

## INTERPRETATIVE AND CRITICAL NOTES ON *ILIAD* 2.291

*Iliad* verse 2.291 is a problematic point in the text, which has attracted the attention of scholars from ancient times to the present day.<sup>1</sup> In an effort to contribute to the solution of the problem, in this article I re-examine the verse and propose its restoration through a new interpretative approach.

The verse is contained in the speech of Odysseus (2.284–332) at the assembly of the Achaeans. The hero blames them for rushing to the ships with relief, when Agamemnon, in order to test them, proposed to leave Troy and return home; but then justifies them, because of their desire to return home after nine years in Troy, and tries to inspire courage in them. Among other things Odysseus says:<sup>2</sup>

<p>ὥς τε γὰρ ἦ παῖδες νεαροὶ χῆραί τε γυναικες ἀλλήλοισιν ὀδύρονται οἰκόνδε νέεσθαι. ἦ μὴν καὶ πόνος ἐστὶν ἀνιθέντα νέεσθαι· καὶ γάρ τίς θ' ἓνα μῆνα μένων ἀπὸ ἧς ἀλόχοιο ἀσχαλὰ σὺν νηὶ πολυζύγῳ, ὃν περ ἄελλαι χειμέριαι εἰλέωσιν ὀρινομένη τε θάλασσα· ἡμῖν δ' εἵνατός ἐστι περιτροπέων ἐνιαυτὸς ἐνθάδε μιμνόντεσσι· τῷ οὐ νεμεσίζοιμ' Ἀχαιοὺς ἀσχαλάν παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν· ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπηξ αἰσχρόν τοι δηρόν τε μένειν κενεόν τε νέεσθαι.</p>	<p>290         295</p>
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Verse 291, as it is edited in Monro and Allen's edition (the predominant form in almost all of the most distinguished critical editions),<sup>3</sup> if translated literally, seems to have, according to Kirk, the following meaning: 'truly it is also a labour to depart in distress'.<sup>4</sup> Apart from the fact, however, that this interpretation is not satisfactory (as Kirk himself points out<sup>5</sup>), it also does not agree with the spirit of

<sup>1</sup> See E. Mehler, 'Miscellanea: Ad Sam. Adr. Naber epistula critica', *Mnemosyne* 5 (1877), 387–412, at 388; G.S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary, Vol. I: Books 1–4* (Cambridge, 1985), 147; M.L. West, *Studies in the Text and Transmission of the Iliad* (Munich and Leipzig, 2001), 176.

<sup>2</sup> *Iliad* and *Odyssey* quotations in this paper come from D.B. Monro and T.W. Allen, *Homeri opera*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1920<sup>3</sup>), and P. von der Mühll, *Homeri Odyssea* (Basel, 1962) respectively.

<sup>3</sup> See W. Leaf, *The Iliad: Edited, with Apparatus Criticus, Prolegomena, Notes, and Appendices*, vol. 1 (London, 1900<sup>2</sup>); A. Ludwich, *Homeri Ilias*, vol. 1 (Leipzig, 1902); T.W. Allen, *Homeri Ilias*, vol. 2 (Oxford, 1931); P. Mazon, P. Chantraine, P. Collart and R. Langumier, *Homère Iliade*, vol. 1 (Paris, 1937); H. van Thiel, *Homeri Ilias* (Hildesheim, 1996). M.L. West, *Homeri Ilias*, vol. 1 (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1998) edited the verse similarly, but considers the second colon irremediably corrupt: ἄνιθέντα νέεσθαι†.

<sup>4</sup> See Kirk (n. 1), 147. Cf. Leaf (n. 3), 70: 'The obvious sense of this line, if it stood alone, would be, "Verily it is a trouble even to return home in grief." But this does not cohere with what follows ...'.

<sup>5</sup> See Kirk (n. 1), 147: 'Fighting before Troy is often described as a labour – the paradox is that going home (for that is the meaning of "depart", as the previous verse shows) can involve equal hardship'.

verses 292–4. The conjunctive element *καὶ γὰρ* at verse 292 that joins the previous sentence (291) to the next (292–4) indicates their logical relation. If we accept this interpretation, one would wonder what the role of *καὶ γὰρ* is, by which the sentence in verses 292–4 is introduced. However, from the meaning of verses 292–4, which constitute the logical continuation of the problematic verse 291, it is not difficult to define precisely its meaning from the underlying comparison: as the sailors worry, when cut off at sea on account of bad weather even for a single month, because they are away and yearn to return home and to their wives, so do the Achaeans, who have been away from their homeland for nine years without being in a position to foresee when the war will finish. The following annotation of Eustathius is accurate<sup>6</sup>: *πικράνας τοὺς Ἕλληνας Ὀδυσσεὺς ὀνειδισμοῖς ... ἀνίησιν ὕστερον τὴν ἐπιτίμησιν τῇ συγγνώμῃ καὶ ὑπεραπολογεῖται λέγων ἐπίπονον εἶναι τὸν τῶσασετὴ πόλεμον, ὥστε εὐλόγως ἂν τινα ἀνιαθέντα καὶ ἀκηδιάσαντα ἐφίεσθαι τοῦ νόστου* (*Comm. ad Hom. Il.* 1.338.29–32 M. van der Valk).<sup>7</sup>

Various views have been formulated for the interpretation of this passage, but they have not been satisfactory. Lehrs's interpretation 'truly here is toil to make a man return disheartened' (as Leaf renders it in English<sup>8</sup>), considering that it fits the following context, is not convincing since, as long as we accept this interpretation, the logical coherence between 291 and 292–4 is detected with difficulty: at 291, according to this interpretation, the Achaeans' labour is the reason why they want to return home, while, at 292–4 (which constitute the logical continuation of verse 291, on account of *καὶ γὰρ*), the reason the sailors want to return home is not their labour but their long absence from home. Since here we have a comparison of the Achaeans to the sailors, the reason all of them want to return home must be the same, otherwise the comparison is impossible. Consequently, the above interpreta-

<sup>6</sup> Mehler (n. 1), 388, commenting on this note of Eustathius, rightly underlines: *Verissima haec quidem, sed nihil eorum in verbis poetae*.

<sup>7</sup> The following interpretations move in the same direction: K. Lehrs, *De Aristarchi studiis Homerici* (Leipzig, 1882<sup>3</sup>), 74 (see below, n. 8); D.B. Monro, *Homer: Iliad, Books I–XII, with an Introduction, a Brief Homeric Grammar, and Notes*, vol. 1 (Oxford, 1906<sup>5</sup>), 266: 'The *πόνος*, as Ulysses goes on to explain, is the nine years' war, which may well make the Greeks chafe, and long to return home. An indefinite subject is understood with *ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι*: cp. 6.268., Od. 2.310. This interpretation comes from Aristarchus. It is the only one which suits the *reason* given, *καὶ γὰρ* κ.τ.λ., and the *reply* in l. 297, *ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔμπης* κ.τ.λ.'; J. Latacz (ed.), *Homers Ilias: Gesamtkommentar*, vol. 2.2 (Munich and Leipzig, 2003), 91: 'Von der Argumentation des Odysseus hier muß Vers 291 – der in Textkonstitution und Interpretation umstritten ist – das Hierbleiben als lästig bzw. die Rückkehr als erwünscht erscheinen lassen: er entschuldigt das Verlangen nach Heimkehr (289f.), wird durch ein Beispiel erläutert ("den" 292) und in 297b–298 mit einer Gnome wieder aufgenommen'. J. La Roche, *Homers Ilias: Für den schulgebrauch Erklärt*, Part 1 (Leipzig, 1877<sup>2</sup>), 63, supporting his interpretation (see below, n. 28), criticises interpretations that are similar to the ones we mention here: 'Die Erklärungen: "unsere Mühe ist derart, dass man, ihrer überdrüssig, zurückzukehren wünscht", oder "wer belästigt ist, ringt danach, nach Hause zu kehren" oder "nimirum laboribus fungimur, ut moleste ferentes redire velimus" sind sämtlich gekünstelt und zum Theil sprachwidrig, da pas Participium des Aorist immer eine in der Vergangenheit bereits abgeschlossene Handlung bezeichnet'. Mehler (n. 1), 388–9, refuted La Roche's interpretation: *Videsis quid ille decernat. 'Molestum est reverti, quos rei pertaesum est.' Immo quem rei cuiusdam pertaedet, ei dixerim non molestum esse, sed exoptatum, bella linquere nullos habitura triumphos*.

<sup>8</sup> See Leaf (n. 3), 70. However, this rendering in English of the original interpretation of Lehrs (n. 7), 74, i.e. *nimirum laboribus fungimur ut moleste ferentes redire velimus* (see above, n. 7), is not exact, since the desire to return home, an idea that is contained in the interpretation of Lehrs, is absent from Leaf's English translation. Lehrs, 74, stresses: *cupiunt* [sc. the Achaeans] *enim iam redire*.

tion is not valid. Besides, it is based on an inaccurate translation of the verse.<sup>9</sup> Also, the scholium πολλὺς μὲν οὖν ἔστιν ὁ πόνος ὥστε λοιπὸν ἀκηδιάσαντά τινα νεῖσθαι (*Schol. Il. 2.291d* Erbse), offers a similar interpretation.<sup>10</sup>

Kirk<sup>11</sup> proposed, with reservation, the interpretation ‘truly it would be a labour [i.e. as much as toiling on the battlefield] to return home in frustration with nothing accomplished’, considering it better than the interpretation of Lehrs in English. However, he accepts afterwards that verse 292, which is introduced by καὶ γάρ, does not offer direct explanation of the thought expressed at verse 291, according to this interpretation.

Lohmann,<sup>12</sup> by correlating verses 291 and 298, considers that they express opinions nearly agreeing in terms of content and form<sup>13</sup> – he appeals to ring-composition<sup>14</sup> – and renders verse 291 as follows: ‘Es ist wahrlich auch schwer, voller Trübsal heimzufahren’. In order to justify the logical gap between verses 291 and 292–6, he proposes an explanation in support of his interpretation, which, however, does not seem convincing: ‘Eine Lösung scheint mir darin zu liegen, das γάρ nicht zurückzubeziehen, sondern auf 296<sup>b</sup> τῷ οὐ νεμεσίζομ’ Ἀχαιοὺς ... vorzubeziehen im Sinne von: “Weil auch mancher auf See ..., darum verarge ich es den A. nicht...”’. He considers, namely, that γάρ is anticipatory, which, as an equivalent in a way of the causal conjunction ἐπεὶ or ἐπειδὴ, introduces a clause with which the following τῷ οὐ νεμεσίζομ’ Ἀχαιοὺς is justified. He also stresses that a similar use of γάρ occurs in the Homeric epics.<sup>15</sup> However, Lohmann does not explain why the clause introduced by γάρ does not justify here the judgement that the preceding verse 291 expresses, though this use is the most common and therefore the most probable. The sentence introduced by καὶ γάρ (292–4) has a logical relation to the preceding sentence (291) as well as to the following τῷ οὐ νεμεσίζομ’ Ἀχαιοὺς ἀσχαλάαν παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν (296–7). Similar cases occur elsewhere in Homer:

ὦ τέκος, οὐκ ἄν μοι δόμον ἀνέρος ἡγήσαιο  
 Ἀλκινόου, ὃς τοῖσδε μετ’ ἀνθρώποισιν ἀνάσσει;  
 καὶ γάρ ἐγὼ ξείνος ταλαπείριος ἐνθάδ’ ἰκάνω  
 τηλόθεν ἐξ ἀπλής γαίης· τῷ οὐ τινα οἶδα  
 ἀνθρώπων, οἳ τήνδε πόλιν καὶ ἔργα νέμονται (Od. 7.22–6)

<sup>9</sup> The addition ‘to make’ is not justified by the letter of the text. We also note similar freedom in the Latin translation of Lehrs (see above, n. 8), on which Mehler (n. 1), 390, commented as follows: *Neque apparet quomodo aoristus ἀνηθέντα praesentis vim accipere ... neque quomodo νέεσθαι significare possit redire volumus.*

<sup>10</sup> See Lehrs (n. 7), 75. Cf. D.B. Monro, ‘Notes on the Second Book of the Iliad’, *Journal of Philology* 11 (1882), 125–9, at 128, who explains the verse as follows: ‘Assuredly we have toil enough to drive a man to return disgusted’. He afterwards remarks: ‘This interpretation, which has the authority of Aristarchus, is the only one that meets all the requirements of the context’. However, his interpretation and the argumentation that follows are not convincing.

<sup>11</sup> See Kirk (n. 1), 147.

<sup>12</sup> See D. Lohmann, *Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias* (Berlin, 1970), 52.

<sup>13</sup> For this reason he considers all the attempts to correct the verse improbable. See *ibid.*, 52, n. 90.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. Kirk (n. 1), 147.

<sup>15</sup> See J.D. Denniston, *The Greek Particles* (Oxford, 1950<sup>2</sup>), 68 ff.; H.W. Smyth, *Greek Grammar*, rev. G.M. Messing (Cambridge, MA, 1984), 639–40, § 2811. Cf. E. Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik auf der Grundlage von Karl Brugmanns griechischer Grammatik*, zweiter Band: *Syntax und syntaktische Stilistik* (Munich, 1988<sup>5</sup>), 560.

ξείνῃ, κακῶς ἀνδρῶν τοξάζεαι· οὐκέτ' ἀέθλων  
 ἄλλων ἀντιάσεις· νῦν τοι σῶς αἰπὺς ὄλεθρος.  
 καὶ γὰρ δὴ νῦν φῶτα κατέκτανες, ὃς μέγ' ἄριστος  
 κοῦρων εἰν Ἰθάκῃ· τῷ σ' ἐνθάδε γυῖπες ἔδονται (Od. 22.27–30)<sup>16</sup>

The clause introduced by καὶ γάρ in these quoted passages, and also in the *Iliad* passage that we are examining, refers to the preceding as well as the following sentence. Lohmann's view, finally, that verses 291 and 298 express almost harmonious opinions as to the content and the form is not entirely convincing, since the meaning of verse 291 is not clear, for the present at least, and therefore the correlation, as to the content, with verse 298 is dubious.

West, too, stresses that the verse, as it is transmitted, is one of the most problematic points of the *Iliad* and he renders its meaning as follows: 'to be sure, it is toilsome to go home in vexation'.<sup>17</sup> According to West, the expected meaning of verse 291 is the following:

Taken in isolation, this could be understood as having much the same sense as 298, αἰσχρὸν τοι δηρὸν τε μένειν κενεόν τε νέεσθαι (though it is questionable whether πόνος is appropriate). But in the context what we require is 'to be sure, it is toilsome to stay here'. It goes on, 'for even a man kept away from his wife for just a month frets, whereas we have been stuck here for nine years, so I can't blame the troops for fretting; but all the same it looks bad to go home empty-handed after staying so long'.<sup>18</sup>

This view lays emphasis on the tiring and long-drawn-out stay of the Achaeans at Troy. But, if we compare, in terms of meaning, the two parts of the underlying comparison (see above, p. 345), and particularly the verses that constitute the context of verse 291 – namely verse 290 ἀλλήλοισιν ὀδύρονται οἰκόνδε νέεσθαι, in the first part of the comparison, and verses 292–3 καὶ γὰρ τίς θ' εἶνα μῆνα μένων ἀπὸ ἧς ἀλόχοιο ἀσχαλάα, in its second part – we clearly see that the Achaeans, according to the text (290) ὀδύρονται, because they want to return home, whereas somebody who is cut off at sea on account of bad weather, worries (ἀσχαλάα) because he is away from home for a long time (εἶνα μῆνα μένων ἀπὸ ἧς ἀλόχοιο). In the first part of the comparison, emphasis is laid on the idea of the return home (= νόστος),<sup>19</sup> whereas in the second part the stress is on the idea of the long absence from home. It is evident here that these two ideas are interdependent and constitute together the common denominator (*tertium comparationis*) of the two compared parts. The common feature, which joins both parts compared – the Achaeans and the sailors – is the fact that both of them are away from their homes for a long time and are impatiently thinking of the day of return, which, however, is not visible. For the comprehension, however, and the interpretation of the verse in question, one needs to examine these two ideas separately. West, basing his argument on the second part of the comparison, is led to the conclusion that at verse 291 only the idea of the long and tiring stay away from the fatherland is expressed.<sup>20</sup> This interpretation, however, downgrades the idea of νόστος, which, in the part of Book Two known as Διάπειρα to which verse

<sup>16</sup> Cf. *Od.* 18.259–66.

<sup>17</sup> See West (n. 1), 176.

<sup>18</sup> West (n. 1), 176.

<sup>19</sup> Cf. *Od.* 5.153, 5.219–20.

<sup>20</sup> Cf. A. Spengel, 'Hom. *Il.* II, 291', *Philologus* 23 (1866), 547–48, at 548.

291 belongs, constitutes a ruling theme,<sup>21</sup> as it is shown more intensely than the secondary idea of the long stay at Troy.<sup>22</sup> West's interpretation, therefore, insinuates that the verse presents a problem that is situated at the second colon, at the reading ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι. However, the verse in question, as transmitted, is, as regards its second colon, concordant in sense with the ruling idea, in the Διάπειρα, of νόστος, and it does not appear to present any problem at this point. It is therefore not easy for us to dispute the authenticity of the reading ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι.<sup>23</sup> The homoioteleuton,<sup>24</sup> however, of verses 291 and 292 creates suspicion as regards the authenticity of this reading, which appears reasonable to a point, but homoioteleuton occurs in several other cases in the *Iliad*: for example, 1.192–3, 2.527–8, 4.70–1, 4.250–1, 5.358–9, 8.432–3, 10.116–17, 10.473–4, 12.373–4, 12.431–2, 16.230–1, 18.500–1, 20.272–3, 21.341–2, 23.376–7, 23.513–14, 23.838–9.<sup>25</sup> In addition, the infinitive νέεσθαι is a common formula at verse-end in the Homeric epics (20 times in the *Iliad* out of a total of 22 uses, and 32 out of 33 in the *Odyssey*),<sup>26</sup> which supports the reading.

The interpretations cited in note 7 correspond with the spirit of the text, to the degree that they too show the idea of the Achaeans' longing to return home, an idea expected by the reader and justified by the context. But these interpretations are not satisfactory because, while they are based on the verse as it is transmitted, they do not render it exactly and literally but somewhat freely and according to the expected sense.<sup>27</sup>

It is evident that the above interpretations, and others,<sup>28</sup> which are based on the form of the verse as it is transmitted, do not offer a satisfactory solution. We

<sup>21</sup> Cf. Kirk (n. 1), 147. See also *Il.* 2.140, 2.142–54, 2.158–9, 2.174–5, 2.236, 2.251, 2.288, 2.290, 2.354, 2.357. The idea of the return home is a ruling theme in the Διάπειρα as is clearly discerned in 2.453–4, where the inversion of the army's mood is emphatically shown: τοῖσι δ' ἄφ' ἄφ' πόλεμος γλυκίων γένετ' ἢ νέεσθαι / ἐν νηυσὶ γλαφυρῇσι φίλῃν ἐς πατρίδα γαίαν. This indicates that the war is now sweeter than the return home, while previously, as is easily concluded, the yearning to return home was sweeter than the war. Cf. T.D. Seymour, *The First Six Books of Homer's Iliad with Introduction, Commentary, and Vocabulary* (Boston, MA, 1898), 71–2: 'As a wise orator, Odysseus concedes that their longing for home is natural (many a man is homesick after a single month away from his family), but he emphasises the motives for continuing the struggle'.

<sup>22</sup> See *Il.* 2.134, 2.295, 2.343.

<sup>23</sup> Cf. πρὶν κεν ἀνιηθεὶς σὴν πατρίδα γαίαν ἴκοιο, *Od.* 3.117. West (n. 1), 176, n. 4, considers that this verse has a superficial relation with *Iliad* 2.291. It does not, of course, have an immediate relation, but offers an indication, albeit of minor importance, of the authenticity of the reading ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι.

<sup>24</sup> See Leaf (n. 3), 70; E. Schwarz, 'Homerica', in *ANTIΔΩPON: Festschrift Jacob Wackernagel zur Vollendung des 70. Lebensjahres am 11. Dezember 1923* (Göttingen, 1923), 62–71, at 62; Latacz (n. 7), 91; West (n. 1), 176.

<sup>25</sup> See also Spengel (n. 20), 547.

<sup>26</sup> See Kirk (n. 1), 147.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. above, n. 6, for Mehler's observation on the scholium of Eustathius.

<sup>28</sup> See also, for example, the following: S. Clarke, *Homeri Ilias Graece et Latine: Annotationes in usum serenissimi principis Gulielmi Augusti*, vol. 1 (London, 1729), 55: *Enimvero certe durum est afflictum et re infecta aliquem redire*; C.F. Nägelsbach, *Anmerkungen zur Ilias (Buch I. II, 1–483. III.) nebst einigen Exkursen: Ein Hilfsbuch für das Verständniss des Dichters überhaupt* (Nürnberg, 1850<sup>2</sup>), 178: 'Freilich wohl ist auch eine Noth, erst dann nach Hause zu kehren, wenn man Verdruss und Plage ausgestanden hat; oder: zuvor den Verdruss eines so langen Verweilens auszustehn, ehe man nach Hause kehrt'; Monro (n. 10), 128, see also idem, *A Grammar of the Homeric Dialect* (Oxford, 1891<sup>2</sup>), 199, § 233: 'Verily there is toil for a man to return in vexation, i.e. "I admit that the toil is enough to provoke any one to return"'; La

need an interpretation that will both serve the spirit of the context and follow the letter of the text. For this reason, some scholars have tried to correct the verse and have even formulated audacious proposals. The corrective attempts have been turned mostly towards the second colon, after the caesura, namely at the reading ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι. An anonymous scholar<sup>29</sup> and Schwartz<sup>30</sup> proposed the correction of the reading νέεσθαι to καθῆσθαι; as to the reading ἀνιηθέντα νέεσθαι, Spengel<sup>31</sup> and Mehler<sup>32</sup> proposed the correction of it to ἀνιηθέντ' ἀνέχεσθαι, Freytag<sup>33</sup> to ἀνίη τ' ἔνθ' ἀνέχεσθαι and Pfudel<sup>34</sup> to ἀνίη τ' ἐνθάδε ἦσθαι. West<sup>35</sup> prefers this last correction, but considers that this part of the verse is irremediable.<sup>36</sup> These corrective proposals presuppose that the verse has undergone some changes or even an irreparable corruption in the second colon,<sup>37</sup> which does not seem probable, since, as I mentioned above, verse 291 (as transmitted) is harmonised in the second colon with the spirit of the context. With the above corrective interventions, the logical relation between the verse and the idea of νόστος is destroyed and, consequently, the logical context in which the verse lies is changed. Besides, we have to underline the hesitation and cautiousness towards these emendations of almost all *Iliad* editors, who prefer to edit the verse as transmitted.<sup>38</sup> If it is necessary to correct

Roche (n. 7), 63: 'Es ist in der That auch eine Mühe, eine Last, es ist beschwerlich, zurück-zukehren, nachdem man der Sache überdrüssig geworden ist, d. h. aus blosser Unlust, ohne seinen Zweck erreicht zu haben' (see also above, n. 7); C.F. Ameis and C. Hentze, *Homers Ilias für den Schulgebrauch*. Erster Band. Erstes Heft: *Gesang I–III*, rev. P. Cauer (Leipzig und Berlin, 19137), 68: 'Freilich ist es auch eine Mühsal, um überdrüssig [geworden] nach Hause zu gehen' (see a criticism of this translation in Lohmann [n. 12], 52, n. 90); Seymour (n. 21), 71: 'Our trouble has been enough to make a man return to his home.'; J.R. Sitlington Sterrett, *Homer's Iliad: First Three Books and Selections* (New York, 1907), N 164: 'Lit., in very truth there is even toil that one return home in disgust, i.e., it is assuredly a hard lot for a man (τῷ) to return home only after having suffered hardships (without accomplishing his object). The meaning is, Truly the toil of this nine years' war is enough to send one home broken-hearted because of the long delay and ill success'; M.M. Willcock, *A Commentary on Homer's Iliad: Books I–VI* (London and New York, 1970), 55: 'Indeed, there is trouble enough to make a man return home in despair', and alternatively: 'But surely to return home in despair is also troublesome'; A.T. Murray, *Homer: Iliad: Books 1–12 with an English Translation*, rev. W.F. Wyatt, vol. 1, (Cambridge, MA, and London, 1999), 83: 'To be sure there is toil enough to make a man go home disheartened'.

<sup>29</sup> See C.G. Heyne, *Homeri carmina cum brevi annotatione. Accedunt variae lectiones et observationes veterum grammaticorum cum nostrae aetatis critica*, vol. 4 (Leipzig and London, 1802), 252; cf. Ludwig (n. 3), 69.

<sup>30</sup> See Schwarz (n. 24), 62, who defends his conjecture based on the passage ἀσχαλώσει γὰρ οἷδε καθήμενοι, *Il.* 24.403; cf. Latacz (n. 7), 91.

<sup>31</sup> See Spengel (n. 20), 548.

<sup>32</sup> See Mehler (n. 1), 388–90. Some scholars attribute the correction to Nauck: Lohmann (n. 12), 52, n. 90; P. von der Mühl, *Kritisches Hypomnema zur Ilias* (Basel, 1952), 44, n. 40; J. Wackernagel, 'Congetture greche e latine', *SIFC* n.s. 5 (1927), 27–37, at 33. However, A. Nauck, *Homeri Ilias cum potiore lectionis varietate*, vol. 2 (Berlin, 1879), xiv, renders it to Mehler.

<sup>33</sup> See J. van Leeuwen, *Ilias: Cum prolegomenis, notis criticis, commentariis exegeticis* (Leiden, 1912), 62; West (n. 3), 55. Nägelsbach (n. 28), 179, mentioned another conjecture of Freytag (= ἀνίη τ' ἐνθα κέεσθαι [κεῖσθαι]) with the observation: 'κέεσθαι ist keine homerische Form'.

<sup>34</sup> See Latacz (n. 7), 91. See also M.L. West, *Homeri Ilias*, vol. 2 (Munich and Leipzig, 2000), vii, who records: '291 ἀνίη τ' ἐνθάδε ἦσθαι nescioquis quem laudat Wecklein *SBAW* 1908(2).28.'; idem (n. 1), 176.

<sup>35</sup> See West (n. 3), 55; idem (n. 1), 176.

<sup>36</sup> See above, n. 3.

<sup>37</sup> See above, nn. 3, 24.

<sup>38</sup> See above, n. 3. However, compare Leeuwen's edition: ἦ μὲν καὶ πόνος ἐστὶν ἀνίη τ' ἔνθ' ἀνέχεσθαι!

the verse so that it can offer the expected sense (see above, p. 345), we should not interfere with its second colon because it is correct as transmitted, but seek a different way to solve the problem.

It has been pointed out since ancient times that the problem of the verse is situated at the reading *πόνος*: ἡ διπλὴ πρὸς τὸν πόνον, ὅτι ἀντὶ τοῦ ἔργον· οὐδέποτε γὰρ οὕτως εἶπε τὴν ἀλγυδὸνα.<sup>39</sup> I consider that this observation is correct to the degree that it points to the solution of the problem.

Commenting on the reading *πόνος*, Wecklein observes:

Überhaupt ist *πόνος* kein passendes Prädikat. Der Nominativ *πόνος* lag sehr nahe neben *ἔστιν*, einen brauchbaren Sinn erhalten wir mit *πόνῳ ἔστιν ἀνιθέντα νέεσθαι*: 'freilich ist es auch statthaft, daß man der Kampfesarbeit sattgeworden heimkehrt'. Mit *πόνῳ ἀνιθέντα* vgl. *ἀνιθεις ὀρμαγδῶ* α 133, mit der ganzen Ausdruckweise *Ψ 157 γόοιο μὲν ἔστι καὶ ἄσαι*.<sup>40</sup>

This interpretation presupposes the acceptance of the emendation of the reading *πόνος* to *πόνῳ*, which does not create a metrical problem but changes without reason the metrical form of the verse, since, with this emendation, a syllable long by nature, metrically equivalent to a short syllable because of epic shortening (*correptio epica*), takes the place of a syllable short by nature. However, since the verse is metrically perfect as it stands, it seems audacious but also unnecessary to proceed to an emendation that affects the vowels or diphthongs of the syllables of the verse and leads to other metrical choices. We should not have to alter its metrical form in our effort to understand and correct the verse, given that it is metrically normal. Besides, the interpretation in question is also not logically satisfactory, since it shows the labour (*πόνον*) as the reason for which the Achaeans' wish to return home, which, as mentioned above, is not justified. Consequently, Wecklein's interpretation cannot be sustained. Therefore a solution that offers a sense that is both harmonised with the context and does not touch the metrical form of the verse remains a desideratum. I consider that the verse should be treated more easily, unobtrusively and without drastic intervention.

To resolve the problem we either have to seek a meaning for the word *πόνος* that fits the context or to discover the initial reading that has been corrupted to *πόνος*. That is to say, the word *πόνος* in the verse has to mean 'impatience', 'longing' or something similar; otherwise we ought to replace it with another word that is metrically suitable and with the expected meaning.

If we render the above-mentioned meaning to *πόνος*, there is no interpretative problem, since the sense of the verse fits both the sense of the precedent (290) and of the following verses (292–4):

For like little children and widow women they wait to each other to return home. Truly, there is also yearning for everyone to return home after the many troubles they have suffered; for even if a person abides one single month far from his wife in his many-benched ship, he worries, because the winter storms and the rough sea keep him cut off.

As long as we take the authenticity of the reading for granted, *πόνος* needs to be interpreted in this way. But the word in question does not occur in the texts

<sup>39</sup> Ariston. *De signis Iliadis* 2.291 (Friedländer); see also *Schol. Il.* 2.291 (Erbse).

<sup>40</sup> N. Wecklein, *Über die Methode der Textkritik und die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Homer* (Munich, 1908), 28.

of ancient literature with this sense;<sup>41</sup> in almost all cases in Homeric epic it holds the meanings 'toil', 'labour', 'work', 'hard work' and, predominantly, 'the toil of war'.<sup>42</sup> But these meanings do not fit the context of verse 291, unless we accept, in the second colon, the above emendations, which are not, however, sufficiently convincing. On the other hand, it would be very audacious to translate the word *πόνος* with the meanings 'longing', 'yearning', 'impatience'.

I believe that the emendation of the reading *πόνος* to *πόθος* could offer a solution. The corruption to *πόνος* is, in all probability, a result of mistaken reading because of the similarity of the two words, perhaps owing to the carelessness of a copyist or produced by the oral tradition. It is reasonable to assume that some alterations of the text were due to the reciters of epic poems (*ῥαψωδοί*), who, during their recitation, sometimes corrupted the text unconsciously without being particularly detained by errors that brought about slight alterations to the text. These reciters were not thinking like scholars, nor were their audience, who were above all interested in hearing the exploits of the epic heroes rather than in detecting mistakes, which could be located only by a mind trained in literary matters. Thus it is not improbable that the word *πόθος* was corrupted in recitation to *πόνος* (*lapsus linguae*) because of the similarity of the words, as the verse is not metrically affected by this change. This emendation is very old and has been proposed by an anonymous scholar. We find it in the apparatus of the old editions<sup>43</sup> and until now it has not been adequately attended to – nobody, as far as I know, has dealt with this either to support or to reject it. It is a logical and unobtrusive correction, which satisfies interpretative needs. Through this emendation the yearning for the return home is demonstrated, which also constitutes the theme of the preceding verse (290); additionally the logical connection of the two verses, the second of which (291) constitutes a logical and normal continuation of the first (290), is clear.<sup>44</sup> Moreover, with this emendation, verse 291 is also logically harmonised with the sentence that follows (292–4). The role of *καὶ γάρ* in introducing this sentence is thus obvious.

Let us view this theme from a psychological aspect too: does the soldier who does his military service far from home or who is far at the front, have anything other in mind than his return home? The longing for home and nostalgia is the dominant feeling in his soul. In the *Odyssey* the ruling feeling in the soul of Odysseus, who was away from home for many years, is nostalgia, the longing to see his home and his loved ones (see *Od.* 1.57–9). The same idea is also expressed in the following passages, where the mood of the soldiers who are absent from

<sup>41</sup> See LSJ, s.v. *πόνος*.

<sup>42</sup> See Lehrs (n. 7), 73–5; Mehler (n. 1), 389; Kirk (n. 1), 147; LSJ, s.v. *πόνος*; and B. Snell and H. Erbse (edd.), *Lexicon des frühgriechischen Epos* (Göttingen, 1955–), s.v. *πόνος*. Cf. *πόνον τὸ κατὰ πόλεμον ἔργον εἴρηκεν*, *Schol. Il.* 13.2c (Erbse).

<sup>43</sup> See the following editions: Clarke (n. 28), ad. loc.; Heyne (n. 29), ad loc; Ludwich (n. 3), ad loc. Cf. Wecklein (n. 40), 28. Hans Wilhelm Nordheider, the writer of the entry *πόνος* in Snell and Erbse (n. 42) (s.v. *πόνος*, B, I 2a, col. 1446), attributes this correction to Cauer without a relevant reference. Unfortunately, I cannot find this reference to confirm the information. However, it should be pointed out that the reading *πόνος* has been retained in the editions to which Cauer has attended (see Ameis and Hentze [n. 28]; P. Cauer, *Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάς: Homers Ilias*, rev. W. Krause [Vienna, 1963<sup>12</sup>]).

<sup>44</sup> The intense longing for the return home is especially demonstrated in the following passages from the *Διόπειρα* too: *αὐτὴ δ' οὐρανὸν ἔκεν / οὔκαδε ἱεμένων, Il.* 2.153–54; *εἰ δέ τις ἐκπάγλως ἐθέλει οἰκόνδε νέεσθαι, Il.* 2.357. Cf. above, n. 19.



home for a long time is explained most clearly: οὐ δυνάμενοι καθεύδειν ὑπὸ λύπης καὶ πόθου πατρίδων, γονέων, γυναικῶν, παίδων, οὓς οὔποτ' ἐνόμιζον ἔτι ὄψεσθαι (Xen. *An.* 3.1.3, Marchant); καὶ τούτοις ξύμπασιν πόθος μὲν γονέων ἐστίν, ὅσοις ἔτι σώζονται, πόθος δὲ γυναικῶν καὶ παίδων, πόθος δὲ δὴ τῆς γῆς αὐτῆς τῆς οἰκείας (Arr. *An.* 5.27.6, Roos and Wirth).<sup>45</sup> It is a diachronic, natural and therefore commonly expected emotional reaction, which is also most characteristically impressed in the modern Greek anti-war novel of Stratis Myrivilis *Ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τάφῳ*, which is based on the author's experiences of life at the front in the First World War:

*Αγαπημένη! Εἰμαι βαριά χτυπημένος ἀπὸ τῆ λαχτάρα τοῦ γυρισμοῦ! ... Θέλω νὰ γυρίσω πιά κοντά σου, κοντά στὴ Λέσβο, κοντά στ' ἀγαπημένα μας τὰ πράματα. Όλα, ὅλα τὰ λαχταρῶ θανατὰ καὶ τὰ φωνάζω, καὶ τώρα μονάχα καταλαβαίνω πόσο μοῦ εἶναι ἀπαραίτητα.*<sup>46</sup>

The word *πόθος* is used in the Homeric epics for people and things.<sup>47</sup> The fact that the expression *πόθος ἐστι* with an infinitive does not occur again in these texts – as also the expression *πόνος ἐστι* with an infinitive – does not mean that this expression is improbable and that we have to exclude it; on the contrary it is a reasonable and possible syntax, which occurs in later texts: compare ὅπως δ' ἐσώθης, ὦ τάλας, Τροίας ἄπο / κέρδος μὲν οὐδὲν εἰδέναι, πόθος δέ τις / {τὰ τῶν φίλων φίλοισιν αἰσθέσθαι κακά}<sup>48</sup> (Eur. *Hel.* 762–4 [Diggle]); ὥς μοι πόθος εἰλίξαι / καὶ διαδοῦναι νῶτον ἄκανθάν τ' / εἰς ἀμφοτέρους τοίχους μελέων (Eur. *Tr.* 116–8 [Diggle]); ὃν δὴ μοι πόθος ἐστὶ περὶ φρένα θηήσασθαι (Orph. *Argon.* 389 [Dottin]); καὶ μοι πόθος ἐστὶ παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τοῦ βασιλέως γενέσθαι (*Vita Aesopi W* 96 [Perry]).<sup>49</sup> In these examples, however, there is a dative near the impersonal expression, while in the Homeric verse under discussion there is an accusative (*τινά*, which is implied as the subject of the infinitive *νέεσθαι* and agrees with the participle *ἀνιθέντα*<sup>50</sup>). On that we have to observe that the accusative in question does not create any problem, because this use is common in Homeric epic: for example, *νεμεσσητὸν δέ κεν εἶη / ἀθάνατον θεὸν ὦδε*

<sup>45</sup> Cf. *Anth. Gr.* 7.263; Chariton 5.1.3.

<sup>46</sup> S. Myrivilis, *Ἡ ζωὴ ἐν τάφῳ*. Τὸ βιβλίον τοῦ πολέμου, Βιβλιοπωλεῖον τῆς Ἑστίας (Athens, 1987<sup>24</sup>), pp. 230–1, translated by P. Bien as S. Myrivilis, *Life in the Tomb* (Hanover, NH, 1977), 184: 'Dearest, I have a serious case of homesickness! ... I want to go back, to be near you, near Lesbos, near all the things we love. I pine so strongly for them all; I cry out for them; only now do I realize how badly I need them.'

<sup>47</sup> It occurs once in the *Iliad* 17.437–9 (although a reading *ποθῇ* is also handed down as *varia lectio*, the editors prefer the reading *πόθῳ*; regarding the use of the two words in the Homeric epics, see G.M. Bolling, *Ποθῇ Πόθος in Iliad and Odyssey: a semantic note*, *CPh* 15 [1920], 387–9; A. Shewan, 'Ποθῇ and πόθος in Iliad and Odyssey: another chorizontic failure', *CPh* 16 [1921], 195–7; F. Schironi, *I frammenti di Aristarco di Samotraccia negli etimologici bizantini: Etymologicum Genuinum, Magnum, Symeonis, Μεγάλη Γραμματική, Zonarae Lexicon: Introduzione, edizione critica e commento* [Göttingen, 2004], 93, n. 4), and three times in the *Odyssey*: 4.596, 11.202, 14.144. See also *Hom. Hymns*: 2.201, 2.304, 2.344, 19.33 (Allen).

<sup>48</sup> According to Murray's edition (Oxford, 1913<sup>2</sup>) this verse (764) is genuine.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. also *θάλε γὰρ πόθος ὕργος ἐπελθὼν / νύμφη ἐϋπλοκάμῳ Δρύσπος φιλότῃ μιγῆναι* (*Hom. Hymns* 19.33–4 [Allen]).

<sup>50</sup> See Seymour (n. 21), 72.

βροτοὺς ἀγαπαζέμεν ἄντην (*Il.* 24.463–4); αἰδῶς δ' αὖ νέον ἄνδρα γεραίτερον ἐξερέεσθαι (*Od.* 3.24).<sup>51</sup>

With the emendation to *πόθος* the verse is smoothed out syntactically. Leaf had already pointed out a syntactic disorder in the verse: 'The difficulty is the very bare use of the acc[usative] and infin[itive] with a violent change of subject.'<sup>52</sup> The infinitive *νέεσθαι* is now dependent on the impersonal expression *πόθος ἐστίν*, and *τινά* is its subject, which is implied. The tense of the infinitive *νέεσθαι* does not create any problem, nor does the tense of *νέεσθαι* in verse 290.<sup>53</sup> As for the indefinite subject *τινά* in this case, this use is not uncommon in the Homeric epics: see *Il.* 6.267–8, 13.787; *Od.* 2.310.<sup>54</sup> Finally, the tense of the participle *ἀνιηθέντα* is syntactically acceptable:<sup>55</sup> the participle refers vaguely to the past and particularly to the worries and torment of war that the Achaeans suffered until the instant the speaker talks (Odysseus in this case), and that constitute a serious reason for them to yearn to return home.

The syntactic function of *καὶ* in verse 2.291 (*καὶ πόθος ἐστίν*) still remains to be defined: it is adverbial, with the meaning 'also' (Lat. *etiam*). However, with this meaning one seeks something additional to *πόθος*, but this is not declared directly and by a substantive as one should expect. This could be the substantive *ἀνίη* (cf. *ἀνιηθέντα*) or another synonym (e.g. *λύπη*, *ἀθυμία*), which arises from the context of verses 289–91. So, we might understand the verse in a free rendering as follows: 'Truly, besides the worries and the torment there is also a yearning for the return home.' Or we could translate it more faithfully as: 'Truly, there is also yearning to return home after the worries one has suffered.'

To conclude, verse 2.291 can easily be restored without drastic corrective intervention. The verse expresses sententiously a general and logically acceptable judgement with a proverbial colouring,<sup>56</sup> which is documented with an example from the life of the sailors, who are compared to the Achaeans. After the emendation to *πόθος* and the interpretation arising from it, the logical inconsistency of the verse with its context disappears.

<sup>51</sup> See Schwyzler (n. 15), 377; P. Chantraine, *Grammaire homérique*, vol. 2 (Paris, 1953), 312, § 455.

<sup>52</sup> Leaf (n. 3), 70. As regards the use of the infinitive in question, different views have been expressed, which confirm the existing problem in the verse: Lehrs (n. 7), 75, observes: 'Usus infinitivi simillimus β 284 οὐδέ τι ἴσασιν θάνατον καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν, ὅς δὴ σφί σχεδόν ἐστίν, ἐπ' ἡματι πάντας ὀλέσθαι.' Mehler (n. 1), 390, disagrees with this view and considers the infinitive of the passage from the *Odyssey* exegetic. Cf. Monro (n. 10), 129: 'For the infinitive after *πόνος ἐστίν* we may compare such constructions as *ὅθι τοι μοῖρ' ἐστίν ἀλύξαι where it is thy fate to escape; ὅρη εὔδεν it is time for sleeping; ἐπεὶ τοι θυμὸς ἀναίτιον αἰτιάσασθαι you have a mind (which leads you) to blame the innocent*. In all these cases the infinitive expresses tendency or consequence. So when *ἔστι* is used impersonally, as *ἔστι μὲν εὔδεν there is (time, means, leave, &c.) for sleeping*: cp. also *Il.* 7.239 *τό μοι ἔστι ταλαύρινον πολεμίζειν wherefore I have the means to fight with shield of stout hide*' (also Monro [n. 28], 198–9, § 233); Leeuwen (n. 33), 62: *absolute nunc usurpatum, ut in locutione τέτλαθι καὶ ἀνασχεός*; Latacz (n. 7), 91: 'Demzufolge ist der Infinitiv *νέεσθαι* entweder mit etwas loser Syntax konsekutiv aufzufassen ... oder als Homoioteleuton (290) für korrupt zu erklären'.

<sup>53</sup> For the use of the tense of the infinitive in the Homeric epics, see Chantraine (n. 51), 303–4, § 445.

<sup>54</sup> See Monro (n. 7), 266; Chantraine (n. 51), 322, § 468(a).

<sup>55</sup> See above, n. 7, which La Roche supports regarding the tense of the participle in combination with the interpretations that he rejects.

<sup>56</sup> See also Kirk (n. 1), 147.

However, some scholars, such as La Roche, relying on the unanimity of the manuscripts, considered any correction inadmissible and have tried to interpret the verse as transmitted.<sup>57</sup> In response, I argue that we should not downgrade or ignore the more forceful view, that the verse as transmitted is problematic – something that many scholars have admitted. La Roche's position, however, is criticised by Mehler, who, *inter alia*, underlining La Roche's excessive respect for the transmitted reading, rightly observes: *Nimia scilicet traditae lectionis reverentia aggredi nefas habebat, quod omnium codicum praesidio esset munitum. Quasi vero non sexcenti essent loci, ubi falsa lectio Graecis iuxta ac nobis verba dedit.*<sup>58</sup> Furthermore, Bentley's saying *Nobis et ratio et res ipsa centum codicibus potiores sunt*,<sup>59</sup> which scholars frequently use as an axiom in isolation from its context, also applies to the case of the verse examined here.

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<sup>57</sup> See La Roche (n. 7), 62–3. Mehler (n. 1), 388–9, criticises La Roche's interpretation; see also above, nn. 7, 28.

<sup>58</sup> See Mehler (n. 1), 389.

<sup>59</sup> See R. Bentley, *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Ex recensione et cum notis atque emendationibus R. Bentleii* (Amsterdam, 1713<sup>2</sup>), 231, note on *Odes* 3.27.15; also E.J. Kenney, *The Classical Text: Aspects of Editing in the Age of the Printed Book* (Berkeley, CA, 1974), 71–4.