

EUPHORBUS AND THE DEATH OF ACHILLES

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NOT ONLY IS THE DEATH OF PATROCLUS the turning point in the plot of the *Iliad*; it is also the most extraordinary event in this extraordinary poem.¹ Under Patroclus' leadership the Greeks have saved their ships from Trojan fire, have driven the enemy to the walls of Troy, and are, just before Patroclus is killed, fighting "beyond what is fated" (16.780).² Nothing else happens in the *Iliad* "beyond fate," and so, with these words, we know that what is taking place is of the utmost importance. Three times Patroclus charges forward, killing nine men each time, another event unparalleled in the poem. Then suddenly, approaching in a mist, Apollo strikes Patroclus from behind and knocks off his armour, leaving him stunned and vulnerable. Quickly Euphorbus stabs Patroclus with his spear, then retreats back into his own ranks. Dazed and wounded, Patroclus is trying to find safety among his own men when Hector steps forward and kills him.

In this paper I will examine only one aspect of this scene, namely the role of the Trojan Euphorbus, who has the distinction of being the first mortal to wound the defenseless and stunned Patroclus (16.806–815):

ὄπιθεν δὲ μετάφρενον ὀξείῳ δουρὶ
ὤμων μεσσηγὺς σχεδὸθεν βάλε Δάρδανος ἀνὴρ,
Πανθοΐδης Εὐφορβος, ὃς ἡλικίην ἐκέκαστο
ἔγχεϊ θ' ἵπποσύνη τε πόδεσσί τε καρπαλίμοισι·
καὶ γὰρ δὴ τότε φῶτας εἴκοσι βῆσεν ἄφ' ἵππων,
πρῶτ' ἐλθὼν σὺν ὄχρῳ, διδασκόμενος πολέμοιο·
ὃς τοι πρῶτος ἐφήκε βέλος, Πατρόκλεος ἱππεύ,
οὐδὲ δάμασσε· ὁ μὲν αὖτις ἀνέδραμε, μίκτο δ' ὀμίλῳ,
ἐκ χροῶς ἀρπάξας δόρυ μείλινον, οὐδ' ὑπέμεινε
Πάτροκλον γυμνὸν περ ἐόντ' ἐν δηϊότητι.

From close behind his back a Dardanian man, Panthoös' son, Euphorbus, struck him between the shoulders with a sharp spear. This man excelled all men his own age in spearcraft, horsemanship, and in swiftness of feet. For, at that time, he had already brought down twenty men from their horses, since first coming with his chariot and learning the art of war. He was first to hit you with his javelin, o charioteer Patroclus. But he did not

¹ I would like to thank in particular Jonathan Burgess, Emmet Robbins, Wallace McLeod, Ian Storey, and the two anonymous readers from *Phoenix*, whose careful readings and comments have strengthened my arguments immeasurably. Any errors that remain are, of course, my own.

² On this unique formula, see Janko (1992: 410), who observes that "the usual pattern is typified by 17.319, 'they would have taken Troy even beyond what was fated by Zeus, had not Apollo . . .'" On all other occasions in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, except at *Il.* 16.780, something would have happened contrary to fate (ὑπέρμορα, ὑπὲρ μόρον/μοῖραν/αἴσαν), if one of the gods had not noticed. On these reversal scenes, see further Kirk 1985: 132–133.

kill you. He ran back and mingled with the crowd, having snatched the ash spear from your flesh. He did not stand and face Patroclus, naked though he was in battle.³

The role that Euphorbus plays here has been and continues to be widely misinterpreted. In an article published in 1972, Hugo Mühlestein argued that Euphorbus is an *ad hoc* invention created to serve as a doublet of Paris. As such, he reminds the audience of the role that Paris will play as Achilles' slayer. Mühlestein's proposal appeared to solve the long-standing problem of why the poet inserts a minor character whose action undermines Hector's glory at that hero's greatest moment. Since it has been long held that Homer fashions the scene of Patroclus' death in such a way as to recreate the circumstances of Achilles' death, the suggestion that Euphorbus is a doublet of Paris seems to explain why this minor character appears at this important moment. Euphorbus, the Paris-doublet, wounds Patroclus, the Achilles-doublet. Thus Euphorbus functions to strengthen the correspondence between the deaths of Patroclus and Achilles. Most scholars now accept that Mühlestein has effectively solved the Euphorbus problem.⁴

I will argue, however, that Mühlestein's hypothesis is fundamentally flawed, for his equation of Euphorbus with Paris is based on a biographical tradition about Paris that plays no role in the *Iliad* and for which we have no evidence before the fifth century B.C. With Mühlestein, I agree that Euphorbus' role is tied to the death of Achilles, but not as a doublet of Paris. Euphorbus is a doublet of Achilles. Not infrequently Homer presents his audience with doublets of his principal hero. Patroclus and Diomedes are the most commonly cited examples. Minor characters, such as Euchenor and Hippothous, are also used as doublets of Achilles. Homer uses his Achilles-doublets in a consistent way, to look ahead to the death of Achilles, an event not narrated in the *Iliad*, but none the less important to its plot. Euphorbus too functions as an Achilles-doublet, but in a more specific way than have those doublets that preceded him. For after the death of Patroclus, the poet makes clear that not only will Achilles die, but that he will bring about his own death in a conscious, self-willed manner. As a doublet of Achilles, Euphorbus functions both to look ahead to Achilles' death and to stress that his death is consciously self-willed.

EUPHORBUS AND PARIS

Mühlestein argues that Euphorbus is created specifically for the role he plays as the first mortal to wound Patroclus, and that the biographical details that

³ All quotations from the Homeric poems use the text of David B. Monro and Thomas W. Allen, *Homeri Opera*³ (Oxford 1920); translations are my own.

⁴ Mühlestein's arguments have recently been championed in two volumes of the Cambridge commentary on the *Iliad*, most forcefully by Janko, who states that "Homer based Euphorbus on Akhilleus' slayer, Paris, as Mühlestein proved" (Janko 1992: 410; see also 312, 414–415). M. Edwards (1991: 18, 64) also views Mühlestein's arguments favourably. See also van Thiel 1982: 18–19, 416; Burkert 1987: 47; Baldick 1994: 81; Leclerc 1998: 98.

attend him are the key to understanding his role. He observes that Euphorbus is a Dardanian (16.807) and that his name is a suitable one for a shepherd.⁵ Since Dardanians live on the slopes of Mt Ida (*Il.* 2.819–821, 20.215–218) and since the young Paris, in later sources, shepherded flocks on Mt Ida, he concludes that Euphorbus must have been created with Paris as his model. This is confirmed when we hear that Euphorbus excelled all men his age in skill with his spear, in horsemanship, and in swiftness of foot (16.808–809). According to Mühlestein, this is meant to remind the audience of Paris' own excellence in athletics, specifically when he, as a shepherd, competed against his brothers in the funeral games commemorating the infant whom Priam and Hecuba had exposed at birth.

Mühlestein also finds it significant that Euphorbus wounds Patroclus immediately after Apollo stuns and disarms the Greek warrior. In the same way, he argues, Paris, with the help of Apollo, slays Achilles. When we turn to Euphorbus' only subsequent appearance, when he dies fighting over the corpse of Patroclus at the beginning of Book 17, two points are designed to make us remember that Euphorbus is a doublet of Paris. He is killed by Menelaus, Paris' arch enemy. At his death, particular attention is given to the defilement of his hair which is compared to the Graces' hair and is decorated with gold and silver (17.51–52). This is meant to recall Paris' status as a favourite of Aphrodite.⁶

The purpose behind the creation of Euphorbus as a doublet of Paris is to remind the audience that Patroclus' death functions in part as an anticipatory enactment of the death of Achilles. Euphorbus is necessary here, according to Mühlestein, because Hector is already fulfilling another role and cannot stand in for Paris. Hector functions as a doublet of Memnon to Patroclus' Antilochus. For the scene of Patroclus' death serves two functions. It not only re-enacts the death of Achilles, but also the death of Antilochus at the hands of Memnon. Thus, on the one hand, Patroclus stands in for Achilles and Euphorbus for Paris, and, on the other, Patroclus does double-duty (quite literally) as Antilochus while Hector is busy playing Memnon.⁷

Mühlestein's argument is flawed in both its general assumptions and in its particular proofs. I will not here address the problems inherent in neo-analytical

⁵"Das wort εὐφορβος bedeutet 'mit guter Weide' oder, bei verbal aufgefasstem Hinterglied, 'gut fütternd, gute Weide gewährend.' Der Name Euphorbos passt also, seinem Sinne nach, zu einem Hirten" (Mühlestein 1987: 80). On the name, see further Wathelet 1988: 548.

⁶See Mühlestein 1987: 80–82 for a detailed exposition of his various arguments. Mühlestein sums up his position as follows: "Alles konvergiert zur Evidenz: Das Muster für Euphorbos ist Paris, der auf dem Ida ausgesetzte Prinz, der zum Hirten aufwächst, in die Stadt zurückkehrt, in Kampfspielen alle besiegt und danach erkannt wird, der Rivale des Menelaos, der schöne Liebling der Aphrodite, der später mit Apollons Hilfe den Achill von hinten erlegt und ihm doch auch dann nicht zu stehen wagt" (82–83). Janko (1992: 414) reiterates Mühlestein's conclusions almost point by point.

⁷Mühlestein 1987: 83–85. Mühlestein does not consider why, if Patroclus can simultaneously stand in for Antilochus and Achilles, Hector cannot also fulfil both the roles of Memnon and Paris. Hector, after all, could easily double for his brother in such a scene, thereby rendering Euphorbus superfluous.

views on the death of Patroclus, for this has already been done in a recent article.⁸ But a questionable assumption on Mühlestein's part and the conclusions he draws based on that assumption need to be examined at the outset. Mühlestein believes that Homer knew the tradition surrounding the early life of Paris, his exposure, his youth as a shepherd on Mt Ida, and his recognition at the funeral games that commemorated him. Except for one problematic reference to the Judgement of Paris, Homer makes no references to any event in Paris' life before the abduction of Helen.⁹ Equally striking, there is no reference to any of these events, except for the Judgement, in Proclus' summary of the *Cypria*, a place where we should expect most of all to find them. None of this bothers Mühlestein, or Janko, his strongest supporter. While Mühlestein unquestioningly assumes that Homer knew the story of Paris' early life as we know it from later sources, Janko's position is even more troubling. He argues that Homer knew of Paris' early life because Euphorbus, who is based on Paris, is said to have excelled in games. In other words, Euphorbus is based on Paris because Euphorbus excelled in games. Therefore, Homer knew the story of Paris' victory in the funeral games in his honour and, in fact, the entire story of Paris' early life, as found in later sources.¹⁰

The earliest source we have for any episode from Paris' life before the Judgement is Pindar, who tells how Hecuba dreamed that she gave birth to a fiery Hundred-hander who razed Troy (*Paeon* 8a). Although the *paeon* is fragmentary and breaks off soon after Hecuba's dream, we can say that the dream in all likelihood indicates that Pindar also knew of the infant Paris' exposure.¹¹ Thus the earliest source we have that even suggests the story of Paris' exposure and early pastoral life comes from the fifth century. For the stories of Paris' boyhood on Mt Ida and his recognition by his parents, the nature of the evidence is much sketchier.¹² This story is told fully only by Hyginus (*Fab.* 91). Sophocles and Euripides both wrote an *Alexandros*, both or either of which may have been Hyginus' source. To Sophocles' play we can assign only a context of a herdsman who

⁸Burgess 1997: 1–17, esp. 10–16.

⁹At 3.17, Homer describes Paris wearing a leopard skin. It is tempting to see this as a possible allusion to Paris' past life as a shepherd, or even a hunter. However, at 10.334, Dolon wears a wolf-skin in a passage that is unconnected to any pastoral themes. Moreover, Naiden (1999: 181–184) argues that Paris' leopard skin should be interpreted in relation to the lion simile used for Menelaus at 3.21–29. The leopard skin, which replaces the living animal, protects the hero against an opponent compared to a lion who is invincible. He points to the leopard simile used for Agenor (21.573–580) in his encounter with Achilles.

¹⁰Janko 1992: 414: "Homer surely knew this story [about Paris' early life], since he at once describes Euphorbos' prowess in *games*, another way in which he resembles Paris." Here Burgess's comment, made in a different context, is apposite: "This reasoning suffers from the circular logic that is often present in the thought of neo-analysts. To reconstruct a pre-Homeric story on the basis of the *Iliad* and then to claim that the reconstructed story influenced the *Iliad* is not sound methodology" (Burgess 1997: 6).

¹¹On Pind. *Paeon* 8a, see Stinton 1990: 57; Gantz 1993: 562.

¹²Huys (1995: 316–319) reviews the different sources on Paris' pastoral childhood.

defeats the Trojans.¹³ From the much more substantial fragments of Euripides' *Alexandros* and its hypothesis, we know that the story of Paris' return to the city, his competition in the funeral games in which he defeated the Trojan noblemen, and his eventual recognition were told. But what form the story took we cannot tell.¹⁴ In addition, two late archaic cups may depict the homecoming of Paris. Both identifications are far from certain and neither cup shows any trace of the funeral games around which the plot of Euripides' play centered.¹⁵

In short, we have no evidence that is earlier than Pindar and Euripides for any episode in Paris' life prior to the Judgement. Stinton, for one, thought that the story of the funeral games was an invention of either Sophocles or Euripides. Gantz, more cautiously, notes that the motif of prophecy and abandonment is old, but concludes that this does not mean it was necessarily associated with Paris at an early date. As I have already mentioned, the story does not appear in Proclus' summary of the *Cypria*, nor is it easy to see where else it might have been told.¹⁶

The story of Paris' judgement of Aphrodite, Athena, and Hera was certainly known in some form in the oral epic tradition, as we can see from the mention of it at *Il.* 24.23–30.¹⁷ Once again, however, we cannot determine what form that story took and what inferences can be made from it about earlier events in Paris' life. Homer uses this story to explain the original cause of Hera's, Athena's, and (rather oddly) Poseidon's hatred of the Trojans. In three lines we are told that Paris insulted the two goddesses by choosing Aphrodite in preference to themselves when they all came to the place where he tended his herds. There is no indication in these lines that Paris is anything other than what he is in the rest of the *Iliad*, a Trojan prince, the son of Priam and Hecuba. Homer's mention of the Judgement does not require that Paris be a full-time shepherd, for Trojan princes are frequently represented tending flocks on Mt Ida.¹⁸ Based on what we have in the *Iliad*, the story that was known to the epic tradition may have consisted simply of the three goddesses presenting themselves to the Trojan prince Paris, who happened at that moment to be tending flocks in the countryside, as was commonplace among Trojan noblemen. The rest of the story, with its motif of exposure, its pastoral elements, and the recognition, may well have grown out of

¹³ Radt 1985: fr. 93; Gantz 1993: 562.

¹⁴ We can determine that Cassandra appeared, that Deiphobus took offense at being defeated by a slave, and that Hecuba, likewise finding this situation intolerable, proposed to her sons that they kill Paris. See Scodel 1980: 20–42; Gantz 1993: 563; Huys 1995: 67–68. Jouan (1966: 135–137) believes the *Cypria* is the source for Euripides' play, but his arguments are not convincing. Both works, he says, involve the plan of Zeus and present Cassandra as a prophet and Paris as enjoying the protection of Aphrodite. These similarities are too general to argue for the dependence of one work upon the other.

¹⁵ See Hampe and Krauskopf 1981: nos. 16, 17.

¹⁶ Stinton 1990: 59; Gantz 1993: 564.

¹⁷ On the Judgement of Paris in the *Iliad*, see Reinhardt 1960; Stinton 1990: 19; Davies 1981.

¹⁸ See Robert 1921: 978, n. 3 for a complete list of Trojan princes who engage in shepherding. Among others Robert lists Aeneas (*Il.* 21.91), Anchises (5.313), and the brothers of Andromache (6.424–425).

this central tableau of the shepherd prince and taken on its final form long after Homer.

Before dismissing altogether the proposal that Euphorbus is a doublet of Paris, we must compare what we are told about Euphorbus in his two scenes with what the *Iliad* in general has to say about Paris. Mühlestein makes much of Euphorbus' athletic prowess and its supposed relationship to Paris' performance at his funeral games. Putting aside the questionable antiquity of this tradition, we might still ask if the areas in which Euphorbus excels bear any relation to what Homer tells us about Paris. Here again, there is no correspondence. Euphorbus is described as excelling in spearcraft, horsemanship, and running. None of these is associated in any distinctive way with Paris. The bow, not the spear, is his weapon of choice on the battlefield.¹⁹ He will use it most famously to kill Achilles. Given this, why would Homer not have had Euphorbus wound Patroclus with an arrow, if his only reason for creating this character was to have him serve as a doublet of Paris? As for horsemanship and swiftness of foot, neither of these characterizes Paris in the *Iliad*.²⁰

Mühlestein finds significance in Euphorbus being killed by Menelaus. The *Iliad*, of course, knows of Menelaus as the enemy of Paris, as is evident in the duel between the two heroes in Book 3. However, in the absence of other ties between Euphorbus and Paris, the fact that they both fight against Menelaus is a weak link. For Menelaus fights against and kills many other Trojans, including Euphorbus' brother Hyperenor (14.515–517).²¹ Moreover, Menelaus does not kill Paris, whereas he does kill Euphorbus. Therefore, the supposed parallel between the two Trojans would surely have been stronger if Euphorbus managed to avoid being killed by Menelaus, as Paris did in Book 3. Mühlestein finds further significance in the comparison of Euphorbus' hair to that of the Graces. This is apparently based on Paris' status as Aphrodite's favourite. But hair being sullied in the dust at a warrior's death is a typical motif that occurs a number of times in the *Iliad*.²²

In the absence of any evidence that Homer or the epic tradition knew of the story of Paris' exposure, his youth as a shepherd, and his eventual reunion with his family on the occasion of his funeral games, the claim that Euphorbus is modelled on Paris has no force. If we base this argument on what we know from the *Iliad* (and what we know about the Epic Cycle), the only points of comparison

¹⁹In the *Iliad*, he uses his bow to wound Diomedes, Machaon, and Eurypylus (11.373–378, 504–507, 579–583), and to kill Euchenor (13.660–672) and one of Nestor's horses (8.80–84). At 15.341–342, he kills Deïochos with a spear.

²⁰According to the hypothesis to Euripides' *Alexandros*, the events in which Paris was victorious were the pentathlon, boxing, and running. This is the only reference to Paris as a runner; see Scodel 1980: 32. Virgil refers to Paris' skill as a boxer (*Aen.* 5.370).

²¹Menelaus kills or wounds a number of Trojans in addition to these two sons of Panthoös; see 5.49–51, 578–579; 13.593–595, 615–617; 15.540–543; 16.311–312; 17.575–579.

²²Fenik (1968: 163) offers a complete list of all the instances of this motif; see further M. Edwards 1991: 68.

that remain are the role of Menelaus as Euphorbus' slayer and the sully of his hair in the dust. These points are simply too tenuous to argue for an association between the two Trojan heroes. While silence does not necessarily mean the absence of a tradition, the fact remains that Homer never refers to any of the stories of Paris' life that we know from later sources. The only exception may be his one reference to the Judgement. But, as I have argued, this story does not require as background the story of exposure and rescue. In sum, it is remarkable to conclude that, though Homer never refers to the early life of Paris when he could easily do so, he should, with conscious intent, base a character on Paris and make the basis of that comparison not what he says about Paris in the *Iliad*, but what he chooses to omit (assuming he knew it) and is only attested in much later sources.

DOUBLETS

In what follows, I will argue that Homer consciously models Euphorbus after one of the characters of the *Iliad* and that, as Mühlestein had argued, his purpose in doing so is to anticipate the death of Achilles in the scene of Patroclus' death. I will argue, however, that Euphorbus is a doublet of Achilles, not Paris, and that Homer's purpose is to allow us to see simultaneously Achilles' responsibility for the death of Patroclus and the suicidal quality of Achilles' vengeance for Patroclus' death. When Achilles kills Hector he knows that he ensures his own death shortly thereafter. Achilles understands the sequence of events from Patroclus' death, to Hector's, to his own, and, most importantly, his role in all three. For when his mother tells him that he is destined to die soon after Hector he responds: αὐτίκα τεθναίην, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρ' ἐμὲλλον ἐταίρω / κτεινομένω ἐπαμῦναι ("May I die at once, since I was not there to defend my companion when he was killed," 18.98–99). By modelling Euphorbus on Achilles and then having him wound Patroclus, who also functions as a doublet of Achilles, we are presented with a picture of Achilles' self-willed death. Homer will present us with this same picture again at the death of Hector when Achilles slays Hector who, because of the armour that he wears, is visually indistinguishable from Achilles himself.

Central to my argument is the phenomenon of character doublets and a concentration of such doublets around the figure of Achilles. Regular use of doublets was one of the ways in which oral poets built up narrative structures.²³ Doublets can consist simply of two characters who share similar personality traits or who engage in similar actions. Fenik calls the former "person" doublets and the latter "motif" or "action" doublets, and acknowledges that the two categories often

²³ Most of the work on doublets has been done by Bernard Fenik, who has studied this feature of oral poetic composition in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as well as in the Epic Cycle. See Fenik 1964: 28–40 (for the Epic Cycle); 1968: 148–154 (for the *Iliad*, and Achilles in particular); and 1974: 133–232, esp. 172–207 (for the *Odyssey*). See also Russo, Fernandez-Galiano, and Heubeck 1992: 27–28.

overlap.²⁴ Both kinds of doublets can serve as temporal markers in the progression of the narrative and as focal points for the recapitulation and development of important themes. For example, in the *Odyssey*, the doublets Melanthius and Melanthe each rebuke Odysseus on two separate occasions. Each time, a subsidiary aspect of one of the poem's most important themes is developed: how the *hybris* of the suitors has infected even some of the household slaves. But these four scenes of reproach are also structurally important, for they are used as chronological markers in the narrative. Melanthius attacks Odysseus at the beginning of his first day in the palace. Melanthe's first attack takes place at the end of the first day. Her second attack is placed at the beginning of the first night in the palace, and Melanthius' second attack at the beginning of the second day.²⁵ In this way, the doublets themselves serve a double function: they are used to organize a lengthy and complex narrative; at the same time, they underline important themes in the development of the narrative. Numerous character doublets like Melanthius and Melanthe occur in the *Odyssey*, with each pair playing a role in the structure and development of the narrative. In addition to Melanthius and Melanthe, we find Mentos and Mentor, Demodocus and Phemius, Circe and Calypso, the Cyclopes and the Laestrygonians, Eumaeus and Philoitus, Eurycleia and Eurynome, Amphinomus and Leodes, and Antinoös and Eurymachus.²⁶

Fenik argues that such widespread use of doublets to structure narrative and develop themes is one of the distinguishing features of the *Odyssey*.²⁷ But their presence is not confined to this poem. There is evidence to suggest that they were used in at least some parts of the Epic Cycle. The conflict between Memnon and Achilles in the *Aethiopis* may have made significant use of character doubling. The poem contained two divine mothers, Eos and Thetis, and their heroic sons. Each son had a set of armour made by Hephaestus. There was also a scene in which the fates of Achilles and Memnon were weighed in the balance in the presence of their mothers. In the end, both sons were granted immortality.²⁸ In addition, several of the Trojan allies who arrive in the last days of the war may have been conceived as doublets of earlier characters. The conflict between Eurypylus and Neoptolemus, which was told in the *Little Iliad*, may have been a doublet of the contest between Memnon and Achilles.²⁹ Based on what we know from the

²⁴ Fenik 1974: 142.

²⁵ Fenik 1974: 174–180.

²⁶ "None of the doublet pairs, and no member within any single pair, is otiose. To argue that the poet *could* have gotten along with one member in each case is perhaps true but irrelevant. What is important is that each pair, and each member within each pair, is functional and adds something to the story" (Fenik 1974: 206). For a brief but typical illustration of Fenik's thesis, see his analysis of the doublets Eurycleia and Eurynome (Fenik 1974: 189–192).

²⁷ Of the *Odyssey*'s character doublets Fenik says that they are "one of the most thorough-going, deeply-rooted stylistic idiosyncrasies of the poem" (Fenik 1974: 172).

²⁸ Reinhardt 1961: 14–16; Fenik 1974: 206–207; and most recently Burgess 1997: 2–3, 7.

²⁹ Fenik 1964: 28–40; Davies 1989: 67.

Odyssey and some limited evidence from the Epic Cycle, doublets appear to have been one of the many compositional tools available to the oral poet.

However, pervasive use of doublets is not found in the *Iliad*. This poem stresses individuality of character, as can be seen from even a brief glance. Diomedes and Sthenelus emerge as individually characterized, as do Idomeneus and Meriones—both cases where the poet could have made use of the same kind of doubling of a major character with a less important one that we see in the *Odyssey* with Eumaeus and Philoitiis, for example, or Eurycleia and Eurynome. Agamemnon and Menelaus, as well as Hector and Paris, are likewise individually characterized, and often even contrasted with one another. Both pairs are examples where doubling such as we see in the *Odyssey* could have been easily achieved. We have two pairs of brothers, each playing similar roles, in which one brother in each pair is less important in the narrative. In all these cases, uniqueness of character, even to the point of opposition, not character doubling, is the poet's preferred route.

None the less, what Fenik has established is that the use of doublets is a tool available to the oral poet, a tool with specific functions that will at times be useful. Therefore, we should expect that, in the *Iliad*, the poet will also from time to time make use of this tool. In particular, Homer uses doublets to keep in his audience's mind his central character during Achilles' long absences from the narrative. Character doubling allows for the story of the hero's withdrawal and its disastrous consequences to be developed without the frequent intrusion of the withdrawn hero into the main narrative. To this end, Diomedes is often cited as a doublet of Achilles in the fighting in the first half of the poem.³⁰ In Book 16, Patroclus functions as a doublet of Achilles in the extended scene of his death. Other minor characters also function as Achilles-doublets, and I will review these presently.

It goes without saying that we must be cautious in seeing one character as a doublet of another, as I have just argued in the case of Mühlestein's Euphorbus/Paris hypothesis. This is especially so when we are dealing with minor characters or ones who make only a single appearance. Such characters may well be *ad hoc* inventions and their biographies composed of standard motifs such as the pathos of a death far away from one's homeland or the inability of the dead warrior to repay his aging parents for rearing him. Even such minor characters can, however, be used as doublets. Fenik argues that the key to identifying any character as a doublet for another is the cumulative presence of personality traits, motifs, and/or action sequences for one character that the poet also uses for another character or are known to be attached to that character in the epic tradition.³¹ This is the case for major characters like Diomedes and Patroclus, where it is the presence of significant motifs and action sequences, such as fire

³⁰ See Schoeck 1961: 75–80; Erbse 1961: *passim*; Nagy 1979: 30–31; Mueller 1984: 97–98; Kullmann 1984: 312–315; Burgess 1995: 239, n. 87.

³¹ Fenik 1968: 148–152.

flashing above the hero's head or the attack on the walls of Troy, that allow us to argue for their role as doublets. If we can point to an action sequence or motif that plays a significant role in the narrative, then we have a basis for arguing that characters are being employed as doublets.³² In the case of Achilles and the characters who function as his doublets, common motifs and action sequences are used in a thematically significant manner to anticipate Achilles' death. All doublets of Achilles in the *Iliad* function to give us a proleptic glimpse of the hero's death. For, in this poem, the death of Achilles, though not part of the narrative itself, has been significant from the beginning and becomes ever more important as the story progresses, particularly after the death of Patroclus.³³

Patroclus' death functions in part as an anticipation of Achilles' own death. Important features of the death of Achilles are duplicated in the death of Patroclus. Both men are killed attacking Troy, while driving the Trojans back toward their city. Both men are killed at the walls of Troy. Apollo is instrumental in the death of both men.³⁴ Patroclus' most important function both as a doublet of Achilles and as a character in his own right is to anticipate Achilles' death. For, in taking vengeance for Patroclus' death by slaying Hector, Achilles knows that he ensures his own death in the near future (*Il.* 18.95–96).³⁵ Thus, to have the death of Achilles explicitly anticipated in the scene of Patroclus' death is a masterly stroke. One death leads to the other; therefore, both are the same and are depicted simultaneously.

As stated earlier, Diomedes also functions as a doublet of Achilles; therefore, we should expect here as well to find an anticipation of Achilles' death as part of this doubling. In a famous passage at 11.369–378, Paris wounds Diomedes in the foot with an arrow. Many scholars have seen this as a reference to the death of Achilles, pointing to the role of Paris, his weapon, and the location of the wound as parallels.³⁶ No one else in the *Iliad* receives a wound in the foot. When the attacker turns out to be Paris using his bow, the cumulative presence of several motifs known to be attached to the death of Achilles points to Diomedes' role

³² This is the essence of Fenik's examination of the character doublets we see among Odysseus' servants. Two groups of good servants (Eumaeus/Philoitius and Eurycleia/Eurynome) and one group of bad (Melanthius/Melantho) give the poet ample opportunity for different kinds of narrative sequences that "emphasize the overriding moral issues of the poem such as punishment of hybris and the role of piety in human affairs" (Fenik 1974: 179).

³³ References to Achilles' death come as early as Book 1 (415–418), and continue throughout the poem (9.410–416; 18.95–96; 19.408–417; 21.106–113; 22.358–360).

³⁴ On the question of the correspondence between the deaths of Achilles and Patroclus, see most recently Burgess 1997: 14–16, with bibliography.

³⁵ On this sequence of deaths, see Thalmann 1984: 50–51; Taplin 1992: 186–188, 243.

³⁶ Von der Mühl 1952: 195–196; Erbse 1961: 175–176; Kakridis 1961: 293, n. 1; Fenik 1968: 94–95, 234; Heubeck 1974: 46. On the precise location of the leg wound in Achilles' case, see Burgess 1995: 234–235. Fenik and Erbse urge some caution, noting that the scene of Diomedes' wounding in 11 has a number of similarities with the scene in 5 where he is wounded by Pandarus (5.95–100). Nonetheless Fenik concludes that "the detail of the wound in the foot . . . remains as an important link."

here as a doublet of Achilles whose function, like that of Patroclus, is to anticipate Achilles' own death by recreating the circumstances of that death. In both cases, this re-creation also serves as the climax to each warrior's role in the narrative. For when Diomedes is wounded in Book 11, his dominance of the battlefield, which began in Book 5, comes to an end. His wound removes him from the fighting for the rest of the poem. He may not die of his wound, or as a result of his function as a doublet of Achilles, but his role in the narrative is finished.

EUCHENOR AND HIPPOTHOUS

I turn now to an examination of two minor characters who function as doublets of Achilles, Euchenor and Hippothous. Inasmuch as they are characters who appear only briefly, they have more in common with Euphorbus than do Diomedes and Patroclus. Their scenes consist of little more than a brief biography and an account of how they were slain. Euphorbus, of course, has a somewhat larger role to play, but can by no means be said to be comparable in importance to any of the poem's principal warriors. The brief appearances of Euchenor, Hippothous, and Euphorbus all contain specific motifs that connect them with Achilles, and particularly with Achilles' death.

In Book 13, Paris kills Euchenor, the rich son of the Corinthian seer, Polyidos, who had foretold his son's fate to him before he came to Troy (13.663–670):

ἦν δέ τις Εὐχίνωρ, Πολυίδου μάντιος υἱός,
 ἀφνειός τ' ἀγαθός τε, Κορινθόθι οἰκία ναίων,
 ὅς ῥ' εὖ εἰδὼς κῆρ' ὀλοὴν ἐπὶ νηὶς ἔβαινε·
 πολλάκι γάρ οἱ ἔειπε γέρων ἀγαθὸς Πολυίδος
 νοῦσφ' ὕπ' ἀργαλέῃ φθίσθαι οἷς ἐν μεγάροισιν,
 ἦ μετ' Ἀχαιῶν νηυσὶν ὑπὸ Τρώεσσι δαμῆναι·
 τῷ ῥ' ἅμα τ' ἀργαλέην θωὴν ἀλέεινεν Ἀχαιῶν
 νοῦσόν τε στυγερήν, ἵνα μὴ πάθοι ἄλγεα θυμῷ

There was a man, Euchenor, the son of the prophet Polyidos, a rich and good man who dwelt in Corinth. He boarded his ship knowing full well of his death. For often the old man, good Polyidos, used to say to him that he would perish in his own halls of a grievous illness or that by the Achaeans' ships he would be killed at the hands of the Trojans. Therefore, he avoided both the Achaeans' troublesome penalty and hateful sickness, so that his spirit would not suffer distress.

Euchenor's fate is reminiscent of the fate that Achilles' mother prophesied for him. Both men possess a double destiny in which different lives are available to them, depending on whether or not they participate in the Trojan war. In Book 9 (410–416), Achilles reports that Thetis has told him he possesses a twofold destiny: he can fight at Troy, die young, and achieve everlasting fame, or he can return to Phthia where he will live a long life, but be forgotten in death. Such a double destiny is remarkable and sets Achilles apart from his fellow warriors. He, unlike them, has knowledge of his fate and a role to play in bringing it about.

When Achilles chooses, in the end, to remain and fight at Troy, he knows that his decision will result in his death; for him, there is no hope of a distinguished career at Troy and seeing his homeland again. Achilles' double destiny and his eventual choice are another way in which Homer portrays Achilles' role in bringing about his own death. Therefore, when we meet another warrior who also possesses this rare double destiny, we should at least investigate the possible link with Achilles.

That Euchenor possesses a twofold fate involving a choice between an early death and an inglorious one, coupled with the fact that he is killed by Paris, suggests that he serves as a doublet of Achilles, and that his purpose is to remind the audience that Achilles will die at Troy at the hands of Paris after having made a similar choice. Aristarchus certainly thought so, and the majority of contemporary scholars have agreed.³⁷

The minor Trojan warrior, Hippothous, like Euchenor, appears only once and only to be killed (17.288–303):

Ἦτοι τὸν [sc. Patroclus] Λήθοιο Πελασγοῦ φαίδιμος υἱός,
 Ἴπποθοός, ποδὸς ἔλκε κατὰ κρατερὴν ὕσμινην,
 δησάμενος τελαμῶνι παρὰ σφυρὸν ἀμφὶ τένοντα,
 Ἔκτορι καὶ Τρώεσσι χαριζόμενος· τάχα δ' αὐτῷ
 ἦλθε κακόν, τό οἱ οὐ τις ἐρύκακεν ἱεμένων περ.
 τὸν δ' υἱὸς Τελαμῶνος ἐπαΐξας δι' ὀμίλου
 πλῆξ' αὐτοσχεδίην κυνέης διὰ χαλκοπαρήου·
 ἦρικε δ' ἵπποδάσεια κόρυς περὶ δουρὸς ἀκωκῆ,
 πληγεῖς ἔγχεϊ τε μεγάλῳ καὶ χειρὶ παχείῃ,
 ἐγκέφαλος δὲ παρ' αὐλὸν ἀνέδραμεν ἐξ ὠτειλῆς
 αἵματόεις· τοῦ δ' αὖθις λύθη μένος, ἐκ δ' ἄρα χειρῶν
 Πατρόκλοιο πόδα μεγάλῃτορος ἦκε χαμάζε
 κείσθαι· ὁ δ' ἄγχ' αὐτοῖο πέσσε πρηνῆς ἐπὶ νεκρῷ,
 τῇλ' ἀπὸ Λαρίσης ἐριβόλακος, οὐδὲ τοκεῦσι
 θρέπτρα φίλοις ἀπέδωκε, μινυνθάδιος δέ οἱ αἰὼν
 ἔπλεθ' ὑπ' Αἴαντος μεγαθύμου δουρὶ δαμέντι.

Hippothoös, the shining son of Pelasgian Lethos, tried to drag [Patroclus] by the foot through the strong combat, having bound him with the shield strap around the ankle tendons, and finding favour in the eyes of Hector and the Trojans. But quickly an evil came upon him, which no one, despite his eagerness, could ward off. The son of Telamon, rushing through the encounter, struck him at close quarters through the bronze-cheeked helmet. The horse-crested helm shattered around the spear point, struck as it was by a

³⁷ For Aristarchus, see the A scholia at 13.663 (Erbse 1974: 526): δισσᾶς εἰμαρμένας ὑποτίθεται τοῦ Εὐχηνόρος, καθάπερ καὶ ἐπ' Ἀχιλλέως, “διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν” ([Homer] proposes two destinies for Euchenor, just as also for Achilles: ‘that I carry two sorts of fate’ [= *Il.* 9.411]). See also Strasburger 1954: 75–76; Erbse 1961: 174–175; Michel 1971: 103–104; Janko 1992: 127–128. Fenik offers the most extended analysis of the various motifs in the brief account of Euchenor's death. He concludes that, even though Euchenor's biography contains motifs that are not shared with Achilles, it is the presence here of “familiar details in combination [that] make[s] him into a rather close doublet of Achilles” (Fenik 1968: 148).

great spear and a powerful hand. The brain ran out from the wound around the socket, full of blood. And there his spirit was released; he let fall from his hands the foot of great-hearted Patroclus to lie on the ground. He fell over him, face down on the corpse, far from fertile Larisa. He could not pay back to his beloved parents the debt of his rearing; his life was short-lived, subdued beneath the spear of great-hearted Ajax.

Hippothous is a figure of some importance to neo-analytical scholars who use him as another proof in their efforts to demonstrate the dependence of the *Iliad* on the lost *Aethiopis*. For Hippothous is killed by Ajax as he attempts to tie his shield strap around Patroclus' ankle so that he can drag off the corpse. Neo-analysts see this detail as a reference to the death of Glaucus who is also slain by Ajax while trying to drag off Achilles' corpse with his shield strap.³⁸ The attempt to drag the corpse using one's shield strap ties the two scenes together, especially as this detail occurs nowhere else in the *Iliad*. Therefore, this scene may be intended as another allusion to the death of Achilles, with Hippothous functioning as a doublet of Glaucus.

Recently, however, Robert Rabel has argued the case for Hippothous as an Achilles-doublet, based on the specific details that make up the account of his death. Hippothous and Achilles both die far from their homeland; both their deaths result in suffering for their parents; both heroes are said to have tragically brief lives.³⁹ Death far from home and the consequent suffering of parents are frequently used motifs in the descriptions of death on the *Iliad*'s battlefield. However, when the two motifs are found together and combined with the rarely used adjective *μινυνθάδιος*, Hippothous begins to look different from the many battlefield dead.⁴⁰ Cumulatively, the presence of three elements in the biography of Hippothous that are also present in the characterization of Achilles in the *Iliad* points to a conscious deployment of this minor character as an Achilles-doublet.⁴¹ When we add to this the specific detail of the dragging of the corpse with the shield strap—a detail that may have been attached to the death of Achilles in the epic tradition—we have a case for not only an Achilles-doublet, but one who, like those already examined, serves as a doublet for the purpose of

³⁸ See Rabel 1991: 130, n. 23 for bibliography, to which add Fenik 1968: 233.

³⁹ Rabel 1991: 129–130.

⁴⁰ The adjective *μινυνθάδιος* is rare and applied only to Hippothous (17.302), Achilles (1.352), and Lykaon (21.84).

⁴¹ Rabel sums up particularly well the difficulty of attaching thematic importance to repeated elements in type scenes and recurring narrative sequences: "Oral poetry is in many ways rigidly schematic, so that even the best singers will likely manifest the natural tendency to attach the same kind of song to different characters. In Homer's hands, however, the demands of oral technique, far from intruding as external constraints upon the possibilities of plot development, seem artfully and almost effortlessly subordinated to poetic intention In this regard, minor episodes and typical scenes . . . often provide instructive parallels to the major events of the poem; they act, in other words, as interpretive funnels that concentrate major themes and channel the flow of the narrative along fixed, repetitive courses. Through theme and image, the story of Hippothous in many ways encapsulates the life and death of Achilles" (Rabel 1991: 127).

giving us a proleptic glimpse of the great hero's death. As with Euchenor, it is the combination of motifs associated with the death of Achilles that allows for Hippothous' identification as a doublet of Achilles.

EUPHORBUS AND ACHILLES

Doublets of Achilles, then, occur in the *Iliad* with some frequency and fulfil a consistent and thematically important function. Euphorbus too belongs to this group. His biography sets him up as an Achilles-doublet and Homer's purpose in doing so is to create another proleptic enactment of Achilles' death.⁴² When Euphorbus is introduced, the biographical details that describe him point to his role as a doublet of Achilles. Euphorbus surpasses all men his age in spearcraft, horsemanship, and swiftness of foot. His superiority is affirmed by the statement that he had recently brought down twenty men from their chariots, in spite of having joined the war effort only recently (16.808–811). After this introduction, Euphorbus hurls his spear and strikes Patroclus. Before he disappears back into the crowd, Euphorbus snatches his spear from between Patroclus' shoulder blades. This spear is an ash spear (16.814). The description of Euphorbus' areas of expertise, especially his swiftness of foot and skill in horsemanship, and his use of an ash spear point to his role as an Achilles-doublet.

Swiftness of foot, in the *Iliad*, is overwhelmingly associated with Achilles. To give but a few examples, the epithet πόδας ὠκύς is used of Achilles thirty-one times; Iris, the messenger goddess, receives this epithet nine times; none of Achilles' heroic peers ever receives it. ποδάρκης δῖος is unique to Achilles and used of him twenty-one times. He is also ποδώκεος eleven times.⁴³ Altogether in the *Iliad*, Achilles receives epithets denoting swiftness of foot more than seventy times. Only four other heroes receive such epithets, all together fewer than twenty times.⁴⁴ Even though swiftness is one of Achilles' distinguishing characteristics,

⁴²This idea was briefly proposed by Steven Lowenstam, as part of a larger study of typological elements in the scene of Patroclus' death (Lowenstam 1981: 122–124). As far as I know, it has not met with acceptance. In what follows, I take up and develop Lowenstam's idea.

⁴³Only Dolon receives this epithet and only once (10.316). Meriones is twice described as swift of foot (πόδας ταχύ, 13.249; καρπαλίμοισι πόδεσσι, 16.342). Aeneas and Antilochus each receive the epithet πόδας ταχύ once (13.482, 18.2). Oelian Ajax receives the epithet ταχύς eleven times (2.527; 10.110, 175; 13.66, 701; 14.442, 520; 17.256; 23.473, 488, 754).

⁴⁴On the Iliadic characterization of Achilles through epithets denoting swiftness of foot, see Whallon 1969: 14–17; Nagy 1979: 326–327; A. Edwards 1985: 15–16; Dunkle 1997. Edwards argues that the quality expressed in the swiftness epithets is consistent with the characterization of Achilles as hot-headed and reckless. He also sees these epithets as tied to Achilles' early death, for ὠκύμορος, used exclusively of Achilles, is yet another epithet of swiftness and refers to Achilles' fast approaching death (1985: 16). Dunkle argues that the ὠκύς epithets denote super-human swiftness in Achilles. These epithets are used of a wide variety of things (ships, arrows, deer, birds, rivers, and the goddess Iris) capable of great speed, but Achilles is the only human for whom they are used. This, argues Dunkle (227, n. 3), denotes that Achilles possesses "a special kind of speed that surpasses normal human capability."

there need not necessarily always be an association with Achilles on those few occasions when other heroes in the *Iliad* are described as swift. How then can we say that Euphorbus is like Achilles because of the shared quality of swiftness? Partly the answer to this is cumulative; that is to say that Euphorbus' swiftness resonates most fully when all the facts about him are taken together. As Fenik argued for Euchenor, it is the combination of familiar motifs that points to his function as a doublet of Achilles. But there is more to it. Where other heroes are described as being swift, only two, besides Achilles, are identified as the swiftest of all men in their age group. Achilles is the fastest man at Troy, according to Idomeneus at 13.324–325.⁴⁵ Antilochus is also singled out in this way, when he is said to be the fastest of all the young men (23.756). Euphorbus, like them, is not only swift, but the swiftest among all his peers. As if to underline this, he is also the son of Panthous ("all-swift"). What links Euphorbus to Achilles is not merely his swiftness but his superlative swiftness.

Euphorbus is also singled out for his horsemanship. This is another area in which Achilles surpasses all others at Troy. He possesses two divine horses and, as he himself boasts, can easily outperform any other charioteer in the army (23.274–276).⁴⁶ Euphorbus' skill with the spear is also noted. This is so generalized a skill among the *Iliad*'s warriors that one cannot make a case for character doubling based on it. However, Homer adds a specific and significant detail about Euphorbus' spear, for he wounds Patroclus with an ash spear, a δόρυ μείλιον (16.814). Richard Shannon has shown some time ago that the ash spear is closely associated with Achilles and, in particular, his mortality.⁴⁷ His weapon is consistently and repeatedly referred to as an ash spear.⁴⁸ A small number of heroes use ash spears.⁴⁹ Only with Achilles, however, is the designation consistent, for only with Achilles is the use of an ash spear important in the development of the narrative.

Achilles' Pelian ash spear is singled out first in Patroclus' arming scene, where it is the one piece of Achilles' armour that Patroclus did not take, since no one but Achilles could wield it. When Achilles himself arms, this ash spear is the one piece of his original panoply that remains for him. He uses his ash spear only once with success in the three books of fighting that follow. The ash spear, it seems, is

⁴⁵ See also Antilochus' remarks about Achilles' swiftness at 23.790.

⁴⁶ Eumelus has the best horses in the catalogue in Book 2, but this is to be understood only in the absence of Achilles and his superior horses. Dunkle (1997: 229) also makes the point that the prominence of the chariot race, followed in importance by the foot race, in the funeral games of Book 23 may be a reflection of Achilles' skill in these two areas.

⁴⁷ Shannon 1975: 31–86; Nagy 1979: 158–159.

⁴⁸ μέλιη, for example, is used to mean "ash spear" eleven times in the *Iliad* (twice it refers to ash trees). On ten of these occasions it refers to Achilles' ash spear; see Shannon 1975: 32.

⁴⁹ Ash spears are used on seven occasions by someone other than Achilles: Tlepolemus (5.655); Agamemnon (6.65); Menelaus (13.597); Euphorbus (16.814); Ajax (16.114); Aeneas (20.272); Hector (22.293).

reserved for Hector. For he is the only hero in the poem killed with this weapon.⁵⁰ The one piece of Achilles' armour that Patroclus did not take is the very weapon that Achilles uses in avenging his friend's death. Therefore, when Euphorbus wounds Patroclus with a rarely seen ash spear, after having been told not long before that Patroclus could not himself wield an ash spear, we are surely meant to see the significance.⁵¹ And the significance is that Euphorbus functions in this scene as an Achilles-doublet. Euphorbus, known for his swiftness of foot, his horsemanship, and wounding Patroclus with an ash spear, emerges as a doublet of Achilles.

Euphorbus plays a crucial role in the death of Patroclus, for this scene must fulfil two different and important functions. First and foremost, the death of Patroclus stands as the pivotal event of the *Iliad*, the event that will end Achilles' withdrawal and bring him back into the battle. Achilles will kill Hector because Hector killed Patroclus. But secondly, the death of Patroclus must also foreshadow the death of Achilles. This is where Euphorbus steps in, both literally and symbolically.

Euphorbus wounds Patroclus, thus paving the way for Hector's fatal blow. But more importantly, Euphorbus, as a doublet of Achilles, steps forward with his ash spear and stabs Patroclus, who also functions as a doublet of Achilles. Thus we have a scene in which Achilles plays a role in killing himself. Is this far-fetched? In fact, the motif of Achilles' death and the role he plays in bringing it about—still unconscious at the death of Patroclus, but of which he is fully aware when he kills Hector—are central to understanding both of these crucial points in the narrative. When we look at the death of Hector, once again we have Achilles playing a role in his own death when he uses his ash spear to kill Hector. Here Homer stresses the suicidal element in the unique situation of Achilles killing the man who is wearing his armour and looking for all the world just like him. For this brief moment, at his death, Hector too becomes a doublet of Achilles. When we see Hector dying, we also see Achilles dying. Achilles knows this and Homer allows his audience to imagine this through what must surely have been a unique tableau in traditional epic poetry—two warriors fighting, both wearing famous, divinely wrought armour, but both panoplies belonging originally to only one of the two men. It is important to stress how unusual this scene is. Under normal circumstances, this could never happen. For warriors obtain their enemies' armour by stripping it from their corpses. When such armour is worn it serves as a symbol of that warrior's *arete*. His superiority in having killed his opponent is manifest in his possession of the armour. In other words, to have a warrior wearing his

⁵⁰ Achilles hurls it on two other occasions, at Aeneas (20.273–283) and at Asteropaios (21.169–172); both times he misses.

⁵¹ That significance is further underlined by Euphorbus' epithet *ἑυμμελής* (17.9 and 59; at 17.23 it is used in the plural to describe the sons of Panthous collectively). He is the only hero in the poem who receives this epithet after Achilles' ash spear makes its appearance in Patroclus' arming scene. This epithet is rare and used only of Priam in a formulaic line (4.47, 165; 6.449). See Shannon 1975: 68.

enemy's armour is normally a sign that he has killed his enemy. Symbolically Hector has done this. When he killed Patroclus, he killed Achilles. That he wears Achilles' armour is the proof. And when Achilles kills Hector, who is clad in Achilles' armour, he kills himself. This is brought out most forcefully by the fact that Achilles uses the one piece of his original armour that he still has to kill Hector. Only when Achilles thrusts into Hector's body the Pelian ash spear does Hector possess all of Achilles' armour. Thus, at the moment of his death, Hector becomes, for an instant, a complete doublet of Achilles, and more precisely, ὠκύμορος Achilles. In this way, the armour serves as a visual symbol that links together all three deaths and ultimately merges them into one. For the deaths of Patroclus and Hector are also the death of Achilles. The armour links the two scenes together, and, in the scene of Hector's death, underlines the suicidal aspects of Achilles' slaying of Hector.

Homer has already anticipated Achilles' role in his own death in the episode of Patroclus' death. When Euphorbus steps forward to inflict the first wound, we see one doublet of Achilles striking another. This powerful motif—the anticipation and symbolic enactment of Achilles' death—reaches its fulfilment and conclusion when Achilles kills Hector who is at that moment indistinguishable in appearance from himself. It is through the use of character doublets that Homer realizes this motif, as each of the poem's Achilles-doublets contains an allusion to the death of Achilles. It is present in the wound that removes Diomedes from the fighting. We are reminded of it in the deaths of otherwise unknown warriors like Euchenor and Hippothous. But it is worked out most fully in the scenes of Patroclus' and Hector's deaths, where the motif is expanded to emphasize Achilles' role in bringing about his own death. In the former, we see a doublet of Achilles wounding another doublet of Achilles. In the latter, we see Achilles killing a doublet of himself. In this way, Euphorbus plays a role in the development of one of the poem's most important motifs.

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