαῖς χρωμένων.*

<sup>349</sup> See Day 2010: 89-90 on the connection between the words κόσμος, ἄγαλμα, and κῦδος in this passage.

<sup>350</sup> Diller 1956: 50.

<sup>351</sup> Leaf 1900 *ad loc.*: “the connotation of the word is thus very appropriate to an ornament which would be used for purposes of display rather than of warfare”; see *Il.* 11.702, 23.369.

Joseph Day observes, the cheekpiece's ability to confer glory is determined by its worth in the eyes of a broader audience that has seen and admired it.<sup>352</sup> The precise relationship between the king, the driver, and the other horsemen in the simile is not made explicit. A possible scenario is the one presented in the funeral games of Patroclus in *Iliad* 23: there, Menelaus himself participates in the chariot race, and represents both ἑλατήρ and βασιλεύς. Although nothing is said about horses' decorations in that race,<sup>353</sup> such a scenario offers a concrete way that a cheekpiece might bring glory to a horse, a driver, and a king in a public arena that allows many to admire and desire the object, before it is returned for safekeeping to the king's storeroom.

The nexus of order, delight, and glory in the cheekpiece simile has implications on the metapoetic level as well, insofar as the description annotates the ring-composed simile as a beautiful thing of value, one that, like the cheekpiece, gains its worth from an appreciative audience. The three nouns describing the cheekpiece occur in a series of nominative-dative pairs: the ornament is an ἄγαλμα for a king, a κόσμος for a horse, and a κῦδος for the charioteer. It may not be wholly idle to see lurking in the background of the simile the old Indo-European metaphor of poet as charioteer: if the simile with its structure is a functional adornment for the narrative the way the cheekpiece is an ornament for a horse, then the narrative is like a horse, and if the cheekpiece brings glory to the horse's driver, then the simile brings glory to the one holding the reins of the narrative, so to speak: to the poet.<sup>354</sup> The metaphor of the poet as charioteer is well known from Pindar and other early poets;<sup>355</sup> in *Olympian* 9 Pindar says "may I find the right

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<sup>352</sup> Day 2010: 90.

<sup>353</sup> Diomedes' chariot is said to be 'covered with gold and tin' at *Il.* 23.503 (ἄρματα δὲ χρυσῷ πεπυκασμένα κασιτέρῳ τε), but the only reference to a horse's appearance in the race (aside from formulaic descriptions of their long manes) is the description of one of Diomedes' horses as being red, with a white mark on its forehead 'round like the moon' (*Il.* 23.454-455 λευκὸν σῆμα τέτυκτο περίτροχον ἤϊτε μῆνη).

<sup>354</sup> The word used for charioteer, ἑλατήρ 'driver' (145), is an agent noun derived from the verb ἐλαύνω, discussed in the section on shields as the signature verb for describing the work of a blacksmith and, therefore, potentially bearing metapoetic connotations of the production of verse.

<sup>355</sup> Listed and discussed by Nünlist 1998: 255-264; see also Platte 2017: 87-93, West 2007: 42-43 and n50.

words and fittingly drive forward in the chariot of the Muses” (80-81),<sup>356</sup> and the same metaphor has been taken to underlie the proem of Parmenides’ *On Nature*:<sup>357</sup>

**Parmenides B1.1-5 DK: ABCBBCBA**

A, B ἵπποι ταί με φέρουσιν, ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ θυμὸς ἱκανοί,  
 C πέμπον, ἐπεὶ μ' ἐς ὁδὸν βῆσαν πολύφημον ἄγουσαι  
 B δαίμονος, ἣ κατὰ πάντ' ἄντην φέρει εἰδότα φῶτα·  
 B, C, B, A τῆ φερόμην· τῆ γάρ με πολύφραστοὶ φέρων ἵπποι  
 ἄρμα τιταίνουσαι, κοῦραι δ' ὁδὸν ἡγεμόνευον.

The mares which bear me as far as my desires might reach  
 Were conveying me, when they led me into the many-voiced way  
 Of the deity, who bears the knowing mortal straight on through all things.  
 By this way was I borne, for by this way the much-discerning mares bore me  
 As they drew the chariot, and the maidens guided the way.<sup>358</sup>

Since parallels appear in the cognate Indo-European languages Vedic and Avestan, it would not be anachronistic to find this metaphor in Homeric epic.<sup>359</sup> The notion that poetic κόσμος brings renown to a poet shows up explicitly elsewhere in Homer: in the passage at *Od.* 8.486-498 discussed above, lines 496-8, Odysseus says that if Demodocus sings well (κατὰ μοῖραν 496), he will praise him to everyone. This idea, too, appears in the lyric poets, as when Pindar in *Nemean* 3 addresses himself, saying “you have won a suitable κόσμος for yourself / to sing something sweet.”<sup>360</sup>

This brings us to the third nominative-dative pair, the ἄγαλμα for a king. If a metapoetic interpretation of the other two noun-dative pairs is speculative, this goes perhaps a step further, but with this acknowledgment in place there is no harm in pursuing the line of inquiry to its end. Two possibilities present themselves, not necessarily mutually exclusive: we may see the ἄγαλμα

<sup>356</sup> *Ol.* 9.80-81 εἶην εὐρησιεπῆς ἀναγηῖσθαι/ πρόσφορος ἐν Μοισᾶν δίφρῳ; trans. Race 1997.

<sup>357</sup> See Nünlist 1998: 260-261, West 2007: 43.

<sup>358</sup> Trans. Graham 2010.

<sup>359</sup> See Platte 2017: 87-93, West 2007: 41-43, Nünlist 1998: 255.

<sup>360</sup> Pindar *Nemean* 3.31-32 ποδῖφορον δὲ κόσμον ἔλαχε/ γλυκὺ τι γαρυμένον. Cf. Nünlist 1998: 96.

for a king as a reference to a poem-external king who serves (at least notionally) as the poet's patron, or as a reference to a poem-internal king such as Menelaus himself, the tenor of the cheekpiece simile. As for the first case, let it simply be observed that an implication of royal patronage is consistent with Homeric poetry's representation of the social position of singers, such as Phemius in the house of Odysseus or Demodocus in the palace of Alcinous, however idealizing or archaizing that representation may have been at any given phase of the poems' development.

The effect of the second possibility would be that the simile-as-ornament serves as a source of renown for Menelaus. This has a certain logic to it, because in the image of the preservation of the precious object in a royal store room we see a symbol of the preservation of Menelaus' life and fame. In line 146 Menelaus receives a rare and affectionate apostrophe from the narrator, and a maternal Athena has come to his aid to protect him earlier in the scene. The audience knows from the preceding passage that Menelaus' wound is not fatal, but this is not yet apparent to the characters within the narrative. This is an important narrative crux: if Menelaus dies here, the war is over, and perhaps even more than as a marker of renown for Menelaus, the simile marks out the overwhelming importance of Menelaus' survival at this juncture for the continuation of the narrative as a whole.

In the lines following the simile, the poet has Agamemnon give a speech that unpacks the significance of Menelaus' injury:

**Il. 4.169-175**

ἀλλά μοι αἰνὸν ἄχος σέθεν ἔσσειται ὦ Μενέλαε  
 αἶ κε θάνης καὶ πότμον ἀναπλήσης βιότοιο. 170  
 καὶ κεν ἐλέγχιστος πολυδίψιον Ἄργος ἰκοίμην·  
 αὐτίκα γὰρ μνήσονται Ἀχαιοὶ πατρίδος αἴης·  
 κὰδ δέ κεν εὐχολὴν Πριάμῳ καὶ Τρωσὶ λίπομεν  
 Ἀργεῖην Ἑλένην· σέο δ' ὅστέα πύσει ἄρουρα  
**κειμένου** ἐν Τροίῃ ἀτελευτήτῳ ἐπὶ ἔργῳ. 175

But I shall suffer terrible grief, Menelaus,  
 if it be your lot now to die and complete your allotted life.  
 I should return to thirsty Argos in shame,  
 for the Achaeans will at once remember their paternal land.  
 We shall leave Priam and the Trojans  
 the glory of still keeping Helen, and the earth will rot your bones  
 as you **lie** here at Troy with your purpose not fulfilled.

In imagining the death of Menelaus, Agamemnon uses the participle of the connotatively rich verb κείμαι ‘to lie’ in line 175. This verb appears twice in the vehicle of the cheekpiece simile as part of the ring structure (‘[the cheekpiece] lies (κεῖται) in the storeroom... it lies (κεῖται) there as a delight’), where it evokes on the one hand the image of the injured Menelaus lying on the battle field, and on the other the traditional designation of treasure as κειμήλια, ‘that which lies there.’ As for the first, Calvert Watkins has shown that κείται and its cognates in other Indo-European poetic traditions can serve as virtual synonyms for the phrase ‘has been slain.’<sup>361</sup> A *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* search reveals that κείται (so inflected) in line-initial position in the *Iliad* almost always refers to a dead warrior, such as Patroclus at 18.20 or Sarpedon at 16.541;<sup>362</sup> in seven of the ten instances the dead man’s status as such is unambiguous, but even in the cases that are unclear, the verb always bears connotations of death.<sup>363</sup> Although κείται is applied to the cheekpiece in the vehicle of the simile, its line-initial position in 143 raises the specter of Menelaus’ death, and its prominent role in the simile anticipates Agamemnon’s fears and the particular way he expresses those fears.

<sup>361</sup> Watkins 1995: 500-504.

<sup>362</sup> The ten instances are *Il.* 4.143, 5.467, 16.541, 16.558, 18.20, 18.435, 19.212, 22.386, 24.554, 24.600.

<sup>363</sup> At *Il.* 5.467 a disguised Ares uses the verb in urging Hector to save Aeneas, who has disappeared from battle; his language leaves uncertain whether they will find Aeneas alive or dead, since the verb σώζω ‘save’ is sometimes used in the *Iliad* for rescuing a corpse from enemies (*Il.* 17.692, *Il.* 24.35). The Trojans, at any rate, do not know if Aeneas is dead or not, as is evident from their joy at seeing him alive later in the book (τοὶ δὲ χάρισαν, / ὡς εἶδον ζῶν τε καὶ ἀρτεμέα προσιόντα *Il.* 5.514-515). At *Il.* 18.435 Thetis describes her mortal husband Peleus as ‘worn out by old age in his halls’ (ὁ μὲν δὴ γήραϊ λυγρῷ / κείται ἐνὶ μεγάροις ἀρημένοσ 434-435), the point of her remark being the distinction between his mortality and her immortality.

At the same time, the verb *κεῖμαι* in the simile functions as the standard verb for treasure placed in a storeroom, an etymology foregrounded in the *Odyssey*'s description of the storeroom in which Odysseus stores his bow:

**Od. 21.8-10**

βῆ δ' ἴμεναι **θάλαμόνδε** σὺν ἀμφιπόλοισι γυναιξὶν  
ἔσχατον· ἔνθα δέ οἱ **κειμήλια κείτο** ἄνακτος,  
χαλκός τε χρυσός τε πολύκμητός τε σίδηρος. 10

She with her attendant women into the **store-room**  
at the end of the house, where **lay the possessions** of the lord,  
gold, bronze, and iron wrought with much effort.

The noun for treasure here, *κειμήλια*, derives from *κεῖμαι* and refers to wealth that 'lies' in place (as opposed to moveable wealth, like slaves and cattle);<sup>364</sup> the phrase *κειμήλια κείτο* is formulaic.<sup>365</sup> The word *θάλαμος* 'inner room' (*Od.* 21.8; *Il.* 4.143 *κείται δ' ἐν θαλάμῳ*) is used in Homer of storerooms and bedrooms and is typically where laid-up treasure can be found: in the brooch scene in *Odyssey* 19, Penelope describes taking garments for Odysseus from a *θάλαμος* (19.256). Descriptions of storerooms and bedrooms in Homer are often framed with a ring consisting of or including the verb *βαίνω* 'step, go' to mark a character's entrance into and exit from the room, for example when Hera goes to a private room to adorn herself with all manner of cosmetics (*πάντα... κόσμον Il.* 14.187) in *Iliad* 14: *βῆ δ' ἴμεν ἐς θάλαμον-βῆ ῥ' ἴμεν ἐκ θαλάμοιο* ('she stepped to go into the room...she stepped to go out of the room' 166-188); or when Hecabe goes down into a storeroom to retrieve a fine cloth as a gift for Athena in *Iliad* 6:

**Il. 6.286-296** ABCDEDECBA

ὥς ἔφαθ', ἣ δὲ μολοῦσα ποτὶ μέγαρ' ἀμφιπόλοισι  
A κέκλετο· ται δ' ἄρ' ἀόλλισσαν κατὰ ἄστῳ **γεραιάς**.  
B αὐτὴ δ' ἐς **θάλαμον** **κατεβήσεται** κηῶεντα,  
C ἔνθ' ἔσαν οἱ πέπλοι **παμποίκιλα** ἔργα γυναικῶν  
D **Σιδονίων**, τὰς αὐτὸς **Ἀλέξανδρος** θεοειδῆς 290

<sup>364</sup> Watkins 1994: 9-10, 51, 154, 210n19.

<sup>365</sup> Cf. *Il.* 6.47, *Il.* 11.132, *Od.* 15.101.

E ἤγαγε Σιδονίθην ἐπιπλῶς εὐρέα πόντον,  
 D τὴν ὁδὸν ἦν Ἑλένην περ ἀνήγαγεν εὐπατέρειαν·  
 τῶν ἔν' ἀειραμένη Ἑκάβη φέρε δῶρον Ἀθήνῃ,  
 C ὃς κάλλιστος ἔην ποικίλμασιν ἠδὲ μέγιστος,  
 ἀστήρ δ' ὧς ἀπέλαμπεν· ἔκειτο δὲ νείατος ἄλλων. 295  
 B, A βῆ δ' ἰέναι, πολλαὶ δὲ μετεσσεύοντο γεραιαί.

Thus she spoke, and went into the house and called her attendants who gathered the matrons throughout the city. She went down into her fragrant store-room, where her pattern-woven robes were kept, the work of Sidonian women, whom Alexandrus had brought over from Sidon when he sailed the seas upon that voyage during which he carried off Helen. Hecuba took one of these to bring as a gift to Athena, the largest robe, and the one that was most beautifully pattern-woven: it glittered like a star, and lay at the very bottom of the chest. With this she went on her way and many matrons with her.

Menelaus himself has a storeroom full of treasure in his palace in Sparta, which he and Helen enter and exit in *Odyssey* 15 (ἐς θάλαμον κατεβήσετο-βὰν δ' ἰέναι 15.97-110).<sup>366</sup> By means of such ring composition, the narrative space of Homeric descriptions of rooms becomes the rooms themselves, with the poet and audience's passage into and out of the rooms corresponding with that of the characters.<sup>367</sup>

Accordingly, the narrative space of the description of the cheekpiece stored in a treasure room in *Iliad* 4 can be heard not only as a reflection of the ornament itself but of the room where it is kept. There is no mention in the simile of anyone entering the room where the cheekpiece lies, but as with other Homeric storerooms, the lexical ring structure ushers the audience into and back out of this otherwise inaccessible place. The verb καταβαίνω 'step down' at *Il.* 6.288 and *Od.* 15.97 suggests that entrance into treasure rooms involves a descent, so the poem's figurative entrance into and out of the storeroom in the cheekpiece simile can be taken as a katabasis

<sup>366</sup> Other rooms framed with βαίνω at *Od.* 1.425-441, *Od.* 6.15-41, *Od.* 8.273-287, *Od.* 21.8-58, *Od.* 22.109-112, *Od.* 22.142-146, *Od.* 22.179-202.

<sup>367</sup> Cf. Steinrück 1997: 74-75 on ring structures in association with movement between rooms.

(κατάβασις ‘stepping down, descent’) in its most literal sense. The simile moves by stages from the daylight plain where Menelaus lies bleeding to the storeroom and back to daylight, at which point Menelaus’ spirit is gathered back in his chest (θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἀγέρθη *Il.* 4.152), suggesting that Menelaus may have experienced his own katabatic brush with death in the time in which the simile was narrated. The blood flowing from Menelaus’ wound at the beginning end of the simile marks out this liminal space between life and death: if enough of it escapes, he dies, but if enough remains in his body like stored-up treasure, he lives.

Just as line-initial κεῖται in line 143 with its connotations of death in battle maps onto the following narrative insofar as it is not yet clear to the onlooking characters whether Menelaus will die from his injury, so the connotations and denotations of treasure safely stored map onto the narrative preceding the simile: the simile presents a valuable object in a position of safety, just as Athena values Menelaus and keeps him safe by diverting the arrow from a vital point. A passage from Pindar is again instructive for construing the metapoetics of hoarded treasure. In *Pythian* 6 he says that for the victor, “a Pythian victor’s treasure house of hymns has been built in Apollo’s valley rich in gold,” one that he goes on to describe as impervious to the elements.<sup>368</sup> Pindar’s metaphor makes clear that a literal treasury, however well built, is impermanent, and no true safeguard for the likewise impermanent treasure stored within; he thus points to the superiority of the figurative treasure and treasure-house that is his poetry as a vehicle for preserving fame. The ornamental and ‘orderly’ simile that marks the scene of Menelaus’ survival in the narrative also marks his enduring survival by means of the fame the narrative bestows, a narrative that itself would be cut short if Menelaus were to die at this point, because if Menelaus

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<sup>368</sup> Pindar *Pythian* 6.7-9 ἑτοῖμος ὕμνων/θησαυρὸς ἐν πολυχρύσῳ/Ἀπολλωνία τετείχισται νάπα.

dies and the Achaeans return home, the entire subsequent narrative of the *Iliad* in its traditional outline goes with him. When Menelaus survives, the order of the Iliadic narrative is maintained.

### 3.2.3 *Summary and Conclusion*

The two ornaments discussed in this section differ in many respects, but both appear in ring-composed passages that mark important junctures in the progress of their respective narratives. In Penelope and Odysseus' first interaction after his return to Ithaca, the disguised Odysseus' description of the brooch (περόνη) Penelope gave him answers her "piercing" request (πειράομαι) for indications that her interlocutor is truly familiar with her husband, and is one of the signs that allows him to pass her test. The fine workmanship of the brooch finds its analogue in the careful construction of Odysseus' description of the object, and this raises questions about the extent to which lexical structures contribute to characterization and whether the skilled organization of language is a component of the signs (σήματα) produced and perceived by Odysseus and Penelope in this scene. The same questions can be asked about Nestor and Antilochus in Nestor's speech to his son in *Iliad* 23, discussed in Chapter 2, in which Nestor's ring-composed advice about chariot racing hinges heavily and explicitly on the perception of signs. Later in *Iliad* 19 another recognition scene plays out when Odysseus' nurse Eurycleia recognizes the scar on Odysseus' foot, which this time gives rise to an extended ring-composed reminiscence by the narrator of the boar hunt that produced the scar.<sup>369</sup>

The second ornament appears in a simile illustrating the blood on Menelaus' thigh after he is shot by Pandarus in *Iliad* 4. The ivory cheekpiece dyed red by a Maeonian or Carian woman is described as a κόσμος for a horse, and the description's ring structure suggests a structural correlation for the idea of order that is a necessary component of the word, tying into

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<sup>369</sup> See Purves 2013.

David Elmer's concept of poetic κόσμος as orderly narrative corresponding to orderly subject matter. Insofar as κόσμος bears the specific meaning 'ornament' in the passage, the simile too can be understood as 'ornamental.' Comparative evidence from Pindar shows that early metaphors of ornamentation for poetry draw from the prized objects' function as visible manifestations of renown: in keeping with the social dynamics of poetic production visible elsewhere in Homer and in post-Homeric poetry, an orderly poem is a beautiful poem, and brings glory and enduring fame to its subject and poet alike.

The beautiful and orderly composition of the cheekpiece simile marks the critical juncture of Menelaus' survival: the audience knows that Menelaus will survive his injury, but the poet plays with the alternate possibility, the one given voice by Agamemnon in the subsequent lines. The connotations of the repeated verb κείται ('lies [dead or safe]') in the simile gesture toward the fundamental crux of the narrative moment. Like the horses' cheekpiece, the simile has a structural function in addition to its aesthetic value, and through it the poet reveals his hand and skill in arranging the narrative.

It would be remiss to conclude this section without acknowledging the depicted role of the hypothetical Maeonian or Carian woman in dyeing the cheekpiece. As we saw in the discussion of shields, it is typical for the poet to take interest in artistic skill, and here it leads him to include the agency of the dyer in the vehicle of the simile where it has no obvious correlation in the tenor of the blood on Menelaus' leg. The verb μιάνω 'stain' is used only here of dyeing in the *Iliad*, and its collocation with Μηονίς 'Maeonian woman' may have to do with the sound similarity of the two words. But of particular note is an ancient tradition that identified Homer himself as a Maeonian, or as a son of Maeon;<sup>370</sup> as Kirk points out, the poet seems

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<sup>370</sup> *Certamen Homeri et Hesiodi* 20 attributes the latter to Hellenicus (5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E). Ovid at *Fasti* 2.120 calls Homer "Maeonides."

surprisingly familiar with the inland Maeonian region in the Catalogue of Ships.<sup>371</sup> Whatever the reason for these attributions, which vied with many other claims about Homer's birthplace and parentage, an interpretation of the simile through this lens would situate the poet within the same cultural milieu of skilled artistic production as the woman dyeing ivory, and offer any audience adhering to this interpretation a potential justification for the poet's interest in the same.

### 3.3 THINGS THAT HOLD TOGETHER (FOR A WHILE): ICONICITY AT THE ACHAEAN GATES

At several points in previous chapters and sections there has been occasion to note the self-reflexive role of the verb ἔχω 'hold' and its derivatives in marking the center of a ring structure as the place that 'holds' the entire sequence together. For ease of overview, I gather the aforementioned passages here:

#### *Il.* 2.216-220 abba

a ...ἔμμεναι· **αἴσχιστος δὲ** ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε·  
 b **φορκὸς ἔην**, **χολὸς** δ' ἕτερον πόδα· **τῷ** δέ οἱ **ῶμω**  
*κυρτῷ* ἐπὶ στῆθος *συναχόκοτε*· ἀντάρ ὕπερθε  
 b **φοξὸς ἔην** κεφαλὴν, ψεδνὴ δ' ἐπενήνοθε *λάχνη*.  
 a **ἔχθιστος δ'** Ἀχιλῆϊ μάλιστ' ἦν ἠδ' Ὀδυσῆϊ· ... 220

...he was the ugliest man of all those that came before Troy—  
 squint-eyed, lame of one foot, with his two shoulders  
 rounded and **holding together** over his chest.  
 Pointed was his head, but there was little hair on the top of it.  
 Most hated he was by Achilles and Odysseus...

The participle *συναχόκοτε* (*συνέχω*) describes Thersites' stooped shoulders at the center of a ring structure consisting of paronomastic elements, where it appears among and contributes to the unifying alliteration of the vowel ω.

<sup>371</sup> Kirk 1985 *ad* 2.864-866.

**II. 23.327-332** AbcddebA

ἔστηκε ξύλον αἶον ὅσον τ' ὄργυι' ὑπὲρ αἴης  
 A, b ἢ δρυὸς ἢ πεύκης· τὸ μὲν οὐ καταπύθεται ὄμβρω,  
 c, d λαῖε δὲ τοῦ ἐκότερθεν ἐρηρέδαται δύο λευκῶ  
 d, c ἐν ζυνοχῆσιν ὁδοῦ, λεῖτος δ' ἵπποδρομος ἀμφίς 330  
 b, A ἢ τευ σημα βροτοῖο πάλαι κατατεθνηῶτος,  
 ἢ τό γε νύσσα τέτυκτο ἐπὶ προτέρων ἀνθρώπων...

There is a stump of a dead tree some six feet above the ground—  
 either an oak or a pine—and not yet rotted away by rain;  
 it has two white stones set one on each side  
 at the joinings of the road; and there is a smooth course for horses all round it,  
 either a monument to a mortal long since dead,  
 or it was fashioned as a turning mark by men of a former time;

The Homeric hapax συνοχή ('holding-together,' also from συνέχω) designates the semantically obscure 'joinings' of the racing path in Nestor's speech to Antilochus in *Il.* 23.327-332 and simultaneously marks out the center of the speech's extensive ring structure, which extends well beyond the passage excerpted here.

**II. 23.815-819** ABCCBA

A ...δεινὸν δερκομένω· θάμβος δ' ἔχε πάντας Ἀχαιοῦς. 815  
 B ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ σχεδὸν ἦσαν ἐπ' ἀλλήλοισιν ἰόντες,  
 C, C, B τρὶς μὲν ἐπήϊξαν, τρὶς δὲ σχεδὸν ὀρμήθησαν.  
 A ἔνθ' Αἴας μὲν ἔπειτα κατ' ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἔϊσῃν  
 νύξ', οὐδὲ χρο' ἴκανεν· ἔρυτο γὰρ ἔνδοθι θώρηξ...

...glancing fiercely, and amazement held all the Achaeans.  
 But when the two were now close up with one another,  
thrice did they spring forward and thrice come close to each other.  
 Ajax pierced Diomedes's shield equal in all directions,  
 but did not reach his skin, for the cuirass beneath the shield protected him...

When Ajax and Diomedes approach each other in the spear contest in *Il.* 23.815-819, the lexically ring-composed description of their actions emphasizes their proximity with the repetition of the adverb σχεδόν 'near, close by,' likewise derived from ἔχω.

A noteworthy point of comparison from outside Homer can be found in the Hesiodic *Shield of Heracles*. There, as on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18, the River Ocean is depicted

encircling the edge of the shield (314-315): ἀμφὶ δ' ἴτον ῥέεν Ὠκεανὸς πλήθοντι ἐοικώς, / πᾶν δὲ συνεῖχε σάκος πολυδαίδαλον... (“around the rim flowed Ocean as if in flood, and it enclosed [lit. ‘held together’] the whole much-decorated shield”). William Thalmann draws attention to the role of the verb συνέχω in these lines:<sup>372</sup>

Ocean literally “held together” the diverse scenes on the shield, unified them by providing a border. With that verb the poet insists on the function of the frame. Once again there is a correspondence between the poetic pattern and the physical object described, for the whole account of the shield is enclosed by ring composition.

In this case, unlike the previous examples, the verb annotates the surrounding framework of the ring structure rather than its midpoint, but this only suggests that the idea of ‘holding’ is pertinent to ring structures more broadly as compositional unities.

I focus in what follows on a scene in which a built structure’s ability and then failure to hold serves as a critical plot point for the progression of the narrative, namely Hector’s destruction of the Achaean Gates at the end of *Iliad* 12.

### 3.3.1 *The Achaean Gates*

In *Iliad* 7 the Achaeans build a defensive wall around their camp, and in subsequent books the Trojans attempt to overcome the wall and burn the Greek ships, culminating in the *τειχομαχία* or ‘battle of the wall’ that forms the subject of *Iliad* 12.<sup>373</sup> Sarpedon tears away a section of the battlements at *Il.* 12.397-399, but the climactic moment comes when Hector breaks the gates with a boulder at the end of *Iliad* 12, a scene that marks the halfway point of the *Iliad*

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<sup>372</sup> Thalmann 1984: 10.

<sup>373</sup> On the much-discussed role of the wall in the *Iliad* in general, see Porter 2011; West 1969: 255; Garcia 2013: 95-116.

as a whole. A scholion enthuses about the vigor and energy (ἐνέργεια) of the passage (bT ad 12.461-470):

πανταχόθεν ἐκίνησε τὴν ἐνέργειαν, ἐκ τοῦ βαλόντος, ἐκ τῶν διαρριπτομένων σανίδων, ἐκ τοῦ εἰσπηδῶντος καὶ φοβερὸν βλέποντος, ἐκ τῆς τῶν ὀπλων λαμπηδόνοσ, ἐκ τῶν κατεχομένων δοράτων, ἐκ τῶν ὑπερβαιόντων τὸ τεῖχος, καθ' ὃ μέρος ἔρρηξε Σαρπηδῶν, ἐκ τῶν εἰστρεχόντων εἰς τὰς πύλασ, καθ' ὃ μέρος ἔρρηξεν αὐτὰς ὁ Ἔκτωρ.

From all sides [the poet] has put in motion the activity (ἐνέργεια), from the throwing, from the planks torn through, from [Hector's] leaping and [his] terrible glance, from the shining of the armor, from the held spears, from the [Trojan's] rush into the gates through the part that Hector broke.

I would argue that an important component of the scene's dynamic is the poet's use of ring composition to enact first the closed and tightly locked gate, then the breaking-apart of that gate as Hector hurls a boulder through it. The thematically vital language of 'holding' as applied to the gates serves as a metastructural commentary on the organization of the passage, and both the strength of the Achaean gate and its destruction become metapoetic gestures toward the skill of the poet in the production of the scene.

Between the moment when Hector lifts the boulder (discussed in Ch. 2) and the moment when he hurls it through the gates, the poet describes the gates in detail:

**II. 12.453-457**            ABcDDcBA  
 ὦσ Ἔκτωρ ἰθὺς σανίδων φέρε λααν ἀείρας,  
 A            αἶ ῥα πύλασ εἴρυντο πύκα στιβαρῶσ **ἀραρυίας**  
 B, c, D    **δικλίδασ** ὑψηλάσ· **δαίσι** δ' ἔντοσθεν **ὀχῆεσ**            455  
 D, c, B, A **εἶχον ἐπημοιβοί**, μία δὲ **κλιῖσ ἐπαρήρει**.  
 στή δὲ μάλ' ἐγγὺσ ἰών, καὶ ἐρεισάμενοσ βάλε μέσσασ...

so did Hector lift the great stone and drive it right at the doors that closed the gates so strong and so firmly fit together. These doors were double and high, and two **cross-bars** **held** them in alternation, over which one pin-bolt was fitted. He stood close and planting himself firm struck the middle...

The description's ring structure centers on the bars or bolts (ὄχητες, lit. 'holders') that hold (εἶχον) the gates together (a *figura etymologica*). The ring structure mirrors the structure of the gates, with the 'holders' at the center 'holding' the lexical structure, like the gates, closed; this impression is enforced by the enjambment of εἶχον, which bridges the line division and binds together the two halves of the description of the bolts across it (δοιοὶ δ' ἔντοσθεν ὄχητες / εἶχον ἐπημοιβοὶ 455-456).<sup>374</sup> The sentence itself chiastically arranges the phonetically echoic δοιοὶ ('two') and ἐπημοιβοὶ ('alternating') around the central *figura etymologica*. The phrase ὄχητες εἶχον itself forms a phonetic palindrome consisting of front and back vowels arranged in chiasmus around the χ in each word; the final ν of εἶχον has a match in the final ν of the word preceding ὄχητες: ENOXHESSEIXONE. This quasi-palindrome continues on a smaller scale the annular arrangement of the larger ring structure.

The meaning of ἐπημοιβοὶ 'alternating' is not wholly clear; the scholia understand it to mean that the bolts cross each other at the midpoint of the door.<sup>375</sup> Whatever the envisaged configuration, the adjective connotes a kind of symmetry in the construction of the gates that has its parallel in the lexical and syntactic structure of the passage. As an implicit commentary on the lexical structure, the language of fitting and density (πύκα στιβαρῶς ἀραρυίας 454; ἐπαρήρει 456) points to the lexical sequence as a thing that has been 'densely and strongly fit together'; indeed, the annular repetitions in the three lines of the description of the gate are packed unusually tightly for a Homeric lexical ring structure.

<sup>374</sup> Cf. *Il.* 4.132-133 = 20.414-415 ζωστήρος ὄχητες / χρύσειοι σύνεχον.

<sup>375</sup> Scholion A *ad* 455-456: δοιοὶ δ' ἔντοσθεν ὄχητες / > εἶχον ἐπημοιβοὶ, <μία δὲ κληῖς ἐπαρήρει>: ὅτι δύο φησὶ μοχλοὺς εἶναι ἐπὶ τῆς πύλης, ἐξ ἑκατέρας φλιᾶς ἕνα, ἐπαλλασσομένους κατὰ μέσον καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἄκροις ἐπικλειομένους διὰ τὴν συμβολὴν μιᾶς κλειδὸς ("Since he says that there are two bolts on the gate, one from each doorpost, crossing at the middle and shut on top through the place where they join with one pin-bolt"). Scholion AbT *ad* 456: ἐπημοιβοὶ: εἰς μέσον συνάπτοντες· οἱ δὲ, εἷς ἐφ' ἕνα, μία δὲ ἐπ' αὐτῶν κλεις ἤρμοστο ("Connecting at the middle: some say, one [bolt] was fitted on the other, and one pin-bolt was fitted over them").

3.3.2 *Hector Breaks the Gates*

Immediately following the description of the closed gates is an account of Hector smashing them off their hinges with a boulder. A number of words from the initial description are repeated in spiral composition in the description of the breaking gate, and for this reason I include with new emphases the above-quoted text in the following excerpt:

**II. 12.453-462** ABC DEF GG DEF BCA

A, B, C	...ὡς Ἴκτωρ ἰθὺς <u>σανίδων</u> φέρε <u>λᾶαν</u> ἀείρας,	
D	αἶ ῥα <u>πύλας</u> εἴρυντο πύκα στιβαρῶς ἀραρυίας	
E	δικλίδας ὑψηλάς· δοιοὶ δ' ἔντοσθεν <u>ὀχῆες</u>	455
F	<u>ἔχων</u> ἐπημοιβοί, μία δὲ κληῖς ἐπαρήρει.	
G	στή δὲ μάλ' ἐγγὺς ἰών, καὶ ἐρεισάμενος <u>βάλε</u> μέσσας	
G	εὔ διαβάς, ἵνα μὴ οἱ ἀφανρότερον <u>βέλος</u> εἴη,	
	ῥῆξε δ' ἅπ' ἀμφοτέρους θαιρούς· πέσε δὲ λίθος εἴσω	
D, E	βριθοσύνη, μέγα δ' ἀμφὶ <u>πύλαι</u> μύκον, οὐδ' ἄρ' <u>ὀχῆες</u>	460
F, B	<u>ἔσχεθέτην</u> , <u>σανίδες</u> δὲ διέτμαγεν ἄλλυδις ἄλλη	
C, A	<u>λᾶος</u> ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς· ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθορε φαίδιμος Ἴκτωρ...	

...so did Hector lift the great stone and drive it right at the doors that closed the gates so strong and so firmly fit together. These doors were double and high, and two cross-bars held them in alternation, over which one pin-bolt was fitted. He stood close and planting himself firm struck the middle with a wide stance, so that his blow might gain in force, and broke the hinges on both sides, and the stone fell inside by reason of its great weight. The gates re-echoed with the sound, the bars no longer held, and the doors flew open, one one way, and the other the other through the force of the stone. Then brave Hector leaped inside...

Three lines describe Hector's action, which tears the gates from their pivots (456-459), then the words πύλαι 'gates,' ὀχῆες 'bolts,' ἔχω 'hold,' and σανίδες 'planks' are repeated from above to describe the destruction, followed by resumptions of λᾶας 'stone' and the name Ἴκτωρ. This time the 'holders' do not hold (οὐδ' ἄρ' ὀχῆες / ἔσχεθέτην 460-461), and while the collocation of ὀχῆες and ἔχω is maintained, there is nothing of the chiasmus or neat symmetrical structure around them that unified the previous description of the gates. The absence of internal ring

composition in the second description of the door stands in contrast to that former description as an apt reflection of the gates' failure to hold.

At the same time, these repetitions form a new ring structure that retroactively establishes the whole initial ring structure of the gates as now a component in a larger structure centered around the boulder's passage through the gates; this new center is metastructurally marked with the word μέσσας ('middle [of the gates]') in 457. Around this point, the innermost ring of the new structure consists of the words denoting the strike itself, the etymological pair βάλε 'strike' (verb) and βέλος 'strike' (noun), which 'hit' at the new middle. The boulder passes through the middle of the gates and the new ring structure at the same time, rendering both the described gates and the figural 'gates' open. The word σανίδες ('planks') that appears in line 461 has been iconically 'severed' (διέτμαγεν) from the previous instance of the word (453); the new ring structure enacts not the artfully fitted gates but the gates broken 'from the pivots on both sides' (ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρους θαιρούς 459), a phrase suggestive of the two-sidedness of the overarching ring structure.

Several components of the descriptions of the fitted and broken gates appear in the ring-composed Odyssean scene in which Penelope uses a key or hook to open the doors to the storeroom where Odysseus' bow is kept, and this may shed light on the conceptual nexus underlying the composition of ring-composed descriptions of gates more broadly:

**Od. 21.46-50** ABcDcDAB

αὐτίκ' ἄρ' ἦ γ' ἰμάντα θοῶς ἀπέλυσε κορώνης,  
 A, B ἐν δὲ κληῖδ' ἦκε, θυρέων δ' ἀνέκοπτεν ὀχῆας  
 c, D ἄντα τιτυσκομένη· τὰ δ' ἀνέβραχεν ἠὔτε ταῦρος  
 c, D, B βοσκόμενος λειμῶνι· τόσ' ἔβραχε καλὰ θύρετρα  
 A πληγέντα κληῖδι, πετάσθησαν δέ οἱ ὄκα. 50

She loosed the strap from the hook of the door,  
 put in the key, and drove it straight home

to shoot back the bolts that held the doors; these bellowed like a bull grazing in a meadow, so much did the lovely doors bellow struck by the key, and they opened very quickly.

The poet elaborates this rather less dramatic process of opening a set of double doors with a simile comparing the groaning of the doors to the sound of a bull in a field, and in so doing expands upon the same auditory idea behind the use of the onomatopoeic verb *μυκάζομαι* ‘low, bellow,’ properly of oxen, for gates in *Il.* 12.460 (*μέγα δ’ ἀμφὶ πύλαι μύκον*) and elsewhere.<sup>376</sup>

The noun *κλήϊς* again forms one of the repetends. Although *ὀχῆας* appears in 47, ‘holding’ is not a prominent theme as it is in the Iliadic passage: these doors do what they are supposed to insofar as they give access to the person to whom they are supposed to, betokening Penelope’s rightful status in her household and role as keeper of her husband’s prized and private possessions.

### 3.3.3 *The Onslaught of Hector and the Trojans*

To return to the passage at hand, the destruction of the Achaean gates allows Hector and the Trojans to rush through the wall. It is at this point useful to step back and survey the broader scene, because this motion represents a continuation of an action started previously in lines 442-445 and which was momentarily sidelined by the narrator’s description of Hector picking up the boulder and breaking the gate. All of the elements I have discussed above are thus framed by a ring of Hector’s initial exhortation to his men to storm the wall and then, enabled by his actions, their rush through and over the wall at the close of the book:

*Il.* 12.442-445 and 462-471 ABC DE FG(H)...FGGF DE (H) BCA BC H

A ὡς φάτ’ *ἐποτρύνων*, οἳ δ’ οὔασι πάντες ἄκουον,

B ἴθυσαν δ’ ἐπὶ *τείχος* ἀολλέες· οἳ μὲν ἔπειτα

C, DE κροσσάων *ἐπέβαινον* ἀκαχμένα *δούρατ’ ἔχοντες*,

F, G, H *Ἐκτωρ* δ’ ἀρπάξας *λαῶν* φέρεν, ὅς ῥα *πυλάων* 445

...

[simile of Hector lifting the boulder and description of the gate]

<sup>376</sup> The verb *μυκάζομαι* of oxen at e.g. *Il.* 18.580, *Il.* 21.237; of the gates of Ouranos at *Il.* 5.749.

- ...  
 G, F λαῖος ὑπὸ ριπῆς· ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθορε φαίδιμος Ἑκτωρ 462  
 νυκτὶ θοῇ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια· λάμπε δὲ χαλκῶ  
 σμερδαλέω, τὸν ἔεστο περὶ χροῖ, δοῖα δὲ χερσὶ  
 DE δοῦρ' ἔχεν· οὐ κέν τις μιν ἐρύκακεν ἀντιβολήσας 465  
 H νόσφι θεῶν ὅτ' ἐσᾶλτο πύλας· πυρὶ δ' ὅσσε δεδήει.  
 κέκλετο δὲ Τρώεσσιν ἐλιζάμενος καθ' ὄμιλον  
 B, C, A τεῖχος ὑπερβαίνειν· τοὶ δ' ὀτρύνοντι πίθοντο.  
 B, C αὐτίκα δ' οἱ μὲν τεῖχος ὑπέρβασαν, οἱ δὲ κατ' αὐτὰς  
 H ποιητὰς ἐσέχυντο πύλας· Δαναοὶ δὲ φόβηθεν 470  
 νῆας ἀνά γλαφυράς, ὄμαδος δ' ἀλίαστος ἐτύχθη.

Thus he spoke urging them on, and they listened with their ears,  
 and in one body they rushed straight at the wall,  
 and scaled the battlements holding sharp spears.

Hector laid hold of a stone that lay just outside the gates

...  
 through the force of the stone. Then brave Hector leaped inside  
 with a face like flying night. The gleaming bronze flashed  
 fiercely about his body and he had two spears in his hand.  
 None but a god could have withstood him  
 as he flung himself into the gateway, and his eyes glared like fire.  
 Then he turned round towards the Trojans and called on them  
 to scale the wall, and they did as he urged them—  
 some of them at once scaled the wall, while others  
 passed through the well-built gates. The Danaans then fled  
 panic-stricken towards their ships, and all was uproar and confusion.

Hector is described as urging the Trojans on in 442 (ἐποτρύνων), and again after breaking the gate (ὀτρύνοντι 468); on the first occasion, the Trojans respond by climbing up a stepped structure (κροσσάων ἐπέβαινον 444),<sup>377</sup> while on the second they cross over the wall itself (τεῖχος ὑπέρβασαν 469). The group of men that climbs over the wall is different from the group that pours through the gates (οἱ μὲν... οἱ δὲ 469), and the success of the former is not strictly contingent on Hector's destruction of the gates. But the simultaneity of their action and their

<sup>377</sup> The word κρόσσαι is a technical term whose precise meaning here is unknown. LSJ s.v. κρόσσαι: probably 'stepped copings of parapets'; Aristarchus explained it as 'scaling ladders.'

response to Hector's second exhortation allows for the condensation of the Trojan attack into a single climactic moment attributable to Hector's outstanding deed.

### 3.3.4 *Summary and Conclusion*

As Porter points out, some of the most detailed accounts of the wall's construction appear in its moments of destruction.<sup>378</sup> Here, the description of the well-made gate sets up and heightens Hector's destruction of the same. The overarching pattern of the above scenes can be summarized as follows:

- A) 442-444 Hector urges the Trojans on, and these make an attempt on the wall
- B) 445-453 Hector lifts the stone like a shepherd carrying a fleece (with ring structure)
- C) 453-456 Description of the closed gates (with ring structure)
- BC) 457-462 Hector breaks the gates with the stone (with ring structure retroactively encompassing 453-456)
- A) 462-471 Hector leaps through the gates and urges the Trojans on, and the Trojans overcome the wall

There is a noted disjunction between the speed with which the Achaeans build their wall in *Iliad* 7 (a single day) and the strong, well-built fortification that Trojans attack in *Iliad* 12, a fortification that at a later time will take the gods nine days to destroy.<sup>379</sup> For Porter, this disjunction points to the wall as “a metapoetic object that exhibits the full force of Homer's creative powers, which is to say, of a poet who can make and unmake objects at will.”<sup>380</sup>

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<sup>378</sup> Porter 2011: 31.

<sup>379</sup> *Il.* 12.17-33.

<sup>380</sup> Porter 2011: 33.

This is an apt framework for thinking about the structural iconicity of the passage, in which the evolving spiral composition allows the pattern to continuously retroactively recharacterize itself. The poet's structural illustration of what it means for a gate to hold and for a gate not to hold represents a more granular way in which the poet "can make and unmake objects at will." Because the structure of the narrative has enacted the content, that structure/narrative nexus itself can be seen as the obstacle hindering, and finally enabling, the progress of the Trojans. The concluding reference to the gates in 470 as 'well-built' (ποιητὰς...πύλας) annotates the descriptions of the construction and the destruction of the gates as products of the poet's skill.

From this point of view, the failure of the gates to hold represents on the narrative level a way in which the narrative itself holds together: the gates must break for the plot to continue. In this connection there is a thematic resonance in the etymology of the name Hector, 'Holder,' a name often interpreted to reflect his role in keeping safe the city of Troy. A noted instance of wordplay between Ἔκτωρ and ἔχω occurs at *Il.* 5.472-473:<sup>381</sup>

***Il.* 5.472-473**

Ἔκτωρ πῆ δὴ τοι μένος οἴχεται ὃ πρὶν ἔχεσκες;  
φῆς που ἄτερ λαῶν πόλιν ἐξέμεν ἠδ' ἐπικούρων  
οἶος σὺν γαμβροῖσι κασιγνήτοισί τε σοῖσι.

**Hector**, where has the strength gone that you once **had**?  
You used to say that though you had neither people nor allies  
you could **hold** the town alone with your brothers and brothers-in-law.

In his triumphant moment at the end of Book 12, the gate breaks but Hector's plot-line 'holds,' however temporarily, and secures for the time being the safety of his city. It may be relevant to add as a final observation that *Iliad* 12 has one of the highest frequencies of the verb ἔχω of all

<sup>381</sup> Louden 1995: 29 and n7, citing as further examples *Il.* 13.679, *Il.* 8.355-6, and *Il.* 24.728-30; Rank 1951: 46.

the books in the *Iliad*, followed closely by *Iliad* 13 and second only to *Iliad* 2, in which its frequency is accounted for by its role as a verb for possessing territory in the Catalogue of Ships.<sup>382</sup> What relationship there may, if any, be between the thematics of holding as manifested in the breaking of the Achaean gates and the centrality of the scene in the sequence of book divisions is a question I will leave open.

### 3.4 NUMBER ICONICITY

At the beginning of Chapter 1 I discussed a couplet from the beginning of the *Odyssey* in which the repetition of the noun Αἰθίοπας ‘Aethiopians’ seems to serve as a reflection of the fact that the Aethiopians live divided in two separate places, as the relevant lines state: ἀλλ’ ὁ μὲν Αἰθίοπας μετεκίαθε τηλόθ’ ἔοντας, / Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαΐαται (*Od.* 1.22-23). Taking its cues from and in turn offering support for this interpretation, the present section investigates passages in which numeric language is accompanied by an iconic illustration of that number through repetitions of relevant lexical items.

The cardinal and ordinal numerals the Homeric poet(s) use tend to denote low quantities; William Gladstone asserted in 1870 that “Homer had no definite idea of numbers beyond a very narrow range.”<sup>383</sup> A statistical analysis by Catherine Rubincam finds that 84% of the numbers in the *Iliad* and 90% in the *Odyssey* fall in the 2-20 range, and the majority of numbers in early poetic texts go up to 13 and no higher.<sup>384</sup> My purpose here is not to investigate the mathematical capabilities of the epic poet(s), but there is direct evidence of at least some facility in counting within the low range just described. A very basic kind of numeric iconicity occurs when the poet

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<sup>382</sup> Based on numbers derived from the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae*.

<sup>383</sup> Gladstone 1870: 541.

<sup>384</sup> Rubincam 2003: 455-457.

both states the number of individuals or items in a set and lists the individuals or items to the same number, as in the list of the leaders of the men assigned to stand watch outside the Achaean wall in *Iliad* 9:

***Il.* 9.80-86**

ἐκ δὲ φυλακτῆρες σὺν τεύχεσιν ἐσσεύοντο 80  
 ἀμφὶ τε Νεστορίδην Θρασυμήδεα ποιμένα λαῶν,  
 ἠδ' ἀμφ' Ἀσκάλαφον καὶ Ἰάλμενον υἱᾶς Ἄρηος  
 ἀμφὶ τε Μηριόνην Ἀφαρηά τε Δηϊπυρόν τε,  
 ἠδ' ἀμφὶ Κρείοντος υἱὸν Λυκομήδεα δῖον.  
 ἔπτ' ἔσαν ἡγεμόνες φυλάκων, ἑκατὸν δὲ ἑκάστω 85  
 κοῦροι ἅμα στεῖχον δολίχ' ἔγχεα χερσὶν ἔχοντες...

The sentinels went out in their armour  
 under command of Nestor's son **Thrasymedes**, shepherd of the host,  
 and of **Ascalaphus** and **Ialmenus**, sons of Ares:  
 there were also **Meriones**, **Aphareus** and **Deipyros**,  
 and the son of Creion, noble **Lycomedes**.  
 There were *seven* captains of the sentinels, and with each there went a hundred  
 youths armed with long spears in their hands...

After naming each of the leaders, the poet summarizes the list with the statement that there were seven leaders of the watchmen (85); the ‘hundred fighting men’ that follow the leaders are not, understandably, named.<sup>385</sup> In *Iliad* 16.171-197 appears a numbered description of the five men Achilles has appointed as leaders of his contingent (πέντε δ' ἄρ' ἡγεμόνας ποιήσατο 171): τῆς μὲν **ἰῆς** στιχὸς ἦρχε Μενέσθιος... τῆς δ' **ἐτέρης** Εὐδωρος... τῆς δὲ **τρίτης** Πείσανδρος... τῆς δὲ **τετάρτης** ἦρχε γέρον ἱπηλάτα Φοῖνιξ... **πέμπτης** δ' Ἀλκιμέδων (“Menestheus ruled one rank... Eudorus another... the third Pisander... the fourth Phoenix... the fifth Alkimedon”).<sup>386</sup>

Similarly, in *Iliad* 12 the Trojan contingents are described as “arranged in five parts” (πένταχα

<sup>385</sup> Cf. the list of seven cities at *Il.* 9.291-294, introduced by ἐπὶ δὲ τοὶ δώσει ... πολίεθρα ‘he will give you seven cities’; the list of Achaean leaders who follow Diomedes into battle in *Il.* 8.261-267, with Teucer labeled as the ninth (Τεῦκρος δ' εἵνατος ἦλθε 266; the count implicitly starts with Diomedes as first); and the list of Priam’s nine sons at *Il.* 9.249-252, concluding with ἐννέα τοῖς... ἐκέλευε “he was bidding... these nine.”

<sup>386</sup> Cf. *Il.* 2.405-407 Νέστορα μὲν πρότιστα... ἕκτον δ' αὐτ' Ὀδυσῆα; *Od.* 10.348-359 ἀμφίπολοι... τέσσαρες... ἢ μὲν... ἢ δὲ τετάρτη.

κοσμηθέντες 12.87) before a numbered list of the leaders, in an instance of structural order reflecting orderly content as discussed in the section on the cheekpiece simile at *Il.* 4.140-147 (3.2.2). Not fundamentally different are passages in which someone deliberates or acknowledges a specific number of alternative possibilities, as Achilles does in *Iliad* 9:

<b><i>Il.</i> 9.410-416</b>	AB C DEFG C DEFG BA	
	μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα	410
AB	<i>διχθαδίας κῆρας</i> φερέμεν <b>θανάτιο τέλος</b> δέ.	
C	<b>εἰ μὲν κ'</b> αὔθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,	
D, E, F, G	<b>ᾧλετο</b> μὲν <b>μοι</b> νόστος, ἀτὰρ <b>κλέος</b> ἄφθιτον <b>ἔσται</b> .	
C	<b>εἰ δέ κεν</b> οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,	
D, E, F	<b>ᾧλετό μοι κλέος</b> ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ <b>μοι</b> αἰὼν	415
G, BA	<b>ἔσσεται</b> , οὐδέ κέ μ' ᾧκα <b>τέλος θανάτιο</b> κιχεΐη.	

My mother the goddess Thetis of the silver feet tells me  
that I bear a **twofold** destiny toward death's end.  
If I stay here and fight around the city of the Trojans,  
My homecoming is destroyed but my fame will last for ever:  
whereas if I go home to my dear fatherland,  
my fame is destroyed, but my life will be long  
nor swiftly will the end of death come upon me.

As discussed in section 1.1, Achilles describes the two fates (*διχθαδίας κῆρας*) that face him in two syntactically and lexically parallel conditional clauses (*εἰ μὲν κ' ... ᾧλετο ... εἰ δέ κεν ... ᾧλετό* etc.). Alternatives plans are sometimes formulated with *διχθά* or *τρίχα* plus the correlative conjunctions *ἢ ... ἢ ...* ('either... or'), as in *τρίχα* δέ σφισιν ἦνδανε βουλή, ἦε ... ἢ ... ἢ ... (*Od.* 8.506-510 'in three ways the plan was pleasing to them: either... or... or...').<sup>387</sup> The poet does not need to expressly state the number of alternatives before listing them, but doing so as a means of structuring information likely seemed as intuitive to the Greeks as it does to us.<sup>388</sup>

<sup>387</sup> Cf. *Il.* 16.435-438 (*διχθά* δέ μοι κραδίη μέμονε... ἢ... ἢ...); *Il.* 14.20-22 (ὡς ὁ γέρων ὄρμαινε... *διχθάδι*, ἢ μεθ'... ἦε μετ'...).

<sup>388</sup> Compare the Indo-European examples of lists of three names introduced by 'three' at West 2007: 119.



This triple division between the three brothers manifests in three ways in his account: In the list of the siblings (*Ζεὺς καὶ ἐγώ, τρίτατος δ' Ἀἴδης* in 188), repeated in 190-192; in the triple repetition of words denoting ‘three,’ completed in line 189 (*τρεῖς... τρίτατος... τριχθὰ* ‘three... third... in three ways’); and in the syntactic and lexical parallelism of the description of the division with its triple repetition of *λαγχάνω* ‘obtain by lot’ in 190-192. The explicit reference to ‘three’ in three lines is emphatic, as any number of ‘threes’ would be, but the triple repetition is strikingly appropriate to the context.<sup>389</sup>

In *Iliad* 18 Achilles orders his men to put a tripod (*τρίπους*, lit. ‘three-foot’) on the fire to heat water with which to bathe the dead Patroclus:

**II. 18.343-351** A BCDEEDCB F DBA FFE  
 ὧς εἰπὼν ἐτάροισιν ἐκέκλετο δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς  
 ABCD ἀμφὶ πυρὶ στήσαι τρίποδα μέγαν, ὄφρα τάχιστα  
 E Πάτροκλον λούσειαν ἀπο βρότον αἱματόεντα. 345  
 EDCB οἱ δὲ λοετροχόον τρίποδ' ἴστασαν ἐν πυρὶ κηλέω,  
 F ἐν δ' ἄρ' ὕδωρ ἔχεαν, ὑπὸ δὲ ξύλα δαῖον ἐλόντες.  
 DBAF γάστρην μὲν τρίποδος πῦρ ἄμφεπε, θέρμετο δ' ὕδωρ·  
 F αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ ζέσσειεν ὕδωρ ἐνὶ ἥνοπι χαλκῶ,  
 E καὶ τότε δὴ λούσαν τε καὶ ἤλειψαν λίπ' ἐλαίω, 350  
 ἐν δ' ὠτειλᾶς πλήσαν ἀλείφατος ἐννεώροιο· ...

Thus speaking, Achilles told his men  
 to set a large tripod upon the fire that they might  
 wash the clotted gore from off Patroclus.  
 Thereon they set a tripod full of bath water on to a clear fire:  
 they poured water in and kindled wood beneath it,  
 and the water became hot as the flame played about the belly of the tripod.  
 When the water in the flashing bronze was boiling  
 they washed the body, anointed it with oil,  
 and closed its wounds with ointment that had been kept nine years...

The poet devotes time to the heating of the tripod; there would be no consequence to the narrative if lines 346-349 were left out, although it is typical for the poet to include both a

<sup>389</sup> Compare Aeschylus fr. 109: *τρία* δόρη πάλλοντα χερσίν· *τρία* δ' ἴτης σάκη προτείνων, *τρεῖς* δ' ἐπισσειών λόφους.

character's instructions and a description of the instructions being carried out. Even allowing for this, lines 347-348 (the heating and boiling water) could be omitted with little consequence. Strictly speaking, the bathing of the corpse could occur without reference to a tripod at all. But the poet chooses to dwell on the image, and in doing so has occasion to repeat several words. The triple repetition of 'tripod' entails a repetition of the element ποδ-, 'foot,' three times, such that the deployment of the word enacts the 'three-foot' it describes. It may or may not be pertinent that each of the terms πῦρ 'fire,' ὕδωρ 'water,' and λούω/λοετρ- 'wash' also occurs three times; at any rate these further lexical repetitions contribute to the structural unity that binds the focused emphasis on the heating tripod, organized around the underlying sequence in which Achilles orders the water heated, preparations are made, and the water heats. In a testament to the cohesion and efficacy of the passage, lines 344 and 346-348 with their triple τρίπους appear with minor variations at *Od.* 8.434-437.

In an unusual anaphora, the otherwise-unmentioned Nireus is named in line-initial position three lines in a row in the Catalogue of Ships (cf. section 1.3):

***Il.* 2.671-673**

Νιρέυς αὖ Σύμηθεν ἄγε *τρεις* νῆας εἴσας  
Νιρέυς Ἀγλαΐης υἱὸς Χαρόποιό τ' ἀνακτος  
Νιρέυς, ὃς κάλλιστος ἀνὴρ ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθε  
 τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν μετ' ἀμύμονα Πηλεΐωνα·  
 ἀλλ' ἀλαπαδνὸς ἔην, παῦρος δέ οἱ εἶπετο λαός.      675

Nireus brought *three equal ships* from Syme—  
Nireus, son of Aglaia and lord Charopos,  
Nireus, who was the handsomest man that came up under Ilius  
 of all the Danaans after the son of Peleus.  
 But he was a man of no substance, and had but a small following.

Nireus is said to lead three 'equal' ships (*τρεις νῆας εἴσας* 2.671), a fact that suggests a resonance not only with the number of times the name is repeated but with the balanced or 'equal' position

of the line-initial repetitions (see for comparison the discussion of the adjective ἔισος in the section on shields). Although Nireus appears nowhere else in the text, this brief but striking description of the second-most-beautiful Danaan earned him considerable fame in later Greco-Roman antiquity.<sup>390</sup>

Not much earlier in the Catalogue of Ships, The Rhodians are described as living ‘arranged in three’ (τρίγα κοσμηθέντες 655), with a threefold repetition of ‘Rhodes/Rhodian’:

**Il. 2.653-656**

Τληπόλεμος δ' Ἡρακλείδης ἠϋς τε μέγας τε  
 ἐκ **Ῥόδου** ἐννέα νῆας ἄγεν **Ῥοδίων** ἀγερώχων,  
 οἱ **Ῥόδου** ἀμφενέμοντο διὰ **τρίγα κοσμηθέντες** 655  
 Λίνδον Ἰηλυσόν τε καὶ ἀργινόεντα Κάμειρον.

Tlepolemus, son of Hercules, a man both brave and large of stature,  
 brought from Rhodes nine ships of lordly Rhodians.  
 These dwelt in Rhodes which is *arranged among the three* cities  
 of Lindus, Ielus, and Cameirus, that lies upon the chalk.

The final line (656) lists the three cities in which the Rhodians dwell. Once again, the structural arrangement of the language of the description reflects the arrangement it describes with the verb κοσμέω. Structurally similar is the account of the birth of Tros:

**Il. 20.230-233**

**Ἐριχθόνιος** δ' Ἐριχθόνιος τέκετο **Ἐρώεσσι** ἄνακτα· 230  
**Ἐρώος** δ' αὖ **τρεις** παῖδες ἀμύμονες ἐξεγένοντο  
**Ἴλος** τ' **Ἀσσάρακος** τε καὶ ἀντίθεος **Γανυμήδης**,  
 ὃς δὴ κάλλιστος γένητο θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων...

Erichthonius begat Tros, king of the Trojans,  
 and Tros had *three* noble sons,  
**Ius**, **Assaracus**, and godlike **Ganymede**,  
 who was comeliest of mortal men...

<sup>390</sup> Putnam 1995: 127-131; Fehling 1969: 184n32.

Τρώς/Τρῶες is repeated three times before a list of the three sons born to him, with alliteration of τρ-.

The verb (ἀναρ)ροιβδέω ‘suck down’ appears three times in Circe’s description of Charybdis swallowing and belching up water three times a day in *Odyssey* 12:

**Od. 12.104-106**

τῷ δ' ὑπὸ δῖα Χάρυβδις ἀναρροιβδεῖ μέλαν ὕδωρ.  
**τρὶς** μὲν γάρ τ' ἀνίσιν ἐπ' ἤματι, **τρὶς** δ' ἀναρροιβδεῖ 105  
 δεινόν· μὴ σύ γε κεῖθι τύχοις, ὅτε **ροιβδήσειεν**...

Under it Charybdis swallows down black water.

Three times in the day does she vomit forth, and three times she swallows down terribly: see that you be not there when she is swallowing...

The adverb τρίς ‘thrice’ appears twice to express the opposite but related actions of belching and swallowing and does not itself participate in the iconicity of threeness. Circe’s injunction against being present when Charybdis is gulping down, as opposed to when she is belching up (although the actions are paired), enables the third repetition of (ἀναρ)ροιβδέω.

3.4.2 *Epanalepsis of Hemistichs*

On three occasions in the *Iliad*, an entire hemistich in the second half of a line is repeated in the first half of the subsequent line. At *Il.* 23.641-2, Nestor describes his chariot race against the unbeatable twins (δίδυμοι 641), and describes their teamwork:

**Il. 23.638-642** aBCBCa  
 οἰοισίν μ' ἵπποισι παρήλασαν Ἀκτορίωνε  
 πλήθει πρόσθε βαλόντες ἀγασσάμενοι περὶ νίκης,  
 a οὔνεκα δὴ τὰ **μέγιστα** παρ' αὐτόθι λείπεται ἄεθλα. 640  
 BC οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἔσαν **δίδυμοι**· ὁ μὲν **ἔμπεδον ἠνιόχευεν**,  
 BC, a **ἔμπεδον ἠνιόχευ**, ὁ δ' ἄρα **μάστιγι** κέλευεν.

In chariot-racing alone did the two sons of Actor surpass me by crowding their horses in front of me, angry about winning, and at the greater part of the prizes remaining in the place.

They were *twins*, and the one kept on holding the reins,  
holding the reins, while the other plied the whip.

A scholion observes that the epanalepsis contains ‘much suggestiveness’ (πολλήν...ἔμφασιν);<sup>391</sup> although denotatively the hemistich refers only to one twin, the doubling achieved by the salient repetition suggests the duality of the twins, as if an elaboration of the morphological reduplication in the word **δίδουμοι** itself.<sup>392</sup> At the same time, the epanalepsis illustrates the continual and steadfast (ἔμπεδον) charioteering signified also by the use of the imperfect.

In *Il.* 22.127-128 Hector rejects the possibility of talking to Achilles by comparing such talk to the intimate conversation of a young man and woman:

***Il.* 22.126-130**

ABCBCA

οὐ μὲν πῶς νῦν ἔστιν ἀπὸ δρυὸς οὐδ’ ἀπὸ πέτρης  
A, BC τῷ **ᾠαρίζεμεναι**, ἅ τε **παρθένος ἡϊθέος** τε  
BC, A **παρθένος ἡϊθέος** τ’ **ᾠαρίζετον** ἀλλήλοιν.  
βέλτερον αὐτ’ ἔριδι ξυνελαυνέμεν ὅττι τάχιστα·  
εἶδομεν ὀπποτέρῳ κεν Ὀλύμπιος εὖχος ὀρέξῃ.

130

There is no way from oak or from stone  
to converse with him, as young men and maidens,  
young men and maidens converse with one another.  
Better to come together in strife with him at once,  
and learn to which of us Zeus will vouchsafe victory.

The intimacy and reciprocity of the imagined conversation is signaled by the close repetition of **παρθένος ἡϊθέος τε**, which is further set off from its context by the surrounding repetition of **ᾠαρίζω** ‘speak familiarly,’ in a structural evocation of the mutual absorption of a young couple who have become for each other a world in themselves.<sup>393</sup> Olga Levaniouk characterizes the repetitions as an iconic expression of the idea of agonistic balance, and observes that the

<sup>391</sup> Scholion b 642b πολλήν δὲ ἔχει ἢ ἐπανάληψις ἔμφασιν.

<sup>392</sup> δίδυμος “double” < IE \**dui-du-*; reduplication from δύο with suffix (Beekes 2010). Cf. Blažek 1999: 166 on the word’s expressive reduplication.

<sup>393</sup> Cf. Scholion bT 126-127c: διὰ δὲ τὴν πολυλογία τῆ ἀναλήψις ἐχρήσατο (“[the poet] used analepsis because of their chattiness”).

reciprocity and duality of the young pair is further emphasized with the dual dative of ἀλλήλων ‘each other,’ itself in origin a doubling of the word ἄλλος ‘other.’<sup>394</sup> By lingering on the image, Hector puts off for another moment the reality of his impending fight with Achilles.

The repeated hemistich at *Il.* 20.371-372 likewise concerns a pair, the hands of Achilles, as imagined by Hector in an address to the Trojans:

***Il.* 20.369-372 ABCABC**

οὐδ’ Ἀχιλεὺς πάντεσσι τέλος μύθοις ἐπιθήσει,  
 ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν τελέει, τὸ δὲ καὶ μεσσηγὸν κολούει. 370  
 ABC τοῦ δ’ ἐγὼ ἀντίος εἶμι καὶ εἰ πυρὶ χεῖρας ἔοικεν,  
 ABC εἰ πυρὶ χεῖρας ἔοικε, μένος δ’ αἴθωνι σιδήρω.

Even so the deed of Achilles will fall somewhat short of his word;  
 he will do in part, and the other part he will clip short.  
 I will go up against him though his hands be as fire—  
though his hands be as fire and his strength as shining iron.

Richard Bentley suggested that the phrase χεῖρας ἔοικε (‘like [fire] in his hands’) may originally have been χεῖρε φέροιεν, with the dual of χεῖρ ‘hand’ followed by the digamma-initial reduplicated perfect-as-present verb ‘to be like.’<sup>395</sup>

There is naturally more to these repeated hemistichs than an enactment of duality, or else we would expect a much greater frequency of such figures in Homer. Their appearance only in speeches suggests that they serve a particular rhetorical effect. It is only in *Il.* 23.641-642 that ‘duality’ is semantically explicit (δίδυμοι ‘twins’), but the use of the dual in *Il.* 22.127-128 (ἀλλήλουιν ‘each other’) and possibly in *Il.* 20.371-372 (χεῖρε ‘[two] hands’) draws attention to the same number. In all cases there is morphological reduplication – in δίδυμοι, ἀλλήλουιν, and ἔοικεν < φέροιεν – which raises the possibility that this doubling may have been heard as such

<sup>394</sup> Levaniouk 2011: 84-85. For the etymology of ἀλλήλων, see Beekes 2010 s.v. ἀλλήλους, -ων, -οις: “from repeated ἄλλος, i.e. \*αλλο-αλλο-.”

<sup>395</sup> See Edwards 1991 *ad loc.* Beekes 2010 s.v. ἔοικα < φέ-φοικ-α < IE? \*ueik-, possibly ‘be fitting.’

by the Homeric poet and audience. In Chapter 2.4.2 I made a case for the ability of morphological reduplication to play a role in paronomastic rings in lexical ring structures, and by the same token it seems not implausible that an ancient poet and audience might view lexical repetition and morphological repetition as two expressions of the same underlying iconic phenomenon.<sup>396</sup>

### 3.4.3 *Doubling, Reduplication, and Duality*

As witnessed above, there are two kinds of morphological reduplication, one in which the whole structure of a root is repeated, as in ἀλλήλων ‘each other,’ and the more linguistically productive type in which the first consonant of a root is repeated and followed by a short vowel, as in many perfect verbs (e.g. ἔοικεν < **ῥέ**φοικεν) and some presents.<sup>397</sup> Elisabetta Magni argues on the basis of Homeric evidence that reduplication in the so-called ‘intensive’ perfects (i.e. verbs in the perfect tense with present meaning, such as κέκληγα from κλάζω ‘scream’ or ὄρωρα from ὄρνυμι ‘arise’ or πέπληγα from πλήσσω ‘hit’) originally encoded pluractionality, that is, information about event plurality, and that the basic semantic value of ‘intensive’ perfects was not in the first place intensity but event repetition.<sup>398</sup> If morphological reduplication of either of the two types was in some cases or in some linguistic phases in antiquity heard as a repetitive doubling, this perception may have contributed to the durability of some formulaic language pertaining to twos.

The formula διάνδιχα μερμήριξεν (‘deliberated worriedly in two ways’) contains a twofold phonetic doubling (δι...δι... and the reduplicated μερμήρ...); the adverb διάνδιχα itself is a compound of διά ‘through’ and ἄνδιχα ‘in two,’ both of which derive from Proto-Indo-

<sup>396</sup> See, also, the citation there of Hackstein 2007.

<sup>397</sup> Magni 2017: 328.

<sup>398</sup> Magni 2017: 325-328 and 334-335; specific verbs at 330-333.

European \*dis ‘twice, apart.’<sup>399</sup> Although the etymology of μερμηρίζω ‘care, consider, linger’ is not wholly understood, the verb developed within Greek and was built around the intensive effect of reduplication, which perhaps accounts for its irregularity. The formula and variations of the same are usually followed by a description of the two plans under consideration in an either/or syntactic framework:<sup>400</sup>

**Il. 1.188-192** abcdba

a ὦς φάτο· Πηλεΐωνι δ’ ἄχος γένετ’, ἐν δέ οἱ ἦτορ  
 b, c στήθεσσι λασίοισι διάνδιχα μερμηρίζεν,  
 c ἦ ὁ γε φάσανον ὄξυ ἐρυσάμενος παρὰ μηροῦ 190  
 b τοὺς μὲν ἀναστήσειεν, ὃ δ’ Ἄτρεΐδην ἐναρίζοι,  
 a ἦε χόλον παύσειεν ἐρητύσειέ τε θυμόν.

Thus he spoke, and the son of Peleus was furious, and his heart pondered in two ways within his shaggy breast, whether to draw his sword from beside his thigh, make the others stand up, and kill the son of Atreus, or to restrain himself and check his anger.

Here external support for the audibility of the reduplication in μερμηρίζεν comes from the paronomastic resumption of the relevant syllable in μηροῦ (‘thigh’) in the following line; although this belatedly adds a third μηρ-, the repetition in μηροῦ represents its own kind of doubling at the center of a semantic/paronomastic ring structure (ἄχος... ἦτορ-στήθεσσι-μερμηρίζεν-μηροῦ-ἀναστήσειεν-χόλον... θυμόν). The same wordplay occurs at *Od.* 10.438-439: ὦς ἔφατ’, αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ γε μετὰ φρεσὶ μερμηρίζα, / σπασσάμενος τανύηκες ἄορ παχέος παρὰ μηροῦ (‘thus he spoke, but I deliberated in my mind, drawing my sharp-edged sword from my thick thigh’) and *Od.* 22.333-336: δίχα δὲ φρεσὶ μερμηρίζεν... Λαέρτης Ὀδυσσεύς τε βοῶν ἐπὶ μηρί’ ἔκταν (‘he was deliberating in two ways in his mind... where Laertes and Odysseus

<sup>399</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. διά and δίς.

<sup>400</sup> Cf. *Il.* 13.455-457; *Od.* 16.73-77; *Od.* 22.333-337. *Il.* 8.167-168 (ὦς φάτο, Τυδεΐδης δὲ διάνδιχα μερμηρίζεν / ἵππους τε στρέψαι καὶ ἐναντίβιον μαχέσασθαι) anomalously lacks either/or alternatives; the scholia (bT 8.167 and A 168) reject a plus verse (168a) they explain as designed to fill the gap.

burned the thighs of cattle”). Semantically and morphologically similar in its δίχα plus reduplication structure is Penelope’s expression at *Od.* 19.525: ὦς καὶ ἐμοὶ δίχα θυμὸς ὀρώρεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα (“thus also was my heart stirred in two, this way and that”).

The phrase δίπλακα πορφυρέην ‘twofold, purple’ appears twice in the *Iliad*, first as a description of the cloth Helen is weaving in *Iliad* 3, then of the cloth Andromache weaves in *Iliad* 22; a looser collocation appears in the disguised Odysseus’ fictional description in *Odyssey* 19 of gifts he purportedly gave Odysseus (δίπλακα δῶκα / καλὴν πορφυρέην 241-243). Different suggestions have been put forward since antiquity for what is meant by ‘twofold’ in this formula,<sup>401</sup> but the fact that the fabric is in some way double may also resonate with the approximate phonetic repetition in πορφυρ-. The variant μαρμαρέην ‘gleaming,’ attested for both Iliadic passages, fits the same criterion. Similarly, in the passage containing the description of Odysseus’ brooch, discussed in 3.2.1, appears both a two-fold (διπλός) purple cloak and the pin with double (δίδυμοι) clasps:

***Od.* 19.225-227**

χλαῖναν πορφυρέην οὔλην ἔχε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς, 225  
 διπλήν· ἐν δ’ ἄρα οἱ περόνη χρυσοῖο τέτυκτο  
 αὐλοῖσιν διδύμοισι· πάροιθε δὲ δαίδαλον ἦεν...

Divine Odysseus wore a mantle of purple wool,  
 twofold, and it was fastened by a gold brooch  
 with twin catches for the pin. On the face it was finely decorated...

Four reduplicated forms appear in three lines (πορφυρέην, τέτυκτο, διδύμοισι, δαίδαλον), and the echo in the formula δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς – the same syllables as in δίδυμοι – contributes to the phonetic doublings as well.<sup>402</sup> The alliteration of διδύμοισι and δαίδαλον ‘intricately worked’ in

<sup>401</sup> E.g. Edmunds 2012: §60-§61; Nagy 2009: 278-279.

<sup>402</sup> Cf. *Od.* 20.353 and 357 οἰωγὴ δὲ δέδηε, δεδάκρυνται δὲ παρειαί... οὐρανοῦ ἐξαπόλωλε, κακὴ δ’ ἐπιδέδρομεν ἀγλός.

a single line is noteworthy, because not only is the root ‘two’ doubled in δίδυμοι, but those syllables are then loosely ‘doubled’ in the reduplication in δαίδαλος, compounding the morphological reduplication with a lexical doubling (something like ‘2-2 + 2-2’). The pairing suggests a semantic connection between reduplication and the iterative activity of fine craftsmanship that is metapoetically apt for the passage at hand, and the language of ‘folding’ and ‘twinning’ here takes on what we might call a metamorphological cast. Rhetorical terminology from a later era would make use of the same metaphor of ‘folding’ for linguistic doublings: ἀναδίπλωσις (lit. ‘folding up in two’) and ἀναδιπλασιασμός became technical terms for the appearance of the same word twice in a row or reduplication.<sup>403</sup> Already in Aeschylus we find this sense in the self-referential χαίρετε, χαίρετε δ’ αὖθις, ἐπανδιπλοῖζω (‘farewell, farewell again, I redouble it,’ *Eum.* 1014), which itself repeats a farewell from lines 996-997 (χαίρετε three times).<sup>404</sup>

The description of the brooch continues with a ring-composed ekphrasis of its image of a dog pursuing a fawn, and this structure, in which the dog and fawn are each mentioned twice, extends in a different way the doubling-by-repetition; the scene was discussed in detail in 3.2.2.

I suggested in section 2.2.4 that Nestor’s ring-composed speech about charioteering in *Iliad* 23 centers on a description of the turning post that features a paronomastic lexical structure in which δύο ‘two’ is paired with ὁδοῦ ‘path,’ reflecting the two stones leaned against the post and virtually saying ‘two’ twice: λᾶε δὲ τοῦ ἐκάτερθεν ἐρηρέδαται **δύο** λευκῶ / ἐν ξυνοχῆσιν ὁδοῦ (‘two white stones were leaned on either side of it in the joinings of the path’ 329-330).

The proximity of the terms and their position in a broader ring structure lends support to the

<sup>403</sup> Pseudo-Demetrius of Phaleron *On Style*: 2.66; Trypho fr. 12.

<sup>404</sup> The form ἐπανδιπλοῖζω is Hermann’s conjecture; the manuscripts have ἐπιδιπλοῖζω or διπλοῖζω. These alternatives make little difference for the present argument. Cf. *Ag.* 835 ἄχθος διπλοῖζει τῷ πεπαιμένῳ νόσον; *Cho.* 939 διπλοῦς λέων, διπλοῦς Ἄρης.

supposition that the echo is significant. A similar case can be made for δύο and ἀποδοῦναι in *Il.* 18.498-499: **δύο** δ' ἄνδρες ἐνεΐκεον εἵνεκα ποινῆς / ἄνδρὸς ἀποφθιμένου· ὃ μὲν εὖχετο πάντ' **ἀποδοῦναι** ('two men were quarreling on account of the blood money for a dead man: the one claimed to have paid in full'). If phonetic doubling based on δύο is a kind of trope, it may also be at play in the formulas δύο δοῦρε 'two spears' (three times in the *Iliad*, five in the *Odyssey*) and δοῦρε δύω (twice in the *Iliad*, once in the *Odyssey*).<sup>405</sup> The inclusion of the numeral here is semantically gratuitous insofar as the word δοῦρε is already in the dual number; the form δύω itself is the dual number of δύο, and represents another kind of compounded duality.<sup>406</sup>

The phrase διχθὰ δεδαΐαται ('divided in two,' with its own reduplicated verb) in the passage about the Aethiopians (*Od.* 1.23) is unique,<sup>407</sup> but the verb δαΐομαι 'divide' and the related form δαίνυμι 'apportion out > feast,' while not strictly denoting numbers, appear often in etymological or paronomastic figures. The formulaic line δαίνυντ', οὐδέ τι θυμὸς ἐδεύετο δαιτὸς εἴσης ('they feasted, and no heart lacked an equal portion') is one example;<sup>408</sup> feasts may be added to ships and shields in the category of things described by Homeric verse as 'equal' in contexts of balanced lexical repetitions. The line is often preceded by the line αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ παύσαντο πόνου τετύκοντό τε δαΐτα ('but when they ceased from toil and had made a feast'), which compounds the *figura etymologica* and expands the alliteration.<sup>409</sup> At other times the line is preceded by ὡς τότε μὲν πρόπαν ἦμαρ ἐς ἠέλιον καταδύντα ('thus, then, all day to the sun

<sup>405</sup> Gonda 1953: 17-18 notes the alliteration of the phrase and suggests the inclusion of the numeral is "a means of dwelling upon the completeness of this part of the armor," in addition to possible metrical considerations. The use of two spears in Homer is usually discussed in terms of a reflection of a historical phase of Greek warfare with implications for the dating of the epics; see the summary in Kirk 2005: 183-184.

<sup>406</sup> Gonda 1953: 13 considers a possible "emphatic" usage of the dual PIE numeral, as well as of the use of the Greek numeral with nouns in the dual number (17). See also his comments on the Greek use of the dual for natural or perceived pairs (14) and the inconsistent use of the dual in Homer more broadly (15-20).

<sup>407</sup> Similar is *Od.* 15.412 δίχα δέ σφισι πάντα δέδασται.

<sup>408</sup> E.g. *Il.* 23.56, and see the following two notes.

<sup>409</sup> *Il.* 1.467, *Il.* 2.430, *Il.* 7.319, *Od.* 16.478.

going down'), which makes a paronomastic jingle of καταδύντα / δαίνυντ.<sup>410</sup> The formula δαίνυντ' ἐρικυδέα δαῖτα ('they feasted a glorious feast') is another etymological example;<sup>411</sup> non-etymological, from the modern standpoint at least, is the collocation in ἀλλά μοι ἄμφ' Ὀδυσῆι δαΐφρονι δαίεται ἦτορ ('but my heart is divided over skillful Odysseus') at *Od.* 1.48.<sup>412</sup>

Some of the linguistic doublings that appear in the preceding examples have their origins in the language itself; some in all likelihood belong to the oral poetic tradition that produced Homeric epic; some collocations may be unique to these epics in particular. But the tendency for doublings, both structural and semantic, to compound in Homeric epic, as in the description of Odysseus' cloak and brooch in *Odyssey* 19, suggests that reduplication at least in some cases offered a living rather than a dead metaphor for the producers of Homeric verse. An interesting case appears in the Embassy to Achilles in *Iliad* 9:

***Il.* 9.223-231 ab(CC)DDDba**

- A νεῦσ' Αἴας Φοίνικι· νόησε δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,  
 b, C πλησάμενος δ' οἴνοιο δέπας δειδέκτ' Ἀχιλῆα·  
 C, D χαῖρ' Ἀχιλεῦ· δαιτὸς μὲν εἴσης οὐκ ἐπιδευεῖς 225  
 ἡμὲν ἐνὶ κλισίῃ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἄτρεϊδαο  
 ἥδ' ἐ καὶ ἐνθάδε νῦν, πάρα γὰρ μενοεικέα πολλὰ  
 D, D δαίνυσθ'· ἀλλ' οὐ δαιτὸς ἐπηράτου ἔργα μέμηλεν,  
 ἀλλὰ λίην μέγα πῆμα διοτρεφὲς εἰσορόωντες  
 b δειδίμεν· ἐν δροῖῃ δὲ σαωσέμεν ἢ ἀπολέσθαι 230  
 a νῆας εὖσσέλμους, εἰ μὴ σὺ γε δύσσαι ἀλκίην.

Ajax nodded to Phoenix, and when he noticed this, divine Odysseus filled his cup with wine and pledged Achilles.

"Hail, Achilles, we have had no scant of an equal feast,  
 neither in the tent of Agamemnon son of Atreus,  
 nor yet here; there has been plenty of agreeable things  
 to divide out, but our thoughts do not turn to the lovely feast.

<sup>410</sup> *Od.* 1.601, *Od.* 19.424; cf. καταδύντα / ἡμεθα δαινόμενοι at *Od.* 9.161, *Od.* 9.556, *Od.* 10.183, *Od.* 10.476, *Od.* 12.29.

<sup>411</sup> *Il.* 24.802, *Od.* 3.66, *Od.* 13.26, *Od.* 20.280.

<sup>412</sup> See Risch 1947: 88; Packard 1974: 244. The soundplay continues with ἀλλά μοι ἄμφ' Ὀδυσῆι δαΐφρονι δαίεται ἦτορ, / δυσμόρω, ὃς δὴ δῆθ' ἄ φίλων ἄπο πῆματα πάσχει (*Od.* 1.148-149). On Ὀδυσῆι/δυσμόρω here, see Louden 1995: 34-35.

Sir, we are looking in the face of great Zeus-nourished disaster, and afraid, and it is in doubt whether we shall save or lose our well-benched ships, unless you put on strength.”

This is the speech to which Achilles will later respond with the rumination on his two fates at 9.410-416. The passage contains a ring structure consisting of pairs that alliterate in /d/; the structure centers on language of division (δαῖτος, δαίνυσθ’) and, at the very middle, on a syntactic parallelism (ἡμὲν... ἡδὲ 226-227) that occupies two lines (its own δαίς ἔῖση, ‘equal division’?). There are further parallels in ἀλλ’... ἀλλὰ (228-229) and ἐν δοιῇ δὲ σαωσέμεν ἢ ἀπολέσθαι (230). The phrase ἐν δοιῇ ‘[it is] in doubt’ is in origin ‘in two,’ from δοιοί ‘two.’<sup>413</sup> Reduplication has produced orthographically identical first syllables in δαίδεκτο (δέχομαι ‘receive’) and δαίδιμεν (‘fear’);<sup>414</sup> the form δαίδιμεν comes from the old perfect \*δέ-δρι-μεν from IE \**duei-* ‘fear’, a root that is formally identical to IE \**duei-* ‘two.’<sup>415</sup> Benveniste argued on the basis of line 230 (δαίδιμεν· ἐν δοιῇ δὲ...) that the roots are the same, since ἐν δοιῇ explains how \**duei-* ‘two’ could have come to mean ‘fear’: “être en double, *douter*” in its old sense, equivalent to modern French *redouter* ‘dread.’<sup>416</sup> He compares the cognate Latin *dubio*, *dubius* (*in dubio esse*) (‘be in two ways’), whence also English ‘doubt.’

The historical etymology of δαίδιμεν need not have been available to the Homeric poet and audience for the ‘twoness’ of its reduplication, like that of δαίδεκτο, to resonate in a passage full of doublings. Odysseus contrasts the equitable division of feasts available to Achilles with the Achaean’s fear about the fate of their ships, suggesting an incommensurability between the feasts Achilles enjoys and his refusal to participate in the activities that would justify his status.

<sup>413</sup> δοιοί ‘two, both’ < IE \**duoi-* ‘twofold, double’ (Beekes 2010 s.v.).

<sup>414</sup> The form δαίδεκτο occurs only here in Homer; cf. δαιδέχατ’ (*Il.* 4.4, *Il.* 9.61, *Il.* 22.435) and δαιδέχεται (*Od.* 7.72).

<sup>415</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. δαίδω.

<sup>416</sup> Benveniste 1954: 254-255.

While Odysseus focuses on the ‘equal portion of the feast’ that Achilles receives among men, Achilles in his reply is concerned with Agamemnon’s inequitable distribution of wealth and, ultimately, a different kind of apportionment, the ‘twofold fates’ (411) according to which he will either die in Troy and win eternal fame, or return home and live to old age without renown.

#### 3.4.4 *Summary and Conclusion*

I have argued for numeric iconicity in a number of Homeric passages, with an emphasis on threes and triple repetitions and on twos and various types of doubling and reduplication. But it is worth reiterating that there are many cases in which there is no such precise correspondence between repetitions and numerals. The τρις μὲν... τρις δέ (‘thrice... thrice...’) structure that appears in the description of Charybdis at *Od.* 12.105 is common;<sup>417</sup> the phrase τριπλακα μαρμαρέην (‘threefold sparkling’) describing the rim of Achilles’ shield in *Il.* 18.480 does not quite have the same effect as δίπλακα πορφυρέην/μαρμαρέην, although a case can be made that the reduplication in the adjective is still evocative of ‘folding.’ Indeed, even when there is no 1:1 correspondence between a numeral and a number of related repetitions, the repetitions can be understood as evocative of multiplicity more generally: this iconic function of repetition is a widespread linguistic phenomenon in the Indo-European language family and beyond.<sup>418</sup> Georgios Giannakis summarizes the iconic semantics of reduplication as “conferring, among other meanings, plurality, emphasis, perfectivity, iterativity, distributionality, causativity, transitivity and an entire host of other functions and/or nuances.”<sup>419</sup>

Ancient commentators on Homer were not unattuned to the iconic effects of repetition, as we saw at the beginning of the section. A scholion on Hector’s simile of a young man and

<sup>417</sup> E.g. *Il.* 5.436-437, *Il.* 11.462-463, *Il.* 24.454-455, *Od.* 11.206-7; cf. *Od.* 6.154-5, *Od.* 17.515.

<sup>418</sup> Gonda 1959: 324-325; West 2007: 106.

<sup>419</sup> Giannakis 2014. Cf. Gygli-Wyss 1966: 9 and 11.

woman in intimate conversation opines that the poet “used analepsis on account of their many-wordedness,” which implies that the repeated hemistich evokes a plurality of words (bT 22.126-7c διὰ δὲ τὴν πολυλογίαν τῆ ἀναλήψει ἐχρήσατο). On the lemma ἠϊόνες βοόωσιν ‘the headlands resound’ at *Il.* 17.265, a scholion explains the “anadiplosis” of the vowel in βοόωσιν (βοάω) as imitating the sound of water repeatedly cast back from the headland (τῆς γὰρ ἐπαλλήλου τῶν ὑδάτων ἐκβολῆς ἢ τοῦ βοόωσιν ἀναδίπλωσις ὁμοίαν ἀπετέλεσε συνφδίαν AbT). On a passage that employs a threefold repetition of πολλοί ‘many’ in a description of the sacrificial slaughter of many animals (*Il.* 23.30-32 πολλοὶ μὲν βόες ..., πολλοὶ δ’ ὄϊες ..., πολλοὶ δ’ ἀργιόδοντες ὕες), a scholion observes that “the epanalepsis of πολλοὶ suggests multitude and boundlessness” (bT 23.30-32 ἡ ἐπανάληψις τοῦ πολλοὶ τὸ πλῆθος ἐμφαίνει καὶ τὸ ἀόριστον). The iconic repetition of πολὺς is common in Homeric epic, and forms the subject of Section 3.5.

It is not trivial that Greek rhetorical theory would develop an elaborate terminology for describing types of repetition, and that the scholia to Homer often identify these figures in Homeric epic. The later Greek tradition saw in Homer the foundations of rhetoric, among other arts and sciences, and Pseudo-Plutarch’s *Essay on the Life and Poetry of Homer* attributed to him the discovery of literary devices such as figures and tropes.<sup>420</sup> But if the technical rhetorical vocabulary that surfaces in the scholia certainly postdates the Homeric tradition, the relationship between form and content examined in this section nevertheless suggests that some of the metaphors that that vocabulary employed were used in a proto-technical way already in Homeric epic.

### 3.5 THEMATIC OF MULTIPLICITY

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<sup>420</sup> Knudsen 2014; Sluiter 2005.

The number iconicity discussed in the previous section can be seen as a subset of the well-known use of repetition to enact multiplicity or iterativity: familiar English examples are ‘more and more,’ ‘many, many...,’ ‘again and again.’ Ancient Greek tends to repeat the adjective *πολύς* ‘many, much’ in descriptions involving denoted multiplicities, an example of which was noted in the previous section (*Il.* 23.30-32 *πολλοὶ μὲν βόες ... , πολλοὶ δ’ ὄϊες ... , πολλοὶ δ’ ἀργιόδοντες ὕες*), along with the scholion’s observation that “the epianalepsis of *πολλοί* suggests multitude (*πλήθος*) and boundlessness.”<sup>421</sup> More recently, Fehling finds close to 50 examples of the anaphora of *πολύς* or related forms in early Greek literature,<sup>422</sup> and Martin West notes in a discussion of Indo-European stylistics that “one characteristic use of anaphora is to emphasize quantity,” citing *Il.* 11.494-495 among other Homeric examples in which *πολύς* is repeated: *πολλὰς δὲ δρυὸς ἀζαλέας, πολλὰς δὲ τε πεύκας / ἐσφέρεται, πολλὸν δὲ τ’ ἀφυσγετὸν εἰς ἄλλα βάλλει* (‘many the withered oaks, many the pines that it bears off, and much the debris that it casts in the sea’).<sup>423</sup> We may note that the repetitions here act as a gloss on *πλήθων ποταμὸς* ‘river being full, in flood’ in 492; *πλήθω* ‘to be full’ derives from the same Indo-European root as *πολύς*, and sometimes clusters with it.<sup>424</sup> West gives further examples of repetitions of ‘many’ from Norse, Vedic, Avestan, and Old Irish, but the phenomenon is not limited to the Indo-European language family.

<sup>421</sup> Scholion bT 23.30-32 ἡ ἐπανάληψις τοῦ πολλοί τὸ πλήθος ἐμφαίνει καὶ τὸ ἀόριστον.

<sup>422</sup> Fehling 1969: 199-200.

<sup>423</sup> West 2007: 108-110 (translation his), citing also *Il.* 20.246, *Il.* 23.30, *Od.* 1.3, *Od.* 9.45, *Od.* 22.47, *Od.* 23.304; *πολύ-* in compounds *Il.* 5.613, *Il.* 9.154. I would add *Il.* 1.162-169, *Il.* 2.128-133, *Il.* 2.173-177, *Il.* 2.459-470, *Il.* 4.229-232, *Il.* 5.87-94, *Il.* 6.227-229, *Il.* 8.253-256, *Il.* 9.71-77, *Il.* 9.179-184, *Il.* 9.320-333, *Il.* 9.395-398, *Il.* 9.464-469, *Il.* 9.490-492, *Il.* 9.540-547, *Il.* 9.564-568, *Il.* 9.581-585, *Il.* 11.677-684, *Il.* 13.663-666, *Il.* 13.725-742, *Il.* 13.797-800, *Il.* 15.680-685, *Il.* 15.446-451, *Il.* 16.709-710, *Il.* 16.772-775, *Il.* 17.430-431, *Il.* 18.285-291, *Il.* 20.326-328, *Il.* 23.520-521, *Od.* 1.111-113, *Od.* 4.81, *Od.* 4.95-96, *Od.* 4.228-230, *Od.* 4.495, *Od.* 5.223, *Od.* 4.811-813, *Od.* 6.39-40, *Od.* 7.139-140, *Od.* 8.152-155, *Od.* 11.38-42, *Od.* 11.364-365, *Od.* 15.176, *Od.* 15.401, *Od.* 16.88-90, *Od.* 19.281-285, *Od.* 21.57-62, *Od.* 24.65-70. Gygli-Wyss 1966: 43-48 also discusses the intensifying effect of repetitions of *πᾶς* and *πολύς* in early Greek literature.

<sup>424</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. *πίμπλημι*.

By far the most famous Homeric passage in which *πολύς* is repeated is the first four lines of the *Odyssey*, in which the root occurs four times. Before turning to this passage, however, I present several other examples of iconic multiplicity and its paronomastic resonances, with the intention both of picking up and extending the discussion of paronomasia in *πολ-* from Chapter 2 (in which I pointed out interactions of *πολύς*, *Ἀπόλλων* and *ἀπόλλυμι*) and of setting up at least in a preliminary way some structural and semantic context for the *Odyssey* proem.

### 3.5.1 *Πολύς and Paronomasia*

It was noted in section 2.3.5 that *πολύς* sometimes clusters with wordplay in *π(V)λ(λ)-*, as at *Il.* 13.795-801:

#### ***Il.* 13.795-801**

οἱ δ' ἴσαν ἀργαλέων ἀνέμων ἀτάλαντοι ἀέλλη,                    795  
 ἦ ρά θ' ὑπὸ βροντῆς πατρὸς Διὸς εἴσι πέδον δέ,  
 θεσπεσίῳ δ' ὀμάδῳ ἀλὶ μίσηται, ἐν δέ τε πολλὰ  
κύματα παφλάζοντα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης  
κυρτὰ φαληριόωντα, πρὸ μὲν τ' ἄλλ', αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλα·  
 ὡς Τρῶες πρὸ μὲν ἄλλοι ἀρηρότες, αὐτὰρ ἐπ' ἄλλοι,                    800  
 χαλκῷ μαρμαίροντες ἅμ' ἠγεμόνεσσιν ἔποντο.

They flew forth like the blasts of some fierce wind  
 that strike earth in the van of a thunderstorm from Zeus—  
 they buffet the salt sea into an uproar; many  
 are the great waves of the much-sounding sea that come crashing  
 with their arching heads all crested with foam, some in front, some after—  
 even so did the fitted ranks of Trojans, some in front, some after,  
 arrayed in gleaming armour follow their leaders onward.

The epithet *πολύφλοισβος* ‘much-sounding’ is illustrated and elaborated by the multiple repetitions throughout the passage of its own sounds *π(V)λ-* and *φ(V)λ-*. The passage itself, like the sea it depicts, can by the same token be described as *πολύφλοισβος*, as ‘much-sounding,’ but also, specifically and self-referentially, as ‘containing many *φ(V)λ-s*’ (*πολύφλοισβος*) or

‘sounding πολυ-’ (πολύφλοισβος).<sup>425</sup> The sounds π(V)λ- and φ(V)λ- recur in an onomatopoeic imitation of waves, and the repeated sounds combine with the denoted multiplicity of πολλά and πολυ- (‘many waves’ and ‘many sounds’) to make the perception of the passage an auditory experience of its own multiplicity.

Beyond what was discussed in Chapter 2, the words π(τ)όλις or πτολίεθρον ‘city’ and πόλεμος ‘war’ sometimes participate in paronomastic clustering with πολύς, as at *Il.* 1.160-171.<sup>426</sup>

### *Il.* 1.160-171

...πρὸς Τρώων· τῶν οὔ τι μετατρέπη οὐδ’ ἀλεγίζεις· 160  
καὶ δὴ μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς,  
ᾧ ἐπὶ πολλά μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἱὲς Ἀχαιῶν.  
οὐ μὲν σοὶ ποτε ἴσον ἔχω γέρας ὀππότε Ἀχαιοὶ  
Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ’ εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον·  
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο 165  
χειρὲς ἐμαὶ διέπουσ’· ἀτὰρ ἦν ποτε δασμὸς ἵκηται,  
σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μείζον, ἐγὼ δ’ ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε  
ἔρχομ’ ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κε κάμω πολεμίζων.  
νῦν δ’ εἶμι Φθίην δ’, ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν  
οἴκαδ’ ἴμεν σὺν νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν, οὐδέ σ’ οἴω 170  
ἐνθάδ’ ἄτιμος ἐὼν ἄφενος καὶ πλοῦτον ἀφύζειν.

...from the Trojans: you forget this, or do not care,  
and threaten to rob me of the prize  
for which I have toiled much, and which the sons of the Achaeans have given me.  
Never do I receive so good a prize as you do  
when the Achaeans sack any rich city of the Trojans,  
though it is my hands that do the greater part  
of the much-darting fighting. When the sharing comes,  
your prize is much greater, and I go with something small and dear  
back to my ships, when I am weary of fighting.  
Now, therefore, I shall go back to Phthia; it will be much better for me  
to return home with my ships, for I think I will not  
stay here dishonoured to pile up gold and wealth for you.

<sup>425</sup> In five of the eight Homeric instances of πολύφλοισβος, a form of πολύς appears in either the preceding or subsequent line.

<sup>426</sup> Further *Il.* 1.124-129, *Il.* 2.128-133, *Il.* 9.318-327, *Il.* 9.395-402, *Il.* 9.540-547, *Il.* 10.4-8, *Il.* 11.677-684, *Il.* 13.725-746, *Il.* 16.708-711, *Il.* 17.430-433, *Il.* 18.285-291, *Il.* 20.214-222, *Il.* 20.326-329, *Od.* 5.223-224, *Od.* 6.37-40, *Od.* 8.404-405, *Od.* 9.265-266.

Achilles laments that he has a greater share (πλεῖον) of battle (πολέμοιο 165), but a lesser share in the distribution of wealth derived from sacking Trojan cities, wealth (πλοῦτος 171) that he piles up for Agamemnon. This circumstance is pithily expressed in 167-168 with the paronomasia σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μείζον-κάμω πολεμίζων ('for you is the prize much greater-I weary waging war'). With the phrase πλεῖον πολυαῖκος πολέμοιο ('more of much-darting battle') in 165, Achilles connects his own multitudinous action with an activity that inherently involves 'a lot' of a wearying activity (like πλήθων at *Il.* 11.492, πλεῖον 'more' is related to πολύς).<sup>427</sup> Through paronomasia, the πολ- of war and of multiplicity bleed into each other, so that war becomes 'too much,' and Achilles tires of the 'muchness' of the fighting (168). If the word πλοῦτος ('wealth' 171) at the end of his speech participates in this nexus ('dishonored I draw up wealth and luxury [for you]'), it fittingly caps not only the description of the inequitable distribution of the fruits of Achilles' labors but the πλ- and πολ- sounds that have piled up in his speech like Agamemnon's wealth.

The theme of distribution in return for effort in battle appears again when Achilles addresses 'much-contriving Odysseus' (πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ *Il.* 9.308) to reject Agamemnon's conciliatory offer in the Embassy in *Iliad* 9:

### ***Il.* 9.318-327**

ἴση μοῖρα μένοντι καὶ εἰ μάλα τις πολεμίζοι·  
 ἐν δὲ ἱῆ τιμῇ ἡμὲν κακὸς ἢ δὲ καὶ ἐσθλός·  
 κάτθαν' ὁμῶς ὃ τ' ἀεργὸς ἀνήρ ὃ τε πολλὰ ἐοργός. 320  
 οὐδέ τί μοι περὶ κείται, ἐπεὶ πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῶ  
 αἰεὶ ἐμὴν ψυχὴν παραβαλλόμενος πολεμίζειν.  
 ὥς δ' ὄρνις ἀπτήσι νεοσσοῖσι προφέρησι  
 μάστακ' ἐπεὶ κε λάβησι, κακῶς δ' ἄρα οἱ πέλει αὐτῇ,

<sup>427</sup> Cf. *Il.* 20.326-329, in which Aeneas' action could serve as a gloss on πολυαῖζ 'much-darting':  
 πολλὰς δὲ στίχας ἠρώων, πολλὰς δὲ καὶ ἵππων  
 Αἰνεΐας ὑπερᾶλτο θεοῦ ἀπὸ χειρὸς ὀρούσας,  
 ἴξε δ' ἐπ' ἐσχατιὴν πολυαῖκος πολέμοιο,  
 ἔνθα τε Καύκωνες πόλεμον μετὰ θωρήσσοντο.

ὥς καὶ ἐγὼ πολλὰς μὲν ἀϋπνοὺς νύκτας ἴανον, 325  
 ἦματα δ' αἵματόεντα διέπρησσον πολεμίζων  
ἀνδράσι μαρνάμενος ὀάρων ἔνεκα σφετεράων.

Fate is equal for him who holds back and him that  fights;  
 coward and hero are held in the same honour,  
 and death deals like measure to him who works much and him who is idle.  
 I have taken nothing for all the pains in my heart—  
 always risking my life to do  battle;  
 as a bird takes to her young nestlings  
 a morsel she has found, and herself fares hardly,  
 even so many a long night have I been wakeful,  
 and many a bloody  battle have I waged by day  
 fighting against them on account of women.

Achilles goes on to say that he has sacked twelve cities (πλόλεις 328) by sea and eleven by land and taken their many possessions (κειμήλια πολλὰ 330), but given everything to Agamemnon, who stayed back by the ships and “distributed it little by little, and kept much” (διὰ παῦρα δασάσκετο, πολλὰ δ' ἔχεσκεν 333).

For their similarity of content and diction, Pietro Pucci connects lines 321-322 (πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῶ / αἰεὶ ἐμήν ψυχὴν παραβαλλόμενος) with *Od.* 1.4-5 πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὄν κατὰ θυμόν, / ἀρνύμενος ἦν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων (“he suffered many pains in his heart, striving for his life and the homecoming of his companions”); aside from the context of grief for risking one’s life, Pucci points out the relatively uncommon formula πάθον ἄλγεα (θυμῶ/ὄν κατὰ θυμόν) and the rare abstract use of ψυχή, which appears only here with the possessive pronoun.<sup>428</sup> The reference to sacking Trojan cities in *Il.* 9.328 is a further point of connection. In Pucci’s view, these similarities serve ultimately to highlight the different but complexly overlapping ethical natures of the heroes and the stories they occupy. Achilles’ emphasis on warfare as manifest in the recurrence of line-final πολεμίζω is absent from the *Odyssey* proem, however, as suits the divergent settings and themes of the two poems.

<sup>428</sup> Pucci 1982: 41-42.

As a final example of paronomasia around *πολύς* before we turn to the *Odyssey* proem, Agamemnon clusters *πολ-* sounds in his description of the relative size of the Achaean and Trojan forces in *Iliad 2*:

**Il. 2.126-133**

ἡμεῖς δ' ἐς δεκάδας διακοσμηθεῖμεν Ἀχαιοί,  
 Τρώων δ' ἄνδρα ἕκαστοι ἐλοίμεθα οἰνοχοεῦειν,  
πολλάι κεν δεκάδες δευοῖατο οἰνοχόοιο.  
 τόσσον ἐγὼ φημι πλέας ἔμμεναι υἱὰς Ἀχαιῶν  
 Τρώων, οἳ ναίουσι κατὰ πτόλιν. ἀλλ' ἐπίκουροι 130  
πολλέων ἐκ πολίων ἐγγέσπαλοι ἄνδρες ἔασιν,  
 οἳ με μέγα πλάζουσι καὶ οὐκ εἰῶσ' ἐθέλοντα  
 Ἴλιου ἐκπέρσαι εὖ ναϊόμενον πτολίεθρον.

If we Achaeans were put in order by tens,  
 And each chose a man of the Trojans to serve wine,  
Many tens would lack a wine server.  
 We sons of Achaeans are so greatly more in number  
 Than the Trojans who live in the city. But they have allies  
 from many other cities, spear-bearers,  
 and it is these that hinder me, although I wish it,  
 from being able to sack the rich city of Ilius.

Not only the sack of Troy and the thematics of multiplicity here find a parallel in the *Odyssey* proem, but also the alliterative participation of the verb *πλάζω* ‘repel, drive off course,’ which appears in the passive voice in the proem to describe Odysseus’ wanderings after the sack of Troy (*μάλα πολλὰ / πλάγχθη Od. 1.1-2*).

In the three previous examples, paronomasia of *πολύς*, *π(τ)όλις*, and *πόλεμος* appears when characters are thinking about the big picture of the war against Troy and their role in it. It is, conceptually, an easy nexus: the purpose of the war (*πόλεμος*) is to sack a city (*π(τ)όλις/πτολίεθρον*), and that involves many actions with many consequences and much suffering (*πολλά*). An emphasis on multiplicity and suffering appears also in the proem of the *Iliad*: Achilles’ wrath ‘placed *countless pains* on the Achaeans, and sent *many* steadfast souls to

Hades' (*μυρί' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε, / πολλάς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν Il. 1.2-3*).<sup>429</sup> The lexical elements of the paronomasia combine differently in the *Odyssey* proem – Troy has now been sacked, and Odysseus' journey home will present new avenues for misery – but the nexus there represents in many ways a variation on a paronomastic theme that connects the sacking of Troy in war (e.g. *Il. 1.164, Il. 2.133*), suffering from thwarted efforts (e.g. *Il. 9.321, Il. 2.132*), and multiplicity emphasized by the repetition of *πολύς*. Moreover, and importantly, the quoted examples demonstrate the self-aware deployment of repetitions of *πολύς* for specific effect, evident above all in the description of the waves in *Il. 13.795-801*.

### 3.5.2 *Odysseus Much-Turning*

Against this backdrop, let us turn to the first five lines of the *Odyssey*:

#### ***Od. 1.1-5***

ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον, ὃς μάλα πολλά  
πλάγχθη, ἐπεὶ Τροίης ἱερὸν πτολίεθρον ἔπερσεν·  
πολλῶν δ' ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα καὶ νόον ἔγνω,  
πολλά δ' ὃ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,  
 ἀρνύμενος ἦν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἐταίρων. 5

Tell me, Muse, of the man of many turns, who many times  
 wandered after he had sacked the holy town of Troy.  
Many cities did he visit, and their manners and customs knew;  
 moreover he suffered many things by sea in his heart  
 while trying to save his own life and bring his companions safely home.

The phonetic play on *πολύς* is by now familiar. The sequence π(V)λ- in the first line is picked up in *πλάγχθη* and *πτολίεθρον*, and more loosely in *πόντῳ* *πάθεν ἄλγεα*; Dimock points out the

<sup>429</sup> The extensive similarities between the proems of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have long been noted: see Bekker 1863, Rüter 1969: 28-48; Pucci 1982: 39-41. Eustathius (*ad Od. 1.1*) suggests that beginning with *πολύ* was an ancient commonplace: “λαβὼν ἀφορμὴν κατὰ τοὺς παλαιοὺς ὁ ποιητὴς ἐκ τοῦ πολὺ, ὅπερ ἔγκειται τῇ λέξει τοῦ πολύτροπος, ἐπέμεινε τῇ ὁμοιότητι τοῦ ὀνόματος. εἰπὼν. πολλά ἐπλάγχθη. πολλῶν δὲ ἀνθρώπων ἴδεν ἄστεα. πολλά δὲ ἔπαθεν ἄλγεα (“the poet, taking his start according to the ancients from *πολύ*, which is contained in the word *πολύτροπος*, he stays with the sameness of the word, saying ‘he wandered much,’ ‘he saw many cities of men,’ ‘he suffered many pains’”).

prominence throughout these lines of the sound /p/, which occurs fourteen times.<sup>430</sup> The epithet πολύτροπος ‘much-turning’ or ‘-turned’ has been subject to a range of interpretations since antiquity, including ‘of many devices, ingenious,’ ‘turning his thoughts to many things,’ and ‘much wandering,’ all of which are appropriate to the here-unnamed Odysseus,<sup>431</sup> but, just as πολύφλοισβος ‘much sounding’ in *Il.* 13.798 annotates the deployment of πολ- in that passage (and elsewhere; cf. *Il.* 1.33-36 in 2.3.1), it is possible to find additional meaning in πολύτροπος as a reflection of the repetitions here.

If Martin Steinrück is correct in identifying the notion of turning (τρέπω) as a metaphor for lexical repetition in early Greek poetry,<sup>432</sup> Odysseus’ epithet πολύτροπος can be interpreted not only as ‘much-turning’ but ‘much-repeating;’ further, given the repetitions of πολύς in the passage, it can be interpreted as ‘repeating “much,”’ ‘repeating the element πολυ-.’ The repetition of πολύς enacts the multitude of turns described in the adjective πολύτροπος, bringing the composition of the verses in line with the description of the protagonist. Each repetition of πολύς represents one of Odysseus’ ‘turns’: he 1) wandered much; 2) saw many cities of men; 3) suffered many pains in his heart on the sea: in short, a summary of the *Odyssey*, prefiguring the nature of the wandering narrative. The first five lines, and then the whole narrative of the *Odyssey*, becomes an unfolding, structurally and in terms of content, of what is meant by the word πολύτροπος.

The many epithets in πολυ- (πολύμητις, πολυμήχανος, πολύτλας, etc.) that attach to Odysseus’ name in the *Odyssey* (and *Iliad*) participate in this iterative unfolding of

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<sup>430</sup> Dimock 1989: 11; cf. Miller 2014: 101. Dimock argues that the sounds of the first line set up the word πλάγχθη in the second, which “focuses the sounds as well as the meaning of the first half” of the proem, but I think this assigns too much weight to πλάγχθη at the expense of the multiple repetitions of πολύ-. The phrase πολλά πλάγχθη, at least, suggests that conceptually, as well as in terms of alliteration, the terms must be taken closely together.

<sup>431</sup> Heubeck et al. 1988 *ad* 1.1.

<sup>432</sup> Steinrück 1997: 65-68; I take up this subject in another section.

multiplicity.<sup>433</sup> In an article about the *Odyssey* proem that makes a number of points shared by the interpretation here, Pietro Pucci discusses the multitude of Odysseus' πολυ- epithets and comments:<sup>434</sup>

Odysseus' manyness outlines not only a horizontal structure, but also a vertical one, a structure of repetition. The opening lines of the proem emphasize just this point by repeating four times the adjective *polús*: the man of many turns, who wandered in many travels, saw the cities of many men, and suffered many griefs. The notion of repetition, of a certain accumulation of the same, seems here unescapable.

A little later in the article, Pucci states that “Odysseus's manyness in the first line of the *Odyssey* refers specifically to his *trópoi*, his 'turns,' and this word already suggests the zigzagging movement of repetition and manyness.”<sup>435</sup> This comes close to but does not explicitly make the case for an interpretation of πολύτροπος as ‘repeating πολυ-.’

Rather, in suggesting that πολύτροπος can mean ‘of the many turns of language’ in addition to ‘much-journeying’ and ‘of many turns of mind,’ Pucci connects the τρόπος of πολύτροπος with the trope (‘figure of speech,’ namely a word used in a non-literal or unexpected way) as understood by the ancient rhetorical tradition and in particular with “the *trópos par excellence*,” metaphor, noting that πολύτροπος as a descriptor is itself metaphorical.<sup>436</sup>

Acknowledging the difficulty of determining whether the notion of τρόπος as ‘turn of language’ was available in the Homeric age, Pucci points to the interpretations of Antisthenes and Plato’s Hippias, as well as to Odysseus’ own facility with puns and figures of speech. Plato’s Hippias argues that πολύτροπος means ‘lying,’ which would constitute a metaphorical usage of τρόπος in

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<sup>433</sup> On the πολυ- epithets, see Finley 1978.

<sup>434</sup> Pucci 1982: 51.

<sup>435</sup> Pucci 1982: 53.

<sup>436</sup> Pucci 1982: 53; again 1995: 16 (“‘Polytropy’ has the felicitous advantage of describing not only [Odysseus’] character but the thematic and rhetorical qualities of his text, for the turns and re-turn of his wanderings, the turns and ruses of his mind, are mirrored in the turns (*tropoi*, rhetoric and rhetorical figures) of the *Odyssey* itself”), 24.

reference to speech,<sup>437</sup> and as reported by the *Odyssey* scholia, Antisthenes likewise connects τρόπος to language use:<sup>438</sup>

ἄρα γε πονηρὸς ὁ Ὀδυσσεὺς ὅτι πολύτροπος ἐκλήθη; ... μήποτε οὖν ὁ τρόπος τὸ μὲν τι σημαίνει τὸ ἦθος, τὸ δὲ τι σημαίνει τὴν τοῦ λόγου χρῆσιν; εὐτροπος γὰρ ἀνὴρ ὁ τὸ ἦθος ἔχων εἰς τὸ εὖ τετραμμένον· τρόποι δὲ λόγων αἱ ποιαὶ πλάσεις, κέχρηται τῷ τρόπῳ καὶ ἐπὶ φωνῆς καὶ ἐπὶ μελῶν ἐξαλλαγῆς, ὡς ἐπὶ τῆς ἀηδόνας, “ἦτε θαμὰ τροπῶσα χέει πολυηχέα φωνήν.” εἰ δὲ οἱ σοφοὶ δεινοὶ εἰσι διαλέγεσθαι, καὶ ἐπίστανται τὸ αὐτὸ νόημα κατὰ πολλοὺς λέγειν τρόπους· ἐπιστάμενοι δὲ πολλοὺς τρόπους λόγων περὶ τοῦ αὐτοῦ πολύτροποι ἂν εἶεν.

Is Odysseus wicked, since he was called πολύτροπος? ... So does τρόπος not sometimes refer to character, sometimes to the use of speech? For a well-turned (εὐτροπος) man is one who has a nature turned toward the good (τὸ εὖ), and fictions of some sort are turns of speech (τρόποι λόγων). One uses τρόπος also for the voice and the changing of melodies, as [Homer] says about the nightingale: ‘and she, turning frequently [her voice], pours forth a many-toned voice’ (*Od.* 19. 521). And if the wise are skilled at conversing, they also understand how to say the same thought according to many τρόποι: and understanding [how to use] many τρόποι of words about the same thing, they would be πολύτροποι.

Antisthenes argues that the latter skill consists in adapting one’s speech to one’s audience; he uses the example of Pythagoras, who was said to have used language appropriate to children when talking to children, and appropriate to women when talking to women, etc., because it is “wise to find the fitting kind (τρόπος) of wisdom for each.”<sup>439</sup>

The ‘turns of language’ suggested by Antisthenes and Hippias refer neither to metaphors nor to repetitions, although Antisthenes suggests that there are multiple ways τρόπος can apply to speech or voice, and rhetorical elements may be conducive to deceit or the adaptation of one’s language to one’s audience. Pucci’s argument that the best evidence for πολύτροπος as ‘turns of speech’ is the fact that the word itself is metaphorical is perhaps overstated, since there are many

<sup>437</sup> Plato *Hippias Minor* 365a-b.

<sup>438</sup> Translation mine.

<sup>439</sup> Scholion HMQR *ad* 1.1: οὕτω καὶ Πυθαγόρας λέγεται πρὸς παῖδας ἀξιοθεῖς ποιήσασθαι λόγους διαθεῖναι πρὸς αὐτοὺς λόγους παιδικούς, καὶ πρὸς γυναῖκας γυναῖξιν ἀρμοδίους, καὶ πρὸς ἄρχοντας ἀρχοντικούς, καὶ πρὸς ἐφήβους ἐφηβικούς. τὸν γὰρ ἐκάστοις πρόσφορον τρόπον τῆς σοφίας ἐξευρίσκειν σοφίας ἐστίν.

words with metaphorical senses that do not themselves mean ‘metaphor.’ Yet the sheer ambiguity or polysemy of the word does seem temptingly relevant to the multiplicity and shiftiness it denotes. On this point we may keep in mind that an oral performance would presumably not pause long at the word πολύτροπος to give an audience time for speculation, and it seems natural to take the immediate subsequent repetitions of πολὺς as a kind of guideline for interpreting the word. This underlies the old interpretation of πολύτροπος as ‘much travelling,’ since μάλα πολλὰ πλάγχθη (‘he wandered very much’) can be taken as a gloss of it,<sup>440</sup> and so too can the interpretation ‘turning his thoughts to many things,’<sup>441</sup> since in 1.3 Odysseus is said to have seen many cities and known their inhabitants’ ways of thinking. The multiple repetitions of πολὺς in fact offer three different but related interpretations of πολύτροπος in a row (as listed above, he ‘wandered much,’ ‘saw and knew much,’ and ‘suffered much at sea’), such that the multiplicity of meanings do retroactively establish πολύτροπος as polysemous, albeit with a specified range. This plurality of unfolding meanings draws attention to the word πολύτροπος as a word warranting multiple and varied exegesis, and thus also to this plurality as a plurality in the textual fabric (πολύς), to the iconicity of multiplicity through repetition at the structural level – the ‘turnings’ of πολυ-.

### 3.5.3 *A Twisted Tongue*

To return to the question of the relationship between turning and repetition, there is a Homeric passage in which the vocabulary of turning or twistiness is applied directly to human speech, or rather, metonymically, to the tongue:

#### ***Il. 20.244-250***

ἀλλ’ ἄγε μηκέτι ταῦτα λεγόμεθα νηπύτιοι ὧς

<sup>440</sup> Heubeck et al. 1988 *ad* 1.1; Pucci 1982: 53.

<sup>441</sup> Scholia M1V *ad* 1.1 ἐπὶ πολλὰ τρέποντα τὴν διάνοιαν.

ἔσταότ' ἐν μέσση ὑσμίνῃ δηϊοτήτος. 245  
 ἔστι γὰρ ἀμφοτέροισιν ὀνειδέα μυθήσασθαι  
πολλά μάλ', οὐδ' ἂν νηῦς ἑκατόζυγος ἄχθος ἄροιτο.  
 στρεπτή δὲ γλῶσσο' ἐστὶ βροτῶν, πολέες δ' ἔνι μῦθοι  
 παντοῖοι, ἐπέων δὲ πολύς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.  
 ὀπποῖόν κ' εἴπησθα ἔπος, τοῖόν κ' ἐπακούσαις. 250

And now let there be no more of this prating like children  
in mid-battle between the armies.

We could fling taunts without end at one another,  
very many, a hundred-oared galley would not hold them.

The tongue of mortals is twisted, and many stories are there  
of all kinds, and there is much distribution of words here and there.

The kind of word you say, so shall you also hear from others.

Aeneas in his address to Achilles relates a twisted tongue to multiplicity of words or utterances and stories. In the context of imputations against one's character (ὀνειδέα 246), it is clear that Aeneas is implying that not every story is true, but here he avoids saying this directly by focusing on the multiplicity and variety of types of speech. He is more explicit in the simile that follows comparing their potential quarrel to two women hurling insults at each other in the street: these in their anger say 'many things that are and are not true' (πόλλ' ἔτεά τε καὶ οὐκί 255). But in the quoted lines his criticism of Achilles' prior taunts is more discreet, and he shifts the agency of false speech from speakers to the tongue, setting himself up to privilege fighting over speech as the true arena of agency: ἀλκῆς δ' οὐ μ' ἐπέεσσιν ἀποτρέψεις μεμαῶτα / πρὶν χαλκῷ μαχέσασθαι ἐναντίον ("you will not turn me, eager, away from strength with words, before we have fought opposite each other with bronze" 256-7).

Aeneas seems to be saying in sum that one function of a twisted (στρεπτός) tongue is to turn someone away (ἀποτρέπω) from a course of action, in particular through abusive language that may include lies (this relates to the beginning of his speech, when he tells Achilles not to try to scare him with words in line 200). The use of the adjective στρεπτή (from στρέφω 'turn') in this context may offer support for Hippias' interpretation of 'much-turning' as a reference to

deceitful language, while the persuasive effects of speech more generally represent another way in which language connects to ‘turning.’ But it is also significant that the quoted passage, like the adjective πολύτροπος, relates twistiness to multiplicity but here explicitly with respect to language, and that it moreover does so in a passage in which the very words that are repeated denote multiplicity (πολύς) and speech (μῦθος, ἔπος). Would it be a stretch to suppose that the lexical repetitions are iconic not only of multiplicity but of the figurative ‘twistiness’ of the human tongue?

To pick up a thread of argumentation from above, while τρόπος developed among other meanings that of figurative language in the sense of a word used in a meaning other than literal, derivatives of στρέφω would appear in rhetorical terminology denoting lexical and other repetitions: Hermogenes (2<sup>nd</sup> c. CE) uses ἀναστροφή and ἐπαναστροφή for the “repetition of the last word or words of a sentence at the beginning of the next”;<sup>442</sup> ἀντιστροφή had a rhetorical sense of “repetition of closing words in successive members”;<sup>443</sup> ὑποστροφάς could refer to the “recurrence to a subject after a parenthesis.”<sup>444</sup> None of these quite match the pattern of repetition of πολύς in this passage (or of the repetitions μῦθησασθαι/μῦθοι; ἐπέων/εἶπησθα ἔπος; ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα), but they do not need to match it to serve the point that the metaphor of ‘turning’ was explicitly used for repetitions at least at a later stage of Greek history. There is no reason to think the metaphor could not already be viable in Homeric epic, and a ‘twisted’ tongue might well find a correlate of one aspect of its twistiness in lexical repetition. Beyond that, the statement in 249 that “there is much distribution of words here and there” (ἐπέων δὲ πολὺς νομὸς ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα) is close to “there is distribution of the words ‘πολύς’ here and there,” and even

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<sup>442</sup> LSJ s.v. ἐπαναστροφή, from Hermog. *Id.* 1.12; of -μια in Σαμία μία ναῦς Eust. 1751.40.

<sup>443</sup> LSJ s.v. ἀντιστροφή.

<sup>444</sup> LSJ s.v. ὑποστροφάς.

closer to “there is much distribution of the word ‘ἔπος,’” the root of which appears two more times in 250 in the phrase εἴπησθα ἔπος (I follow the scholia in interpreting νομός in 249 as the equivalent of νέμησις ‘distribution’).<sup>445</sup>

### 3.5.4 *Epic Multitude and the Much-Turning Muse*

Also at issue in Aeneas’ speech is what the word ἔπος (‘word, utterance, speech’) means. Koller denies that ἔπος can refer to an individual word (except in some late instances), which would seem to rule out the sense required above,<sup>446</sup> but Richard Martin considers ἔπεα in the plural capable of applying to individual words or phrases, as evinced by Homeric passages that comment on speaking styles.<sup>447</sup> He emphasizes that, unlike μῦθος, ἔπος “focuses on the physical quality of speech rather than on rhetorical or illocutionary force,” that is, on the materiality and sound of the speaking voice, and this would presumably include the sonic rhythms and textures of repeated phonemes and syllables. As I described in Chapter 2, Homeric “lexical” repetitions are not so much repetitions of individual words as repetitions of phonemic sequences (e.g. not πολλά, πολέες, πολύς in *Il.* 20.244-250 but πολ- three times, together with the denotation of ‘multiplicity’; not πολύτροπον, πολλά, πολλῶν in *Od.* 1.1-4 but πVλ(λ)-, also in πλάγχθη and πτολίεθρον). Martin cites as pertaining to individual words or phrases the comparison of Odysseus’ ἔπεα to falling snow at *Il.* 3.222 (ἔπεα νιφάδεσσιν εὐικότα χειμερίησιν); the simile suggests a conception of ἔπεα as a multiplicity of small spoken units.

<sup>445</sup> Scholion A *ad* 20.249: νομός: ὀξύτονος, ἵνα σημαίνεται ὡς ἐν τῇ συνηθείᾳ ἡ νέμησις· τοῦτο γὰρ ἐμφάσεως μείζονός ἐστι σημαντικόν (“accented on the final syllable, so that it means what ‘distribution’ means in common usage: for this is significant of greater suggestiveness”). But see Pohlenz 1948: 139, who explains νομός in this line as ‘movement here and there’ by comparison with Aesch. *Ag.* 685 γλῶσσαν... νέμων (‘moving? the tongue’), although νέμω ‘distribute, manage, pasture’ shows the same broad semantic range as the noun. The collocation in Aeschylus is in fact explicitly used for a tongue’s skilled wordplay of Ἑλένα (‘Helen’)/ἔλεν (‘take, overcome’); ἐλ(έ)- appears four times for emphasis (Ἑλέναν... ἐλένας, ἔλανδρος, ἐλέπτολις, *Ag.* 686-690). At any rate these proposed meanings of νομός are not mutually exclusive.

<sup>446</sup> Koller 1972: 16.

<sup>447</sup> Martin 2011: 259, citing *Il.* 2.213 and *Il.* 3.222.

From the 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE, the singular ἔπος would be used to mean ‘an epic verse,’ and ἔπος is already associated with epic poetry within Homeric epic (for example, ἔπεα is applied to the song of Demodocus at *Od.* 8.91).<sup>448</sup> Nagy interprets the tales and rumors to which Aeneas refers in his speech – namely the ones brought up by Achilles against him – as alternative poetic traditions to that of the *Iliad*, and if ἔπος here connects to epic, then a ‘twisted tongue’ is implicated in the production of the genre.<sup>449</sup> This is all the more reason to suppose that this metapoetic moment plays out on the level of stylistics as well, even if different senses of the word ἔπος come to the fore within the narrative and in terms of the structure of the narrative. Whereas ἔπος may connote a genre in Aeneas’ use of the word in context, it also gestures toward the distribution of words in his own speech, a speech that itself participates in stylistic characteristics of the epic genre.

The act of speaking is also highlighted in the first line of the *Odyssey*, in ἐννέπω ‘narrate, recount,’ as the verb for the Muse’s impartation of speech that is the poem itself: ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, μοῦσα, πολύτροπον (‘narrate to me, Muse, the man of many turns’ *Od.* 1.1). Although not related to ἔπος, it bears a phonetic similarity to and forms a ring with a verb in 1.10 that is related to ἔπος, the aorist εἶπέ ‘say,’ in a line that resumes the opening line’s direct address to the Muse (θεά... εἶπε καὶ ἡμῖν ‘goddess, tell even us’).<sup>450</sup> If the repetitions of πολύς help guide an interpretation of πολύτροπος, the verb ἐννέπω draws attention from the start to the poem as a spoken thing, to language as the medium of its communication. And if πολύτροπος relates to language use and is reflected in the repetitive structures of the poem, then both narrator and Muse can aptly be called πολύτροπος as well. It is human tongues that twist in Aeneas’ speech,

<sup>448</sup> Martin 2011: 260, Koller 1972; cf. Nagy 1999: 271-275.

<sup>449</sup> Nagy 1999: 272-273.

<sup>450</sup> Beekes 2010 s.v. ἐν(ν)έπω (< IE \*sek<sup>w</sup>- ‘say’) and s.v. εἶπον ‘I said.’

but in light of the connotations of ἔπος and μῦθος there, Hesiod's words of the Muses in the beginning of the *Theogony* come to mind: ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα, / ἴδμεν δ', εὔτ' ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα γηρύσασθαι ("we know how to say many false things similar to true ones, and we know, when we wish, to sing true things" 27-28). Odysseus could make the same claim as Hesiod's Muses (one thinks again of Antisthenes' interpretation of πολύτροπος), and the similarities between Odysseus and the epic narrator are well known.<sup>451</sup> The emphasis in Hesiod is, as in Aeneas' speech, on truth and falsehood, but we should not overlook the relevance of multiplicity here, the Muses' basic ability to say many things (πολλὰ λέγειν) and to put forward many words or tales. That this ability includes the employment of many words is apparent from the invocation of the Muses before the Catalogue of Ships in *Iliad* 2, in which the narrator asks the goddesses for aid in recounting the leaders of the Achaeans and their ships. Precisely at issue is the multiplicity of names and items to be recounted (πληθὺν 'multiplicity' 2.488, ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον 'as many as came to Ilium' 492), and the limitations of human memory, which can be overcome only with the help of the Muses; these know not only many things but all (ἴστέ τε πάντα 485).

If the Muses are adept at saying "many things" (Hesiod *Theogony* 27), are they also adept at saying the word πολλά? In a footnote above, I cited Eustathius' comment on *Od.* 1.1 that beginning with πολύ was an ancient commonplace: λαβὼν ἀφορμὴν κατὰ τοὺς παλαιοὺς ὁ ποιητὴς ἐκ τοῦ πολὺ ("the poet, taking his start according to the ancients from πολύ"). If by this Eustathius means that it was an ancient commonplace to begin epics (as opposed to other genres) with πολύ, then there is a genre association not just with the concept of multiplicity but with the word itself. A number of extant hexameter openings use πολυ- besides *Od.* 1.1 and its

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<sup>451</sup> For example, Odysseus takes over the narrative in his account to the Phaeacians in Books 9-12 of the *Odyssey*, and is compared to a poet at *Od.* 11.368, 11.406-411, 17.518. Bibliography in Mackie 1997: 77n1.

πολύτροπος; **πολλάς** δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς *Il.* 1.3; Ἄργος ἄειδε θεὰ **πολυδίψιον** ἔνθεν ἄνακτες *Thebaid* 1; Μοῦσα μοι ἔννεπε ἔργα **πολυχρύσου** Ἀφροδίτης *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 1; Ἀρκαδῆς **πολυμήλου** *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 2 (Hermes is called *παῖδα πολύτροπον* in 13); paronomastically, Ἴλιον ἀείδω καὶ Δαρδανίην εὐ**πωλον** *Little Iliad* 1. One cannot determine whether the trend started with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and was picked up by later imitators or simply manifests in them, but it represents a kind of iconicity of multiplicity writ large, and gives rise to the amusing thought that the foregrounding of the word is a self-reflexive nod toward the multiplicity of words and tales that are characteristic of the genre in which each poem participates. In acknowledging many-wordedness, the openings word 'manyness,' and thus lend themselves to an Odyssean characterization of the genre as *πολύτροπος*.

### 3.5.5 *Summary and Conclusion*

The iconicity of multiplicity through repetitions of *πολύς* is a known feature of Ancient Greek, and finds parallels in other ancient Indo-European traditions. Among other patterns of paronomasia, *πολύς* can be shown on a number of occasions to cluster with *π(τ)όλις* / *πολίεθρον*, *πόλεμος*, and the theme of suffering. These elements appear also in the proem of the *Odyssey*, in which the repetitions of *πολυ-* unpack Odysseus' epithet *πολύτροπος* in line 1. Because a case can be made that turning serves as a metaphor for 'repeating' in Homeric epic, *πολύτροπος* can be interpreted as 'repeating *πολυ-*,' which brings the structural stylistics of the narrative in line with the character of its protagonist. Similarly, in *Il.* 20-244-250, Aeneas connects a 'twisted tongue' with multiplicity of language in a passage that repeats both *πολύς* and the words for words and stories; the verb *στρέφω* would be used as a metaphor for repetition in the later Greek rhetorical tradition.

The word ἔπος ‘word, utterance, speech’ in the Aeneas passage can be connected to epic poetry, and the verb ἐννέπω ‘narrate’ used in the invocation to the Muse at the beginning of the *Odyssey* draws attention to the verbal medium of the tale. Hesiod characterizes the Muses’ use of language in terms of a multiplicity of true and false accounts in a way similar to Aeneas’ characterization of the use of speech by twisty mortal tongues, so it is possible to hear this connotative system at play in *Od.* 1.1: a much-turning Muse is a fitting guide for the story of the ‘man of many turns.’ The word πολύς also appears in a number of other epic beginnings, which represents another axis along which the iconicity of multiplicity plays out. The recurrence of the word is appropriate to a genre known for its many-wordedness and variety of tales. Moreover, if πολύτροπος expresses something fundamental about the nature of the Odyssean narrative and of epic more broadly, the sense ‘repeating much’ acknowledges the importance of repetition for the genre, especially in terms of the kinds of repetitions of words and syllables and sound-sequences that are on display in the poem of the *Odyssey* itself.

### 3.6 TURNING

A case has been made in the previous section for a connection between the language of turning and lexical repetition, and at several points already I have discussed passages that appear to correlate the notion of turning with ring structures. Nestor’s ring-composed advice to Antilochus in *Iliad* 23 about chariot-racing and in particular about turning around the turning-post is one obvious example (2.2.4); another is the passage discussed by Martin Steinrück and quoted in the introduction (under “Lexical Repetitions and Modern Homeric Scholarship”) in which Nausicaa’s ball falls into an eddy in a stream described with the structure Ὀδυσσεύς ἔγροϊτο - ἀμφίπολον- ἀμφιπόλου- ἔμβαλε δίνη - ἔγρετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς (*Od.* 6.113-117). I noted

in 2.2.5 that Achilles' tossing and turning (ἐστρέφετο) and then whirling pacing (δινεύεσκε) by the sea in *Il.* 24.3-14 finds a structural correlate in the many repetitions of ἀλλ- in the passage. Steinrück devotes a brief subsection of *Kranz und Wirbel: Ringkompositionen in den Büchern 6-8 der Odyssee* to the metaphor of turning (τρέπομαι) for ring composition and another to δίνη 'whirl, eddy'; here I build on his analysis and offer further passages in which the language of turning appears to correlate with repetitions. I look first at passages featuring the verb τρέπω ('turn' in the sense of 'change direction,' according to Ruijgh), second those that feature στρέφω ('turn' in the sense of a circular motion),<sup>452</sup> and third those that contain δίνη or its relatives, although it should be noted that some passages feature more than one of these words and accordingly could fit under more than one heading.

In his section on the metaphor of 'turning' (τρέπομαι), Steinrück gives two examples of ring-composed Homeric passages, both of which employ the metaphor of turning at the center of a ring structure. A review of these may serve as the starting point for this broader, if in no way comprehensive, survey of the language of turning in relation to lexical repetitions.<sup>453</sup>

### 3.6.1 *The Verb τρέπω*

Steinrück's first example is *Od.* 7.244-270ff, which he locates at the center of a narrative ring structure that extends on either side:<sup>454</sup>

Erstes Schicksal: Kalypso ( <u>Seesturm</u> )	244ff.
da blieb ich 7 Jahre,	259
netzte die Kleider mit Tränen, die göttlichen (εἴματα ... ἄμβροτα), <u>die Kalypso mir gab.</u>	259ff.
Dann forderte sie mich auf <u>heimzufahren</u> auf Zeus' Befehl oder, weil	260ff.

<sup>452</sup> On the distinction between τρέπω and στρέφω see Ruijgh 1968: 706–707, who is followed by Delgado 2017.

<sup>453</sup> Steinrück 1997: 65-68.

<sup>454</sup> Steinrück 1997: 65-66, cf. 31 and 154-158. He makes no mention of the repetition πολυδέσμου, πολλὰ δ' ἔδωκε in line 264 or the soundplay of ἐποτρύγουσα νέεσθαι... νόος ἐτρέπετ' in 262-263.

ihre Sinn sich wandte (ἐτρέπετ').	263
Sie <u>schickte</u> mich auf einem Floss fort,	264
<u>gab mir</u> viel Getreide und Honigwein, zog mir göttliche Kleider an (ἄμβροτα εἶματα).	264ff.
17 Tage fuhr eich und freute mich.	267ff.
Zweites Schicksal: Phäaken ( <u>Seesturm</u> )	270ff.

Odysseus describes how Calypso kept him on her island until either Zeus ordered her to let him leave, or she changed her mind (νόος ἐτρέπετ' αὐτῆς 263, lit. 'her mind was turned'). Steinrück observes that the latter possibility seems gratuitous in light of the fact that the former is both the correct interpretation and fulfills the narrative function in the account; he suggests that the structure of the passage may have motivated the phrasing of the second alternative here.

The second example is from *Odyssey* 8, when the Phaeacians prepare a ship for Odysseus. The description of the preparations centers on the τροποί, twisted leather straps that attach the oars to the thole-pins to hold them in place:

52 Jünglinge gingen (βήτην) zum Meer.	48ff.
Sie zogen das Schiff ins Wasser,	51
setzten den Mast ein und die Segelstangen (ἰστία),	52
fügten die Ruder in die ledernen τροποί	53
spannten die Segel auf (ἰστία),	54
brachten das Schiff in den Südhafen.	55
Dann gingen sie (βάν) zum Haus des Alkinoos	56

This is not the only place where a boat part with a name derived from τρέπω appears to annotate a surrounding repetitive structure; at *Od.* 5.125-132, Calypso describes rescuing Odysseus from the sea, where he was floating on his ship's keel (τρόπις) after Zeus struck his ship with lightning:

**Od. 5.125-132**      ABCBCA  
 ὣς δ' ὀπότε Ἰασίωνι εὐπλόκαμος Δημήτηρ, 125  
 ᾧ θυμῷ εἷξασα, μίγη φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῆ  
 νεῖῳ ἔνι τριπόλῳ· οὐδὲ δὴν ἦεν ἄπυστος

- A, BC Ζεύς, ὅς μιν κατέπεφνε βαλὼν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῶ.  
 ὣς δ' αὖ νῦν μοι ἄγασθε, θεοί, βροτὸν ἄνδρα παρεῖναι.  
 τὸν μὲν ἐγὼν ἐσάωσα περὶ τρόπιος βεβαῶτα 130
- BC οἶον, ἐπεὶ οἱ νῆα θοῆν ἀργῆτι κεραυνῶ
- A Ζεύς ἔλσας ἐκέασσε μέσῳ ἐνὶ οἴνοπι πόντῳ.

So again when fair-locked Demeter fell in love with Iasion,  
 yielding to her heart, and mingled with him in love  
 in a thrice-ploughed fallow field, and before long  
Zeus came to hear of it and killed Iasion with his bright lightning.  
 And now you are angry with me too, gods, because I have a man here  
 whom I saved sitting all alone astride of a *keel*,  
 for his swift ship with bright lightning  
Zeus had broken in the middle of the wine-dark sea.

The repetition of ἀργῆτι κεραυνῶ in 131 picks up the description of Zeus slaying Iasion, beloved of Demeter, in 128. The structural parallelism diverges notably from the parallel drawn by the mythological exemplum: the exemplum illustrates Calypso's claim that Zeus begrudges goddesses to have mortal lovers, as has proven true for her with respect to Odysseus. But Zeus' act of striking Odysseus' ship with a thunderbolt occurred prior to their meeting, not in response to it. In other words, the structural parallelism cannot be attributed to the semantic parallelism of the exemplum. Two books later, when Odysseus describes this shipwreck and his rescue by Calypso to the Phaeacian queen Arete, τρόπις again appears near the center of a ring structure.<sup>455</sup>

Forte and Smith as well as Steinrück devote attention to the position of the turning metaphor in the sequence of a ring structure;<sup>456</sup> the former focus on turning language at the center of ring-composed poems or passages, which I have likewise referred to as the 'turning point' of the structures. But this is not the only place where the language of turning can appear, and in what follows I focus not so much on passages in which turning appears at the center of a ring structure as on passages in which τρέπω is semantically linked with the words being

<sup>455</sup> *Od.* 7.244-258: Ἔργητι τις νῆσος- Καλυψὼ/ναίει εὐπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεός- νῆα- πόντῳ- πάντες-τρόπιν ἀγκὰς ἐλὼν- νέος- νῆσον ἐς Ἔργητιν- Καλυψὼ/ναίει εὐπλόκαμος, δεινὴ θεός. See Steinrück 1997: 31-32, 154-155.

<sup>456</sup> Steinrück 1997 esp. 79; Forte and Smith 2014.

repeated, either as part of the repetition or as the verb governing a repeated object. In the same way that πολύτροπος can be understood as ‘turning’ or ‘repeating πολύ-,’ the repetition of the direct object of τρέπω (or of the subject of the verb in the passive voice) makes it particularly easy to bridge the gap between the idea of ‘turning x’ within the narrative and the idea of ‘repeating x’ in the surface structure of the narrative.

So, at *Iliad* 13.2, Zeus ‘turns his shining eyes,’ and the phrase ‘turns his shining eyes’ is repeated in line 7:

**II. 13.1-10** ABCDEEBCDA

A	Ζεὺς δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν <b>Τρῳάς</b> τε καὶ Ἴκτορα νηυσὶ πέλασσε,	1
	τοὺς μὲν ἕα παρὰ τῆσι πόνον τ' ἐχέμεν καὶ οἴζυν	
BCD	νωλεμέως, αὐτὸς δὲ <i>πάλιν</i> <b>τρέπεν ὅσσε φαεινῶ</b>	
E	νόσφιν ἐφ' <b>ἵπποπόλων</b> Θρηκῶν καθορώμενος αἴαν	
E	Μυσῶν τ' ἀγχεμάχων καὶ ἀγαυῶν <b>ἵππημολγῶν</b>	5
	γαλκτοφάγων Ἀβίων τε δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων.	
A, BCD	ἔς <b>Τροίην</b> δ' οὐ πάμπαν ἔτι <b>τρέπεν ὅσσε φαεινῶ</b> .	
	οὐ γὰρ ὃ γ' ἀθανάτων τινα ἔλπετο ὄν κατὰ θυμὸν	
A	ἐλθόντ' ἢ <b>Τρώεσσιν</b> ἀρηξέμεν ἢ Δαναοῖσιν.	

Now when Zeus had thus brought Hector and the Trojans to the ships, he left them to their never-ending toil, and he himself turned back his shining eyes, looking elsewhere towards the horse-breeders of Thrace, and the Mysians, fighters at close quarters, the noble Hippemolgi, who live on milk, and the Abians, justest of mankind. No longer toward Troy did he turn his shining eyes, for he did not think in his heart that any of the immortals would go and help either Trojans or Danaans.

The repetition of ὅσσε φαεινῶ, and the verb with it, enacts a ‘turning’ of the phrase in the narrative. It contributes to a lexical ring structure centering on the Thracians and Mysians, described in three lines sonically joined by the homoeoteleuton of the genitive plural ending –ων. The repetition of ὅσσε φαεινῶ also resonates with the fact that the phrase is morphologically

dual; by doubling it, the poet doubles the two-ness of the word in the manner familiar from the discussion of number iconicity in section 3.4.

Later in *Iliad* 13, Idomeneus describes a cowardly man as one whose skin changes color (lit. ‘is turned,’ *τρέπεται χρώς*) when preparing an ambush: τοῦ μὲν γάρ τε κακοῦ *τρέπεται χρώς ἄλλυδις ἄλλη* (279); by contrast, the brave man is one whose skin under the same circumstances does not change (τοῦ δ’ ἀγαθοῦ οὐτ’ ἄρ *τρέπεται χρώς* 284). The intervening space between the repetitions is taken up with further characterizations of the cowardly man, whose heart trembles, teeth chatter, and who shifts from foot to foot. Of all the various manifestations of cowardice, it is only the phrase with the word ‘turning’ that is repeated verbatim for the sake of negation in the description of the brave man. The repeated phrases participate in the broader lexical structure *λόχον - ἀνήρ - τρέπεται χρώς ἄλλυδις ἄλλη - ἵζει - τρέπεται χρώς - ἐσίζηται λόχον ἀνδρῶν* (*Il.* 13.277-285).

In *Iliad* 11, Agamemnon casts a spear at Iphidamas and misses, and the spear is said to be ‘turned aside’ (*ἐτράπετ’ ἔγχος* 233); Iphidamas then stabs Agamemnon in the belt, but the silver there deflects the blow and this spear-point too is ‘turned aside’ (*ἐτράπετ’ αἰχμή* 237):

***Il.* 11.232-237**                      ABcdddcBA  
    οἱ δ’ ὅτε δὴ *σχεδὸν* ἦσαν ἐπ’ *ἀλλήλοισιν* ἰόντες,  
 A                                    Ἄτρεΐδης μὲν ἄμαρτε, παραὶ δέ οἱ *ἐτράπετ’* ἔγχος,  
 Bc                                   Ἴφιδάμας δὲ κατὰ *ζώνην* *θώρακος* ἔνερθε  
 ddd                                νύξ’, ἐπὶ δ’ αὐτὸς *ἔρεισε* *βαρεῖν* *χειρὶ* πιθήσας· 235  
 cB                                   οὐδ’ *ἔτορε* *ζωστήρα* παναίολον, *ἀλλὰ* πολὺ πρὶν  
 A                                   ἀργύρω ἀντομένη μόλιβος ὧς *ἐτράπετ’* αἰχμή.

When they were close up with one another,  
 the son of Atreus missed his aim, and the spear was turned beside him,  
 and Iphidamas hit him on the girdle below the cuirass  
 and then flung himself upon him, trusting to his strength of arm;  
 the belt, however, was not pierced, nor nearly so,  
 for the point of the spear struck the silver and was turned aside like lead.

The combatants near each other (σχεδὸν ἦσαν 232) at the beginning of a lexical ring structure that draws toward the center, fittingly, with the description of Agamemnon’s belt (ζώνην 234, ζωστῆρα 236).<sup>457</sup> Although the noun that serves as the subject of τρέπομαι is not repeated – αἰχμή ‘spear-point’ replaces ἔγχος ‘spear’ in the second instance – it is clear that the repeated verb in the same metrical position and in equivalent places in the broader lexical structure draws a parallel of reciprocal action between the not-wholly-similar actions of Agamemnon’s failed spear-cast and the bending of Iphidamas’ spear-point; this balance holds only for a moment before Agamemnon gains the upper hand and kills Iphidamas. In another account of deflection in combat, Pandarus in *Iliad* 5 describes how he struck Diomedes with an arrow to no avail, positing that a god must have turned the arrow away (βέλος... ἔτραπεν ἄλλη); the word βέλος is repeated in the next line, forming the inner ring of a ring structure: ἵππους - θεός ἐστιν - θεοῦ - ὦμους – βέλος ὠκὸν κινήμενον ἔτραπεν ἄλλη – βέλος - ὦμον - θεός νύ τίς ἐστι - ἵπποι (*Il.* 5.183-192).

Early in *Iliad* 12 appears a flash-forward account of the final destruction of the Achaean wall by Apollo and Poseidon. Apollo turns the mouths of the local rivers together against the wall for nine days: τῶν πάντων ὁμόσε στόματ’ ἔτραπε Φοῖβος Απόλλων, / ἐννῆμαρ δ’ ἐς τεῖχος ἔει ῥόον (24-25 ‘Phoibos Apollo turned the mouths of these waters together, and nine days long threw the flood against the wall’). Then Poseidon, after washing away all the foundations (θεῖη-θεμεῖλια - θέσαν 26-29), turns the rivers back to their original courses:

### ***Il.* 12.31-33**

αὐτίς δ’ ἠϊόνα μεγάλην ψαμάθοισι κάλυψε  
 τεῖχος ἀμαλδύνας· ποταμοὺς δ’ ἔτρεψε νέεσθαι  
 κὰρ ῥόον, ἧ περ πρόσθεν ἔεν καλλίρροον ὕδωρ.

<sup>457</sup> The structure includes the repetition of the name Agamemnon in 231 and 238; the passages preceding and following each contain a description of the home and family that Iphidamas has left behind (221-230 and 242-245).



times, of which the last is governed by τρέπω, when Athena ‘turns [Odysseus’] spirit’ toward the multitude of Lycians:

**II. 5.668-680** ABCDE ABCDE BCA etc.  
 Τληπόλεμον δ’ ἐτέρωθεν εὐκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ  
 ἐξέφερον πολέμοιο· νόησε δὲ **δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς**  
 τλήμονα **θυμὸν** ἔχων, μαίμησε δέ οἱ φίλον ἦτορ· 670  
 μερμήριξε δ’ ἔπειτα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ **θυμὸν**  
 A ἢ προτέρω **Διὸς υἱὸν** ἐριγδούποιο διώκοι,  
 BC, DE ἦ ὃ γε τῶν **πλεόνων Λυκίων** ἀπὸ **θυμὸν ἔλοιτο**.  
 οὐδ’ ἄρ’ **Ὀδυσσῆϊ** μεγαλήτορι μόρσιμον ἦεν  
 A ἴφθιμον **Διὸς υἱὸν ἀποκτάμεν** ὄξει χαλκῷ· 675  
 BC, D *τὼ ῥα κατὰ **πληθὺν Λυκίων** τράπε **θυμὸν** Ἀθήνη.*  
 E ἔνθ’ ὃ γε Κοίρανον **εἶλεν** Ἀλάστορά τε Χρομίον τε  
 Ἄλκανδρόν θ’ Ἄλιόν τε Νοήμονά τε Πρύτανίν τε.  
 BC, A καὶ νύ κ’ ἔτι **πλέονας Λυκίων κτάνε** **δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς**  
 εἰ μὴ ἄρ’ ὄξυ νόησε **μέγας** κορυθαίολος Ἴκτωρ· ... 680

Meanwhile the well-greaved Achaeans carried off the body of Tlepolemus from war, whereon Odysseus took notice, having an enduring spirit, and was moved to pity. He pondered then in his mind and his spirit whether to pursue the son of loud-thundering Zeus, or to strip the spirit from the Lycian masses; it was not decreed, however, for great-hearted Odysseus that he should slay the son of Zeus with sharp bronze; Athena, therefore, *turned* his spirit toward the crowd of the Lycians. He killed Coeranus, Alastor, Chromius, Alcandrus, Halius, Noemon, and Prytanis, and Odysseus would have slain yet more of the Lycians, had not great Hector of the glancing helm noticed him...

Line 676 enforces the ‘turn’ of spirit by repeating much of the format of line 673; the parallelism runs **Διὸς υἱὸν- τῶν πλεόνων Λυκίων ἀπὸ θυμὸν ἔλοιτο** (672-673)- **Διὸς υἱὸν - κατὰ πληθὺν Λυκίων τράπε θυμὸν Ἀθήνη - εἶλεν** (675-677), and is partially resumed in 679 with **ἔτι πλέονας Λυκίων**. The ‘spirit’ (θυμὸν) in lines 670, 671, and 676 belongs to Odysseus, that in 673 to the respective Lycians whom Odysseus considers slaying, so that the structural parallelism of lines 673 and 676 operates partially independently of the expressed thought. This semantic disjunction

draws attention to the repetition or ‘turn’ of the word θυμός as such, and to the structural maneuver that accompanies the description of Athena’s influence. This is not to say that the structure necessarily motivates the content here, but that the pursuit of iconicity may play a role in the specific arrangement and phrasing that appears in the passage. The repetition of πλεόνων (‘more’)- πληθὺν (‘multitude’)- πλέονας (‘more’) is iconic of multiplicity, and the multitude of Lycians so denoted is further illustrated with the list of names of men Odysseus kills in 677-678.

In *Iliad* 8 Hera and Athena set out from Olympus to join battle (392-396), but Zeus sends Iris to turn them back. Hera accordingly turns back her horses at *Il.* 8.432-433, and the word ἵππους is repeated in the same position in each line, along with the preceding syllable -χας:

***Il.* 8.432-443 ABA CDDCA ABC**

- A Ὡς ἄρα φωνήσασα πάλιν τρέπε μώνυ<sup>7</sup>χας ἵππους·  
 B, A τῆσιν δ’ Ὄραι μὲν λῦσαν καλλίτριχας ἵππους,  
 και τοὺς μὲν κατέδησαν ἐπ’ ἀμβροσίησι κάπησιν,  
 C, D ἄρματα δ’ ἐκλιναν πρὸς ἐνώπια παμφανόωντα· 435  
 D αὐταὶ δὲ χρυσέοισιν ἐπὶ κλισμοῖσι κάθιζον  
 μίγδ’ ἄλλοισι θεοῖσι, φίλον τετιημέναι ἦτορ.  
 C, A Ζεὺς δὲ πατὴρ Ἴδηθεν εὐτροχον ἄρμα και ἵππους  
 Οὐλυμπον δὲ δίωκε, θεῶν δ’ ἐξίκετο θώκους.  
 A, B τῶ δὲ και ἵππους μὲν λῦσε κλυτὸς ἐννοσίγαιος, 440  
 C ἄρματα δ’ ἄμ βωμοῖσι τίθει κατὰ λίτα πετάσσας·...

Thus speaking she *turned* back her single-foot horses;  
 the Hours presently unyoked the lovely-haired horses,  
 made them fast to their ambrosial mangers,  
 and leaned the chariot against the end wall of the courtyard.  
 The two goddesses then sat down upon their golden thrones,  
 amid the company of the other gods; but they were very angry.  
 Presently father Zeus drove from Ida his chariot and horses  
 to Olympus, and entered the assembly of gods.  
 The mighty lord of the earthquake unyoked his horses for him,  
 set the chariot upon its stand, and threw a cloth over it...

The description of the horses forms a ring with the description in 438-441 of Zeus driving his chariot from Mt. Ida to Olympus; the application of the adjective εὐτροχος ‘well-wheeled’ to the

chariot in 438 gestures toward the overarching ring structure. The words that form the center ring, κλίνω ‘slope, lean’ and κλισμός ‘couch’ (from κλίνω) in 435-436, are likewise suggestive of the ‘leaning’ together of the structure at its middle.

The verb τρέπω also suggests figurative ‘turning’ in a number of paronomastic examples. In 2.3 I described the paronomasia of πέτρης ‘stone’ - ἀπέτραπε ‘turned away’ (*Il.* 11.757-758) as both a repetition of πέτρ- (**πέτρης** - **ἀπέτραπε**) and an anagrammatic echo in πέτρη/τραπε (**πέτρης** - **ἀπέτραπε**); ἀπέτραπε repeats but also ‘turns’ around the phonemes of πέτρης ‘stone.’ Further, this ‘turning’ takes place near the center of a ring (or parallel) structure consisting primarily of the Achaeans’ approach to Buprasium with their horses and their departure from the same:

***Il.* 11.754-761 ABC dd ABC**

	τόφρα γὰρ οὖν ἐπόμεσθα διὰ σπιδέος πεδίοιο	
A	<b>κτείνοντές</b> τ’ αὐτοὺς ἀνά τ’ ἔντεα καλὰ λέγοντες,	755
B, C	ὄφρ’ ἐπὶ <b>Βουπρασίου</b> πολυπύρου βήσαμεν <b>ἵππους</b>	
d	<b>πέτρης</b> τ’ Ὀλενίης, καὶ Ἀλησίου ἔνθα κολώνη	
d	κέκλιται· ὅθεν αὐτὶς <b>ἀπέτραπε</b> λαὸν Ἀθήνη.	
A	ἔνθ’ ἄνδρα <b>κτείνας</b> πύματον λίπον· αὐτὰρ Ἀχαιοὶ	
B, C	ἄψ ἀπὸ <b>Βουπρασίου</b> Πύλονδ’ ἔχον ὠκέας <b>ἵππους</b> ,	760
	πάντες δ’ εὐχετόωντο θεῶν Διὶ Νέστορί τ’ ἀνδρῶν.	

...so long we chased them far over the plain,  
killing the men and bringing in their armour,  
till we had brought our horses to Buprasium, rich in wheat,  
and to the Olenian rock, with the hill that is called Alesion,  
at which point Athena turned the people back.  
There I killed the last man and left him; then the Achaeans  
drove their horses back from Buprasium to Pylos  
and gave thanks to Zeus among the gods, and among mortal men to Nestor.

The narrative structurally turns at the point at which Athena turns the men back.

A similar phonemic twisting occurs in the collocation **τρεψάμενοι τέρποντο** ('turning they took delight') in a repetitive couplet that appears twice in the Odyssey:<sup>458</sup>

**Od. 1.421-423 = Od. 18.304-306**

οἱ δ' εἰς ὄρχηστὺν τε καὶ ἡμερόεσσαν ἀοιδίην  
**τρεψάμενοι τέρποντο**, μένον δ' ἐπὶ ἔσπερον ἐλθεῖν.  
 τοῖσι δὲ **τερπομένοισι μέλας** ἐπὶ ἔσπερος ἦλθε.

Then to dancing and pleasing song  
 they *turned* and took delight, and waited for evening to come.  
 Then upon them taking their delight dark evening came.

The suitors turn to taking delight in song and dance, the day turns to night, and the second line substantially repeats the first, even down to syllables in unrelated words (μένον/μέλας). The participle τερπομένοισι '[to them] taking delight' combines the participial form of τρεψάμενοι 'turning' with the stem of τέρποντο from the line above: not only has the action of turning resulted in the state of enjoyment, but a minor shifting or 'turning' of phonemes has turned these 'turners' (**τρεψάμενοι**) into 'enjoyers' (**τερπομένοισι**).

Another paronomasia mentioned in Chapter 2 (2.3.3), **εἵνατός** ἐστι *περιτροπέων ἐνιαυτός* (Il. 2.295), is arrayed around a verb of turning at the center of a ring structure:

**Il. 2.291-300 ABCBCBA B**

A	ἦ μὴν καὶ πόνος ἐστὶν ἀνηθέντα <b>véσθαι</b> .	
bB	καὶ γάρ τις θ' ἓνα <b>μῆνα μένων</b> ἀπὸ ἧς ἀλόχοιο	
C	<b>ἀσχαλάα</b> σὺν <b>νηῖ</b> πολυζύγω, ὄν περ ἄελλαι χειμέριαι εἰλέωσιν ὀρινομένη τε θάλασσα·	
	ἡμῖν δ' <b>εἵνατός</b> ἐστι <i>περιτροπέων ἐνιαυτός</i>	295
B	ἐνθάδε <b>μιμόντεσσι</b> · τῷ οὐ νεμεσίζοιμ' Ἀχαιοὺς	
C	<b>ἀσχαλάαν</b> παρὰ <b>νηυσί</b> κορωνίσιν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης	
B, A	αἰσχρὸν τοι δηρὸν τε <b>μένειν</b> κενεὸν τε <b>véσθαι</b> .	
B	τλήτε φίλοι, καὶ <b>μείνατ'</b> ἐπὶ χρόνον ὄφρα δαῶμεν ἢ ἐτεὸν Κάλχας μαντεύεται ἦε καὶ οὐκί.	300

<sup>458</sup> Cf. Od. 4.294-295 ἀλλ' ἄγετ' εἰς εὐνήν **πράπεθ'** ἡμεας, ὄφρα καὶ ἦδη / ὕπνω ὕπο γλυκερῷ **ταρπόμεθα** κοιμηθέντες.

True it is that they have had toil enough to desire to return home.  
 If a man has to wait away from his wife even for a single month,  
 he is distressed with his many-benched ship, at the mercy of winds  
 of winter and the stirred-up sea,  
 but for us it is now the ninth revolving year  
 that we have been kept waiting here; I cannot blame the Achaeans  
 if they are distressed beside the curved ships; still  
 we shall be shamed if we return home empty after so long waiting—  
 therefore, my friends, wait yet a little longer that we may learn  
 whether the prophesings of Calchas were false or true.

The ‘revolving year’ is accompanied by a paronomastic ‘revolution’ of εἴνατός ‘ninth’ into ἐνιαυτός ‘year.’

When Hermes arrives at Calypso’s island in *Odyssey* 5, he marvels at the garden he finds there, which includes four springs (*Od.* 5.70-71): κρῆναι δ’ ἐξείης πίσυρες ῥέον ὕδατι λευκῶ, / πλησίαι ἀλλήλων τετραμμένα ἄλλυδις ἄλλη (‘four springs in a row flowed with bright water, close to each other, turned this way and that’). Aside from the conspicuous repetitions of ἀλλ-/ηλ- on either side of the perfect participle of τρέπω (four, if one is counting), is it possible that the first syllables of τετραμμένα (cf. τετρα- ‘four’) play off πίσυρες ‘four’ in the previous line?<sup>459</sup>

In the category of paronomastic turnings we may place the center of the passage in *Odyssey* 7 described by Steinrück and outlined at the beginning of this section:

**Od. 7.259-266** ABCdeeeDDCBA

A	ἔνθα μὲν <u>ἐπτάετες</u> μένον ἔμπεδον, <u>εἴματα</u> δ’ αἰεὶ	
BC	δάκρυσι δεύεσκον, τά μοι <u>ἄμβροτα δῶκε</u> Καλυψώ·	260
d	ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ ὄγδοόν μοι ἐ <u>πιπλό</u> μενον <u>ἔτος</u> ἦλθε,	
ee	καὶ τότε δὴ μ’ ἐκέλευσεν <u>ἐποτρύνουσα νέεσθαι</u>	
e	Ζηνὸς ὑπ’ ἀγγελίης, ἣ καὶ <u>γῶος ἐτράπετ’</u> αὐτῆς.	
D, D, C	πέμπε δ’ ἐπὶ σχεδῆς <u>πολυδέσμου, πολλὰ δ’ ἔδωκε,</u>	
BA	σίτον καὶ μέθυ ἠδύ, καὶ <u>ἄμβροτα εἴματα ἔσσειν,</u>	265
	οὔρον δὲ προέηκεν ἀπήμονά τε λιάρων τε.	

<sup>459</sup> Both τετρα- and πίσυρες (Aeolic) are from IE \*k<sup>w</sup>etuer- ‘four’ (Beekes 2010 s.v. τέσσαρες).

I stayed there seven years straight on end, and watered the good clothes  
 Calypso gave me, immortal ones, with my tears during the whole time;  
 but at last when the eighth wheeling year came round,  
 then she ordered and encouraged me to go back,  
 either because Zeus had told her she must, or because her mind was *turned*.  
 She send me on a much-bound raft, and gave many things,  
 an abundance of bread and wine, and clothed me in immortal clothing,  
 and sent me a wind that blew both warm and fair.

The sequence ἐποτρύνουσα γέεσθαι - καὶ νόος ἐτρέπεται' αὐτῆς repeats the sound ν-ς, so that the sequence ν-ς has been 'turned' at the same time that Calypso's mind has. Like τρέπω, the verb γέεσθαι 'go back, return' in the *Odyssey* 7 passage comes at an opportune time in the lexical ring structure, at the point at which the lexical pattern begins to work back toward its beginning. The verb may be etymologically related, in the modern sense (and/or the ancient sense), to νόος.<sup>460</sup>

The words νόος and τρέπω are often collocated in Homeric epic to express the changing of a mind; for example, at *Od.* 19.479 Athena turns Penelope's mind from Odysseus' scar so that she fails to notice it, with repetition in the related νοῆσαι 'notice' and νόον 'mind' (ἦ δ' οὐτ' ἀθρήσαι δύνατ' ἀντίη οὔτε νοῆσαι / τῆ γὰρ Ἀθηναίη νόον ἔτραπεν), and at *Il.* 17.546 Zeus' mind is turned to send Athena to rouse the Danaans (ὄρνύμεναι Δαναούς· δὴ γὰρ νόος ἐτρέπεται' αὐτοῦ).<sup>461</sup>

### 3.6.2 *The Verb στρέφω*

As I noted already in 3.5, derivatives of the verb στρέφω 'turn in a circle' eventually appear as metaphors for repetition in Greek rhetorical terminology, for example in ἐπαναστροφή "repetition of the last word or words of a sentence at the beginning of the next,"<sup>462</sup> and I argued

<sup>460</sup> Frame 1978.

<sup>461</sup> Hearts, too, can change, as Helen says of her own at *Od.* 4.259-260: ἐνθ' ἄλλαι Τρῳαὶ λίγ' ἐκόκυον· αὐτὰρ ἐμὸν κῆρ / χαῖρ', ἐπεὶ ἤδη μοι κραδίη τέτραπτο νέεσθαι ('then the other Trojan women wailed shrilly, but my heart rejoiced, since already my heart was turned to go home'). The word κραδίη derives from κῆρ, from \*IE *k̑er*(d) 'heart' (Beekes 2010 s.v. καρδία).

<sup>462</sup> LSJ s.v. ἐπαναστροφή.

for a relationship between the phrase στρεπτή δὲ γλῶσσα in *Il.* 20.248 and the lexical repetitions in that passage. Here I collect further examples of στρέφω and its derivatives in the context of lexical repetitions.

One of the first things Hephaestus depicts on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 are constellations, including Orion and the circumpolar Bear, also known as the Wagon:

***Il.* 18.485-488**

ἐν δὲ τὰ τεῖρα πάντα, τὰ τ' οὐρανὸς ἐστεφάνωται, 485  
 Πληϊάδας θ' Ὑάδας τε τό τε σθένος Ὠρίωνος  
 Ἄρκτόν θ', ἦν καὶ Ἄμαξαν ἐπὶ κλησὶν καλέουσιν,  
 ἧ τ' αὐτοῦ στρέφεται καὶ τ' Ὠρίωνα δοκεύει  
 οἷη δ' ἄμμορός ἐστι λοετρῶν Ὠκεανοῖο.

and all the signs that crown the face of heaven—  
 the Pleiades, the Hyades, the strength of Orion,  
 and the Bear, which men also call by the name Wagon,  
 and which *turns* round ever in one place and looks at Orion,  
 and alone never dips into the stream of Oceanus.

The repetition of Ὠρίων effects a figurative turning of the narrative to match the Bear's circular motion around the north celestial pole, a motion that makes the Bear seem always to be looking in the direction of Orion. All of the constellations appear to turn in the night sky, but the Bear's proximity to the pole makes it an appropriate center for the lexical repetition here. The clause ἧ τ' αὐτοῦ στρέφεται 'she turns in this place' after the etymological phrase ἐπὶ κλησὶν καλέουσιν 'call it by a nickname' and before the repetition of Ὠρίων metastructurally marks out the point at which the description 'turns.'

Later in *Iliad* 18 Hephaestus creates a plowing scene on the shield in which plowmen turn back and forth as they create furrows in a field:

***Il.* 18.541-549**

ἐν δ' ἐτίθει νειὸν μαλακὴν πείραν ἄρουραν  
 εὐρείαν τρίπολον· πολλοὶ δ' ἀροτῆρες ἐν αὐτῇ

ζεύγεα δινεύοντες ἐλάστρεον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.  
 οἱ δ' ὅποτε στρέψαντες ἰκοίατο τέλσον ἀρούρης,  
 τοῖσι δ' ἔπειτ' ἐν χερσὶ δέπας μελιηδέος οἴνου 545  
 δόσκειν ἀνὴρ ἐπιών· τοὶ δὲ στρέψασκον ἀν' ὄγμους,  
 ἰέμενοι νειοῖο βαθείης τέλσον ἰκέσθαι.  
 ἦ δὲ μελαίνετ' ὄπισθεν, ἀρηρομένη δὲ ἐφίκει,  
 χρυσεῖη περ ἐοῦσα· τὸ δὴ περὶ θαῦμα τέτυκτο.

He wrought also a fair fallow field,  
 broad and thrice plowed already. Many plowmen in it  
 were whirling their yoked oxen to and fro.  
 Each time that they turned on reaching the edge of the field,  
 a man would give them a cup of sweet wine,  
 coming up to them, and they would go back to turning along their furrows  
 looking forward to the time when they should again reach the edge of the field.  
 The earth was dark behind them, like it had been plowed,  
 though it was of gold, a great source of wonder.

The repeated action of the plowmen's turning is emphasized in a number of ways, including by the verb δινεύω 'whirl, spin' in 543, by the iterative suffix in στρέψασκον 'kept turning' (546) and, iconically, by the repetition of the verb στρέφω and other words in the passage. The sequence στρέψαντες ἰκοίατο τέλσον - στρέψασκον... τέλσον ἰκέσθαι is particularly evocative: the repetitious description of turning surrounds the description of the man handing out wine when the plowmen reach the edge of the field, and this central description creates a pause in the repetitions at the same moment that the plowmen are allowed to pause, before the turning and repeating begin again in the second half of line 546. The scene is a source of amazement (τὸ δὴ περὶ θαῦμα τέτυκτο) because of the skill with which Hephaestus has made the furrows look real in spite of the medium of gold, and we may understand the passage to be notionally a similar source of amazement on account of the poet's skill in imitating a visual scene through a verbal medium.

Spanned between two similes that illustrate the balance and impasse of the Achaeans and Trojans fighting around the Achaean walls appears a ring-composed passage describing the fighting:

**Il. 12.424-431**

ὥς ἄρα τοὺς διέεργον ἐπάλξιες: οἱ δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτέων  
 δῆουν ἀλλήλων ἀμφὶ στήθεσσι βοείας 425  
ἀσπίδας εὐκύκλους λαισήϊα τε περόντα.  
πολλοὶ δ' οὐτάζοντο κατὰ χροά νηλεῖ χαλκῷ,  
 ἤμην ὄτεω στρεφθέντι μετάφρενα γυμνωθεῖη  
 μαρναμένων, πολλοὶ δὲ διαμπερές ἀσπίδος αὐτῆς.  
 πάντη δὴ πύργοι καὶ ἐπάλξιες αἵματι φωτῶν 430  
 ἐρράδατ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἀπὸ Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν.

even so did the battlements now keep them apart, and over these  
 they beat one another's round shields  
 around their chests and the winged hides.  
Many a man's body was wounded with the pitiless bronze,  
 as he *turned* round and bared his back to the foe,  
 and many were struck clean through their shields;  
 the wall and battlements were deluged with the blood  
 from both sides alike of Trojans and of Achaeans.

The passage fits in the category of ring-composed scenes that mention shields discussed in 3.1; the shields in 426 are εὐκυκλος ‘well-circled,’ which suits the passage’s lexical structure and the repetition of ἀσπίς within it. The participle of στρέφω appears near the center in the phrase στρεφθέντι μετάφρενα ‘for one turning, the back...,’ a phrase that occurs two other times in the *Iliad*.<sup>463</sup> The words share some phonemes (στρεφθέντι μετάφρενα), which could perhaps be heard as a kind of verbal twisting.

Another appearance of the phrase is in *Iliad* 5, when Agamemnon kills Odion by fixing his spear between his shoulders as the latter turns:

**Il. 5.40-50** ABcDeeDcBDA

<sup>463</sup> *Il.* 5.40 and *Il.* 20.488; never in the *Odyssey*.

A	πρώτῳ γὰρ <i>στρεφθέντι</i> μεταφρένω ἐν δόρῳ πῆξεν	40
B	<i>ῶμον</i> μεσσηγύς, διὰ δὲ στήθεσφιν ἔλασσε,	
c	δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, <i>ἀράβησε</i> δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ.	
D	<i>Ἰδομενεὺς</i> δ' ἄρα Φαῖστον ἐνήρατο Μήηνοσ υἱὸν	
e, e	<i>Βόρου</i> , ὃς ἐκ Τάρνης <i>ἐριβόλακος</i> εἰληλούθει.	
D	τὸν μὲν ἄρ' <i>Ἰδομενεὺς</i> δουρικλυτὸς ἔγχει μακρῷ	45
c, B	νύξ' ἵππων <i>ἐπιβησόμενον</i> κατὰ δεξιὸν <i>ῶμον</i> .	
	ἦριπε δ' ἐξ ὀχέων, στυγερός δ' ἄρα μιν σκότος <i>εἴλε</i> .	
D	Τὸν μὲν ἄρ' <i>Ἰδομενήος</i> ἐσύλευον θεράποντες·	
A	υἱὸν δὲ <i>Στροφίοιο</i> <i>Σκαμάνδριον</i> αἴμονα θήρης	
	Ἀτρεΐδης Μενέλαοσ <i>ἔλ'</i> ἔγχει ὀξυόεντι...	50

just as he was turning in flight; it struck him  
between the shoulders and went right through his chest,  
and his armour rang rattling round him as he fell heavily to the ground.  
Then Idomeneus killed Phaestus, the Maeonian son  
of Borus, who had come from Tarne rich in soil.  
Mighty Idomeneus with his long spear  
struck him on the right shoulder as he was mounting his horses,  
and he fell heavily from the chariot, and the darkness of death enshrouded him. The  
squires of Idomeneus spoiled him of his armour,  
while Menelaus, son of Atreus, killed Scamandrius, the son of Strophius,  
a mighty huntsman, with a sharp spear...

Three Achaeans kill three Trojan allies in turn by striking them on or near their shoulders:

Agamemnon kills Odion, Idomeneus kills Phaestus, and Menelaus kills Scamandrius. The lexical ring structure works its way from the turning Odion (*στρεφθέντι* 40) to a paronomastic center of Βόρου-ἐριβόλακος (44) in the biographical details about the doomed Phaestus, then back out toward Scamandrius son of Strophius (*Στροφίοιο* 49, from *στρέφω*), which pairs the name of the father with *στρέφω* in 40. The name Strophius appears only here in Homer, and it is hard to escape the thought that its presence at this point is related to the lexical structure of the passage in which it appears.<sup>464</sup> The name *Σκαμάνδριον* in the same line similarly echoes a reference to the river Scamander a few lines before the quoted passage begins (*Σκαμάνδρῳ* 36), when Athena leads Ares out of battle and makes him sit by the river. In spiral composition, the passage

<sup>464</sup> The Boros mentioned here appears only here as well, although another appears at *Il.* 16.177.

continues on to describe Menelaus killing Scamandrius in a manner similar to Agamemnon's killing of Odion (56-58): he strikes him in the back (μετάφρενον, but not “turning” this time), and line 41 is repeated in full in 57 (ὄμων μεσσηγύς, διὰ δὲ στήθεσφιν ἔλασσεν), followed by the resounding rattle of the fallen man's armor (ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ 42, 58).

In *Iliad* 12, Hector's circling movement around his companions to urge them on is compared first to a whirlwind (ἀέλλη 40) and then, in an extended simile, to the turning of a boar or lion pursued by hunters and dogs:

<b>II. 12.40-50</b>		ABABCACA	
	αὐτὰρ ὃ γ' ὡς τὸ πρόσθεν ἐμάρνατο	ἴσος ἀέλλη·	40
A	ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἄν ἔν τε κύνεσσι καὶ ἀνδράσι	θηρευτῆσι	
B	κάπριος ἢ ἐ λέων στρέφεται	σθένει βλεμεαίνων·	
	οἱ δέ τε πυργηδὸν σφέας αὐτοὺς ἀρτύναντες		
	ἀντίον ἴστανται καὶ ἀκοντίζουσι	θαμειᾶς	
	αἰχμὰς ἐκ χειρῶν· τοῦ δ' οὐ ποτε κυδάλιμον κῆρ		45
A	ταρβεῖ	οὐδὲ φοβεῖται, ἀγνηροῖα δέ μιν ἔκτα·	
B, CA	ταρφέα	τε στρέφεται στίχας ἀνδρῶν	πειρητίζων·
CA	ὄπη τ' ἰθύση τῆ εἴκουσι	στίχας ἀνδρῶν·	
	ὡς Ἴκτωρ ἄν' ὄμιλον ἰὼν ἐλίσσεθ'	ἑταίρους	
	τάφρον	ἐποτρύνων διαβαινέμεν· οὐδέ οἱ ἵπποι...	50

He as heretofore fought with the force of a whirlwind.  
 As when against the dogs and men that attack him,  
 a lion or wild boar turns fiercely, exulting in its strength  
 while these fitting themselves like a solid wall  
 shower thickly their javelins as they face him,  
 casting from their hands: his courage is all undaunted,  
 but his high spirit will be the death of him;  
 many a time does he turn closely among the ranks of men to scatter them,  
 and the ranks of men fall back as often as he does so—  
 even so did Hector go about among the host  
 exhorting and cheering them on to cross the trench. Nor did the horses...

The verb στρέφω twice describes the beast as it turns this way and that to repeatedly confront the men (42, 47), and the lexical repetitions reinforce these whirling encounters. A paronomastic sequence plays out at the beginning of lines 46, 47, and 50 in ταρβεῖ - ταρφέα - τάφρον; in 47 the

phonetic permutation extends to στρέφεται in ταρφέα τε στρέφεται ‘[the animal] turns thickly,’ making the phrase itself an auditory example of the ‘thick turning’ it denotes. The animal’s bravery (ἀγηνωρία 46) in the face of the hunters leads to its death; an ancient folk etymology interpreted ἀγηνωρ as deriving from ἄγαν ‘excessive’ and ἀνήρ ‘man,’<sup>465</sup> so the element ‘man’ can be heard three times in three line consecutive lines, even as the men are described as standing in ranks or lines (στίχας ἀνδρῶν 47, 48). Line 43 had already depicted them ‘fitting themselves together like a tower’ (πυργηδὸν σφέας αὐτοὺς ἀρτόναντες).<sup>466</sup> The paronomastic soundplay relating to the beast’s movement gives it an air of greater flexibility and maneuverability than these fitted ranks of men.

The scholia on the passage discuss whether ἐλίσσεθ’ (49) represents the imperfect third person singular of λίσσομαι ‘pray, beg, beseech, encourage’ or of ἐλίσσω ‘twirl, spin, turn.’ The A scholia favor the former and the bT scholia the latter, which recommend punctuating after the verb to separate it from what follows.<sup>467</sup> The syntax and meter of the line make λίσσομαι the better reading, but it is easy to see why, given the preceding simile, the verb ἐλίσσω might come to mind. Ἐλίσσω does appear when Hector whirls through a crowd calling the Trojans later in Book 12 (κέκλετο δὲ Τρῶεσσιν ἐλιζόμενος καθ’ ὄμιλον *Il.* 12.467), and λισσομένω and ἐλίσσόμενος appear a few lines apart at *Il.* 22.91/95, when Hector is compared to a twisting snake as he waits for Achilles in spite of his parents’ entreaties. It is not out of the question that

<sup>465</sup> Chantraine 1968 s.v. ἀγηνωρ.

<sup>466</sup> LSJ s.v. πυργηδόν ‘in close array.’

<sup>467</sup> Scholion A *ad* 49: τὸ ἐλίσσετο ἑκατέρωθεν δύναται προσδίδοσθαι καὶ σημαίνει ἢ τὸ παρεκάλει παρὰ τὸ λίσσεσθαι ἢ ἐστρέφετο παρὰ τὸ ἐλίσσω ῥήμα, ἐπεὶ καὶ λέοντι αὐτὸν εἰκάζει. πιθανώτερον δὲ τοῖς ἐξῆς αὐτὸ συντάττειν... (“the word ἐλίσσετο is able to be attributed to either and means either ‘encourage’ from λίσσεσθαι or ‘he turned’ from the verb ἐλίσσω, since he likens him to the lion. It is more plausible to take it with what follows...”); scholion bT: στικτέον εἰς τὸ ἐλίσσετο, καὶ ἔστιν ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰλεῖτο· οὐδέποτε γὰρ παρεκάλεισεν Ἐκτωρ (“one must place a pause after ἐλίσσετο, which is used in place of εἰλεῖτο: because Hector never calls on people”). See also Hainsworth 1993 *ad* 12.49-50.

the orthographic ambiguity of ελίσσεθ' reflected an ambiguous spoken word, if it was used in a psilotic dialect (namely, East Ionian) in which no initial aspiration distinguished the two.

In any case, a paronomastic echo suggests itself between ἴσος ἀέλλη 'equal to a whirlwind' in 40 and ἐλίσσεθ' in 49; if the distance between the two is an argument against wordplay, their structural position in reference to Hector just before and after the vehicle of the simile stands in their favor (ἴσος ἀέλλη / ὤς... ὤς Ἐκτώρ ἀν' ὄμιλον ἰὼν ἐλίσσεθ' ἑταίρους). The verb ἐλίσσεθ', written ἐλλίσσεθ' in the Venetus A manuscript to accommodate the word to the meter, recombines the sequences ελ(λ)- and ισ- from the earlier phrase, and represents another kind of phonetic whirling to match the content of the two similes.

The noun στροφάλιγξ 'whirl, eddy' appears in Homer only in the phrase στροφάλιγγι κονίης 'whirl of dust,' and in each of its three occurrences appears in a figurative whirl of lexical and paronomastic repetitions:

**Il. 16.774-776** (fighting around the body of Cebriones)

πολλὰ δὲ χερμάδια **μεγάλ'** ἀσπίδας **ἐστυφέλιξαν**  
μαρναμένων ἀμφ' αὐτόν· ὃ δ' ἐν **στροφάλιγγι** κονίης  
κεῖτο **μέγας μεγαλωστί**, λελασμένος ἵπποσυνάων.

Many a great stone, moreover, beat on many a shield  
as they fought around his body, but there in the *whirling* clouds of dust  
he lay all huge and hugely, heedless of his horsemanship.

**Il. 21.502-504** (Leto picks up Artemis' fallen bow)

ὣς ἄρ' ἔφη, Λητώ δὲ συναίνυτο καμπύλα **τόξα**  
πεπτεῶτ' **ἄλλυδις ἄλλα** μετὰ **στροφάλιγγι** κονίης.  
ἦ μὲν **τόξα** λαβοῦσα **πάλιν κίε** θυγατέρος ἦς·

Thus he spoke, and Leto then gathered up the bent bow and arrows  
that had fallen here and there amid the *whirling* dust,  
and when she had got the bow of her daughter she went back.

**Od. 24.39-42** (the shade of Agamemnon describes the fight for Achilles' body)

**μαρνάμενοι** περὶ σεῖο· σὺ δ' ἐν **στροφάλιγγι** κονίης  
κεῖσο **μέγας μεγαλωστί**, **λελασμένος** ἵπποσυνάων. 40

ἡμεῖς δὲ πρόπαν ἤμαρ ἐμαρνάμεθ'· οὐδέ κε πάμπαν  
 παυσάμεθα πτολέμου, εἰ μὴ Ζεὺς λαίλαπι παῦσεν.

fighting for your body. There you lay in the *whirling* clouds of dust,  
 all huge and hugely, heedless now of your horsemanship.  
 We fought the whole day, nor should we ever  
 have left off if Zeus had not sent a hurricane to stay us.

Repetitions in consecutive words are particularly noteworthy in all three passages: μέγας  
μεγαλωστί (*Il.* 16.776 and *Od.* 24.40), ἄλλυδις ἄλλα (*Il.* 21.503), ἤμαρ ἐμαρνάμεθ' (*Od.* 24.41);  
 word-internal reduplications contribute to the effect: λελασμένος (*Il.* 16.776, *Od.* 24.40),  
πεπτεῶτα (*Il.* 21.503), πάμπαν (*Od.* 24.41), λαίλαπι (*Od.* 24.42).<sup>468</sup> The forms μαρνάμενων/-οι  
 (*Il.* 16.775/*Od.* 24.39) and ἐμαρνάμεθ' (*Od.* 24.41) produce a similar repetition through the –με-  
 of the middle participle and the 1<sup>st</sup> person plural ending, respectively. The listener is for a  
 moment caught up in the thick whirl of repeated words and syllables that accompany the  
 description of the whirls of dust.

### 3.6.3 Narrative Eddies: δίνη and the River Xanthus

Flowing water is by no means the only thing to which the verbs δινέω/δινεύω ‘whirl,  
 spin’ are applied in Homer. Achilles whirls at *Il.* 24.12 as he wanders along the shore, and the  
 plowmen on the Shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18 turn their yoked teams this way and that, to give  
 two aforementioned examples. But the noun δίνη ‘whirlpool, eddy’ from which the verbs derive  
 refers only to rivers in Homeric epic; its sole appearance in the *Odyssey* is in the scene in which  
 Nausicaa’s ball falls into the river (*Od.* 6.116), and all six Iliadic occurrences are in Book 21, the  
 focus of which is Achilles’ slaughter of Trojans beside the river Xanthus and his struggle with

<sup>468</sup> The etymology of λαίλαψ ‘storm, hurricane’ is unknown; Beekes (2010 s.v.) considers it “probably Pre-Greek, with intensive reduplication.”

the divine river. The descriptions of Xanthus in this book are a fitting place to examine the associations between eddying content and eddying repetitions.

The descriptions begin with the first lines of *Iliad* 21. In the following excerpt I have underlined only the words ῥόος ‘stream, current,’ ποταμός ‘river,’ δίνη ‘eddy,’ βαθύς ‘deep,’ and their relatives for the sake of clarity, but there are a number of other lexical and paronomastic repetitions (e.g. μεγάλω- μεγάλ’ 9-10, ἠέρα δ’ Ἥρη 6):

***Il. 21.1-16***

ἀλλ’ ὅτε δὴ πόρον ἴξον ἐϋρρεῖος ποταμοῖο  
 Ξάνθου δινήεντος, ὃν ἀθάνατος τέκετο Ζεὺς,  
 ἔνθα διατμήξας τοὺς μὲν πεδίον δὲ δίωκε  
 πρὸς πόλιν, ἧ περ Ἀχαιοὶ ἀτυζόμενοι φοβέοντο  
 ἦματι τῷ προτέρῳ, ὅτε μαίνετο φαίδιμος Ἴκτωρ· 5  
 τῇ ῥ’ οἳ γε προχέοντο πεφυζότες, ἠέρα δ’ Ἥρη  
 πίτνα πρόσθε βαθεῖαν ἐρυκέμεν· ἡμίσεες δὲ  
 ἐς ποταμὸν εἰλεῦντο βαθύρροον ἀργυροδίνην,  
 ἐν δ’ ἔπεσον μεγάλῳ πατάγῳ, βράχε δ’ αἰπὰ ῥέεθρα,  
 ὄχθαι δ’ ἀμφὶ περὶ μεγάλ’ ἴαχον· οἳ δ’ ἀλαλητῶ 10  
 ἔννεον ἐνθα καὶ ἐνθα ἐλισσόμενοι περὶ δίνας.  
 ὡς δ’ ὄθ’ ὑπὸ ρίπῃς πυρὸς ἀκρίδες ἠερέθονται  
 φευγέμενα ποταμὸν δέ· τὸ δὲ φλέγει ἀκάματον πῦρ  
 ὄρμενον ἐξαίφνης, ταὶ δὲ πτώσσουσι καθ’ ὕδωρ·  
 ὡς ὑπ’ Ἀχιλλῆος Ξάνθου βαθυδινήεντος 15  
 πληττο ῥόος κελάδων ἐπιμιξίῳ ἵππων τε καὶ ἀνδρῶν.

Now when they came to the ford of the well-flowing river whirling Xanthus, begotten of immortal Zeus, Achilles cut their forces in two: one half he chased over the plain towards the city, where the Achaeans had fled in turmoil on the preceding day with Hector in full triumph; this way did they flee pell-mell, and Hera sent down a deep mist in front of them to stay them. The other half were hemmed in by the deep-flowing silver-whirling stream, and fell into it with a great uproar. The waters resounded, and the banks rang again all around, as the men with loud cries swam hither and thither twisting amid the eddies. As locusts before the blast of a grass fire flee to a river—the unwearied flame comes on suddenly, and they huddle into the water—even so before Achilles was the stream of deep-whirling Xanthus

filled with the uproar of men and horses.

The river is well-flowing (ἐϋρρεῖος), whirling (δινήεντος), deep-flowing (βαθύρροον), silver-whirling (ἀργυροδίνην), and deep-whirling (βαθυδινήεντος); the repetition and recombination of elements in compound adjectives produces a description that whirls and flows in imitation of its content. Gary Miller presents lines 8 to 11 as an example of “syntactic-semantic iconicity” in which “the phrases involving the whirling river and the whirled men are intertwined iconic to meaning.”<sup>469</sup> The grammatical subject shifts rapidly from the men to the river to the men, but the repetitions **βαθύρροον** ἀργυρο**δίνην**- **ρέεθρα**- **δίνας** in no small way contribute to the effect, not least in line 11 when the men ‘swim here and there whirling among the eddies’ (ἔννεον ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ἐλίσσόμενοι περὶ δίνας): the men are described swimming between repetitions of the word δίνη (8 and 11), including, further, δινήεντος in line 2 and βαθυδινήεντος in 15.

The structural tendencies on display here recur in further descriptions of the river.

Achilles taunts the corpse of Lycaon, which he has hurled into the water, with a description of Xanthus (= Scamander) carrying off his body:

## II. 21.124-132

... ἀλλὰ Σκάμανδρος οἴσει <b>δινήεις</b> εἴσω ἄλος εὐρέα κόλπον·	125
θρώσκων τις κατὰ κῦμα μέλαιναν φρήχ' ὑπαῖξει ἰχθύς, ὅς κε φάγησι Λυκάονος <b>ἀργέτα</b> δῆμόν. φθείρεσθ' εἰς ὃ κεν ἄστυ κιχείομεν Ἴλιου ἱρήs ὕμεις μὲν φεύγοντες, ἐγὼ δ' ὄπιθεν κεραῖζων. οὐδ' ὑμῖν ποταμός περ ἐϋρροος <b>ἀργυροδίνης</b>	130
ἀρκέσει, ᾗ δὴ δηθὰ πολέας ἱερεύετε ταύρους, ζωοὺς δ' ἐν <b>δίνησι</b> καθίετε μώνυχας ἵππους.	

...but whirling Scamander  
shall bear you into the broad bosom of the sea.  
There shall the fishes as they dart under the dark ripple of the waters  
feed on the shining fat of Lycaon—

<sup>469</sup> Miller 2014: 132-133. He further considers the labials in line 9 “phonesthetic to the plunging and moaning noises.”

so perish all of you till we reach the citadel of strong Ilius—  
 you in flight, and I following after to destroy you.  
 The river well-flowing silver-whirling  
 shall serve you in no stead, for all the bulls you offered him  
 and all the single-hooved horses that you flung living into his eddies.

Here the adjective ἀργυροδίνης ‘silver-whirling’ is anticipated by the words δινήεις ‘whirling’ and ἀργέτα ‘bright, shining,’ and these suggest a morbid gloss on the compound adjective: the river’s water will flash not only from its own properties but because it has been mixed with the shining fat of dead Trojans. The line-final positions of ἀργέτα δημόν (‘shining fat’ 127) and ἀργυροδίνης (130) strengthen the grim association.

At 21.212-213 Xanthus speaks to Achilles, and the compound adjective describing the river is again broken down into its constituent parts: εἰ μὴ χωσάμενος προσέφη ποταμὸς βαθυδίνης / ἀνέρι εἰσάμενος, βαθέης δ’ ἐκ φθέγξατο δίνης (‘... if the deep-whirling river had not spoken to him in anger / seeming like a man, and he spoke from a deep whirl’). Not long after Achilles leaps into the ‘deep-whirling’ river (βαθυδίνης 228), and the latter casts out all the bodies Achilles has piled into it, but saves those still alive under its lovely currents (καλὰ ῥέεθρα 238, cf. 244) by ‘hiding them in large, deep whirls’ (κρύπτων ἐν δίνησι βαθείησιν μεγάλησι 239). The adjective βαθυδίνης may be a conventional descriptor of rivers, but it is not semantically stagnant.

The rampaging river is only stopped when Hera summons Hephaestus to scorch the plain. I discussed the following passage in Chapter 2 for its paronomasia of καί ‘and’ and καίωμα ‘burn,’ but here the eddying repetitions in the description of the effect of the flames on the river warrant attention:

**Il. 21.348-356**

...ὡς ἐξηράνθη πεδίον πᾶν, κὰδ δ’ ἄρα νεκροῦς  
κῆεν. ὃ δ’ ἐς ποταμὸν τρέψε φλόγα παμφανόωσαν.

καίοντο πτελέαι τε καὶ ἰτέαι ἠδὲ μυρῖκαι, 350  
 καίετο δὲ λωτός τε ἰδὲ θρύον ἠδὲ κύπειρον,  
 τὰ περὶ καλὰ ῥέεθρα ἄλις ποταμοῖο πεφύκει·  
 τεύροντ' ἐγγέλυές τε καὶ ἰχθύες οἱ κατὰ δίνας,  
 οἱ κατὰ καλὰ ῥέεθρα κυβίστων ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα  
 πνοιῆ τεϊρόμενοι πολυμήτιος Ἥφαιστοιο. 355  
 καίετο δ' ἰς ποταμοῖο ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἕκ τ' ὀνόμαζεν...

...even so the whole plain was dried and the dead bodies  
 burned. Then he turned the shining flame on to the river.  
 He burned the elms and the willows and the tamarisks,  
 burned the lotus also, with the rushes and marshy herbage  
 that grew abundantly by lovely currents of the river.  
 The eels and fishes suffered in the eddies,  
 tumbling about here and there in the lovely currents,  
 suffering under the blast of cunning Hephaestus,  
 and the river himself was burned, so that he spoke...

The plight of the fish and eels in the streams and whirls of the river is described in a whirl of repetitions coiled most narrowly around the words *οἱ κατὰ δίνας*, / *οἱ κατὰ καλὰ ῥέεθρα* in 353-354. Like the swimmers in 11, the fish and eels tumble here and there (again with the phrase *ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα* 354), this time between repetitions of *καλὰ ῥέεθρα* ‘lovely streams’ in 353 and 355.

It is apparent that lexical repetitions offer the Homeric poet a means of bringing the structure of the narrative in line with the imagery of the turbulent, spinning water of the river Xanthus. In particular, the repetition and reconfiguration of roots denoting whirling, depth, silver, and flowing both individually and in compound adjectives applied to the river can be understood as a kind of shifting fluidity of language that spirals through the narrative in *Iliad* 21.<sup>470</sup> The adjectives ἀργυροδίνης, βαθυδίνης, βαθύρροος, etc. are conventional, to judge by

<sup>470</sup> The language of ‘flowing’ (ῥέω) is applied directly to human speech at *Il.* 1.249: τοῦ καὶ ἀπὸ γλώσσης μέλιτος γλυκίων ῥέεν αὐδὴ (“from his tongue flowed a voice sweeter than honey,” of Nestor).

their application to rivers elsewhere in Homer and early epic,<sup>471</sup> and taken as a set they produce in themselves this effect of eddying language. The list of rivers Tethys bears to Ocean in Hesiod's *Theogony* bears witness to this: the adjectives *δινήεντας*, *βαθυδίνην*, *καλλιρέεθρον*, and *ἀργυροδίνην* complete four lines in a row (337-340), respectively, and *εὐρρείτην* appears mid-line in 343. Metrical considerations are no doubt a factor in the distribution of the adjectives (note, however, the metrical equivalence of *καλλιρέεθρον* and *ἀργυροδίνην*), but even in a relatively unadorned list of names they bring about an iconic whirling through repetitions of *δίνη* and *ρόος* (e.g. Τηθύς δ' Ὀκεανῶ Ποταμοὺς τέκε *δινήεντας*, / Νεῖλόν τ' Ἀλφειόν τε καὶ Ἥριδανὸν *βαθυδίνην* 337-338).

### 3.6.4 Summary and Conclusion

This survey of 'turning' language as an annotation of repetition has neither exhaustively covered the words discussed nor made much of an inroad into the range of Homeric vocabulary pertaining to turning. The verb *ἐλίσσω* 'turn round, spin, roll' is one relatively neglected example, the pertinence of which is perhaps nowhere more clear than in the description of Odysseus' sleepless tossing and turning while considering how to defeat the suitors in *Odyssey* 20:

#### **Od. 20.23-28** ABccBBA

τῷ δὲ μάλ' ἐν πείσῃ κραδίη μένε τετληυῖα  
 A, B νωλεμέως· ἀτὰρ αὐτὸς *ἐλίσσεται ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα.*  
 c ὡς δ' ὅτε γαστέρ' ἀνήρ *πολέος* πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο, 25  
 c, B *ἐμπλείην* κνίσης τε καὶ αἵματος, *ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα*  
 αἰόλλη, μάλα δ' ὄκα λιλαίεται ὀπτηθῆναι,  
 B, A ὡς ἄρ' ὁ γ' *ἔνθα καὶ ἔνθα ἐλίσσεται* μερμηρίζων...

Thus he chided with his heart, and it abided and endured  
 unceasingly, but he tossed to and fro

<sup>471</sup> E.g. *Il.* 2.752-754 *καλλίρροον-ἀργυροδίνη-ἐπιρρέει* (the rivers Titaressus and Peneius); *Il.* 7.421 = *Od.* 19.434 *ἀκααρρείταιο βαθυρόου* (the river Ocean); *Il.* 14.311 *βαθυρόου* (Ocean); *Il.* 20.73 *βαθυδίνης* (Xanthus); Hesiod *Works and Days* 171 *βαθυδίνην* (Ocean).

as one who turns a paunch in front of a hot fire,  
full of blood and fat, moving it to and fro,  
that he may get it cooked as soon as possible,  
even so did he toss to and fro, pondering...

And to fit in one last example, Hephaestus' ring-composed account of his rescue by Eurynome and Thetis in *Iliad* 18 centers on a list of twisty ornaments he made while in hiding in a cave:

**Il. 18.398-405**            ABA CD ee CDC BA  
 AB    ...εἰ μή μ' **Εὐρυνόμη** τε **Θέτις** θ' ὑπεδέξατο κόλπῳ  
 A, CD **Εὐρυνόμη** θυγάτηρ **ἄψορρόου Ὠκεανοῖο**.  
 e     τῆσι παρ' εἰνάετες **χάλκευον** **δαίδαλα** πολλά,            400  
 e     πόρπας τε **γναμπιάς** θ' ἔλικας **κάλυκας** τε καὶ ὄρμους  
 CD    ἐν **σπῆϊ γλαφυρῶ**· περὶ δὲ **ρόος Ὠκεανοῖο**  
 C     ἀφρῶ μορμύρων **ῥέεν** ἄσπετος· οὐδέ τις ἄλλος  
       ἦδεεν οὔτε θεῶν οὔτε θνητῶν ἀνθρώπων,  
 BA    ἀλλὰ **Θέτις** τε καὶ **Εὐρυνόμη** ἴσαν, αἶ μ' ἐσάωσαν.    405

...had not Eurynome and Thetis taken me to their bosom,  
Eurynome, daughter of the ever-encircling waters of Oceanus.  
Nine years did I stay with them, and made many beautiful works in bronze,  
*brooches, bent spirals, cups, and chains*,  
in their *hollow cave*, with the waters of Oceanus  
murmuring with foam rushed ever past it; and no one  
knew, neither of gods nor of mortal men,  
save only Thetis and Eurynome who saved me.

The specific ornaments indicated are not in every case understood: πόρπη refers to a pin or clasp and ὄρμος to a necklace; γναμπταὶ ἔλικες 'curved or bent spirals' (cf. ἐλίσσω) are evidently another kind of jewelry – the scholia *ad loc.* translate with ψέλια 'armlets' or 'anklets' – as are the κάλυκες, literally 'cups of a flower.' Precise definitions are not needed, however, to hear how the twisting imagery marks the turning point of the broader lexical ring structure and resonates with the soundplay in **χάλκευον**, **ἔλικας**, and **κάλυκας**. In another iconic gesture, the cave is said to be surrounded by the streams of Ocean, and the description of the cave is surrounded by the repetition **ἄψορρόου Ὠκεανοῖο** - **ρόος Ὠκεανοῖο** ('back-streaming Ocean'-'stream of Ocean' 399/402), in a fitting evocation of the river flowing back into itself. The whole ring structure

becomes the Ocean-surrounded hollow cave (σπηῖ γλαφυρῶ 402) in which Hephaestus was hidden.<sup>472</sup> In so carefully arranged a passage, it is metapoetically appropriate for Hephaestus (and the poet) to center the ring structure on the description of δαίδαλα πολλά ‘many intricately-made things,’ the delicate, twisting products of his art.

Other words related more or less to the semantic field of turning that appear in Homer include κυλίνδω ‘roll,’ κάμπτω/γνάμπτω ‘bend,’ πλέκω ‘plait, braid,’ πτύσσω ‘fold’ and πτύξ ‘fold, valley’ (see the discussion of shields in 3.1), ἀγκύλος ‘crooked, curved’ (cf. ἀγκυλομήτης ‘of crooked counsel’, epithet of Zeus), ἄγκος ‘bend’ (plural ἄγκεα ‘glens’), and ἀγκών ‘bend of the arm, elbow’;<sup>473</sup> these all deserve greater attention than can be given here.

Certain tendencies have distinguished themselves in the discussions of τρέπω, στρέφω, and δίνη, and while each word for its own part could benefit from a more systematic treatment to determine, for example, the precise semantic range of στρέφω in Homer as opposed to τρέπω, it will do no harm to sketch some observations here. There is, first of all, considerable variety in the kind of repetitive structures in which ‘turning’ words appear. Ring composition is common, and much presented here supports the assessment of a correlation by Steinrück and Forte and Smith. But multiple repetitions of a single word or root, substantial repetitions of one line or phrase in a subsequent line, and paronomastic echoes in which syllables or phonetic sequences have been reshuffled all seem to play a part in the structural iconicity of turning, which supports the idea that ‘turning’ served as a metaphor for repetition more broadly. The use of the transitive τρέπω with a direct object that is repeated nearby is especially conducive to an understanding of ‘turning’ as ‘repeating.’ There is no sufficient basis at this point for associating τρέπω and στρέφω with different patterns of repetitions; the word δίνη and its derivatives in descriptions of

<sup>472</sup> The phrase αἶ μ’ ἐσάωσαν in 405 echoes ἦ μ’ ἐσάωσ’ in 395.

<sup>473</sup> The last three derive from IE *\*h<sub>2</sub>enk-* ‘bend’ (Beekes 2010 s.v. ἀγκύλος).

Xanthus in *Iliad* 21 appear in sequences in which elements shift and recombine, but they can also participate in more and less symmetrical ring structures, as at *Od.* 6.113-117 and *Il.* 21.348-356.

Some ring structures turn on the point of an incidental detail that denotes or connotes turning: the leather straps (τροποῖ) on the Phaeacian craft prepared for Odysseus are literally ‘turners,’ and Hephaestus’ description of his time in hiding centers on the helicoid ornaments he made there. The language of turning can appear in purely descriptive passages, as in the depiction of the circumpolar constellations or the plowing scene on the Shield of Achilles; these scenes showcase the poet’s artistry and draw an implicit analogy between Hephaestus’ skill in working metal and the poet’s skill in enacting content through lexical repetitions. At other times the language of turning attends changes of scene or topic: the suitors turn to song and dance as night comes on; the Cyclops turns his sheep out of the cave, and the scene turns to Odysseus; Zeus turns his eyes away from the Trojan plain, and this allows Poseidon time to act; Athena contrives that Nausicaa’s ball falls into an eddying stream and her attendants shout, waking Odysseus after his shipwreck and propelling the plot forward. Gods are the agents of the verb *τρέπω* on no few occasions, as when Apollo and Poseidon divert and revert mouths of rivers or when Athena turns Odysseus’ spirit to pursue the Lycians. The changes of mind and course that they effect push the narrative this way and that in accordance with the narrator’s own structuring of the scenes. By correlating turns of form with turning content, the poet allows a glimpse of his own artistry in putting the narrative in order.

### 3.7 CONCLUSION

The case studies presented in this chapter, and the passages discussed in previous chapters, have shown some of the ways the Homeric poet or poets leverage patterns of repetitions of small units

of speech for poetic effect by arranging the structural texture of the narrative to reflect its content. This structural valence intertwines the verbal and visual in a way that draws attention to the agency of the poet in constructing the poem, and the various implicit metaphors of fine craftsmanship for poetic production suggest that these structural correlations represent a noteworthy component of the artistry involved in the composition of Homeric verse, to be appreciated by a receptive audience as part of the experience of listening to an epic performance. Pursuing the idea that the alignment of form and content allows us to hear content as an embedded commentary on form, the preceding discussions have demonstrated how the Homeric narrative has folded into itself a self-characterization that emphasizes both the multiplicity and variety of its verbal elements and the skillful arrangement or fitting together of those elements into an orderly, cohesive, and fluent whole.

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