

# THE JUNCTION BETWEEN THE *KYPRIA* AND THE *ILLIAD*

J. MARKS

## I

AT LEAST AS EARLY AS HERODOTOS (2.117), the events leading up to those narrated in the *Iliad* had become identified with an epic known as τὰ Κύπρια ἔπεα, τὰ Κυπριακὰ ποιήματα, or simply τὰ Κύπρια. Most of our evidence for the *Kypria* is contained in a prose summary of the Epic Cycle usually attributed to the fifth-century A.D. Neoplatonist Proklos,<sup>1</sup> who describes the narrative sequence from the ending of the *Kypria* to the beginning of the *Iliad* as follows:

ἔπειτά ἐστι Παλαμήδους θάνατος, καὶ Διὸς βουλή ὅπως ἐπικουφίσῃ τοὺς Τρῶας Ἀχιλλέα τῆς συμμαχίας τῆς Ἑλλήνων ἀποστήσας, καὶ κατάλογος τῶν τοῖς Τρῶσι συμμαχησάντων.  
Proklos p. 43.66–68 Bernabé

ἐπιβάλλει δὲ τοῖς προειρημένοις ἔν τῇ πρὸ ταύτης βίβλῳ ἡ Ἰλιάς Ὅμηρου  
Proklos p. 64 Bernabé

Then there is the death of Palamedes, and a plan of Zeus so that he might relieve the Trojans by causing Achilles to stand apart from the alliance of the Hellenes; and there is a catalogue of allies to the Trojans.

And the *Iliad* of Homer follows the aforementioned [i.e., the *Kypria*] . . .

Thus represented, the *Kypria* overlaps the *Iliad* from after the death of Palamedes to the catalogue of Trojan allies. The phrase Διὸς βουλή appears in the Iliadic proem (1.5), where it refers, at least in part, to Zeus' plan to aid the Trojans while Achilles abstains from battle; the plan to "relieve" (ἐπικουφίσῃ) the Trojans by detaching Achilles from the Greek forces thus suggests events that in the *Iliad* are set in motion by Achilles' quarrel with Agamemnon. And a catalogue of Trojans and their allies occurs at the end of *Iliad* 2.

Many scholars conclude that the *Kypria* was designed to lead up to the *Iliad*.<sup>3</sup> Viewed this way, both the point in the chronology of the Trojan war at which the *Kypria* ends, as well as the events with which it ends, reflect the influence of an established Iliadic text. This interpretation is complicated by the events that fall in the overlap between the two narratives. While a plan of Zeus is a reasonable enough "set-up" for Thetis' interview with Zeus in *Iliad* 1, the link

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<sup>1</sup> Proklos = *Kypria testimonium* 7 Bernabé. I will for convenience refer to Photios' epitome of the summary of the Epic Cycle he attributes to Proklos as "Proklos' summary."

<sup>2</sup> Most editors follow Dunn in deleting this phrase.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Carrier 1999: 101–104; Dowden 1996: 48; Latacz 1996: 75, 89; Scaife 1995: 171–172; Taplin 1992: 85, n. 4.

with the end of *Iliad* 2 suggested by the *Kypria*'s catalogue of Trojan allies seems arbitrary. Indeed, the junction would be seamless if the *Kypria* simply ended with the death of Palamedes. We might assume that Proklos misrepresents the ending of the *Kypria*, or that he fashioned a rather confusing junction to stretch from the death of Palamedes to the first scene in the *Iliad*. Yet it seems *a priori* unlikely that Proklos would insert a junction where none was needed, or would needlessly distort the ending of the *Kypria*. And he was presumably capable of selecting a more effective transition event than a Trojan catalogue in order to align the two narratives artificially, were that his intent.<sup>4</sup>

The ending of the *Kypria* as reported by Proklos thus makes a poor introduction to the *Iliad*, just as the beginning of the *Iliad* makes a poor extension of the *Kypria*. On the one hand, it is difficult to see why a narrative intended to introduce the *Iliad* would conclude with a plan of Zeus, which begins to take shape in *Iliad* 1, and then a catalogue of Trojan allies, which the *Iliad* provides at the end of Book 2. The repetition might be explicable in terms of oral style, but the choice to include the Trojan catalogue and yet make no mention of Agamemnon, his test of the troops, Thetis, Apollo, the Greek catalogue, or any other event or character from *Iliad* 1 and 2, appears wholly arbitrary if the *Kypria* was composed against the backdrop of a pre-existing *Iliad*.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, Neoanalysts, recognizing that these same objections apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to their argument that the *Iliad* is later than the *Kypria*, have proposed that the *Kypria* introduces another Trojan war epic, such as the *Aithiopis*.<sup>6</sup> However, junction with the *Aithiopis* or any other known "post-Iliadic" narrative sequence leaves Briseis' and Chryseis' presence in the *Kypria* unmotivated and truncates radically the stories of Hektor and Patroklos, both of whom are mentioned in Proklos' summary (pp. 42.54 and 43.64 Bernabé, respectively).

Yet the inconcinnities between the ending of the *Kypria* as reported by Proklos and the beginning of the *Iliad* can be explained without recourse to the arbitrariness of the *Kypria* or to Proklos' ineptitude. For the possibility remains that the *Kypria* proceeds in accordance with its own inner logic, without the aim of "introducing" the *Iliad* or any other particular narrative.<sup>7</sup> In the absence of any

<sup>4</sup>De Vet (1996: 63–65), in comparing Homeric and Balinese evidence, makes some observations that can also apply to Proklos' summary: she points out that, even when adding to or subtracting from a received "text," "insertions and expansions have to be created in the style of the current document; thus a performer/reader/copier/adaptor of texts exercises the utmost care to ensure that his lines or passage are correct . . . . This strategy provides greater coherence to the entire poem by linking the new passage to the overall text."

<sup>5</sup>The junction would be smoother with the excision of the Trojan catalogue from the *Iliad*, and the catalogue's authenticity has been challenged, though this remains, rightly in my opinion, a minority view. For a discussion of the peculiarities of the catalogue, see Kirk 1985: 249, 250, 262–263.

<sup>6</sup>That the *Kypria* was intended to precede the *Aithiopis* has been argued most extensively by Kullmann (e.g., 1960: 210–212, 358–360). His later work (1991: 430) entertains the possibility that the join may not have been so specific to the *Aithiopis*.

<sup>7</sup>Thus Burgess (1996: 79) argues that the Epic Cycle "remained resistant for so long [to Homeric influence] . . . that even the fixed texts resulting from this tradition were free of Homeric dependence."

additional information from verse fragments or other ancient references, it cannot be determined whether or how a catalogue of Trojans might have been satisfying as the *Kypria*'s final episode. We are in a better position to judge the significance of the other "overlap event," the plan of Zeus, for Proklos' summary can here be supplemented with a verse fragment from the *Kypria*'s proem in order to provide valuable context.

It is my contention that the *Kypria* represents itself as the opening phase in a plan of Zeus that embraces the entire Trojan war, "pre-Iliadic," "Iliadic," and "post-Iliadic" events alike. The formation of this plan is revealed in the *Kypria*'s proem, where a single motivation, Zeus' desire to depopulate the earth, is made responsible for the deaths of the Trojans and the Greeks on their way to, at, and home from Troy. At its close, the *Kypria* projects this plan of Zeus onto "post-Kyprian" events, so that the separation of Achilles from the Greek forces is framed as a further ploy to thin the ranks of humanity. Understood this way, the *Kypria* is structured so that it introduces and contextualizes "Iliadic events," though not necessarily the *Iliad* as we know it. It is even possible that the ending of the *Kypria* was sufficiently vague with respect to Achilles' separation from the Greek forces that it could introduce a sequence of events unrelated to Achilles' quarrel with Agamemnon, such as his banishment from the Greek army for killing Thersites (*Aithiopsis* p. 68.6–8 Bernabé).

In any case, what the *Kypria* attempts to do at its ending is to impose its own thematics on all "post-Kyprian" events in the Trojan war. Nor do the *Kypria*'s claims end with the destruction of Troy: the deaths of Lokrian Ajax, Agamemnon, and other Greeks as they return and on their return, and of those they kill in the process, can all be assimilated to a plan to reduce human population. The Iliadic plan of Zeus, by comparison, has the potential to be equally all-encompassing, but is presented in a more subtle fashion. For where the *Kypria* trumpets its claim of authority over Trojan war tradition at each of its *termini*, the *Iliad*'s own claims are revealed more slowly and less fully.

## II

Before proceeding, it is necessary to address some issues of methodology. As will already be clear, the approach employed here eschews a source-and-recipient model for the interaction between the *Kypria* and *Iliad* and the associated implications of priority. Instead, I employ an intertextual model similar to the

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Burgess's reconstruction of the *Kypria* as a narrative covering the entire Trojan war differs from the one advanced here, as does his assumption that Proklos' summary truncates the *Kypria*. My own approach to the evidence is more conservative; however, as will be seen, my conception of Zeus' plan in the *Kypria* corresponds to Burgess's conception of the epic's narrative plan. I follow the arguments of Nagy (1979: 7–8 §14, n. 1, 42–43, 219–220 §14, nn. 2–3; 1990a: 53, 56, 72–73) that narrative sequences associated with the Cyclic epics are not derivative of the Homeric epics. And although I distance my arguments from his Neoanalytic methodology, my understanding of the relationship between Cyclic and Homeric narrative takes as a starting point Kullmann's 1955 and 1960 demonstration that "Homeric" themes play a significant role in "non-Homeric" contexts.

one Pucci applies to the relationship between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Pucci argues for what he calls a “specular” reading of each epic, by which he means that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* rewrite and are rewritten by each other, regardless of which, if either, is earlier.<sup>8</sup> I also follow the arguments of Nagy that what distinguishes the Homeric from the Cyclic epics is a more Panhellenic perspective that reflects broader geographic diffusion.<sup>9</sup> My approach thus assumes that the *Kypria* and *Iliad* each offer a “specular” reading of the other, and that their mutual referentiality emerged in the course of simultaneous development in the context of a larger and shared oral tradition. I do not limit the referentiality of the *Kypria* to the *Iliad* or vice versa, but view each as engaged potentially with the entire range of archaic Greek epic.

A second consideration is the nature of our evidence for the *Kypria*. My argument assumes not only that Proklos’ summary is relatively accurate, but that it reflects a fairly homogenous ancient manuscript tradition. This latter assumption is an explicit or implicit component of most arguments about the *Kypria*, but bears careful consideration.<sup>10</sup> For it is by no means certain that ancient writers who mention the *Kypria* by name refer to the “same” narrative; Herodotos and Proklos, after all, lived a millennium apart. Whereas a relatively continuous record of ancient quotations, analyses, periphrases, and the like demonstrates that the textual tradition of the Homeric epics was relatively stable by the fifth century at the latest,<sup>11</sup> the absence of such corroborative material leaves open the possibility that stabilization of an authoritative Kyprian text may have come still later or not at all. Thus “pre-Iliadic” events may have been narrated in dozens, even hundreds, of highly variable texts, any one of which might have been the source for a given ancient author’s reference to “the *Kypria*.” Attribution of the *Kypria* variously to Homer, or to the Cypriots Hegesinos and Stasinos, could then imply that a number of authors composed *Kyprias*, any one of which could have been authoritative at a given period of time or in a given region.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>8</sup> See Pucci 1987: 41–43, with the conclusion that, even were the priority of the *Iliad* or *Odyssey* established as historical fact, “the specularity of polemic gestures . . . would remain untouched . . . since by a sort of *après coup* the second text’s reading would enforce this specularity on the earlier text.” This methodological approach is further elaborated in Cook 1995: 1–5.

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Nagy 1979: 8 §14, n. 4: “The Cyclic epics are so different from the two Homeric epics not because they are more recent or more primitive but rather because they are more local in orientation and diffusion.”

<sup>10</sup> A recent exception is Finkelberg 2000, arguing, I believe incorrectly, that Kyprian tradition, but not Homeric, conforms with the oralist conception of multiformity.

<sup>11</sup> I posit a “late” dating of Homeric text fixation here (corresponding with the midpoint in Nagy’s [1996: 42] “definitive period”) for the sake of a *fortiori* argumentation.

<sup>12</sup> On the authorship of the *Kypria* see Proklos p. 37.7 Bernabé. Consider as well the case of “Kyprias, the poet of the tale of Ilion” (Ἰλιακῶν Κυπρίαν [*sc.* Cyprus] τίκτεν ἀοιδόθετην) referred to in a second-century B.C. inscription from Salamakis; cf. Lloyd-Jones 1999: 3, 11. This “tale of Ilion” is unlikely to be identical with the *Kypria* known to Herodotos, who would presumably have mentioned his fellow Halikarnassian’s connection with it. Note as well the reference to οἱ τῶν Κυπρίων ποιηταὶ in a scholion to *Iliad* 16.57 (= *Kypria* 27 Bernabé).

However, against the possibility of considerable heterogeneity in the manuscript tradition of the *Kypria* must be set the fact that there is only one single significant inconsistency among the roughly three dozen fragments and references that survive. To be sure, the much-discussed discrepancy between Herodotos' (2.116–117) and Proklos' (p. 29.18–20 Bernabé) accounts of the voyage of Paris and Helen from Sparta to Troy in the *Kypria* demonstrates that ancient authors' conceptions of the epic were not identical. Yet the variation here cannot be used as evidence that Herodotos' and Proklos' *Kyprias* were radically different, since Paris' and Helen's side-trip to Sidon, which appears in Proklos' summary, but which is incompatible with what Herodotos knew as "the *Kypria*," has no apparent repercussions in the overall architecture of the epic.<sup>13</sup> Comparison can be made with the *Doloneia* in *Iliad* 10: with or without the episode, the overall scope and thematics of the Iliadic narrative remain undisturbed. The Sidonian side-trip should not, therefore, be allowed to overshadow the fact that Proklos' summary is otherwise consistent with ancient authors' references over the centuries; these references are moreover the most numerous for any of the Cyclic epics.<sup>14</sup> Nor do ancient authors suggest that the *Kypria* was perceived as notably amorphous. Herodotos (2.116–117) doubted and Aristotle (*Poetics* 1459a30–b2) denied that "Homer" composed "the *Kypria*," but neither treats the epic as any less distinct or identifiable than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.<sup>15</sup>

If *ypria* is not derivative of the *Iliad* or vice versa, and if the surviving evidence for the *Kypria* reflects a homogeneous and coherent tradition, it is possible to reconstruct something of the *Kypria*'s inner logic. Because this logic is connected with the plan of Zeus, it also has direct implications for our understanding of the junction between the *Iliad* and the *Kypria*. Specifically, I argue that the Διὸς βουλή theme played a crucial role in structuring and stabilizing the plot of the *Kypria*, and that this stability is reflected in the relative consistency of the ancient testimonia. The concise nature of Proklos' summary prevents a detailed assessment of how most of the events in the *Kypria* may have been linked to Zeus.<sup>16</sup> However, the recurrence of a bundle of themes at the beginning and end of the *Kypria* provides what I believe to be compelling evidence for the consistency

<sup>13</sup> The Sidonian trip is mentioned in passing in the *Iliad* (6.289–292). Finkelberg (2000: 6) leans heavily on the inconsistency between Herodotos and Proklos for her conclusion (11) that "the *Cypria*, even quite late in antiquity, circulated in several written versions." Neville (1977: 5) considers the Sidonian trip in Proklos' summary a reaction to the inconsistency between the *Iliad* and Herodotos' *Kypria*. Kullmann (1960: 204–206) and Monro (1884b: 2, 5) argue that Proklos' account is inaccurate.

<sup>14</sup> Bernabé catalogues thirty-four fragments of the *Kypria*, more than double the number for any other Cyclic epic except the *Ilias Mikra*, for which he lists thirty-one; for comparable numbers and proportions, see Davies 1988 and Allen 1912.

<sup>15</sup> It is true that Herodotos and Aristotle never quote the *Kypria* in verse, as they regularly do the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, but this may reflect the memorization of specifically Homeric passages in the course of their education.

<sup>16</sup> As discussed below, Zeus plans the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the judgment of Paris. Mayer (1996) uses comparative evidence to demonstrate Zeus' responsibility for Helen's role in the *Kypria*.

of Zeus' machinations throughout the epic. The narrative structure supplied by the plan of Zeus remained flexible enough to allow for addition or subtraction of episodes such as the Sidonian trip of Paris and Helen, but rigid enough for "the *Kypria*" to persist throughout antiquity as a definable and coherent narrative.<sup>17</sup>

## III

Proklos' account of the ending of the *Kypria* refers to a Διὸς βουλή, "plan of Zeus," to "relieve" (ἐπικουφίσῃ) the Trojans. The same expression appears in a verse fragment described in a scholion to *Iliad* 1.5 as ἡ δὲ ἱστορία παρὰ Στασίνῳ τῷ τὰ Κύπρια πεποιηκότι:

ἦν ὅτε μυρία φύλα κατὰ χθόνα πλαζόμεν' αἰεὶ  
 < > βαθυστέρνου πλάτος αἴης,  
 Ζεὺς δὲ ἰδὼν ἐλέησε καὶ ἐν πυκιναῖς πρᾶπιδεςσι  
 κουφίσαι ἀνθρώπων παμβώτορα σύνθετο γαῖαν,  
 ῥιπίσσας πολέμου μεγάλῃν ἔριν Ἰλιακοῖο,  
 ὄφρα κενώσειεν θανάτῳ βάρος. οἱ δ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ  
 ἥρωες κτείνοντο, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.

A scholion to *Iliad* 1.5 = *Kypria* 1 Bernabé

there was a time when myriad tribes, ever wandering over the ground  
 . . . the breadth of the deep-breasted earth  
 but Zeus seeing this took pity and in his shrewd thoughts  
 contrived to relieve all-nurturing earth of people  
 and he cast the great striving of the war at Ilion  
 in order that he might lighten the weight with death. And in Troy  
 the heroes were dying, and the plan of Zeus was being brought to pass.<sup>18</sup>

This fragment clearly belongs to a proem; like other epic proems, it sets the stage for the narrative, is apparently presented in the voice of the narrator, and features a temporal marker, ἦν ὅτε, with which we may compare for instance ἔνθ' at *Odyssey* 1.11. As the Odyssean parallel would suggest, the fragment does not start at the beginning of the proem, for there is no invocation to the Muse, which by convention opens ancient Greek epics.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, ἔνθ' at *Odyssey* 1.11 answers τῶν ἀμύθεν γε at *Odyssey* 1.10, connecting the invocation of the Muse with the rest of the opening; ἦν ὅτε in the *Kypria* presumably connects with a preceding temporal marker as well. Nor can we be sure that the proem ended where the quotation does. Nevertheless, at seven lines, the preserved fragment is comparable

<sup>17</sup> I thus agree with Scaife (1995: 172–175) that the fragments we have suggest that "every event in the *Kypria* was causally bound to the events that preceded and followed it," though I find Scaife's conclusion that the *Kypria* is more "concerned with causality" than other Greek epics unconvincing.

<sup>18</sup> Translation of the last clause is provisional; see below, 7–12.

<sup>19</sup> Examples include Hom. *Il.* 1.1, *Od.* 1.1; Hes. *Theog.* 1, *Op.* 1; *Homeric Hymn to Hermes* 1; *Thebais* 1 Bernabé. Edwards (1980: 3–5) understands the invocation as constitutive of a "type-scene" that recurs at the opening of ancient Greek epics.

in size to the proems of the Homeric epics, so it seems unlikely that the quotation leaves off much more than the invocation to the Muse. If this interpretation is correct, the verse fragment preserves the, or a, proem to the *Kypria* from after the invocation to a point at or near the transition to the “primary fabula,” where Zeus’ plan is set in motion.<sup>20</sup>

The lacuna in the second line has been reconstructed in a variety of ways, but whatever the actual reading of the Iliadic scholion the sense is clear. As the *Kypria* opens, the earth is oppressed by humanity, and this state of affairs motivates Zeus to foment war as a means to reduce the population. If the *Kypria* was, as I have argued, preserved in a relatively stable manuscript tradition from a relatively early date, then the verse fragment represents something very close to the proem that introduced the epic summarized by Proklos. However, the verse fragment from “Stasinos” seems at first to conflict with Proklos’ account of the beginning of the *Kypria*:

ἐπιβάλλει τούτοις τὰ λεγόμενα Κύπρια ἐν βιβλίοις φερόμενα ἔνδεκα . . . τὰ δὲ περι-  
έχοντά ἐστι ταῦτα.

Ζεὺς βουλευέται μετὰ τῆς Θέμιδος / Θέτιδος περὶ τοῦ Τρωικοῦ πολέμου . . .

Proklos p. 38.1–4 Bernabé

Following these things is what is called the *Kypria* in eleven books . . . and these are the contents. Zeus makes a plan with Thetis/Themis<sup>21</sup> about the Trojan war . . .

Not only does Proklos make no mention of a plan to relieve the earth; the testimonia also seem to imply more than one plan of Zeus in the *Kypria*. There is a Διὸς βουλή to relieve the earth by means of the Trojan war in the verse fragment from the Iliadic scholion, Zeus’ “planning” (βουλευέται) of the Trojan war with Thetis or Themis here at the beginning of Proklos’ summary, and a Διὸς βουλή to relieve the Trojans at the end of the summary. I propose that all of these “plans” represent varying perspectives on a single, overarching plan that unfolds as the *Kypria* progresses.

On analogy with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the planning scene with Thetis/Themis is more likely to come from the first scene in the primary fabula than from the proem. I note that Proklos seems consistently to have passed over the proems that by convention will have introduced each of the epics he summarized.<sup>22</sup> Every time the summary indicates a switch from one epic to another, a title is given, sometimes followed by an author and number of “books” (βιβλία). The

<sup>20</sup>I use the term “primary fabula” as defined by narratologists to refer to the temporal extent of a narrative excluding digressions, flashbacks, etc.; see de Jong 1987.

<sup>21</sup>The manuscripts read Θέτιδος, but most editors (including Bernabé) and commentators follow Heyne’s emendation to Θέμιδος, as suggested by Plato’s reference to (perhaps) the Judgment of Paris as θεῶν ἔριν τε καὶ κρίσιν διὰ Θέμιτός τε καὶ Διός (*Rep.* 379e6); see Severyns 1965: 285–289. Neither reading is overtly non-traditional, though substitution of Thetis for Themis could have emerged in response to the diffusion of Iliadic tradition.

<sup>22</sup>On the traditional character of the ancient Greek epic proem, see Lenz 1980: 21–26.

summary proper then begins directly with a narrative event. To take an example from elsewhere in the Cycle, "Next are the four books of the *Ilias Mikra* of Lesches the Mytilenaian, which comprise these things: there is the judgment of arms . . ." (ἐξῆς δ' ἐστὶν Ἰλιάδος μικρᾶς βιβλία τέσσαρα Λέσχειω Μυτιληναίου περιέχοντα τὰδε. ἡ τῶν ὅπλων κρίσις γίνεται . . ., Proklos p. 74.1–3 Bernabé). Although Proklos' summary of the *Ilias Mikra* begins with a narrative event, the competition between Odysseus and Ajax for the arms of Achilles, and makes no mention of a proem, other authors preserve part of one: Μοῦσά μοι ἔννεπε ἔργα τὰ μήτ' ἐγένοντο πάροιθε . . . (*Iliades Parvae* 1 Bernabé). This is Proklos' editorial practice as well in the two other cases where there is sufficient evidence to make a determination.<sup>23</sup> We are therefore justified in assuming that Proklos' summary of the *Kypria* does not include the proem. This assumption clarifies the relationship between the verse fragment and the summary in two important respects. First, Zeus' plan to relieve Gaia and his "planning" with Thetis/Themis need not be understood as alternative versions of the same event; second, Proklos' omission of the proem explains his failure to mention the relief-of-earth theme in his account of the beginning of the *Kypria*. The planning session between Zeus and Thetis/Themis is unlikely on other grounds to represent a parallel proem, for the active deliberation implied by the verb βουλεύεται is inconsistent with other surviving proems, in which the only direct speech is the imperative invocation to the Muse. Zeus' observation of the distressed Gaia and his decision to help her, by contrast, require no such active exchange (Burkert 1992: 102).

If, then, the verse fragment and Proklos' summary are read together, Zeus sees the earth, takes pity, and plans the Trojan war in the proem; as the primary fabula opens, Zeus is setting the war in motion with the help of Thetis/Themis. The action then moves from Olympos to earth with the wedding of Peleus and Thetis, and also the judgment of Paris, which Zeus engineers through the medium of Hermes (Proklos pp. 38.5–39.8 Bernabé). Read this way, the opening of the *Kypria* follows a single, coherent plan of Zeus. Earth's mute suffering is the ultimate cause of the entire war, but it is Zeus who articulates her needs and sets the events in motion that fulfil those needs.

The next consideration is whether the plans of Zeus referred to at the beginning and end of the *Kypria* are one and the same. This cannot be the case if Proklos' summary is considered in isolation from the verse fragment, since the planning session between Zeus and Thetis/Themis appears specific to the wedding of Peleus and Thetis and the judgment of Paris, and therefore unrelated to the plan to detach Achilles from the Greek army. In other words, our ability to link the plans of Zeus at the beginning and end of Proklos' summary depends on identifying the verse fragment as part of the same narrative to which the scene involving Zeus and Thetis/Themis belongs, and followed closely by it. If

<sup>23</sup> Cf. *Thebais* (1 Bernabé) and *Epigoni* (1 Bernabé).



this identification is made, repetition of a bundle of themes draws together the beginning and ending of the *Kypria*: Zeus' act of planning, the conceptualization of Zeus' plan as "relief," and Zeus' reliance on Achilles as an instrument of the plan. Thus, at the beginning of the *Kypria*, Zeus induces Achilles and the Greeks to wage war in order to relieve the earth; at the end, Zeus induces Achilles to quit the war in order to relieve the Trojans.

To be sure, Zeus "relieves" the earth in the verse fragment, and the Trojans at the end of Proklos' summary. Nevertheless, his aims are easily harmonized, for relief of the Trojans also relieves the earth. Warriors on both sides perish throughout the war, and most of the male Trojans can be expected to die when their city falls; but the slaughter of the Greeks brought on by Achilles' departure maximizes the body count on the Greek side as well (Burgess 1996: 82). Achilles serves as a doubly effective depopulation machine; by killing Trojans on the battlefield, and by failing to protect the Greeks after he departs the battlefield, he thins the ranks of warriors on both sides. Zeus' plan to relieve the earth, his planning session with Thetis/Themis, and his plan to relieve the Trojans can thus all be seen to have the same overarching goal of destroying people.

I suggest that the plan of Zeus to afford "relief," and the themes associated with it, form a structural ring around the entire *Kypria*.<sup>24</sup> Evidence in support of this interpretation includes a verbal link established by the collocation Διὸς βουλή . . . (ἐπι)κουφίζω, which expresses the idea of Zeus' affording "relief" in the verse fragment and at the end of the summary. Both terms of the collocation are uncommon in ancient Greek. Although the relevant evidence is somewhat limited, it is not inconsiderable. The Homeric, Cyclic, and Hesiodic epics taken together, intact and fragmentary, contain around 25–30,000 hexameter lines, in which the expression Διὸς βουλή is found only seven times in the singular,<sup>25</sup> the verb κουφίζω and its compounds only four times.<sup>26</sup> The two terms of the collocation appear together only in the two *Kypria* testimonia and in a related

<sup>24</sup> Ring-composition is well-documented in Homeric epic; see, e.g., Lohmann 1970. Although rings are sometimes considered one of the "small-scale structural devices" deployed in epic (thus Edwards 1991: 44), a number of scholars have identified large-scale rings embracing entire epics: in the *Iliad*, Silk 1987: 38–39; Whitman 1958: 97; in the *Odyssey*, Loudon 1999: 1, 133. Lord (1991: 30–32) describes analogous structures in South Slavic epic.

<sup>25</sup> *Iliad* 1.5, 12.241, 20.15; *Odyssey* 8.82, 11.297, 13.127; *Kypria* 1.7 Bernabé, p. 43.66 Bernabé; *Hymn to Apollo* 132.

<sup>26</sup> Aside from the two *Kypria* passages and a quotation from the Iliadic scholia to be discussed presently, κουφίζω occurs at Hesiod *Op.* 463, where earth is "made light" for sowing. The other archaic attestations are Theognis 629, where maturity "relieves" the turmoil of youth, and perhaps Solon; Plutarch's use of the verb in his *Solon* (15.4, following a quotation at 15.2) in reference to the *seisachtheia* could derive from Solon's own poetry. Eustathios and a scholion to Eur. *Or.* 1641 describe the Trojan and Theban wars as a κουφισμός of the overburdened earth; see Jouan 1966: 41–54. Reeves (1966) argues, I believe incorrectly, that Euripides' plays were the main source of the relief-of-earth theme in subsequent ancient literature.

account to be discussed presently. These statistics are not intended to represent the precise frequency of these expressions in archaic Greek, but rather to suggest that the collocation was rare enough that its repetition could create a conspicuous and memorable verbal link between the Διὸς βουλή conceived in order to relieve the earth at the beginning of the *Kypria*, and the Διὸς βουλή that detaches Achilles from the Greek forces at the end.

The same scholion that preserves the verse fragment from the *Kypria*'s proem preserves another account of "pre-Iliadic" events, in which appears the only other occurrence of the collocation of Διὸς βουλή with (ἐπι)κουφίζω in extant pre-classical Greek texts or references to them. This account confirms what we would expect on other grounds: the relief-of-earth theme is not specific to the *Kypria*'s version of "pre-Iliadic" events. Indeed, abundant parallels demonstrate that this theme was well known, and likely originated, in Near Eastern traditions with which the Greeks had contact.<sup>27</sup> At the same time, the "non-Kyprian" account helps shed light on what distinguished the *Kypria*'s realization of the relief-of-earth theme from what was likely a diverse set of variations on it.

The Iliadic scholiast prefaces his quotation of the verse fragment as follows:

Διὸς βουλήν] . . . ἄλλοι δὲ ἀπὸ ἱστορίας τινὸς εἶπον εἰρηκέναι τὸν "Ὀμηρον· φασὶ γὰρ τὴν Γῆν βαρουμένην ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων πολυπληθείας, μηδεμιᾶς ἀνθρώπων οὔσης εὐσεβείας, αἰτῆσαι τὸν Δία κουφισθῆναι τοῦ ἄχθους· τὸν δὲ Δία πρῶτον μὲν εὐθὺς ποιῆσαι τὸν Θηβαϊκὸν πόλεμον, δι' οὗ πολλοὺς πάνυ ἀπώλεσεν. ὕστερον δὲ πάλιν—συμβούλῳ τῷ Μώμῳ χρησάμενος, ἦν Διὸς βουλήν "Ὀμηρός φησιν—ἐπειδὴ οἷός τε ἦν κεραυνοῖς ἢ κατακλυσμοῖς πάντας διαφθεῖρειν, ὅπερ τοῦ Μώμου κωλύσαντος, ὑποθεμένου δὲ αὐτῷ γνώμας δύο, τὴν Θέτιδος θνητογαμίαν καὶ θυγατρὸς καλὴν γένναν, ἐξ ὧν ἀμφοτέρων πόλεμος "Ἑλλήσι τε καὶ βαρβάροις ἐγένετο, ἀφ' οὗ συνέβη κουφισθῆναι τὴν Γῆν, πολλῶν ἀνααιρεθέντων.

A scholion to Iliad 1.5 (pp. 43–44 1 (I) Bernabé)

"plan of Zeus": . . . And others have said that Homer spoke following a certain account: for they say that the Earth, being weighed down by a great abundance of people, and there being no piety among people, asked Zeus to be relieved of the burden, and that straightaway Zeus made first the Theban war, through which he destroyed a great many. But then for a second time [Zeus destroyed many men], employing Momos as a counselor, and [conceived the plan that] Homer calls Zeus' plan. Although [Zeus] was able to destroy everyone with thunderbolts and cataclysms, Momos prevented this, and proposed to him two ideas, the marriage of Thetis to a mortal, and the beautiful birth of a daughter, from which things war came about for the Hellenes and *barbaroi*,<sup>28</sup> from which time it happened that the earth was relieved, when many perished.

<sup>27</sup> See recent analyses in West 1997: 480–482; Burkert 1992: 100–106. Mayer (1996) catalogues parallels from Babylonian, Iranian, Indic, and Jewish traditions.

<sup>28</sup> Description of the Trojan war as a conflict between Greeks and "*barbaroi*," echoed in ps.-Apollod. *Epit.* 3.1.1 as "Europe" vs. "Asia," clearly reflects a "re-contextualization" of the mythical conflict in terms of the historical antagonism between Greece and Persia; cf. Herodotos 1.1–4.

Like the verse fragment, the account summarized in prose traces the cause of the Trojan war to Zeus' pity for the overburdened earth. We are thus dealing with clearly related traditions. The prose account goes on, however, to link the Trojan war to the impiety of humanity, the Theban wars, and the character of Momos.<sup>29</sup> None of these linkages is apparent in Proklos' summary and it is difficult to see how they might have appeared in a full quotation of the proem of the *Kypria*. And if his source did include a discussion between Zeus and Momos, it is not clear why Proklos would mention only Zeus' discussion with Thetis/Themis, which would be logically dependent on the Momos scene if Momos convinces Zeus to start the Trojan war and Thetis/Themis then helps him set the war in motion. It appears that a general relief-of-earth theme, tagged by the verbal marker Διὸς βουλή ... (ἐπι)κουφίζω, is realized in the *Kypria* in a distinctive manner. The *Kypria* eschews explicit linkage between the Trojan and Theban wars, omits human impiety as a motivating factor,<sup>30</sup> and denies or does not know a Zeus who would absent-mindedly jeopardize the universe and a Momos who would dissuade Zeus from this path and be the "real" author of the Trojan war.<sup>31</sup>

With these considerations in mind, I propose the following outline of Zeus' role in the *Kypria*:

Iliadic scholiast's verse fragment  
(proem)

Earth weighed down by humanity

Zeus plans to relieve Earth by means  
of the Trojan war

<sup>29</sup> The prose portion of the scholion seems to synthesize at least two different accounts: see West 1997: 481, n. 125; Burkert 1992: 102; Kullmann 1955: 180. Linkage of the Trojan and Theban wars occurs elsewhere in epic: in the Hesiodic *Works and Days*, wars fought over the "flocks of Oidipous" (162–163) and over Helen (164–165) bring an end to the race of "heroes" or "demigods" (ἥρωες, ἡμίθεοι, 159, 160). These latter, however, are characterized by justness and excellence (δικαιοτέρον καὶ ἄρειον, 158). In the Hesiodic *Catalogue*, Zeus apparently plans to use Menelaos, Achilles, and Helen to destroy the "demigods" (fr. 204.97–101 MW). In neither Hesiodic passage is there any overt reference to an oppressed earth or human impiety: see Nagy 1990b: 15–16; 1979: 159–161. Zeus does destroy the Hesiodic silver race as punishment for ὕβρις ἀτάσθαλος and failure to honor the gods (*Op.* 134–139). Ps.-Apollodoros (3.1.1) seems to distinguish these two traditions: αὐθις δὲ Ἑλένην Ἀλέξανδρος ἀρπάξει ὥς τινες λέγουσι καταβούλησιν Διὸς ... ἢ καθάπερ εἶπον ἄλλοι ὅπως τὸ τῶν δειμυθῶν γένος ὀρθῇ.

<sup>30</sup> Mayer (1996: 8, 14, following Slatkin 1991) suggests that the *Kypria* offers an *aition* for war as the displacement of strife from Olympos to earth, in which case human impiety is superseded as a motivating factor.

<sup>31</sup> Momos' role here may refer to a tradition in which Zeus, in anger at humanity, destroys the universe in an *ekpyrosis* of lightning; Ovid's Jupiter opts for a flood instead of thunderbolts for fear of such a disaster when he punishes human impiety: *iamque erat in totas sparsurus fulmina terras; / sed timuit ne forte sacer tot ab ignibus aether / conciperet flammam longusque ardesceret axis. / quoque reminiscitur adfore tempus / quo mare, quo tellus correptaque regia caeli / ardeat et mundi moles operosa laboret* (*Met.* 1.253–258). On *ekpyrosis* as one of the "visible manifestations of the Will of Zeus" in the *Iliad*, see Nagy 2000: 23–24.

Proklos' summary (primary fabula)	Zeus and Thetis/Themis plan the wedding of Peleus and Thetis
	Zeus enlists Hermes to engineer the judgment of Paris
	"pre-Iliadic" events to the death of Palamedes
	Zeus plans to relieve the Trojans by detaching Achilleus from the Greek army
	catalogue of Trojan allies

In the reconstruction proposed here, the Kyprian plan of Zeus has the potential to subsume the entire Epic Cycle, or at least those events that entail the destruction of human characters, since all deaths further the plan declared in the proem. The Διὸς βουλή . . . (ἐπι)κουφίζω collocation at the end of Proklos' summary of the *Kypria* draws attention to this fact in relation to traditions about Achilleus. And this brings us back to the junction between the *Kypria* and the *Iliad*.

A Greek familiar with both Kyprian and Iliadic traditions could not help but notice, as did the Iliadic scholiast, that the Διὸς βουλή mentioned in the Iliadic proem can be understood in a context larger than the μῆνις Ἀχιλλῆος. From a "Kyprian" perspective, the separation of Achilleus from the Greeks in the *Iliad* which his wrath occasions, can be viewed as an event planned by Zeus before Agamemnon and Achilleus even quarrel. As a consequence, regardless of what Achilleus "believes" about the events that unfold in the *Iliad*, he is merely an instrument of Zeus' overarching plan to kill people and thereby relieve the earth.

Again, this is not to insist that the *Kypria* positions itself specifically to engage with the *Iliad*. Rather, I suggest that the *Kypria*'s ending is part of a broad strategy to frame in a specific context any account of Achilleus' detachment from the Greek forces, just as the proem is able to contextualize his battlefield exploits. The Kyprian plan, in other words, makes what might seem from our perspective a gratuitous claim to authority over the rest of the Trojan war. We might then expect an equally adamant declaration on the part of the Iliadic proem of either allegiance to or dissociation from Kyprian thematics. This is not, however, the case. Paradoxically, perhaps, the canonical *Iliad* opens with a gesture of accommodation toward non-canonical traditions like the *Kypria*; this gesture, however, proves to be illusory, even disingenuous.

#### IV

In the *Kypria*'s proem, the relationship between narrative plan and divine plan is unambiguous: Earth is overburdened; Zeus resolves to help her and plans the Trojan war in order to lighten the load; as warriors die, the "plan of Zeus" is reaching its goal, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή. The proem to the *Iliad* establishes a

considerably less transparent relationship between Zeus' plan and the narrative to follow:

- 1.1 μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος  
 2 οὐλομένην ἣ μυρ' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε  
 3 πολλὰ δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν  
 4 ἡρώων αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεύχε κύνεσσιν  
 5a | 5b οἰωνοῖσιν τε δαῖτα | Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή  
 6 ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε  
 7 Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς

wrath, sing, goddess, [wrath] of Peleus' son Achilles destructive [wrath],  
 which countless woes on Achaians placed  
 and many strong souls to Hades sent forth  
 heroes' [souls], and [heroes] themselves [wrath] was making plunder for dogs  
 and feast for birds | and plan of Zeus was reaching fulfilment  
 from when first stood apart in strife  
 son of Atreus ruler of men and godly Achilles

There is nothing in itself remarkable about the grammar here; Parry even cited the opening of the *Iliad* as paradigmatic of how an idea is expanded in traditional epic narrative.<sup>32</sup> As Parry observed, the main clause, μῆνιν ἄειδε θεά, grammatically complete by itself, undergoes extension through "progressive enjambment," the sequential addition of "runover" words and phrases in such a way that the end of each verse represents a potential completion of the sentence. Thus, the μῆνις is destructive, which μῆνις (connective pronoun ἣ) placed countless woes on the Achaians (2); and (copulative δέ) sent souls to Hades (3); heroes' souls, and (δέ) was making the men themselves plunder for dogs and (τε) a banquet for birds (4–5a). So far the sense is clear: μῆνις, the antecedent of the adjective οὐλομένην and the grammatical subject of the δέ clauses, is responsible for the deaths of the heroes and the mutilation of their bodies, which the μῆνις logically precedes in narrative time. The ἐρις between Agamemnon and Achilles (ἐρίσαντε, 6) occasions the μῆνις, and it is with the background to the ἐρις that the narrative begins.

It is then clear that the ἐρις causes the μῆνις, which in turn causes the heroes' deaths. What the *Iliad*'s first sentence leaves uncertain is how Zeus' plan relates to these concepts. The change of grammatical subject from μῆνις Ἀχιλῆος to Διὸς

<sup>32</sup> Parry 1933–1935 = 1971: 462–464; 1930 = 1971: 301–307. A similar analysis had already been advanced by Bassett (1923: 339–340). Cf. recently Bakker 1997b: 291–299; Kirk 1985: 30–34; Lenz 1980: 41–49; Redfield 1979. Bakker (1997b: 292) argues that the syntactical units of the *Iliad*'s opening sentence "do not do much more than [guide] our attention through a series of island-like ideas" and that "what the text actually gives us is a series of short speech units that are more or less loosely connected syntactically." Here and at 1997a: 54–85, his more comprehensive study of "the syntax of movement" in Homeric epic, Bakker makes the case that such structure is characteristic of Homeric discourse ("typical segmentation"). This perspective does not, however, preclude the polemical deployment of loose grammatical structure by traditional singers.

βουλή at 5b, as I have attempted to indicate with the crude translation above, generates in English a run-on sentence. It is therefore unclear whether the Διὸς βουλή clause is logically subordinate to the μῆνις in line 1, or rather represents a new idea. Related to this question is another in line 6: the quantity that is said to start “from the time when” Agamemnon and Achilles quarrel can be either the song itself or the Διὸς βουλή (or both). In other words, the Iliadic proem makes the plan of Zeus either the cause or the result of the μῆνις. This uncertainty arises from three imprecise expressions in the *Iliad*’s opening sentence: the particle δέ and the verb ἐτελείετο in 5b, and the connective ἐξ οὗ in 6.

If, on the one hand, the loose connective δέ in 5b is understood to subordinate the “plan of Zeus” clause to the μῆνις, as it does the “dogs and birds” and “souls to Hades” clauses,<sup>33</sup> Zeus’ plan becomes an instrument of the μῆνις and comes into being as a result of it.<sup>34</sup> On the other hand, δέ could have summary force, as in the *Kypria*’s proem, where the Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή clause reiterates the motivation behind the situation the proem describes: Zeus responds to Earth’s plight with a plan for wars, wars commence, people die, and (so) Zeus’ plan is being brought toward its goal (thus Kirk 1985: 32). If δέ at *Iliad* 1.5b has similar force, Achilles’ wrath is an instrument of Zeus’ plan.

The verb ἐτελείετο complicates the logical flow of the proem both in its root meaning and in its tense. To begin with, the multiple possible renderings of the Greek imperfect leave open the temporal relationship of the plan to the wrath. If ἐτελείετο is an inchoative imperfect, it indicates a subsequent development: after the advent of the wrath, the plan is conceived; when the bodies begin to pile up, the plan “begins being brought to fulfilment.” If on the other hand ἐτελείετο is an imperfect of continuance, the wrath, by causing deaths, can be the extension of an ongoing plan, which “continues to be brought to fulfilment.”<sup>35</sup> Looked at another way, the question is whether the framing function of the imperfect is internal or external to the wrath. The shift to the imperfect (τεῦχε) in line 4 from the aorist tenses (ἔθηκε, προΐαψεν) employed in the preceding “placed woes” and “sent souls to Hades” clauses distinguishes between the instant departure of the heroes’

<sup>33</sup> In the discourse-theory terminology applied to Homeric discourse by Bakker (1997a: 64), δέ at *Iliad* 1.5 can describe “the continuity of topics” and/or “the movement of narrative time.” Bakker (1997b: 299) describes *Iliad* 1.5b as marking “a step to a new idea that is only thematically related, *in a less obvious way*” (emphasis added). Race (2000) surveys “explanatory δέ-clauses” in the *Iliad*, which by his definition “provide an explanation or reason for a preceding statement or action.” Although Race does not include *Iliad* 1.5 in his discussion, his sub-class of “Explanatory δέ-clauses Providing the Motivation for Action” (215–219) aptly describes one of the possible readings of the Iliadic “plan of Zeus” clause.

<sup>34</sup> A *varia lectio* of βουλήι for βουλή at *Iliad* 1.5b, attested by Didymos and Nikanor, even preserves μῆνις as the grammatical subject, a reading that all but demands subordination of the plan to the wrath.

<sup>35</sup> Murnaghan (1997: 23–25) observes that ἐτελείετο can thus be understood to indicate that the *Iliad* is but one instantiation of “the master plot of archaic mythology, Zeus’s imposition of death on mortals.”

souls to Hades and the protracted devouring of their corpses (thus Eustathios 19.25–28).<sup>36</sup> Here an “internal frame” is established: once the wrath has placed woes on the Greeks, the army enters into a state in which souls are snatched away to Hades, leaving the mistreated bodies as an ongoing testament to the wrath’s power. If however 5b marks a transition to a new idea, the plan of Zeus can provide an “external frame” for the quarrel described in line 6. Understood this way, the ongoing plan is offered as an explanation for the ἔρις, and thus for the μῆνις as well.

The root meaning of the verb ἐτελείετο, which represents Zeus’ plan as approaching a τέλος, “end,” “fulfilment,” raises the same question. Is the plan reaching its τέλος within the compass of the wrath, or is the wrath itself the τέλος of the plan? It can be argued that the very description of the plan as approaching a τέλος, rather than proceeding from an ἀρχή, “beginning,” means that the Διὸς βουλή cannot be fully coextensive (“was being”) with the μῆνις, for a τέλος implies a pre-existing ἀρχή.<sup>37</sup> Thus it is also possible that Zeus’ plan both begins and reaches a τέλος after the μῆνις, which begins with the ἔρις, is conceived; this can be true if the plan begins only with Thetis’ request to Zeus on Achilles’ behalf, some 200 lines after the μῆνις is kindled.

The subordinate clause that introduces the ἔρις in line 6 further complicates these problems, since it could be governed either by the imperative in αἶεδε in line 1 or by the plan of Zeus in 5b. This leaves open to question the temporal reference point for the subordinating conjunction ἐξ οὗ, “from the time when.” If the clause depends on αἶεδε, “sing the μῆνις . . . from the time when (ἐξ οὗ) they stood apart in strife,” the Διὸς βουλή is either dependent on the wrath, and therefore subsequent to it, or wholly parenthetical, in which case the temporal relationship between the wrath and the plan is indeterminate.<sup>38</sup> If the ἐξ οὗ clause depends on the Διὸς βουλή, “the plan of Zeus was being brought to completion from the time when they stood apart in strife,” the plan is connected to the

<sup>36</sup> Bakker *per litteras* notes that “it is important that τεύχε be understood as the temporal frame for ἔθηκε and προΐαγεν . . . Διὸς δ’ ἐτελείετο βουλή (or δὲ τελείετο) can thus be interpreted as a further . . . frame”; depending on how strongly the force of τέλος is perceived in this “further frame,” the μῆνις could be reduced to the culmination of the βουλή. Thus Clay (1999: 43) argues that “the imperfect *eteleieto* does indeed suggest a goal . . . [that] goes beyond the confines of the poem and yet [to which] all the events within the poem contribute.” Redfield (1979: 108) understands shared aspect to indicate logical connection, so that the imperfects τεύχε and ἐτελείετο together identify “not the death of the heroes, but their defilement as the special accomplishment of Zeus.”

<sup>37</sup> On the possible implications of τέλος instead of ἀρχή, see Schadewaldt 1958: 24–26. That the corresponding denominative verb, ἀρχομαι, is not governed by Διὸς βουλή in extant ancient Greek epic leaves somewhat uncertain how fully the force of “end” should be felt in ἐτελείετο.

<sup>38</sup> Lenz (1980: 42, n. 1) argues that ἐξ οὗ should be taken with αἶεδε; so also Kirk 1985: 53; Monro 1884a: 248. By contrast, Redfield (1979: 96) argues, based on parallels drawn from the *Odyssey*, that ἐξ οὗ is subordinate to ἐτελείετο; so also Willcock 1978: 185–186. The question exercised Alexandrian scholars: see AD scholia to *Iliad* 1.5–6. Bakker (1997b: 293) observes that the perceived abruptness in connecting lines 1 and 6, which leads Willcock and others to connect 6 with 5b, is something “with which this speaker [i.e., the Homeric narrator] is not concerned.”

quarrel, which precedes the wrath. More specifically, Achilles after quarreling with Agamemnon asks Thetis to enlist Zeus' aid (1.348–412); however, the gods are away from Olympus, and a full eleven days pass before Thetis can petition Zeus (425, 493). Inasmuch as the narrative begins with events leading up to the ἔρις, if the ἐξ οὗ clause describing the ἔρις is connected with the “plan of Zeus” clause, then the Διὸς βουλή begins eleven days *before* Thetis' petition. Read this way, the plan is responsible for the quarrel, absent the remote possibility that the two are independent but parallel phenomena that just happen to take shape simultaneously.

In sum, the loose connection δέ and the uncertainties of the imperfect tense and root meaning of ἐτελείετο in the context of line 5b, along with the temporal imprecision of the ἐξ οὗ clause in line 6, allow the μῆνις Ἀχιλῆος to be understood either (i) to cause and precede the Διὸς βουλή; or (ii) to be caused by, or at least to serve as an instrument of, a preexisting Διὸς βουλή.<sup>39</sup> In terms of the logical flow of the Iliadic proem, these grammatical ambiguities leave open two possibilities:

ἔρις	⇒	μῆνις	⇒	Διὸς βουλή	⇒	deaths of heroes
Διὸς βουλή	⇒	ἔρις	⇒	μῆνις	⇒	deaths of heroes

It may fairly be objected that so close a reading is anachronistic when applied to an orally composed and transmitted narrative. What a close reading does reveal, I suggest, is that grammatical ambiguities in the *Iliad*'s opening sentence channeled its listeners' understanding down one of two readily perceived lines of interpretation. I shall refer to these lines of interpretation as “hearings,” in order to distance the remainder of my argument from the connotations of the term “reading.” As a result of grammatical ambiguity, the Iliadic proem keeps open whether the Iliadic narrative is to be understood as the fulfilment by Zeus of Achilles' request, relayed by Thetis later in *Iliad* 1, or rather as Zeus' exploitation of Achilles in the service of his own larger plan. The former hearing constructs the *Iliad* as a self-contained story about a hero who by calling in anger on the supreme god visits destruction on his fellow soldiers; the relevant dead are those who receive the “woes” (ἄλγεα, 1.2), the Greeks. The latter hearing constructs the *Iliad* as an open-ended story in which a hero's anger fulfils one stage of the supreme god's larger purpose; here the relevant dead can, as in the *Kypria*, be

<sup>39</sup> Clay (1999: 40–44) catalogues four “main positions”: Zeus' plan (i) is equivalent to his promise to Thetis (“the ‘orthodox’ view”); (ii) aims for the destruction of Troy; (iii) seeks to bring an end to the heroic age (“*Cypria* motif”); (iv) is equivalent to “Fate.” Clay dismisses (iv), and suggests that (i)–(iii) “are constantly operative throughout the *Iliad*.” While I follow Clay's open reading of the Iliadic plan (though I would not necessarily exclude [iv]), I believe that the *Iliad* strongly implies a hierarchy among these themes, and accordingly would not refer to the plan as multifarious (“threefold”). Redfield (1979: 105–107) suggests five possible readings, of which he champions the last: Zeus' plan (i) refers gnominically to “god's will”; (ii) has “some specific purpose,” and begins with the ἔρις; (iii) refers solely to Zeus' interventions in battles; (iv) is the same as in the *Kypria* proem; (v) is associated with prophecy.



understood to include not just the Greeks but the Trojans and all who perish in the course of the war and its aftermath. By further extension, this plan could include “pre-Iliadic” events such as those related in the *Kypria*, in particular the prophecy concerning Thetis and her subsequent marriage to Peleus, as has been argued by Slatkin (1991).

In performance, then, the experiences each audience member had of Trojan war stories could predispose him or her to one or the other of these hearings. I do not wish to raise the specter of the naïve auditor of the *Iliad* and argue that the proem is designed as I have described it in order to win converts to the Iliadic perspective on the Trojan war. The proem may have served this function very well, but it is difficult if not impossible to reconstruct historical circumstances in which significant numbers of ancient Greeks might have been hearing the *Iliad* for the first time. Rather, I suggest that the two hearings reflect the kinds of pressures under which Iliadic tradition took shape and achieved its unparalleled authority. By failing to define Zeus’ relationship to the narrative, the Iliadic proem defers polemical engagement with audience members’ various ways of understanding his role in the Trojan war. Moreover, the same effect is achieved with respect to audience members whose epichoric mythologies elevated the role not only of Thetis but also of Olympians such as Apollo in traditions pertaining to the Trojan war.<sup>40</sup> Because of its Panhellenic orientation, the *Iliad*’s version of “Iliadic” events will necessarily conflict at various points with any number of local traditions. The Iliadic proem does not hesitate to assert that Zeus’ role in the wrath-story will be significant, but it does not immediately deny other gods an equally significant role.

My argument for the two hearings is specific to the Iliadic proem, for the *Iliad* does, as it progresses, contextualize Zeus’ actions in terms that extend beyond Achilles’ wrath and Thetis’ petition. This broader canvas is revealed outright in Book 15, when Zeus informs Hera that the Trojans will prevail until Achilles is moved to send Patroklos into battle, after which time the Greeks will gain the advantage and sack Troy (15.59–77). Zeus associates his promise to Thetis with the ban on divine intervention in battle he announces at the beginning of *Iliad* 8.<sup>41</sup> Zeus’ intent to see that “the wish of Peleus’ son be fulfilled” (τελευτηθῆναι, 74) blends seamlessly with the overall architecture of the Trojan war: Patroklos’ death will draw Achilles back into battle, which event will lead in turn to the

<sup>40</sup> Aristotle’s pupil Aristoxenos knew an Iliadic proem that elevates the role of Apollo: ἐσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσαι / ὅπως δὴ μῆνις τε χόλος θ’ ἔλε Πηλεΐωνα / Ἀητοῦς τ’ ἀγλαὸν υἱόν· ὃ γὰρ βασιλῆϊ χολωθεῖς (fr. 91a Wehrli). Here, the causal chain begins with the transfer of Apollo’s μῆνις to Achilles, thus making the anger of Apollo at the beginning of the *Iliad* independent of the plan of Zeus. Perhaps not incidentally, omission of reference to a Διὸς βουλή in this proem also smoothes the junction between the *Kypria* and *Iliad* (van Thiel 1991 *ad Iliad* 1.1: “*Iliada cum Cypriis iungens*”).

<sup>41</sup> Erbse 1986: 226. As Bremer (1987: 34) and others observe, Zeus rescinds his ban and unleashes the *Theomachy* so that Achilles does not bring a premature end to the war (*Iliad* 20.26–30).

death of Hektor, “from which time (ἐκ τοῦ) I shall contrive a counter-attack ever continually from the ships until the Achaeans take Ilion” (15.69–71).<sup>42</sup> And if the destruction of Troy is Zeus’ goal, he can hardly have conceived his plan for it in the tenth year of the Trojan war, when Agamemnon and Achilles quarrel. Achilles’ wrath is thus enmeshed in a plan that extends beyond “his” epic and even beyond his own death.<sup>43</sup>

The *Iliad* thus in the end denies the autonomy of Achilles’ story, and subordinates it to a larger purpose, the plan of Zeus.<sup>44</sup> In other words, the primary fabula eventually reveals that one of the hearings allowed by the proem, the subordination of Zeus’ plan to Achilles’ wrath, is at most only ostensible. Indeed, the Iliadic plan of Zeus, like its counterpart in the *Kypria*, springs its own narrative confines and associates itself with traditions such as the *Iliou Persis* as well as the *Kypria*. However, the overarching Iliadic plan is distinct from the overarching Kyprian plan in that the *Iliad* never does provide a clear explanation for the heroes’ deaths.<sup>45</sup> The *Kypria* offers the bitter consolation that the deaths fulfil a divine imperative; the prose account preserved by the Iliadic scholiast goes one better and makes men culpable for the war on account of their own impiety. The *Iliad* does not rule out the possibility that Zeus’ plan seeks to achieve wholesale destruction<sup>46</sup> or to punish human wickedness. The *Iliad*’s concern, in other words, is to establish who contrives the misery and glory of the Trojan war, but not why.

At the junction between the *Kypria* and the *Iliad*, then, it is not the sequence of events that is in question; the audience knows that Achilles will die, that Troy will be sacked, and so on. What remains open for negotiation is the broader context into which these events fit. This context is by convention signposted in the proem; such is the case with the *Kypria*, and, for that matter, as Cook (1995: 15–21) has demonstrated, the *Odyssey*. What the Iliadic proem seems to do is to provide verbal cues that channel the initial responses of audience members familiar with the tradition and its conventions down alternative paths of

<sup>42</sup> Zeus’ attribution of the sack of Troy to the Ἀθηναίης βουλᾶς (15.71) can thus be understood as his use of Athene to further his own βουλή.

<sup>43</sup> Irrespective of Zeus’ revelation, focalization tends to reflect the confines of the narrative. Later in Book 15, for example, the Homeric narrator describes the Trojans in their attack on the Greek ships as “fulfilling the behests of Zeus” (Διὸς δὲ τέλειον ἐφετιμάς, 593), and names Thetis’ petition as the reason (Θέτιδος δ’ ἐξαίσιον ἄρην / πᾶσαν ἐπικρήνεις, 15.598–599). Thetis and Achilles naturally understand Zeus’ plan as centered on themselves: τὰ μὲν δὴ τοι τετέλεσται / ἐκ Διός, ὥς ἄρα δὴ πρὶν γ’ εὖχαιο, 18.74–75, Thetis; τὰ μὲν ἄρ μοι Ὀλύμπιος ἐξετέλεσεν, 18.79, Achilles.

<sup>44</sup> For Zeus as narrative impetus in the *Iliad*, see Nagy 2000: 20–24; 1999: 263–265; 1979: 81–82 §25, n. 2, 130–131; Clay 1999: 45; Heiden 1996: 19–22. Note that Achilles renounces his wrath well before the *Iliad* ends.

<sup>45</sup> Slatkin (1991: 53–84) understands Zeus’ larger aim in the *Iliad* as alluding to the end to cosmic succession, and thus to the permanence of Zeus’ rule over the universe. See also Murnaghan 1997: 41–42; Muellner 1996: 5–31; Clay 1989: 12–14.

<sup>46</sup> For a different view, see Janko 1992: 236.

contextualization. An audience member can, if so predisposed, begin to hear the *Iliad* as a poem about Achilles and his anger and nothing else; as the narrative proceeds, however, he or she will come to find that the thematic scope of the *Iliad* extends beyond the μῆνις. Another audience member, if predisposed to view the *Kypria* as authoritative, can begin to hear the *Iliad* as maintaining Kyprian thematics, although he or she will not find as the narrative progresses any direct support for this predisposition.

## V

In view of the preceding arguments, I propose that the inconcinnities that seem to arise at the junction between the *Kypria* and the *Iliad* reflect a clash between their respective narrative strategies. The *Kypria*, in presuming to explain all the deaths caused by the Trojan war, including those that result from Achilles' withdrawal(s) from battle, offers a univocal and polemical reading of Homeric and Cyclic traditions as extensions of its own narrative and divine plan. Its proem declares immediately and unambiguously that the ultimate motivation for every event leading up to, during, and in the aftermath of the Trojan war is Zeus' desire to depopulate the earth. That this explanation of the war did not enjoy Panhellenic authority is implied by the *Iliad's* silence on the subject,<sup>47</sup> and an epichoric context for the *Kypria's* thematics is near to hand. Its very title, which apparently derives from the place-name "Kypros" and not "Kypriis" (= Aphrodite),<sup>48</sup> and its explanation for the Trojan war suggest that Kyprian tradition became localized in the part of the Greek world that had contact with Near Eastern traditions, in which, as noted above, the relief-of-earth theme is well documented.<sup>49</sup> Thus the *Kypria's* plan of Zeus may have been obscure or controversial for Greeks who had little or no experience of Near Eastern cultures.

An epichoric context for the Thetis-story is also near to hand. Slatkin (1991) has demonstrated that Thetis was the subject of an extensive tradition, plausibly associated with Lakonia, to which the *Iliad* alludes in its construction of divine power-relations. Again, the fact that the *Iliad* does not clarify the relationship between Thetis and Zeus suggests that the "power of Thetis" was not a consistent quantity in ancient Greek mythology, and that the geographic scope of her patronage was relatively limited.<sup>50</sup> To render Slatkin's understanding

<sup>47</sup> Or near-silence: for discussion of some suggestive passages, see Slatkin 1991: 119–121; Scodel 1982; Kullmann 1955.

<sup>48</sup> Burkert 1992: 103–104, 207, n. 10; see also Nagy 1990a: 77. The Salamakis inscription (discussed above, n. 12) suggests that Kyprian tradition was associated with the southern coast of Asia Minor as well.

<sup>49</sup> On the Near Eastern origins of the relief-of-earth theme, see, for instance, West 1997: 480–482; Mayer 1996; Burkert 1992: 100–106; Jouan 1966: 45.

<sup>50</sup> Slatkin (1991: 81–83, n. 32) suggests that Alkman elevates Thetis' theogonic function over those of Gaia and Zeus (τῆς Θέτιδος γενομένης ἀρχὴ καὶ τέ[λ]ο[ς] ταύτ)α πάντων ἐγένε[τ]ο, 5.iii.15–17 Page) and that Pausanias (3.14.4–5) relates a tradition connecting Thetis to Spartan political

of Thetis' role in the *Iliad* in somewhat more abstract terms, the consolation that the Thetis-tradition receives for subordination to the Panhellenizing plan of Zeus is a central role in the flow of that plan. The *Kypria*'s handling of the power of Thetis is less clear, though her participation in the opening scene and the larger significance of her marriage to Peleus suggest that her role was considerable. Yet the *Kypria*'s plan of Zeus also subordinates Thetis, and goes the additional step of placing Gaia ahead of her in the chain of causation.

Each epic, then, unfolds as a plan of Zeus that subordinates the competing aims of other actors in the narrative. But it is in the presentation of this theme that a crucial difference between the *Kypria* and the *Iliad* becomes apparent. Seconds into a performance of the *Kypria*, the audience knows the motivation for Zeus' plan, its purpose, and its power to explain the entire Trojan war. In a performance of the *Iliad*, by contrast, the motivation for the plan is only alluded to, its purpose remains undefined, and its scope is only gradually revealed and does not emerge fully to view until the narrative is more than half over. Yet but a slight change in the proem—a more forceful conjunction, a switch of grammatical case, a more expressive temporal marker—could render the *Iliad*'s plan of Zeus as transparent as the *Kypria*'s. That the *Iliad* avoids such clarity, I submit, has direct consequences for its reception in performance.

Again, we need not have recourse to naive auditors of the *Iliad* (or the *Kypria*), for the strategies I describe can be understood in terms of the ongoing development of "living" narrative traditions. Though it cannot be concluded that the *Iliad* as we know it engaged specifically with Kyprian thematics, it does seem that the *Kypria* achieved, if not canonical status, at least a relatively high degree of diffusion and authority in the ancient world on the subject of "pre-Iliadic" events. If the *Iliad*'s own orientation is Panhellenic in scope, then perhaps the *Kypria*'s may be termed "proto-Panhellenic."<sup>51</sup> The *Iliad* will thus have had reason as it developed to elaborate a strategy for defusing the claims of the *Kypria*, and the same can in turn be said of the *Kypria*'s "response" to Iliadic tradition. At some point, however, the authority of the *Kypria* either waned or was overshadowed by that of the *Iliad*.<sup>52</sup> By my interpretation, the *Iliad*'s canonical status is at least partly explicable in terms of its deployment of more successful strategies for negotiating a Panhellenic synthesis than those deployed in such epics as the *Kypria*. The *Iliad*'s ambiguous opening and enigmatic divine plan would allow audiences familiar with—and indeed patriotically and ideologically attached to—differing presuppositions about the "real" cause of the Trojan war to experience the *Iliad* without having their presuppositions called

mythology. See Burkert 1985: 172 on Thetis-worship in Thessaly and Sparta; also Most's (1987) alternative interpretation of the Alkman fragment, discussed by Slatkin *loc. cit.*

<sup>51</sup> On Panhellenism as a relative phenomenon, see Nagy 1979: 219–220 §14, n. 3; 1996: 51–55.

<sup>52</sup> Nagy (1999: 271–272) develops the metaphor of a "Panathenaic bottleneck" through which the Homeric epics alone pass.

abruptly into question.<sup>53</sup> Put another way, the *Iliad's* proem would facilitate, in a way that the *Kypria's* would not, the diffusion of Iliadic tradition in Panhellenic contexts by allowing a relatively less confrontational entry into the narrative.

I do not wish to suggest that composer-singers of ancient Greek epic were mere mouthpieces of various (proto-)Panhellenic ideologies. The process I am describing will of course have been conditioned by singers' (and audiences') ideas of a "good song." Indeed, the interplay of conventions and traditions could be used for aesthetic effect.<sup>54</sup> In performance before audiences acquainted with Kyprian tradition, the *Iliad's* references to a plan of Zeus are reinforced, and their scope broadened, by intertextual echoes of that tradition. An instructive parallel is Agamemnon's berating of Kalchas in the *Iliad* as a "prophet of evils" (μάντι κακῶν, 1.106). This charge takes on added resonance for audience members familiar with Agamemnon's sacrifice of Iphigeneia as narrated in the *Kypria* (Proklos p. 41.42–47 Bernabé). That the same prophet who declares that Agamemnon has incurred Artemis' μῆνις also draws public attention to Agamemnon's angering of Apollo reveals the μάντι κακῶν appellation in the *Iliad* as more than a truculent outburst. The two scenes, complete in isolation, form a correlative pair: Agamemnon runs afoul collectively of the brother-sister pair Artemis and Apollo, and is told by the same prophet, Kalchas, that he must surrender a young woman to placate the offended deity. Audiences familiar with both episodes thus have a broader context for Agamemnon's behavior and are in a position to appreciate the symmetry and irony of his situation in *Iliad* 1.<sup>55</sup>

Absent the pressure, opportunity, or capacity to generate a fully Panhellenic narrative plan, Kyprian and other "proto-Panhellenic" and epichoric traditions remained confined to a geographically more restricted cross-section of ancient Greek audiences than did the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.<sup>56</sup> The evidence that Kyprian themes had greatest authority among Greek communities in the eastern Aegean suggests that historical contingencies such as the rise of Assyrian and then Persian

<sup>53</sup> Morrison (1997: 292) argues that the *Iliad's* audience was "kept on edge" by "digressions and contradictory movements," which "[forced] the audience to juxtapose" its preconceptions with the Iliadic narrative. While I agree that audience expectations are crucial to understanding the *Iliad's* narrative strategies, I view those strategies as playing to, rather than confronting, audience preconceptions.

<sup>54</sup> Nagy (2000) discusses instances in the *Iliad* and in Plato where the Διὸς βουλή theme may generate suspense.

<sup>55</sup> Similarly, the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles has a "history" in the *Kypria* (Proklos p. 41.51–52 Bernabé), as does the abortive departure of the Greeks in *Iliad* 2 and 9 (Proklos p. 42.61 Bernabé).

<sup>56</sup> Scenes narrated in the *Kypria* are well represented in artwork across archaic Greece: see recent discussion in Snodgrass 1998: 127–150; Lowenstam 1997; Burgess 1996: 79; Scaife 1995: 174–191. However, this does not mean that the *Kypria* itself enjoyed comparably broad diffusion; as Burgess, Lowenstam, and Snodgrass emphasize, it is difficult, if not impossible, to establish whether a vase scene refers to a specific narrative tradition.

power may have truncated the *Kypria*'s development; alternatively or in addition, Near Eastern influence in these communities may have limited the *Kypria*'s appeal to a broader Hellenic audience. At any rate, the *Kypria*'s limited diffusion during the archaic period seems to have fostered, or been fostered by, univocality in its thematics. The tendency toward multivocality evinced in the *Iliad*, on the other hand, both facilitates and animates specifically Panhellenic discourse. Panhellenic epic could only achieve diffusion through careful negotiation among the complex and often contradictory epichoric and proto-Panhellenic traditions out of and in the context of which it developed. The *Iliad*, I submit, subtly engages in this process of negotiation from its very first sentence. The *Kypria*, by contrast, elaborates from the start a univocality that ultimately limits its potential for transcending its regional roots and achieving full Panhellenic status. It is then, in the end, the *Iliad* that by the classical period assumes authority over the junction between itself and the *Kypria*, an authority it has retained in the scholarly tradition to the present day.

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL LANGUAGES AND LITERATURES  
UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO  
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS 60637  
U.S.A.

epic@midway.uchicago.edu

#### BIBLIOGRAPHY

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