INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
Graduate School of Arts and Sciences

THESIS ACCEPTANCE CERTIFICATE

The undersigned, appointed by the

Division

Department of Classics

Committee

have examined a thesis entitled

Homeric Variations on a Lament by Briseis

presented by

Casey Lynn Due

candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy and hereby certify that it is worthy of acceptance.

Signature .....
Gloria Ferrari Pinney
Typed name .....

Signature .....
Albert Henrichs
Typed name .....

Signature .....
Gregory Nagy
Typed name .....

Signature .....

Typed name .....

Date May 17, 2001

Homeric Variations on a Lament by Briseis

A thesis presented

by

Casey Lynn Dué

to

The Department of Classics

in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
in the subject of
Classical Philology

Harvard University
Cambridge, Massachusetts

May, 2001

UMI Number: 3011361

Bell & Howell Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

Dissertation Director: Gregory Nagy Dissertation Author: Casey Dué

Homeric Variations on a Lament by Briseis

This dissertation examines the figure of Briseis in the *Iliad* as an example of the traditional artistry enabled by a highly complex and self contained oral poetic system. Through a close reading of Homeric passages pertaining to Briseis I show how the *Iliad* refers to expanded and alternative traditions about Briseis even while asserting its own version of her story. Reconstructing the force of Briseis' character from a diachronic perspective, I argue that in some Aeolic epic traditions Briseis once had a story that was well known, involving the sack of her city and capture by Achilles.

Briseis' lament for Patroclus in *Iliad* 19 hints at the role once had in the larger epic tradition. It seems likely that there were at least two variations on her story, because of the two-fold pattern she fulfills in ancient references. In one variation she is a wife whose husband is killed by Achilles in the sack of his city; in another she is an unmarried girl, the daughter of a king, whose father is killed when Achilles captures her town. Our *Iliad* alludes to multiple variations on these two basic themes.

Briseis' lament is compressed retelling of her life story that also maintains a meaningful relationship with the *Iliad* as a whole. A close analysis of Briseis' song reveals a complex web of meaning through substitution as the poetry connects Briseis with the other women of the *Iliad*, including Chryseis, Helen, and Andromache. I analyze both these timeless substitutions as well as the personal associations in the figure of Briseis, in order to demonstrate her powerful role in the structure and poetics of the *Iliad*.

I rely on a variety of sources, including internal evidence of the *Iliad*, the scholia to the *Iliad*, the extant fragments of the Epic Cycle and the summaries of Proclus, later fictional accounts of the Trojan War, and representations on vases. Throughout, I use the figure of Briseis as an example of the empirical reality of the system demonstrated by Milman Parry and Albert Lord in their studies of Homer as traditional oral poetry.

Acknowledgements

I wish to thank the following people, who have inspired, aided, and abetted me in this work: Lenny Muellner, who first suggested that I think about Briseis; my readers Gloria Ferrari and Albert Henrichs, whose precision and clarity of thought both inspired me and guided me through the rough spots; and my director and mentor, Gregory Nagy, whose influence and vision will, I trust, be obvious in the following pages.

I also wish to thank my parents, Paul and Genny Dué, my sisters, Domigne, Monique, and Celeste, my husband Ryan Hackney, and my friend and colleague Mary Ebbott, for their devoted support and encouragement.

Contents

Introduction: Variations on Briseis	1
Briseis and the Multiformity of the *Iliad*	27
Prize	50
Girl	64
Wife	87
Conclusion: Tradition and Innovation	106
Afterward: Elegizing Briseis in Augustan Rome	116
Appendix: Selected Ancient Literary References to Briseis	148
Abbreviations	152
Bibliography	153

Introduction: Variations on Briseis

In his 1960 book *The Singer of Tales*, Albert Lord argues that Homeric poetry is defined by its *traditionality*: any given audience on any given occasion of performance knew the story and the characters already. There would have been nothing about the story, the language, the rhythm of the song, or the characters that was new. The poet of any given performance might be particularly skilled at telling the tale. But as Lord points out, what is good about Homeric poetry is not newness:

> The singer's mode of composition is dictated by the demands of performance at high speed, and he depends upon inculcated habit and association of sounds, words, phrases, and lines. He does not shrink from the habitual; nor does he either require the fixed for memorization or seek the unusual for its own sake. His oft-used phrases and lines lose something in sharpness, yet many of them must resound with overtones from the dim past whence they came. Were we to train our ears to catch these echoes, we might cease to apply the clichés of another criticism to oral poetry, and thereby become aware of its own riches.[1]

---

* All translations in this dissertation are my own, except where indicated. The names of Greek characters are Latinized, but place names are not.

[1] Lord 1960(= 2000).65. Cf. Parry 1932.12-14 (=Parry 1971.334-335): "One oral poet is better than another not because he has by himself found a more striking way of expressing his own thought but because he has been better able to make use of the tradition... The fame of a singer comes not from quitting the tradition but from putting it to the best use. "For a recent application of this principle see Martin 1993. In a forthcoming work I debate in detail the work of Scodel 1997, who has tried to refute the idea that the audience of Homeric poetry necessarily knew the entire story and characters of any given performance, and suggests that often the composer intends to confuse his audience.

The Singer of Tales demonstrates the process by which a poet in a traditional song culture can compose poetry in performance using techniques, plots, characters, and language that he has inherited from many previous generations of singers.[2] The material and techniques are traditional, but each performance is a new composition - a re-composition, in and for performance.[3] In this dissertation I argue that the very fact that the *Iliad* is "oral traditional" often allows even deeper and more complex levels of meaning than may be found in poetry that is composed in a literate, text-based culture.[4]

The traditionality of Homeric poetry allows the phrases, in the words of Lord, to "resound with overtones from the dim past whence they came." In other words, the traditional themes and phraseology carry with them powerful associations for a traditional audience, the "echoes" of many past performances.[5] Words can resonate within their context, recalling by association countless other

---

[2] For more on the concept song culture see Herington 1985.

[3] See especially Lord 1960.4-5 and 13: "every performance is a separate song; for every performance is unique... The singer of tales is at once the tradition and an individual creator" (4); "Singer, performer, composer, and poet are under different aspects *but at the same time*. Singing, performing, composing are facets of the same act" (13).

[4] Cf. Martin 1993.228: "Thanks to its traditionality and flexibility - the two aspects seen by Parry in the formulaic system - Homeric epic can accomplish characterizing effects that prose fiction cannot bring about."

[5] A traditional audience is composed of members of the song culture within which the song is composed and performed. This traditional audience is not a precisely definable entity in the sense that each performance is a new composition, and depending on the time, place, and occasion of performance the definition of "tradition" changes. What is "tradition" in Lesbos in 600 BC might be unfamiliar if not obscure in Chios in 550 BC. As I discuss elsewhere in this dissertation, references to local and therefore potentially unrecognizable traditions became screened out in the panhellenizing process in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* took shape. See Nagy 1979.7, 115-121; 1990, 52-81, with references *ad loc.*; and 1996b.38-43. On the traditional audience see also Lord 1960.148-157 and Martin 1993.227-228 and 238. On the importance of the connection between composition and reception see Foley 1999 p. 18 and *passim*.

song traditions.[6] Laura Slatkin's *The Power of Thetis*, for example, explores the superficially minor role of Thetis in the *Iliad* and shows how

> allusions, both abbreviated and extended in lengthy digressions, are highly charged and repay scrutiny for the myths whose resonance or "reverberation" they carry into the narrative as a whole, signaling a constellation of themes that establish bearings for the poem as it unfolds and linking it continually to other traditions and paradigms and to a wider mythological terrain.[7]

Slatkin uncovers alternative Hesiodic traditions about the power of Thetis to which the *Iliad* alludes within its own narrative, and shows how an awareness of those myths brings a far greater understanding of Thetis' place in the thematic structure of the *Iliad*.[8]

---

[6] G. Nagy was the first to explore, in terms of oral poetics, the possibility cross-references between epic traditions. Scholars had previously proposed for example that the *Iliad* never referred to the *Odyssey* and vice-versa. Nagy shows that while such cross-references are indeed possible, the references are not to texts but to *traditions*:

> Even if we were to accept for the moment the dubious notion that parts of the Homeric Cycle are drawn from some text that predates our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the fundamental objection remains the same: when we are dealing with traditional poetry of the Homeric (and Hesiodic) compositions, it is not justifiable to claim that a passage in any text can refer to another passage in another text... I will confine myself, then, to examining whether a poem that is composed in a given tradition may refer to other *traditions* of composition. Thus, for example, our *Odyssey* may theoretically refer to traditional themes that are central to the stories of the Cypria-or even to the stories of the *Iliad*, for that matter. But even in that case, such traditional themes would have varied from composition to composition. There may theoretically be as many variations on a theme as there are compositions. Any theme is but a multiform [that is, a variant], and not one of the multiforms may be considered a functional "Urform" (Nagy 1979.42-43 = 1992.317-318).

On cross-referencing between the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* traditions see also Nagy 1990.53-54 note 8; for a textual perspective, see Pucci 1987.240-242. On the concept of traditional referentiality see also Foley 1999.13ff and bibliography at p. 278, note 2.

[7] Slatkin 1991.108. On cross-referencing in myth see Leach 1982.5. and Lang 1983. The term "reverberation" is that of Lang 1983. On the idea of resonance see also Foley 1999.20: "the extra layer of meaning is not the singular creation of a particular event or context, but a traditional harmonic that adds resonance to each of its occurrences."

[8] For another study of the powerful effects of seemingly casual or superficial allusions see G. A. Privitera's 1970 work on Dionysus in Homer. See also Foley 1999.18 on the effect of name and epithet combinations: "'Grey-eyed Athena' and 'wise Penelope' are thus neither brilliant attributions in unrelated situations nor mindless metrical fillers of last resort. Rather they index the characters they name, in all their complexity, not merely in one given situation or even poem but against an enormously larger traditional backdrop."

In this dissertation I explore the character of Briseis in a similar way. Like Slatkin, I hope to show that a better understanding of Briseis enhances our appreciation of central themes, and that by exploring key passages in connection with Briseis we can recover other potentially meaningful traditions to which the *Iliad* refers.

The basic premise on which I base my arguments is that Briseis' role in the *Iliad* is enormously compressed from the standpoint of both the *Iliad* as a whole and the entire tradition of the epic cycle.[9] In the *Iliad* she doesn't even have a name – she is simply the "daughter of Brises."[10] Yet elsewhere there are hints that her name was Hippodameia, and that she was part of another story - or other stories.[11] The *Iliad* is a narrative about the anger of Achilles in the tenth year of the Trojan War. Much earlier as well as much later events are woven into a story that takes place in only a few days time. Even though at 15,000 verses it might take as many as three days to perform, I will argue that the *Iliad* is nevertheless a

---

[9] On the terms compression and expansion see Lord 1960.25-27, 68-98, 99-123.

[10] I don't mean to imply that Briseis was not ever understood to be a name. But like Patroclus, who is referred to in his first appearance in the *Iliad* as simply "the son of Menoitios," Briseis is introduced into the poem referentially by way of her father. A similar phenomenon occurs with Chryseis, whose connection with her father in *Iliad* 1 make a patronymic reference seem very logical at first glance. Neither girl, however, receives another name in the *Iliad*, unlike other women who have both a name and a patronymic. (See Higbie 1995.113 and 136.) We may even question to what extent Briseis and Chryseis are actually patronymics. For the name of each girl has meaning for the narrative: Briseis, the prize of Achilles, is related to a word for martial strength (cf. *Iliad* 12.346, 17.52 [LSJ, s.v. βρίθω]), whereas Chryseis, the prize of Agamemnon, is related to a word for gold (χρυσός). Scholars have also connected Briseis and Chryseis to the towns Brisa and Chryse. (Cf. Hyginus *Genealogiae* 106: *Agamemnon Briseidam Brisae sacerdotis filiam ex Moesia captivam propter formae dignitatem, quam Achilles ceperat, ab Achille abduxit...*) Murray 1960.204 translates κούρη Βρισηΐς as "maiden of Brisa." On Briseis' possible relationship with the town of Brisa on Lesbos see also Wilamowitz 1884.409, Reinhardt 1961.50-57, and "Girl," below. On the applicability of both meanings over time see below, p. 65.

[11] She is named Hippodameia by the A scholia at 1.392 and in Dictys of Crete. According to *Iliad* 2.688-694, 19.295-6, and elsewhere she was captured by Achilles in the sack of Lyrnessos. In her lament Briseis says that she was married, and that Achilles killed her husband, who may have been King Mynes. Other sources, including the *Cypria*, say that she was captured not in Lyrnessos but in Pedasos (*Cypria* frag. 27 Bernabé 1987 = 21 Davies 1988). See also the scholia at 16.57.

compression of the ultimate expansion of epic poetry about Troy.[12] I suggest that one result of this compression is that the *Iliad* only gives us a glimpse of the figure of Briseis, whose role in the larger epic tradition I think must have been much greater.

Readers who are interested in Briseis will find this compression to be frustrating, but in this dissertation I hope to show that in fact there is more information about Briseis than meets the eye, and that this compression can be evocative. In the *Iliad*, Briseis can be a prize, a girl, a daughter, a wife, or a captive.[13] The few words she speaks link her to both Helen and Andromache (the cause and victim of war), and the epithet that introduces her as she begins her lament for Patroclus in 19 connects her with Penelope.[14] In at least one tradition she is very much a young (or at least unmarried) girl, the daughter of King Brises of Pedasos, whom Achilles receives as a prize along with Diomedeia, the daughter of King Phorbas of Lesbos.[15]

---

[12] For the length of performance, see Taplin 1992.21 note 20; Heiden 1996, 1997, and 1998; Nagy 1999a; and the debate in *Symbolae Osloenses* 74 (1999).

[13] γέρας (1.185, 356, 507; 2.240; 16.54, 56; 18.444); κούρης (1.298, 336; 2.377; 9.637; 19.58), κούρην (1.275; 1.337; 16.56, 85; 18.444; 19.272); "daughter of Brises": Βρισηΐς (19.282), Βρισηΐδα (1.184, 323, 346), κούρης... Βρισηΐδος (2.689; Βρισηΐδος... κούρης 1.336), κούρη Βρισῆος (9.132), κούρῃ Βρισηΐδι (19.261), κούρην Βρισῆος (1.392); γυνή (1.348), cf. 9.340-343 and 19.298; δουρικτήτην (9.343).

[14] 19.282 Βρισηΐς δ' ἀρ' ἔπειτ' ἰκέλη χρυσέῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ ~ Πηνελόπεια. Ἀρτέμιδι ἰκέλη ἠὲ χρυσέῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ (*Odyssey* 17.36-37; 19.53-54); so also Cassandra ἰκέλη χρυσῇ Ἀφροδίτῃ (*Iliad* 24. 699).

[15] See Dictys of Crete 2.16-19. Such a tradition may be reflected in the words that are used throughout the *Iliad* to denote Briseis, especially κούρης as at 1.298, 1.337, 16.56, 16.85 etc., as well as κουριδίην ἄλοχον at 19.288. (For a different view see Taplin 1992.85 note 5.) For Diomedeia, cf. *Iliad* 9.663-665. Dictys of Crete only survives in a Latin translation of the fourth century AD, though internal evidence and a papyrus fragment of the Greek text date Dictys considerably earlier to between 66 and roughly 200 AD. To what extent we may use the Latin text of Dictys to reconstruct earlier traditions is a difficult but potentially productive question. In my chapter entitled "Girl", I show that in many places where Dictys departs from the Homeric account, he is in agreement with very old sources against the *Iliad*. For a survey of the relationship between the text of the *Iliad* and that of Dictys see Venini 1981.

My reading of the role of Briseis as an example of epic compression requires us to look at Briseis from two perspectives. The first is paradigmatic. That is, I will show how traditional reverberations or resonances unite Briseis with other characters in meaningful narrative relationships that transcend their immediate contexts and evoke universal patterns. The focus of this part of my analysis is *Iliad* 19.282-300, in which Briseis performs a lament over the body of Patroclus. The lament's compressed retelling of her life story both alludes to other parts of the *Iliad* and refers to events that take place outside the confines of the poem. A close reading of Briseis' words reveals a complex web of meaning through substitution as the poetry connects Briseis with Chryseis, Helen, Hecuba, and Andromache.[16]

Briseis, Helen, Andromache, and Hecuba are marked in the *Iliad* as both objects of love and singers of lament. The special combination of love song and lament that they perform is already proto-elegy, incorporated into epic.[17] These four women are linked by their past and future life experiences. Each has survived or will survive the loss of a husband in battle, each has been, is, or will be a captive woman.[18] Briseis becomes structurally linked with each of them throughout the course of the narrative. By examining her connections to these

---

[16] Although their approaches are very different from my own, Suzuki 1989.21-29 and Taplin 1992.84-86 and 212-218 also find several meaningful connections between these characters.

[17] I emphasize performance because these four women are the only women who speak in the *Iliad* and because lament is a form of song. On lament and love song, see Alexiou 1974 (= 2001). On the various genres that are incorporated into epic by the *Iliad* see especially Martin 1989; Nagy 1990; Carlisle-Levaniouk 1999; Davidson 2000.98-144.

[18] I argue that the relationship between Briseis and Helen in the *Iliad* allows the reader to view Helen as a prize of war and a captive woman in a foreign land, even though she came, by many accounts, willingly. On the parallels between Briseis and Helen, see also Suzuki 1989.21-29 and Lang 1995.

four women the *Iliad* reveals to us Briseis' life history, just as she in turn reveals the life history of Andromache, Helen, and Hecuba.

These associations are made possible by the traditional and constantly self-referential system within which the *Iliad* was composed. The lines that introduce the lament can serve as a brief case study for my approach:

> Βρισηΐς δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτ' ἰκέλη χρυσέῃ Ἀφροδίτῃ
> ὡς ἴδε Πάτροκλον δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγ' ἐκώκυε, χερσὶ δ' ἄμυσσε
> στήθεά τ' ἠδ' ἁπαλὴν δειρὴν ἰδὲ καλὰ πρόσωπα.
> εἶπε δ' ἄρα κλαίουσα γυνὴ εἰκυῖα θεῇσι· (19.282-286)
>
> Then Briseis like golden Aphrodite,
> when she saw Patroclus pierced by the sharp bronze,
> falling around him wailed shrilly. And with her hands she struck
> her breast and tender neck and beautiful face.
> And then weeping she spoke, a woman like the goddesses.

As Irene J. F. de Jong and Mark W. Edwards have noted, Briseis' lament for Patroclus activates multiple strains of both past and future grief.[19] The act of throwing herself down upon the body of a fallen warrior is one that she has already experienced when Achilles killed her husband (19.295-296), and she will go through it again when Achilles dies soon after the killing of Hector (αὐτίκα γάρ τοι ἔπειτα μεθ' Ἕκτορα πότμος ἑτοῖμος 18.96).[20] Both of these events take place outside the confines of the *Iliad*, but by means of the lament in 19 they are brought before our eyes in a masterstroke of *enargeia*. Moreover, through Briseis,

---

[19] de Jong 1987.113; Edwards 1991, *ad. loc.*

[20] The sack of Briseis' town was related in the *Cypria*, according to the summary of Proclus. No surviving epic source narrates a lament performed by Briseis on the occasion of either her husband's death or her subsequent captivity. In her lament for Patroclus in *Iliad* 19 Briseis suggests that she was not allowed to lament for her husband (19.295-297). I believe, however, that Briseis' words in these lines refer to Patroclus' actions in the Achaean camp, not to the moment of her husband's death or to the time when she was taken captive, at which time, in some traditions at least, she must have performed a captive woman's traditional lament. Propertius (2.9) and Quintus of Smyrna (3.551-576) present us with a lamenting Briseis, fallen over the body of Achilles, but once again no surving archaic epic source contains such a lament. For the passages in Propertius and Quintus of Smyrna, see my Afterward and Appendix, below.

the fate of every Trojan wife is vividly enacted. From the standpoint of the *Iliad* as a totality, it is appropriate that the words she sings both recall and point ahead to Andromache.

Achilles himself predicted that these would be the actions of Andromache when he decided to return to battle in 18:

> ...νῦν δὲ κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἀροίμην,
> καί τινα Τρωϊάδων καὶ Δαρδανίδων βαθυκόλπων
> ἀμφοτέρῃσιν χερσὶ παρειάων ἁπαλάων
> δάκρυ' ὀμορξαμένην ἀδινὸν στοναχῆσαι ἐφείην,
> γνοῖεν δ' ὡς δὴ δηρὸν ἐγὼ πολέμοιο πέπαυμαι· (18.121-125)
>
> But now may I win good *kleos*,
> and may I cause some one of the deep-girdled Trojan and Dardanian women
> to wipe the tears from their delicate cheeks with both hands
> and lament unceasingly.
> And they may know that too long I have held back from battle.

The substitution of Briseis for the lamenting widow of Achilles' prediction just one book later is full of irony. The woman who caused Achilles' withdrawal and the death of Patroclus (and ultimately the death of Achilles) takes the place of the wife of Patroclus' killer and Achilles' greatest enemy. The substitution intensifies our awareness of the connections and substitutions between Patroclus, Achilles, and Hector that are built into the structure of the poem.[21]

This kind of ironic substitution reflects the poetics of the highly traditional song culture in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed. Expansion and compression on the performance level in the form of allusion, similes, and even epithets create narratives whose power extends far beyond their immediate

---

[21] On the interrelationships between Hector, Patroclus, and Achilles see especially Nagy 1979 and 1997; as well as Whitman 1958 and Sinos 1980. Cf. Sappho fragment 44, in which Achilles' Iliadic epithet θεοεικελος (*Iliad* 1.131, 19.155) is applied to Hector and Andromache.

contexts. Just as Briseis when lamenting Patroclus can become Andromache, so too can Odysseus in the court of the Phaeacians in *Odyssey* 8:

> ταῦτ' ἄρ' ἀοιδὸς ἄειδε περικλυτός· αὐτὰρ 'Οδυσσεὺς
> τήκετο, δάκρυ δ' ἔδευεν ὑπὸ βλεφάροισι παρειάς.
> ὡς δὲ γυνὴ κλαίῃσι φίλον πόσιν ἀμφιπεσοῦσα,
> ὅς τε ἑῆς πρόσθεν πόλιος λαῶν τε πέσῃσιν,
> ἄστεϊ καὶ τεκέεσσιν ἀμύνων νηλεὲς ἦμαρ·
> ἡ μὲν τὸν θνήσκοντα καὶ ἀσπαίροντα ἰδοῦσα
> ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγα κωκύει· οἱ δέ τ' ὄπισθε
> κόπτοντες δούρεσσι μετάφρενον ἠδὲ καὶ ὤμους
> εἴρερον εἰσανάγουσι, πόνον τ' ἐχέμεν καὶ ὀϊζύν·
> τῆς δ' ἐλεεινοτάτῳ ἄχεϊ φθινύθουσι παρειαί·
> ὣς 'Οδυσεὺς ἐλεεινὸν ὑπ' ὀφρύσι δάκρυον εἶβεν.
> (*Odyssey* 8.521-531)

> The renowned singer sang these things. But Odysseus
> melted, and wet the cheeks under his eyelids with a tear.
> As when a woman laments, falling over the body of her dear husband
> who fell before his city and people,
> attempting to ward of the pitiless day for his city and children,
> and she, seeing him dying and gasping,
> falling around him wails shrilly, but men from behind
> beating her back and shoulders with their spears
> force her to be a slave and have toil and misery,
> and with the most pitiful grief her cheeks waste away,
> So Odysseus shed a pitiful tear beneath his brows.

Upon hearing his own *kleos* Odysseus' weeping becomes a lamentation. Lamentation links him with a grieving woman who, from the standpoint of the simile, is soon to be a captive, but who, from the point of view of the *Odyssey*, is already one of his own victims.[22] This kind of referentiality across levels of narrative and across tradition is at the heart of the power of Briseis' song.

In order to best understand the *paradigmatic* power of Briseis, however, it will also be necessary to reconstruct a more *syntagmatic* view of her character by examining the compressed references to her life story within the *Iliad* and in other sources. Again we must return to the term compression, and the idea that

---

[22] On the internalized lamentation of Odysseus and the identification of the lamenting woman see Nagy 1979.100-101. On Odysseus as one of his own victims see also Foley 1978.7.

the *Iliad* is itself an example of compression. The ability to expand or compress complex narratives in performance is a fundamental technique of the epic poet, who has at his disposal a vast continuum of traditional stories from which to draw his song. It will be my assumption throughout this dissertation that compression and expansion can be witnessed throughout the *Iliad* in the form of micro- and macronarratives. A single line, such as that found at *Iliad* 11.227 ("but as soon as he had married, he went away from the bride chamber, looking for glory [*kleos*] from the Achaeans"), could be potentially expanded to an epic of 15,000 lines like that of the *Iliad*. Such a line is a reference to another story, another epic. For a traditional audience,[23] those references are meaningful.

We may compare the story of Achilles as it is told in the Catalogue of Ships:

> νῦν αὖ τοὺς ὅσσοι τὸ Πελασγικὸν Ἄργος ἔναιον,
> οἵ τ' Ἄλον οἵ τ' Ἀλόπην οἵ τε Τρηχῖνα νέμοντο,
> οἵ τ' εἶχον Φθίην ἠδ' Ἑλλάδα καλλιγύναικα,
> Μυρμιδόνες δὲ καλεῦντο καὶ Ἕλληνες καὶ Ἀχαιοί,
> τῶν αὖ πεντήκοντα νεῶν ἦν ἀρχὸς Ἀχιλλεύς.
> ἀλλ' οἵ γ' οὐ πολέμοιο δυσηχέος ἐμνώοντο·
> οὐ γὰρ ἔην ὅς τίς σφιν ἐπὶ στίχας ἡγήσαιτο·
> κεῖτο γὰρ ἐν νήεσσι ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
> κούρης χωόμενος Βρισηΐδος ἠϋκόμοιο,
> τὴν ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ ἐξείλετο πολλὰ μογήσας
> Λυρνησσὸν διαπορθήσας καὶ τείχεα Θήβης,
> κὰδ δὲ Μύνητ' ἔβαλεν καὶ Ἐπίστροφον ἐγχεσιμώρους,
> υἱέας Εὐηνοῖο Σελεπιάδαο ἄνακτος·
> τῆς ὅ γε κεῖτ' ἀχέων, τάχα δ' ἀνστήσεσθαι ἔμελλεν. (2.683-694)

> Now however many inhabited Pelasgian Argos,
> and dwelled in Alos and Alope and Trachis,
> and those who inhabited Phthia and Hellas of the beautiful women,
> and were called Myrmidons and Hellenes and Achaeans,
> of these Achilles was the leader of fifty ships.
> But they did not think of grievous war.
> For there was no one to lead the troops.

---

[23] On the traditional audience, see note 5, above.

> For swift-footed brilliant Achilles lay among his ships
> angered over the fair-haired girl Briseis
> whom he took from Lyrnessos with great toil,
> when he sacked Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe
> and he slew the spear-fighters Mynes and Epistrophus,
> the sons of the ruler Euenus, who was the son of Selepius.
> He lay grieving because of her, and he was not soon to rise up.

If the *Iliad* did not survive and these lines were found in another epic about another warrior at Troy, today's readers would find the references to Achilles' anger and the capture of Briseis at Lyrnessos obscure. But for a traditional audience, the μῆνις of Achilles would be called before their eyes, and that compressed narrative would resonate within its context.

These micronarratives are potentially much more than just signals to the audience of other epic tales in the singer's repertoire. Consider the shield of Achilles in *Iliad* 18. This remarkable piece of armor holds within its design a micronarrative of dispute, which in turn carries with it all kinds of messages for the larger narrative about the anger of Achilles. Close analysis shows us that the anonymous characters on the micronarrative of the shield have their counterparts in the macronarrative. A successful decoding of the shield simultaneously decodes the entire *Iliad*.[24] Slatkin's work builds on similar arguments in its analysis of compressed references to the power of Thetis.

If we look more closely at the words of Briseis herself we find many examples of long-distance interconnections across epic tradition that can aid us

[24] On the shield of Achilles, see especially Nagy 1997. See also Taplin 1980; Hubbard 1992; Stanley 1993; Becker 1995; Stansbury-O'Donnell 1995; and Snodgrass, 1998. 40–44.

in both paradigmatic and syntagmatic perspectives on Briseis.[25] I quote the passage in full:

> Βρισηΐς δ' ἄρ' ἔπειτ' ἰκέλη χρυσέῃ 'Αφροδίτῃ
> ὡς ἴδε Πάτροκλον δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγ' ἐκώκυε, χερσὶ δ' ἄμυσσε
> στήθεά τ' ἠδ' ἀπαλὴν δειρὴν ἰδὲ καλὰ πρόσωπα.
> εἶπε δ' ἄρα κλαίουσα γυνὴ ἐϊκυῖα θεῇσι·
> Πάτροκλέ μοι δειλῇ πλεῖστον κεχαρισμένε θυμῷ
> ζωὸν μέν σε ἔλειπον ἐγὼ κλισίηθεν ἰοῦσα,
> νῦν δέ σε τεθνηῶτα κιχάνομαι ὄρχαμε λαῶν
> ἂψ ἀνιοῦσ'· ὡς μοι δέχεται κακὸν ἐκ κακοῦ αἰεί.
> ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσάν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τούς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
> κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὁλέθριον ἦμαρ ἐπέσπον.
> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὠκὺς 'Αχιλλεὺς
> ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,
> κλαίειν, ἀλλά μ' ἔφασκες 'Αχιλλῆος θείοιο
> κουριδίην ἄλοχον θήσειν, ἄξειν τ' ἐνὶ νηυσὶν
> ἐς Φθίην, δαίσειν δὲ γάμον μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεσσι.
> τῷ σ' ἄμοτον κλαίω τεθνηότα μείλιχον αἰεί.
> ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες
> Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν, σφῶν δ' αὐτῶν κήδε' ἑκάστη. (19.282-302)

> Then Briseis like golden Aphrodite,
> when she saw Patroclus pierced by the sharp bronze,
> falling around him wailed shrilly. And with her hands she struck
> her breast and tender neck and beautiful face.
> And then lamenting she spoke, a woman like the goddesses:
> "Patroclus, most pleasing to my wretched heart,
> I left you alive when I went from the hut.
> But now returning home I find you dead, o leader of the people,
> So evil begets evil for me forever.
> The husband to whom my father and mistress mother gave me
> I saw pierced by the sharp bronze before the city,
> and my three brothers, whom one mother bore together with me,
> beloved ones, all of whom met their day of destruction.
> Nor did you allow me, when swift Achilles killed my husband,
> and sacked the city of god-like Mynes,
> to weep, but you claimed that you would make me the
> wedded wife of god-like Achilles and that you would bring me in the ships
> to Phthia, and give me a wedding feast among the Myrmidons.
> Therefore I weep for you now that you are dead ceaselessly, you who were kind always."

---

[25] For the phrase "long-distance interconnections" see Taplin 1992.vii. For a very different approach to long-distance references see Reichel 1994. See also note 6, above.

> So she spoke lamenting, and the women wailed in response,
> with Patroclus as their pretext, but each woman for her own cares.

Briseis' lament alludes to many of her life experiences, most of which are not narrated by the *Iliad* except in her own voice in this one passage. As I noted above, we see her fall down weeping over the body of Patroclus, in the same way that the unnamed widow of *Odyssey* 8 falls down over the dead body of her warrior husband (19.284 ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λίγ' ἐκώκυε ~ *Odyssey* 8.527). The widow of *Odyssey* 8 is led off as a captive into slavery before our eyes even as she weeps. The death of Patroclus does not bring about slavery for Briseis, who is already a captive. But when she sees the body of Patroclus "pierced by the sharp bronze" (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ 19.283), she recalls her own husband, who died in just this same way (δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ 19.292). Briseis' lament for Patroclus reenacts the lament that she must have performed for her husband upon learning of his death, perhaps, just as the woman in the simile of *Odyssey* 8, just before she herself was led off into slavery. Achilles killed her husband in the sack of Lyrnessos, a raid that takes place outside of the confines of the poem but to which the poem frequently alludes. Thus in just two lines (19.283-84) traditional resonances that are contained in the phrases themselves evoke a whole range of experiences and events.

The lines that follow are likewise extremely rich in traditional cross-references. In line 19.288 Briseis mentions her departure from the tent of Achilles, an event narrated at 1.345-348. It was Patroclus who led her from the tent. Patroclus, Briseis laments, was always kind to her (19.300). The kindness of Patroclus is important, as lines 19.291-4 go on to explain. Briseis is a captive

woman in a foreign camp; she is the concubine of the man who killed her husband. Her brothers are also dead:

> ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσάν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τούς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
> κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὁλέθριον ἦμαρ ἐπέσπον. (19.291-294)
>
> The husband to whom my father and mistress mother gave me
> I saw pierced by the sharp bronze before the city,
> and my three brothers, whom one mother bore together with me,
> beloved ones, all of whom met their day of destruction.

Patroclus proves to be an ally for a vulnerable woman who no longer has the protection of her father, husband, or brothers.[26]

These lines not only refer us to epic traditions outside of the *Iliad* and a raid that is narrated in the *Cypria*, but also make a meaningful connection to another part of the *Iliad* itself.[27] 19.291-294 evoke Andromache's words to Hector in *Iliad* 6, in which she laments the death of her brothers:

> οἵ δέ μοι ἑπτὰ κασίγνητοι ἔσαν ἐν μεγάροισιν
> οἳ μὲν πάντες ἰῷ κίον ἤματι Ἄϊδος εἴσω·
> πάντας γὰρ κατέπεφνε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς (6.421-423)
>
> I had seven brothers in the palace
> all of whom went to Hades in one day.
> For the swift-footed Achilles slew all of them.

In terms of the *Iliad* the sacks of Lyrnessos (the city in which Briseis was captured) and Thebe (in which the brothers of Andromache were killed) took place on a single campaign.[28] In this same sack of Thebe Chryseis was taken and

---

[26] On the traditional features of lament in this passage see discussion below, pp. 93-94.

[27] The *Cypria* (as summarized by Proclus) narrated the raids of Thebe, Lyrnessos and Pedasos. As I argue in below in my first chapter, the *Cypria* and the poems of the Epic Cycle in general are traditional epic narratives that are as old or older than the *Iliad*, but that crystallized later. On the term crystallization as a model of text fixation, see below, p. 23 note 47 and pp. 32-33.

[28] See *Iliad* 2.690-91 and p. 67, below.

given as a prize to Agamemnon.[29] In terms of the *Iliad* Andromache was already living in Troy as Hector's wife at the time of the raid. She thus escapes capture, but only temporarily: through Chryseis and Briseis we are reminded that Andromache (and all of the Trojan women) will soon be captives.[30] From the standpoint of narrative, the past and future are joined and brought to life in Briseis' lament. From the standpoint of tradition, these lines hint at other tales in which the given events traditionally took place, like the *Cypria* or the *Aethiopis*.[31]

In lines 19.295-299 we can see once again how Homeric poetry connects its own tale to other epic traditions:

> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,
> κλαίειν, ἀλλά μ' ἔφασκες Ἀχιλλῆος θείοιο
> κουριδίην ἄλοχον θήσειν, ἄξειν τ' ἐνὶ νηυσὶν
> ἐς Φθίην, δαίσειν δὲ γάμον μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεσσι.
> κουριδίην ἄλοχον (19.295-299)
>
> Nor did you allow me, when swift Achilles killed my husband,
> and sacked the city of god-like Mynes,
> to weep, but you claimed that you would make me the
> wedded wife of god-like Achilles, and that you would bring me in the ships

---

[29] On the connection between Chryseis and Andromache and her mother in this passage see Taplin 1986, Robbins 1990, and discussion below, p. 73.

[30] In his study of allusions to the raid of Thebe in the *Iliad*, J. W. Zarker notes: "The fate of both Hector and Andromache is the same, as is that of Thebe and Troy. What happened at Thebe and the other cities of the Troad will happen to Troy. What happened to Chryseis, Briseis, and other captive women will happen to Andromache... Achilles' taking of Thebe is the dramatic foreshadowing of the fall of Troy" (Zarker 1965-66.114). Zarker's analysis of the effect of allusions to other traditions about Eëtion and the sack of Thebe has much in common with my own interpretation.

[31] We must be careful to distinguish the texts of the *Cypria* and *Aethiopis* as we now have them from the traditional material from which took shape. The Cyclic traditions, like those of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, have a very long history, but the texts seem to have become fixed at a later date than the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. (See Burgess 1996.) We must also realize that the *Cypria* and *Aethiopis* only come down to us in the summaries of Proclus, which only convey the bare minimum of what the texts contained. In the form in which we now have it, for example, there is no episode in the *Aethiopis* in which Briseis laments Achilles as she does Patroclus here, but in this tradition (or one related to it) she likely did so. Both Quintus of Smyrna (3.551) and Propertius (2.9) contain a scene in which Briseis laments Achilles. (See Afterward, below, pp. 116ff. and note 20, above.) On the relationship between the *Iliad* and the Epic Cycle see below, pp. 33-35.

to Phthia, and give me a wedding feast among the Myrmidons.

The allusion to Mynes raises the interesting possibility that Briseis was the queen of Lyrnessos, and that her husband was Mynes.[32] If this interpretation is right, with this one detail the story of Briseis comes together and we can piece together her life as it is represented in the *Iliad*. She was born in Brisa on Lesbos, and married to King Mynes of Lyrnessos.[33] When Achilles went on his series of raids in and around Lesbos, he sacked not only Briseis' hometown, where presumably her brothers were killed,[34] but also Lyrnessos. Achilles killed Mynes and enslaved the women of the town, receiving Briseis as his prize.

It is important to note here that references in an epic song to named figures with which we modern readers are not familiar would not be opaque for a member of the song culture in which that epic poetry is composed and performed.[35] For an audience comprised of such members, the name Mynes means something and conjures up other traditional tales associated with that figure. Similarly, Patroclus is first introduced in the *Iliad* by way of his father, in the form of the patronymic Μενοιτιάδης.[36] The first-time modern reader of the *Iliad* finds this reference confusing and must be told who the son of Menoitius is.

---

[32] I suggest that the syntax of 19.295-296 expresses paratactically what in English prose would be subordinated: that Achilles killed her husband Mynes, who was the ruler of the city (Lyrnessos). This is the interpretation of the bT scholia. It is also quite possible, however, that her husband was a man of Lyrnessos other than Mynes. See also Leaf 1912.246 as well as Edwards 1991, *ad loc.*

[33] Others have similar reconstructions. On the detail that Briseis (and likewise Chryseis) must have been in Lyrnessos because of marriage see Taplin 1992.84-86 and arguments (with bibliography) *ad loc.* For Chryseis, see also Leaf 1912.244.

[34] So also Taplin 1986.18 note 6. Others have suggested that her brothers were fighting as allies for Lyrnessos. See, e.g., Leaf 1912.246. On this raid in general see Reinhardt 1961.50-57.

[35] Lang 1995.149 notes that of all the heroes only Calchas and Nestor are formally introduced.

[36] See also note 10, above.

But for a traditional audience, names like Mynes or a patronymic like Μενοιτιάδης are signals. For us too they can be signals, but they are difficult and sometimes impossible for us as outsiders to interpret. Because of the signals inherent in traditional poetry, in these few lines Briseis can allude elliptically to her entire life history to date.

Moreover in these same lines we hear the hopes of Briseis for the future. Briseis says that Patroclus always promised she would be Achilles' κουριδίη ἄλοχος,[17] and that he would give a wedding feast for them in Phthia after the war. But a traditional audience knows that Achilles will never go back to Phthia. The death of Patroclus means the death of Hector, which in turn, as Achilles learns from his mother Thetis in 18.96, means the death of Achilles. Briseis will become a widow once again and the captive of some other man. Briseis' vain hopes for the future recall Achilles own speculation on a marriage back in Phthia: ἦν γὰρ δή με σαῶσι θεοὶ καὶ οἴκαδ' ἵκωμαι. / Πηλεύς θήν μοι ἔπειτα γυναῖκά γε μάσσεται αὐτός (9.393-394). When Achilles makes that statement in *Iliad* 9, return is still a possibility from the standpoint of the narrative. In *Iliad* 19, however, we know that Achilles will never marry.

We have seen how Briseis' lament both alludes both backwards from the point of view of the narrative to the lament of Andromache in *Iliad* 6 as well outside the poem to events that take place chronologically prior to the narrative of the *Iliad*. Briseis reenacts the lament of Andromache and in doing so assimilates the figures of Hector and Patroclus. When Patroclus becomes substituted for Hector in the lament of *Iliad* 19, the chain of events that lead to

---

[17] For more on the term κουριδίην ἄλοχον see below, p. 56 note 16 and p. 72.

Achilles' death is clarified. In *Iliad* 6 Hector is not yet dead; in *Iliad* 19, because of the death of Patroclus, Hector is all but dead. Briseis the captive then both echoes the words of Andromache, but also previews the lament that will be sung for Hector by the soon-to-be captive Andromache in *Iliad* 24.

19.300, the last line of the lament, likewise points ahead to the funeral of Hector and some of the last lines of the poem:

> τῷ σ' ἄμοτον κλαίω τεθνηότα μείλιχον αἰεί. (19.300)
>
> Therefore I weep for you now that you are dead ceaselessly, you who were kind always.
>
> ἀλλ' εἴ τίς με καὶ ἄλλος ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ἐνίπτοι...
> ἀλλὰ σὺ τὸν ἐπέεσσι παραιφάμενος κατέρυκες
> σῇ τ' ἀγανοφροσύνῃ καὶ σοῖς ἀγανοῖς ἐπέεσσι.
> τῷ σέ θ' ἅμα κλαίω καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον ἀχνυμένη κῆρ·
> οὐ γάρ τίς μοι ἔτ' ἄλλος ἐνὶ Τροίῃ εὐρείῃ
> ἤπιος οὐδὲ φίλος, πάντες δέ με πεφρίκασιν. (24.771-775)
>
> But if anyone ever reproached me in the palace,
> you checked them with your words speaking gently
> with your kindly spirit and kind words.
> Therefore I lament for you and for my unhappy self, grieving in my heart.

These are the words of Helen, who, like Briseis, is a woman in a land of strangers. Without the protection of Hector, she is now vulnerable to the kind of reproach and insult that in the past Hector always warded off. Briseis' own vulnerability to such reproach is made very clear earlier in Book 19, when Achilles exclaims that Artemis should have killed her on the day that he sacked Lyrnessos (19.59-60). The similarity in the laments of these two women reveals an important structural relationship between Briseis and Helen that I will go on to explore in subsequent chapters. Helen's words give us a unique insight into her situation in Troy. They convey the loneliness and defenselessness of an

outsider. When we hear in her words an echo of Briseis, we understand not just Briseis as a second Helen,[38] but Helen as a second Briseis.

The words of Briseis therefore bring together a monumental sequence of events in one highly compressed and expressive song. This sequence of events could not be narrated in full on any one occasion, but, as I have argued, the traditional mechanics of expansion and compression can incorporate by way of allusion, reference, and even resonance complex narratological relationships that span a vast continuum of poetic and artistic traditions. In this brief sketch, we have seen how any one performance of an *Iliad* for example can assume and refer to events of the traditions of the *Cypria* or *Aethiopis*. A traditional system such as the one described here, moreover, contains a built-in poetic structure of stories within stories. As the narrative proceeds these stories within stories are incorporated in more or less expanded form. The least expanded narrative – that is, the most compressed – could be as small as an epithet or a patronymic.[39] An example of a more expanded story-within-a-story is the story of Meleager in *Iliad* 9. The *Iliad* itself is an extreme example of expansion, but as I have been arguing, it is not the ultimate expansion. We might think of the entire Epic Cycle, if it survived as fixed and complete poems, as an ultimate expansion of poetry about Troy - or, better, as a variation on such an ultimate expansion.

The system of stories within stories that are built into Homeric poetry creates structural relationships between events and characters. The traditional laments sung by Andromache, Briseis, Hecuba, and Helen connect them in a way

---

[38] On Briseis as a second Helen see "Prize," below.

that is both artistic and traditional. Their words are both universal and personal, timeless and occasional. As I noted above, Briseis can become Andromache when lamenting Patroclus, just as Odysseus becomes one of his own victims in *Odyssey* 8. The substitutions and connections create meaning. In this dissertation, I analyze both the timeless (or paradigmatic) substitutions as well as the personal (or syntagmatic) associations in the figure of Briseis, in order to illustrate the dynamic workings of a traditional poetic system.

The connections between Briseis' lament and those of Andromache and Helen in *Iliad* 6 and 24 have been noted. Some have interpreted these connections as intentional allusions by a master poet. Others have argued that the lament of Briseis is built upon or derived from the laments of Andromache and Helen (and is therefore inferior poetry).[40] I do not interpret the powerful emotions that Briseis' lament induces in her listeners (or the overall artistry of the scene) as simply the result of universal truths or the intertextual designs of a master poet. Rather I will argue that the traditional artistry involved in the mechanics of expansion and compression allows a multiplicity of associations that evoke powerful emotions for both the characters within the narrative as well as for the audience of the epic.

---

[39] For epithets as micronarratives cf. Nagy 1990(b).23 on πολύτλας Odysseus: "Odysseus is πολύτλας 'much-suffering' throughout the *Iliad* because he is already a figure in an epic tradition about adventures that he will have after Troy."

[40] *Inter alia*, Reinhardt 1961; Lohmann 1970 and 1988.13-32; Erbse 1983; Edwards 1991, *ad loc*; Taplin 1992.84-86 and 212-218. Schadewaldt 1959 shows how Achilles is already very present in the meeting between Hector and Andromache in *Iliad* 6, just as Hector and Andromache are very much called before our eyes by the laments of Achilles and Briseis in *Iliad* 19.

The questions that have generated scholarship about Briseis deal primarily with perceived inconsistencies within the poem. These inconsistencies have been approached from a number of different angles, but nowhere are they addressed systematically. Recent scholarship, moreover, approaches the perceived problems connected with Briseis from a primarily text-centered point of view. Allusions to the raids of Lyrnessos and Pedasos and Thebe, for example, have been read as meaningful for the narrative and part of a master poet's highly complex plan for the poem. But the possibility that these allusions refer to other epic traditions is overlooked and even denied by many scholars.[41] In this dissertation I offer a new way of understanding the many conflicting traditions about Briseis. I too will try to show how powerful connections can made between Briseis and other characters. I will analyze allusions to other traditions and the resonant effect that such allusions have within the *Iliad*. My analysis will address both the perceived "problems" as well as perceived artistry from the point of view of oral poetics, informed throughout by the research of Milman Parry and

---

[41] Instead, they argue that the consistency of the details points to the genius of the master poet. See, for example, Robbins 1990.10, note 28: "What is consistent within the poem, even if that consistency is perceived only as details accumulate, does not have to point outside the poem." Cf. Taplin 1992.222, note 30: "The consistency of detail... should not necessarily lead to neo-analytic theories of pre-existing sagas (thus most fully Kullmann, 284ff.). The details might just as well have been worked up over many years to give substance to this important scene." Both Leaf 1912 and Wade-Gery (1952.85, note 114) posited a pre-Homeric poem about these raids. See also Kullmann 1960.281ff. It is helpful here to consider the formulation of Leach on cross-referencing in myth:

> The various stories [i.e., the myths of a given society] form a *corpus*. They lock in together to form a single theological-cosmological-[juridical] whole. Stories from one part of the corpus presuppose a knowledge of stories from all other parts. There is implicit cross-reference from one part to another. It is an unavoidable feature of storytelling that events are made to happen one after another, but in cross-reference, such sequence is ignored. It is as if the whole corpus referred to a single instant of time, namely, the present moment (Leach 1982.5, as cited by Nagy 1992.316).

I would apply this formulation (as does Nagy) not only to the narratives about gods in the *Iliad* but to all heroic narrative.

Albert Lord, which has demonstrated how a traditional song culture works.[42] The work of Parry and Lord has not yet permeated many "literary" analyses of the poem;[43] I offer my analysis of Briseis as just one example of how literary analysis and appreciation of an oral traditional work can be done.

Recent work on Homeric poetry that attempts to appreciate the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as oral poetry has not broken free of our literate culture's understanding of authorship and poetic craft. Michael Nagler's *Spontaneity and Tradition* interprets the Homeric poems as oral poetry and is very much indebted to the work of Parry and Lord throughout. He notes a "natural tendency to assimilate the unfamiliar "echoes" in oral poetry into superficially similar features of works composed in writing" that "has caused us to judge oral poetry by the wrong standards and to overlook precisely those characteristics of the art which would be most revealing."[44] But Nagler's appreciation of the oral process of composition-in-performance ends with "Homer," the single monumental composer who brought to a cataclysmic end centuries of epic performance and composition-in-performance.

---

[42] Cf. Nagy 1979.4-5: "The positing of a unitary *Iliad* and a unitary *Odyssey* has been for me not an end in itself, one that is continually threatened by contextual inconsistencies in this Homeric passage or that. Rather, it has been a means for solving the problems presented by these inconsistencies. Whatever Homeric passages seem at first to be inconsistent in the short range may in the long range be the key to various central themes of the overall *Iliad* or *Odyssey*-central messages that are hidden away from those of us, such as we are, who have not been raised by Hellenic society as the appreciative audience of Epos."

[43] The intention, craft, or skill of "Homer" or "the poet" are still discussed in the context of the beauty and power of various scenes. Such discussions make no distinction between the artistry of an individual poet and the poetics of an oral traditional song culture. In this dissertation I analyze the power of various scenes not in absolute terms but rather from the standpoint of the song culture within which they were composed. Cf. Hainsworth 1970 (= 1992) and note 49 below, as well as Martin 1993.222-228.

[44] Nagler 1974.xx.

Nagler argues that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were dictated at two "special performances."[45] He also notes: "For my purposes, it actually matters little whether Homer dictated two performances to be written down, or otherwise taught them to be preserved verbatim in oral tradition..."[46] Either of Nagler's two alternatives freezes the process of recomposition-in-performance with one poet and one performance, and therefore he is at odds with my own approach, which sees the poems as having crystallized over time in a gradual and evolutionary process of text fixation in the context of increasingly limited performance.[47]

Similarly, Oliver Taplin's insightful book *Homeric Soundings* undertakes to appreciate the *Iliad* through both form and content.[48] Taplin's approach, despite his intention to interpret the *Iliad* as a work meant to be heard, is nevertheless text-centered in its essentially literate focus on the intention of the single author:

> There might seem to be an inhibition, even a prohibition, against finding all this complex and large-scale correlation in the *Iliad* of all poems. Homer was, after all, archaic, pre-classical; and even if he could laboriously write (which for myself I think highly unlikely) he surely created his poems to be heard. Does this not make all this intricacy, the fruit of many rereadings, inapposite? The more I have dwelt on this problem, the more I have come to believe the contrary: the kind of artistry which I have uncovered, especially the long-distance interconnections, would be more rather than less accessible when perceived aurally. Extended sessions of performance can induce a kind of spellbound attentiveness, such as cannot be sustained in the disjointed process of reading. Furthermore, if the form and timing of the long sessions are arranged by the performer, then this opens up further

---

[45] Nagler 1974.xvii.

[46] Nagler 1974.xvii.

[47] For this model of text fixation see Nagy 1981; 1996a.107-152; and 1996b.29-63.

[48] 1992.vii.

> opportunities for shapings that would be far more apparent when heard in real time...[49]

Taplin's analysis presupposes a master poet who, although illiterate, is capable of creating "complex and large-scale correlation in the *Iliad*" and "long-distance interconnections." Taplin's Homer is in fact something like an illiterate Virgil, whose work we may interpret no differently than any other poet. Taplin offers his *Homeric Soundings* as a new way of reading the complexities of the *Iliad*, but despite many beautiful interpretations, I disagree with his methodology, which focuses too often on the intention of the master poet, and too little on the meaningful connections made possible by tradition.[50]

My reading studies these complex and large-scale correlations and long-distance interconnections as the cornerstone of a long and rich tradition of oral epic poetry composed in and for performance. This long and rich tradition includes the conventions and allusive power of a number of other song traditions.[51] One of the most important of these for our understanding of the *Iliad*

---

[49] 1992.vii-viii.

[50] In a 1970 essay that was reprinted in 1992 (the same year that Taplin's *Homeric Soundings* was published), J. B. Hainsworth examines the question of whether or not a new kind of criticism is required to analyze Homeric poetry. He opens his essay by noting the criticisms that have been launched against Homer by various generations of scholars mired in their own poetic conventions, some of which are "no more than the stock responses of their age to epic poetry." Hainsworth concludes in the end that conventional literary criticism is in fact suited to Homeric poetry. Hainsworth's distrust of the comparative fieldwork of Parry and Lord is apparent in his first paragraph: "It may even be the case that the despised anachronistic 'singer', that unwashed, mendicant figure lurking in the coffee houses of the Balkans, has something to say. But whatever he says, it will be applicable to Homer only by analogy, and will require verification" (Hainsworth 1970=1992.65). Although I do not share Hainsworth's hesitation to accept the analogy of the South Slavic epic tradition, there is much with which I agree in his essay. I note especially p. 74: "Every use of a formula evokes its other uses (Lord, 1960, p. 148), and it is up to the good poet to grasp and make use of these associations." Hainsworth, like Nagler and Taplin, believes the *Iliad* to be the record of a single performance of a master singer (1992.66).

[51] See especially Martin 1989.225.

is the traditional lament for the dead.[52] Briseis' lament must be interpreted within the context of long-standing lament traditions. But rather than limit interpretation of Briseis' words to mere formulas, I argue that an appreciation of the traditional artistry of lament enhances our understanding of Briseis and the other women in the poem.

In the following chapters I will examine the stages of Briseis' life, to which the poem alludes by means of epithets, casual and indirect references, and Briseis' own words. Each of the chapters relates Briseis to important themes, characters, and tensions in the *Iliad*, in order to show how a paradigmatic reading of Briseis brings a great deal of meaning to our understanding of the structure of the entire poem.

But in order to explore these relationships it will first be necessary to understand that Briseis can evoke more than one paradigm in the *Iliad*. Briseis has her own macronarrative that is only hinted at in the *Iliad*. This macronarrative is primarily consistent, but it has, secondarily, its own multiformity. I argue that there was not only one possible expanded tradition about the sack of Lesbos and neighboring cities and the taking of Briseis,[53] but many possible narratives. I assume that traditions about Briseis necessarily varied from locale to locale and in different time periods. Nevertheless, it is my contention that some or all of these traditions would have been familiar to what I have been calling "traditional audiences" of the *Iliad*.

---

[52] See especially Alexiou 1974 as well as Danforth 1997; Caraveli 1986; Seremetakis 1990; Holst-Warhaft 1992; and Herzfeld 1993. For a reading of a woman's lament in Persian epic see Davidson 2000.123-144.

[53] Leaf 1912, for example, posited a great epic poem that he called "The Great Foray" as a major source for the *Iliad*, and others have since followed him. See note 41, above and below, p. 81ff.

In order to reconstruct the expanded or alternative traditions about Briseis I must rely on a variety of sources, including internal evidence, the scholia to the *Iliad*, the extant fragments of the epic cycle and the summaries of Proclus, later fictional accounts of the Trojan War, and representations on vases.[54] These sources are potentially very useful in any reconstruction of competing epic traditions, but each must be approached carefully and in its own way. Throughout my discussion, moreover, I use the figure of Briseis as an example of the empirical reality of the system demonstrated by Milman Parry and Albert Lord in their studies of Homer as traditional oral poetry. In other words, Briseis will not be used to prove a theory about oral poetry, but instead to illustrate the system of poetics that the work of Parry and Lord has uncovered.[55]

---

[54] For a complete list of ancient literary sources for Briseis see Appendix, below.

[55] On the term "oral theory" and the empirical reality of the system in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed see Nagy 1996b.19-20. The bibliography on each of these issues is enormous, but throughout I rely primarily on the findings of Parry and Lord themselves, as published in Parry 1971 and Lord 1960, 1991, and 1995.

Briseis and the Multiformity of the *Iliad*

In an oral traditional song culture such as that in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed, each new performance is a new composition. In such a system, as Albert Lord demonstrated, there can technically be no original from which all others are copies.[1] In fact it is misleading to think of versions that differ from the *Iliad* as we know it as "variants." If, for lack of a better word, we use the term variant, we must acknowledge that the *Iliad* is itself a variation on any number of ways to tell a story about Troy, and that within the *Iliad* itself there are references to other variants.[2] In the *Iliad* Briseis is named Briseis and she was captured by Achilles in the sack of Lyrnessos. In another or other versions of the story of Briseis, she is named Hippodameia and was taken from Pedasos.[3]

The *Iliad* is not only a variant in its own right, it is also a compression.[4] Although, as I have already noted, in its current lengthy form the *Iliad* would take several days to perform,[5] it nevertheless is a compression, in that the events of the entire Trojan saga from the judgment of Paris to the sack of the city are enfolded into a narrative that spans a few weeks in the tenth year of the war. In performance an epic singer expands or compresses his narrative at will. A single

---

[1] See Lord 1960.101.

[2] Cf. Edmunds 1996.440: "Homer's epics as wholes can be shown to constitute particular variants of myths. Because of their monumentality and millenial predominance, their versions now seem authoritative, which is the same as saying that they no longer seem to be versions."

[3] See "Girl," below, p. 64ff. and p. 4, note 11, above.

[4] For the term *compression* see Lord 1960.25-27, 68-98, 99-123.

[5] For the length of performance see above, p. 5, note 12.

word, such as ἀέκουσα (used to describe Briseis at *Iliad* 1.348), signals the possibility of much more. In *Iliad* 19 we learn the kind of things Briseis might have said, had she been given a voice in that scene of departure from the tent of Achilles. But in her lament of book 19 we also learn about events that take place chronologically prior to the beginning of the poem. In the ultimate expansion of poetry about Troy, the prehistory of the war and all of the raids and all of the battles and sacks of cities to which the *Iliad* alludes would be incorporated, as would the death of Achilles, the sack of Troy, and all of the events of the Epic Cycle. We might think of the Epic Cycle itself, if it survived as fixed and complete poems, as one variation on this ultimate expansion.

In the following chapters I will examine the paradigmatic aspects of Briseis - that is the things that unite her with all other mortal women of the *Iliad*. I argue that the traditional nature of Homeric poetry allows her to evoke such figures as Helen and Andromache, thereby bringing additional richness to the scenes in which she appears. I further argue that Briseis actually evokes multiple paradigms (prize, girl, wife, widow, and captive) because of a multiformity of traditions associated with her. In some Aeolic/Lesbian traditions I suggest that Briseis is an unmarried beauty queen, the quintessential local princess who falls in love with her father's enemy.[6] No doubt if we had access to the local epic traditions of towns in and around the Troad we would find that Achilles took one such girl from every town.[7] The *Iliad* contains traces of such a tradition, but

---

[6] This story pattern is also connected with so-called *Ktisis-Sagen* (foundation sagas), in which the conqueror falls in love with a local girl. See Schmid 1947 and Nagy 1979.140-141.

[7] For Pedasa, Peisidike, Briseis/Hippodameia, Diomedeia, etc. see "Girl," below.

primarily asserts another version, in which Briseis is the wife of a local king whom Achilles kills in one of his raids around Troy.[8]

It is my contention that the variations on the story of Briseis are fundamentally connected with local as opposed to Panhellenic epic traditions. As Nagy has shown, archaic Greek poetry refers to Panhellenic myth and poetry as "truth" while local versions of stories about gods and heroes are *pseudea* or "lies."[9] Such a conception of truth and fiction is at work in the opening lines to the *Homeric Hymn to Dionysus*:[10]

> οἳ μὲν γὰρ Δρακάνῳ σ', οἳ δ' Ἰκάρῳ ἠνεμοέσσῃ
> φάσ', οἳ δ' ἐν Νάξῳ, δῖον γένος, εἰραφιῶτα,
> οἳ δέ σ' ἐπ' Ἀλφειῷ ποταμῷ βαθυδινήεντι
> κυσαμένην Σεμέλην τεκέειν Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ·
> ἄλλοι δ' ἐν Θήβῃσιν, ἄναξ, σε λέγουσι γενέσθαι,
> **ψευδόμενοι**· σὲ δ' ἔτικτε πατὴρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε
> πολλὸν ἀπ' ἀνθρώπων, κρύπτων λευκώλενον Ἥρην.
>
> For some say that you were born at Dracanum; others say on windy Icarus;
> some say you were born in Naxos, divinely born, snatched from the thigh,
> and others say that at the Alpheus river with deep eddies
> Semele conceived and bore you to Zeus who delights in thunder.
> Still others say, Lord, that you were born in Thebes,
> **But they lie**. The father of gods and men bore you
> far from men, hiding you from white-armed Hera.

---

[8] *Iliad* 2.688-692; 19.60; 19.295-296.

[9] Nagy 1990a.60: "the **alêtheia** of Greek poetry tends to contrast with the divergence of local poetic versions in the overarching process of achieving a convergent version acceptable to all Hellenes." On *pseudea* as variant versions and not necessarily "lies" – that is, deliberate falsehoods – see Carlisle 1999.

[10] These lines come from the fragmentary hymn to Dionysus (Hymn 1 in the Oxford Classical Text [ed. Allen 1912]). Because of its first position in the manuscript M (where a leaf is missing), the hymn is thought to belong to the group of earlier and longer hymns. For discussion of the dating see Allen-Halliday-Sikes 1936.97 and Càssola 1975.14-16. See also Janko 1982.187. For examples of similar distinctions between truth (ἀλήθεια) and lies in archaic Greek poetry, see Nagy 1990a.62-66 and 1990b.43-46.

As Nagy argues: "various legitimate local traditions are here being discounted as false in order to legitimize the one tradition that is acceptable to the poet's audience."[11]

The *Iliad* must likewise assert a version of the Achilles story that supersedes competing local variants. It does this in two ways. First, it leaves out or leaves obscure many local details about a romance between Achilles and the various girls from the many towns he captures. In the *Iliad* Briseis and Diomedeia are included, but marginalized. Secondly, the *Iliad* will include within its own narrative allusions to other versions, thereby asserting the primacy of its own narrative at the expense of competing variants.

An example of this competition between different versions again concerns Briseis directly. In the *Cypria*, according to the scholia, Briseis was captured in a sack of Pedasos, not Lyrnessos, where we are told she was captured in the *Iliad*.[12] In the *Iliad*, neither Achilles himself nor the other Achaeans ever refer to a sack of Pedasos, which, like Lyrnessos, is a town near Mt. Ida in the Troad.[13] Instead, in the Catalogue of Ships, the town of Thebe, another town near Mt. Ida (where Chryseis and Andromache's mother were captured), is closely associated with the sack of Lyrnessos:[14]

---

[11] Nagy 1990b.43.

[12] From the T scholia at *Iliad* 16.57: τὴν Πήδασον οἱ τῶν Κυπρίων ποιηταί, αὐτὸς δὲ Λυρνησσόν. See p. 76, below.

[13] Apollodorus, who lists by name the towns that Achilles captured, gives Lyrnessos but does not mention Pedasos (Epitome 3.32-3.33). (The list does, however, mention the taking of Aeneas' cattle and concludes with the phrase καὶ ἄλλας πολλάς.)

[14] Lyrnessos, Pedasos, and Thebe are thought to be located very close to one another near Mt. Ida, not far from the gulf of Andramytteion. Lyrnessos and Thebe in particular are closely related in the ancient sources. In Aeschylus' *Phrygians* (as cited in the scholia to Euripides' *Andromache*) Andromache is referred to as having been taken from Lyrnessos, even though she is everwhere else in Greek literature said to come from Thebe:

κεῖτο γὰρ ἐν νήεσσι ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
κούρης χωόμενος Βρισηΐδος ἠϋκόμοιο,
τὴν ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ ἐξείλετο πολλὰ μογήσας
Λυρνησσὸν διαπορθήσας καὶ τείχεα Θήβης (2.688-691)

For swift-footed brilliant Achilles lay among his ships
angered over the fair-haired girl Briseis
whom he took from Lyrnessos with great toil,
when he sacked Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe.

In fact the only person who mentions a sack of Pedasos in the *Iliad* is Aeneas, who describes an encounter with Achilles while he was tending cattle:

οὐ μὲν γὰρ νῦν πρῶτα ποδώκεος ἀντ' Ἀχιλῆος
στήσομαι, ἀλλ' ἤδη με καὶ ἄλλοτε δουρὶ φόβησεν
ἐξ Ἴδης, ὅτε βουσὶν ἐπήλυθεν ἠμετέρῃσι,
πέρσε δὲ Λυρνησσὸν καὶ Πήδασον· αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ Ζεὺς
εἰρύσαθ' (20.89-93)

For this is not the first time that I will stand against swift-footed Achilles,
but already another time he put me to flight with the spear
from Ida, when he made an attack on our cattle,
and he sacked Lyrnessos and Pedasos. But Zeus
protected me.

Later, when Achilles and Aeneas meet in battle at Troy, Achilles taunts Aeneas with their former encounter:

ἤδη μὲν σέ γέ φημι καὶ ἄλλοτε δουρὶ φοβῆσαι.
ἦ οὐ μέμνῃ ὅτε πέρ σε βοῶν ἄπο μοῦνον ἐόντα
σεῦα κατ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ταχέεσσι πόδεσσι
καρπαλίμως; τότε δ' οὔ τι μετατροπαλίζεο φεύγων.
ἔνθεν δ' ἐς Λυρνησσὸν ὑπέκφυγες· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τὴν
πέρσα μεθορμηθεὶς σὺν Ἀθήνῃ καὶ Διὶ πατρί,
λῃϊάδας δὲ γυναῖκας ἐλεύθερον ἦμαρ ἀπούρας
ἦγον· ἀτὰρ σὲ Ζεὺς ἐρρύσατο καὶ θεοὶ ἄλλοι. (20.187-194)

For I assert that already another time I put you to flight with the spear.

ἔνιοι δὲ καὶ τὴν Χρύσην καὶ τὴν Λυρνησσὸν ἐν τῷ τῆς Θήβης πεδίῳ τάσσουσιν, ὡς Αἰσχύλος Λυρνησσίδα προσαγορεύσας τὴν Ἀνδρομάχην ἐν τοῖς Φρυξίν, ἔνθα καὶ ξένως ἱστορεῖ Ἀνδραίμονος αὐτὴν λέγων [frg. 267]:

Ἀνδραίμονος γένεθλον ‹ὦ› Λυρνησσίου,
ὅθεν περ Ἕκτωρ ἄλοχον ἤγαγεν φίλην.

For a complete compendium of all ancient testimonia regarding the location of Lyrnessos, Pedasos, and Thebe, see Stauber 1996.91-175.

> Or do you not remember the time you were alone and apart from your cattle
> And I chased you quickly down from Mt. Ida with swift feet?
> That time you did not turn back as you ran away.
> From there you escaped to Lyrnessos. But then I
> sacked it after I made an attack with the help of Athena and father Zeus,
> and taking their day of freedom from the women I led them off as captives.
> But Zeus and the rest of the gods protected you.

In most respects the two accounts are the same. But Achilles mentions only Lyrnessos, whereas Aeneas says that Achilles took Lyrnessos and Pedasos. I suggest that Aeneas' inclusion of Pedasos is an allusion to another version of this raid in which Pedasos takes the place of Lyrnessos. The *Iliad*, by virtue of being Panhellenic, includes both. And it is especially appropriate that it is Aeneas who speaks the variant. Aeneas was the subject of his own epic traditions in the Troad.[15]

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are multiforms in the sense that our fixed texts are the product of a performance tradition that was at one time a multiform.[16] Variants allow us to recover some of the multiformity that was lost in the process

---

[15] The quarrel between Aeneas and Priam (referred to in *Iliad* 13.459-61) is a vestige of one of these traditions. See below, p. 52 note 4.

[16] On the multiformity of the performance traditions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* see Dué 2001(a) and Nagy 2001. The medieval transmission of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* reflects a text that has become relatively fixed. Nevertheless, in the Classical period, although variability was limited, significant performance variants are attested that are signals of alternative traditions that once flourished. (For example, see my discussion of Aeschines' quotation of *Iliad* 23.77-91 [Dué 2001(a)].) The variants attested in the Classical period and beyond, even though in most cases they do not survive in the medieval manuscripts, are important. In at least one version of the *Odyssey*, to cite just one example, Telemachus goes not to Sparta, but to Crete. (See the scholia at *Odyssey* 3.313.) In a forthcoming work I discuss the manifold local Cretan epic traditions that are still present in our *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Matters of geography are the most likely to be at variance with each other in competing local epic traditions. Towns that have competed historically for the same territory have corresponding epic traditions that legitimize their claims. (See Aloni 1986, Nagy 1990(a).75, note 114, and Higbie 1997.) In the Panhellenizing process, points of geography become increasingly vague so that local color becomes screened out. Cf., for example, *Odyssey* 3.295-296: ἔνθα Νότος μέγα κῦμα ποτὶ σκαιὸν ῥίον ὠθεῖ. / ἐς Φαιστόν, μικρὸς δὲ λίθος μέγα κῦμ' ἀποέργει ("There the South Wind pushes a great wave toward a headland to the West at Phaistos, and a small rock keeps back the big wave). Zenodotus knew of a reading Μαλέου δὲ λίθος ("the rock of Malea") for μικρὸς δὲ λίθος.

of text fixation. This process was coextensive with the process of Panhellenization, as Nagy has shown in his discussions of what he calls the "Panathenaic bottleneck."[17] Nagy argues that the text fixation of *Iliad* and *Odyssey* occurred not through writing but in the context of increasingly limited performance at the Panhellenic festival of the Panathenaia. As the poems passed through this "bottleneck" the degree of variability became increasingly limited.

Nagy has shown that the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, as Panhellenic poetry that must appeal to all Greeks, screens out distinctly local features – particularly romance and elements of fantasy.[18] Because the Panhellenic phase of Greek epic necessarily occurred later rather than earlier in the system of Homeric composition, we must acknowledge that local details that are "screened out" of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are potentially older than the Panhellenic *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. But our sources for these more local elements are, paradoxically, chronologically later than the crystallization of the two Panhellenic epics.

The earliest source for these kinds of narratives, if it survived, would be the relatively less Panhellenic poetry of the Epic Cycle. These poems, attributed to various authors such as Lesches of Mytilene, announce themselves as being

---

[17] On the "Panathenaic bottleneck" see especially Nagy 1999(b).67 and Nagy 1999(a). For even earlier formulations of the role of the Panathenaia in shaping the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* see Nagy 1990(a).23; 1996(b).43; and 1996(a).77.

[18] See especially Nagy 1990(a).70-73 and note 99. Cf. Snodgrass 1987.164: "The legends will have included a substantial body of primarily local traditions, of the kind that often surfaces in later classical literature, sometimes to the embarrassment of the writers who retell it, because of its predictable inconsistency with the (by then) more widely accepted versions." Olga Levaniouk (2000) has explored the local features that do remain in our texts of the *Odyssey*, and shows how they can be reinterpreted and reshaped in a Panhellenic context. On the avoidance of fantasy and elements of folk tale in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* (in contrast with the Cycle) see Griffin 1977 and Davies 1989.9-10.

more locally oriented than the *Iliad* or *Odyssey*.[19] The poems of the Cycle survive only in fragments and in the summaries of Proclus; our knowledge of their contents is therefore limited. The summaries of Proclus, moreover, are not an entirely accurate reflection of the poems in their earliest stages.[20] Nevertheless, the surviving summaries and fragments give us an indication of the traditional content of epic poetry that was composed and performed within the same tradition as the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. These poems are more local in orientation and therefore include relatively more fantasy, folk-tale, romance, and local color.[21]

Jonathan Burgess has argued against a common interpretation of the Epic Cycle which views the poems as late compositions that are wholly derivative of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.[22] Burgess argues that the poems of the Cycle were originally longer than the surviving summaries would indicate and were in many cases overlapping compositions.[23] In the process of the formation of a true

---

[19] The converse is likewise true for Homeric poetry: many cities laid claim to being the birthplace of "Homer." No one city could claim the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as its own. See Allen 1924.11-41. On the local, that is, relatively less Panhellenic nature of the poems of the Cycle see Nagy 1990(a).70-79 as well as Burgess 1996.

[20] On the original scope and content of the poems of the Epic Cycle see especially Davies 1989, Scaife 1995, and Burgess 1996..

[21] See Griffin 1977 and Davies 1989.9-10 (who view these elements as signs of inferior poetry); Nagy 1990(a). 60-61 and 70-71; Burgess 1996.79 note 12 and 95.

[22] Burgess 1996. For this view see, for example, Davies, who has called the *Cypria* "a hold-all for the complete story of the Trojan War up to the events of the *Iliad*" (Davies 1989.4). Davies (1989.3-5) acknowledges that many of the narratives related in the Cycle were traditional, but argues that these narratives should not be attributed to Cyclic poems that predate the *Iliad*: "Provided we do not envisage Homer 'drawing on' specific *texts* of the *Aethiopis* or the *Little Iliad* (least of all those texts from which our fragments with their post-Homeric linguistic forms derive) all will be well: Homer will have been acquainted with the stories of the deaths of Antilochus and Ajax when he composed the relevant parts of the *Iliad*" (Davies 1989.5). Davies, unlike many scholars, is willing to entertain the idea that epic poetry contemporaneous with the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* narrated the events later contained in the *Cypria* and the *Aethiopis* (see Davies 1989.5), but nevertheless views the poems of the epic cycle as "attempts to fill in the gaps left by Homer's poems" (Davies 1989.4). For the opposite view, see Dowden 1996, who argues that when the *Iliad* refers to Cyclic traditions it is referring to fixed poetic compositions.

[23] Burgess 1996. 90-91.

cycle the poems were made to fit around the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and many existing books were cut out of the Cycle tradition.[24] Proclus' summaries of the Epic Cycle reflect this truncated textual tradition, rather than the more fluid and expanded (oral) archaic tradition.

The allusive references to the sack of Lyrnessos and Pedasos within the *Iliad* make it clear that a tradition like that of the *Cypria* flourished contemporaneously with that of the *Iliad*.[25] But as we have seen, the two traditions do not agree in every detail, and the *Cypria* may have told a version of the Briseis story that was quite different than the one asserted by our *Iliad*. Burgess in fact uses the differences discussed above in details about the sack of Lyrnessos and Pedasos and the taking of Briseis to show that the *Cypria* is independent of the *Iliad*, though part of the same tradition: "A better explanation of such general similarity with minor differences is that the *Iliad* and the *Cypria* independently belonged to the same tradition."[26] The variation on the Briseis story alone shows us that we cannot assume that the *Cypria* and the other poetry of the Epic Cycle are late stories based on Homer. In fact, as more local, independent narratives their content may well predate the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we know them.

---

[24] Burgess 1996.87.

[25] Many recent interpreters of Homer actually deny that the *Iliad* alludes to an independent tradition about the raids and prefer to see the cumulative effect of the allusions as the work of a master poet. See discussion above, p. 21.

[26] Burgess 1996.83.

Another very old source for heroic narratives about Troy are the representations on archaic vases. These too are a window into the fluidity – that it is to say the *multiformity* – of the epic tradition in archaic Greece. The relationship between text and image is not a simple one, but, as I will now argue, visual and verbal artistic traditions should not be separated in an investigation of archaic epic traditions.

Current scholarship about Briseis deals with perceived narrative inconsistencies within the *Iliad* and therefore relates directly to the concept of multiformity. One of the most discussed of these perceived problems has to do with the seizing of Briseis from the tent of Achilles. In *Iliad* 1, Agamemnon threatens to come himself to take Briseis away:

> εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλωμαι
> ἢ τεὸν ἢ Αἴαντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος
> ἄξω ἑλών· (1.137-139)
>
> But if [the Achaeans] do not give me [a prize] I myself will take one,
> your prize, or the one of Ajax or Odysseus
> I'll go and take...

> ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον
> αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίην δὲ τὸ σὸν γέρας (1.184-185)
>
> And I myself will go to the tent and take
> the fair-cheeked Briseis, your prize.

In actuality (as our text presents it) Agamemnon sends two heralds to take Briseis (1.318-325). Yet elsewhere characters refer to the incident as if Agamemnon had come in person (1.356; 1.507; 2.240; 9.107; 19.89). It seems as if two versions have become conflated in the received textual tradition.

Agamemnon himself suggests the possibility of an alternative version of these events when he first orders the two heralds to take Briseis:

οὐδ' Ἀγαμέμνων
λῆγ' ἔριδος τὴν πρῶτον ἐπῃπείλησ' Ἀχιλῆϊ,
ἀλλ' ὅ γε Ταλθύβιόν τε καὶ Εὐρυβάτην προσέειπε,
τώ οἱ ἔσαν κήρυκε καὶ ὀτρηρὼ θεράποντε·
ἔρχεσθον κλισίην Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος·
χειρὸς ἑλόντ' ἀγέμεν Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον·
εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώῃσιν ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλωμαι
ἐλθὼν σὺν πλεόνεσσι· τό οἱ καὶ ῥίγιον ἔσται. (1.318-325)

Nor did Agamemnon
let drop the contention with which he first threatened Achilles,
but he addressed Talthybius and Eurybates
who were his two heralds and quick attendants:
"Go to the tent of Achilles the son of Peleus
and taking beautiful cheeked Briseis by the hand bring her [to me].
But if he won't give her I myself will take her,
coming with many men. And it will be a very chilling encounter."

The *Iliad*, through the voice of Agamemnon, directly alludes to an alternative sequence of events that (I suggest) was current in the song culture when these lines were composed.

Geoffrey Kirk has proposed that the discrepancies between the two versions that appear in our text of the *Iliad* might be explained psychologically: the poet and characters, he argues, start to believe Agamemnon's threats. As an alternative solution he cites "oral inconsistency and imprecision."[27] Teffeteller has argued that the grammatical construction used by Agamemnon and others (αὐτὸς ἰὼν 1.185; αὐτὸς ἀπούρας 1.356) does not in fact imply personal agency.[28] But as Steven Lowenstam has demonstrated in his review of this problem, the iconographic tradition is similarly divided.[29]

---

[27] Kirk 1985.72. See alsoLowenstam's 1997 review of the problem for recent arguments and bibliography.

[28] Teffeteller 1990.

[29] Lowenstam 1997.

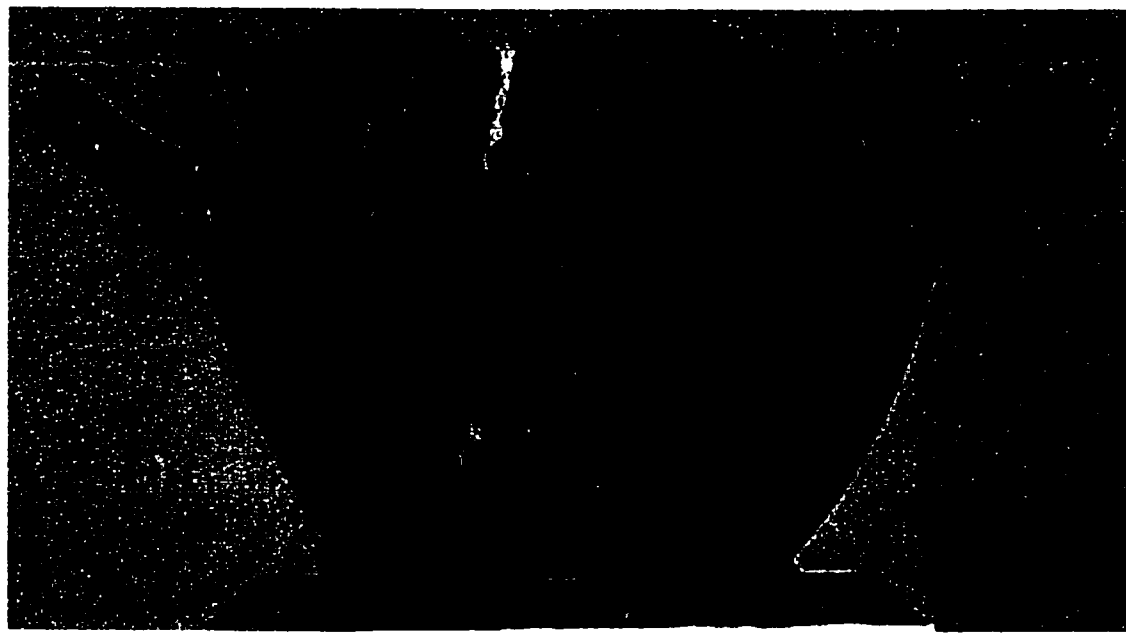
The taking of Briseis from Achilles is thought to be represented on several vases.[30] One of these is certainly identified; it is a red-figure skyphos painted by Makron, on which Agamemnon, who leads Briseis away by the wrist, is explicitly labeled.[31] Another vase, a red-figure cup by the Briseis painter (named for this same cup), is not labeled but thought to be an equally certain representation of the same scene.[32] There is an important difference between the two representations: whereas Makron depicts Agamemnon leading Briseis away himself, in the painting of the Briseis painter two heralds lead Briseis away, and on the other side these same heralds lead her to Agamemnon.

---

[30] These include Louvre G 146 by Makron (*ARV*² 458.2); London E 69, Brygos Painter (*ARV*² 369.2); London E 76, Briseis Painter (*ARV*² 406.1); see also *ARV*² 405.1 and *ARV*² 588.80. See *LIMC* s.v. Briseis and Lowenstam 1997.39–41. There is also a Pompeiian wall painting from the House of the Tragic Poet. For representations of Briseis in other scenes, see below, pp. 41–48.

[31] Louvre G 146 by Makron (*ARV*² 458.2; *Paralipomena* 377; *Addenda* 119). See also Friis Johansen 1967.157 and 161. The other vases have no labels, but show a man leading a woman away by the wrist.

[32] London E 76, Briseis Painter (*ARV*² 406.1; *Paralipomena* 371, *Addenda* 114). See also Friis Johansen 1967.156-157.



Louvre G 146 A: Agamemnon leading away Briseis
(Reproduced by permission of the Louvre Museum)

The pull of the traditional iconography of abduction might well be an explanation for Makron's depiction of the story. Traditional representations of Paris abducting Helen, including several by Makron himself, show Paris leading Helen away by the wrist.[1] The parallels may even reflect a comment by the painter on the similarities between the two events. In my chapter entitled "Prize" I try to show that the dispute over Briseis reenacts for traditional audiences the dispute over Helen. Here Makron shows us visually a similar substitution of Briseis for Helen. A similar kind of commentary is made - this time by direct juxtaposition - on a Boston vase on which Makron depicts Paris leading Helen

[1] See especially Boston 13.186 (*ARV*[2] 458.1), also by Makron (and signed by him) and Berlin F 2291 (*ARV*[2] 459.4, 1654; *Paralipomena* 377, *Addenda* 244), attributed to Makron. The leading of Helen back by Menelaus is also depicted this way. See again Boston 13.186 as well as Munich 1392 (*ABV* 281.16). For the iconography of Helen's abduction and return see Ghali-Kahil 1955.

away on one side by the wrist, and on the other Menelaus leading Helen back in the opposite direction.[2]

I do not believe that Makron has invented his own version of the taking of Briseis in order to bring out parallels between Briseis and Helen. These parallels were already traditional long before Makron painted his vase and long before the *Iliad* came to be in the form in which we have it. Just as the paintings support an apparent divergence of traditions in the text of the *Iliad*, so the text supports a divergence of traditions in painting. I am therefore in agreement with Lowenstam that two separate traditions regarding the agency of Agamemnon seem to be involved.

Makron's creativity, therefore, involves selecting between competing variant traditions in order to create a meaningful artistic narrative. In connection with Makron's depiction of Briseis, Lowenstam has argued that where representations of scenes known to us from the Homeric poems differ from the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we have them, variant poetic traditions are likely to be the source.[3] In so doing Lowenstam addresses an important question: to what extent do the archaic vase-painters invent aspects of the scenes they paint? If differences between Homeric and painted scenes are attributed to innovation, we should not use vases as sources for alternative epic traditions.

Following Ahlberg-Cornell, Lowenstam points out that archaic vase painters would not have wanted to paint scenes that their audience and potential

---

[2] Boston 13.186 (see references above). On this vase see also Caskey-Beazley 1963.32-37 and Robinson 1995. The two scenes are also a way of representing the passage of time, as well as the beginning and end of the Helen story.

[3] Lowenstam 1997. See also Lowenstam 1992. My own view is slightly different, for which see further below.

customers could not recognize.[4] But neither Ahlberg-Cornell nor Lowenstam denies creativity to the painters:

> Indeed, to appraise every evidence of variation from Homer's texts as stemming from creative license undervalues the painters' knowledge and range of choices and denies involvement in an interactive culture where they would be hearing, selecting, and retelling a great number of stories from many sources and different genres... The assertion that the painted variations are often based on competing versions of myths does not deny personal creativity.[5]

This same formulation could be applied to an epic poet.[6] The attribution of "invention" to an epic poet working within a traditional system or a vase-painter representing traditional narratives is a very problematic concept.[7] For just as the poet in his awareness of competing versions of myth calls upon the Muses to relate to him the "truth," so the painters are working within the traditional

---

[4] Lowenstam 1997.26 and 50. Lowenstam cites Ahlberg-Cornell 1992.10: "a basic pre-requisite of a discussion of epic/mythic representations in early Greek art - and this [is] true of Greek art as a whole - is that the artists always wished to represent motifs which could be understood by the contemporary spectator." Cf. Lowenstam 1997.50: "painters displayed their creativity in how they told their stories, not in recasting mythic narratives into completely new scenes that would not be understood by the viewers." In this respect Lowenstam's thinking seems to have changed slightly from his earlier study of vase-painters. Lowenstam's 1992 article emphasizes the inventiveness of the archaic painters. See 1992.174: "painters... might produce variations of the myth to present their own conception of the depicted story; 1992.189: "Kleitias... filled in the details as he imagined them; 1992.190: "as Malcolm Willcock says, 'We must credit [Homer] with a pervasive technique of instant invention' [=Willcock 1977. 53]." (Emphases are mine.) Lowenstam's 1997 article by contrast emphasizes the poets' creativity in selecting between competing but nevertheless traditional variants.

[5] Lowenstam 1997.66.

[6] Cf. the phrase of Lowenstam 1992.189: "traditional stories shared by both poets and painters" and Lowenstam 1997.27: "the mythic tradition was the common inheritance of poets and painters." For epic poetry, compare the formulation of Milman Parry, cited on page 1, above: "One oral poet is better than another not because he has by himself found a more striking way of expressing his own thought but because he has been better able to make use of the tradition... The fame of a singer comes not from quitting the tradition but from putting it to the best use" (Parry 1932.12-14 = Parry 1971.334-335).

[7] See discussion further below, p. 106-112

framework of myth. Myth, anthropologically speaking, is the conveyor of a society's truth values.[8]

It is on this point that my understanding of the relationship between art, myth, and epic text differs slightly from that of Lowenstam. The focus of Lowenstam's 1997 study of the relationship between archaic vase-painting and Homeric epic is his argument that vase-painters relied heavily and perhaps primarily on non-Homeric poetry (including lyric and tragedy). While careful to point out that archaic vase-painters did not think of themselves as illustrators of poetic texts, Lowenstam nonetheless emphasizes throughout his article the relationship between art and poetry.[9] It is my understanding, on the other hand, that archaic vase-painters, just like epic poets, illustrate *myth*, not poetry or text.

This is an obvious point in some ways. Burkert can write, for example, in passing: "As soon as Greek art begins to illustrate myth...".[10] But recent scholarship on artistic narrative has focused very narrowly on the question of whether or not the archaic vase painters knew *Homer* - that is to say, the poetic texts of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as we now have them.[11] Anthony Snodgrass' 1998

---

[8] On this point see especially Nagy 1992 and 1996b.113-146. For a person on the inside of a traditional society myth is truth. Someone looking in on that society from the outside, however, can see that there are many different versions of the same myth which are mutually inconsistent. Greeks became aware through contacts between different communities that their various local versions of myths were mutually contradictory. An Athenian version might be very different from a Lesbian version that might in turn be very different from a Spartan version. (Cf. the famous statement of Hecataeus (*FGrHist* 1 F 1): "the tales (*logoi*) of the Greeks are many [i.e., contradictory] and absurd.") Awareness of variant traditions - and selection between them - is not the same thing as invention. [On the statement of Hecataeus see Fornara 1983.5 and note 10.]

[9] On 1997.43, for example, Lowentam speaks of Makron's dependence on Aeschylus' *Myrmidons*. See also 1997.24 and 28, as well as 57 ("The conclusion that lost epic, and probably lyric poetry, influenced vase-painters in the Archaic period...") and 58 ("the hypothesis that painters were influenced by poems that no longer exist...").

[10] Burkert 1987.46.

[11] Cf. Lowenstam 1997.21: "The essential question in investigating the relationship between the Homeric poems and the epic stories painted on Archaic Greek vases is whether the painters were

book *Homer and the Artists* is devoted entirely to this question. But as Sarah Morris objects in her review of this book, the diachronic development of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* within a traditional system over many centuries and possibly millennia does not allow for even the question, much less an answer:

> This leaves little agreement on whose "Homer" we are comparing to these images, and we should feel some discomfort with the pursuit of points of convergence between two evolving traditions.[12]

In *Homer and the Artists* Snodgrass attempts to combat a simplistic understanding of the relationship between vase paintings and texts in which art serves merely to illustrate texts. Nevertheless, when he concludes that archaic vase-painters did not know Homer, he focuses too sharply on the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as fixed texts rather than as evolving, verbal representations of myth.

Epic poets represent myth through verbal narrative. Artists, drawing from the same storehouse of tradition, represent myth visually. Each medium has its own rules and conventions. Lowenstam has noted that the pressure of traditional iconography for a painter might be somewhat analogous to the pressure of the traditional theme for a poet.[13] We may compare the formulation of Albert Lord:

> In a traditional poem, therefore, there is a pull in two directions: one is toward the song being sung and the other is toward the previous uses of the same theme... The habit is hidden, but felt. It arises from the depths of the tradition through the workings of traditional processes to inevitable expression.[14]

---

depicting, with characteristic artistic license, the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* in the form in which we have inherited them." See also Ahlberg-Cornell 1992. For earlier studies of the relationship see Friis Johansen 1967 and Fittschen 1969. On the relationship between epic and artistic narratives in general see also Snodgrass 1979, 1980, 1982, 1987.132-169, 1998; Stewart 1987; Stansbury-O'Donnell 1999.

[12] Morris 1999.

[13] Lowenstam 1992.171.

[14] Lord 1960.94-97.

I would argue that the relationship between myth, poetry, and art should be imagined as a triangle rather than a series of arrows all headed in one direction.

This model of the triangle helps us to understand at least in part why vase-painters never seem to represent lyric or Hesiodic poetry.[15] The conventional subject of Homeric and Cyclic epic poetry and archaic vase-painting is mythic/heroic traditional narratives. Hesiodic and lyric poetry incorporate heroic narratives to some degree to be sure, but each does so within an entirely separate set of rules and conventions. If more vases and more Hesiodic and lyric poetry survived, we would no doubt find more points of convergence between the three. But the fact remains that Homeric, Cyclic, and visual representations of myth had far more affinity for one another than for lyric or Hesiodic poetry.[16]

If the myths about Briseis are multiform, then we expect both visual and verbal representations of those myths to be multiform. All Greek myth is inherently multiform, due to the local nature of Greek religion and culture. Lowenstam has demonstrated one such example of the multiformity of the Briseis story, as evidenced in both visual and verbal narratives of the taking of Briseis from Achilles. I now propose to look briefly at other visual

---

[15] See Lowenstam 1992.181 for Luckenbach's formulation that Homer and tragedy are the only "literary" sources for archaic vase painters.

[16] I do not mean to deny that Hesiodic and lyric poetry ever influenced archaic vase-painters, nor do I claim that vase-painters never had poetry in mind when they painted. Poetry is sometimes painted or inscribed on vases. See Ferrari 1987 and 1994-1995 for examples and bibliography. It is interesting to note that the examples cited involve a performance of some kind or words written in scrolls. In other words, the poetry does not label the scene but is part of the scene. Ferrari 1994-1995 discusses a possible exception to this formulation. For a survey of the vase-paintings on which lyric poetry is inscribed see Lissarrague 1990.123-139.

representations of Briseis, in order to explore more deeply the degree of multiformity inherent in what we know as the story of Briseis.

The following categories of representations of Briseis are detailed in *LIMC*: the taking of Briseis, Achilles and Briseis together in uncertain scenes, Briseis in the tent of Agamemnon and the return of Briseis to Achilles, Briseis lamenting Patroclus, Briseis with Achilles at the ransom of Hector, and Briseis and Phoenix in the tent of Achilles.[17] There are also several representations of Briseis (without Achilles) in uncertain places. Kossatz-Deissmann, the author of the *LIMC* entry for Briseis, argues that Briseis has no role outside of Iliadic scenes. Friis Johansen argues similarly: "When we meet her in art, the source is undoubtedly Homer."[18]

It is true that Briseis appears primarily in Iliadic scenes on vases. One late archaic amphora by Oltos, however, represents Achilles in armor on side and Briseis holding a flower on the other; both are labeled.[19] A similar combination of warrior and flower-holding maiden occurs on another late archaic amphora.[20] This kind of scene is reminiscent of narratives about local girls falling in love with Achilles when he comes to sack their town, a kind of scene that falls outside of the confines of the *Iliad*.[21] That the flower is an erotic symbol is confirmed by its frequent appearance in courtship scenes.[22]

---

[17] Kossatz-Deissmann 1986.

[18] Friis Johansen 1967.153.

[19] London E 258, from Vulci (*ARV*² 54.4; *Addenda* 79).

[20] In Basel, Antikenmuseum, Kä 424 (*ARV*² 183.8).

[21] See "Girl," pp.74-85 below.

[22] Gloria Ferrari suggests to me that the flower in such scenes is a symbol of loveliness and erotic attraction. On the iconography of courtship scenes, see Dover 1989.91-100 (and particularly 92-93 for girls holding flowers). On flowers as a love gift see Koch-Harnack 1989.

We may compare the Achilles and Briseis vase by Oltos to a red-figure cup, which is thought to be the earliest red-figure depiction of Theseus.[23] Jenifer Neils, following A. S. Murray, interprets the scene on the tondo, in which a maiden holding a flower faces a youth, as Ariadne and Theseus.[24] Here we have an archaic love story in which a young woman falls in love with a foreign enemy.[25] Neils interprets the scene in the context of other scenes on the outside of the cup depicting the deeds of Theseus, including at least one (and probably two) other romantic encounters. The obverse of the cup shows Theseus' abduction of Antiope. The reverse, which is incomplete, shows a male facing a girl holding a flower. Neils proposes that this girl is in fact Helen, whom Theseus abducted from Sparta.[26]

These paintings suggest that there was an iconographic tradition in which Achilles and Briseis meet and fall in love. As I have argued above and will explore further in subsequent chapters, this kind of encounter would be unlikely to be received into the panhellenized *Iliad*, but might be a prominent episode in local Aeolic poetic traditions.[27] Other vases that contain unidentifiable scenes depicting Achilles and Briseis together may be associated with these more local, perhaps Cyclic traditions.[28]

---

[23] London E 41 (*ARV*[2] 58.51, 1622; *Addenda* 80). See Neils 1981.

[24] See Neils 1981.178.

[25] Cf. the tales of Peisidike and Pedasa (discussed in "Girl," below) as well as such well known figures as Medea.

[26] Neils 1981.179.

[27] For Achilles and Polyxena in archaic vase painting and in the *Cypria* see Scaife 1995.189-190.

[28] For the unidentifiable scenes see Kossatz-Deissmann 1986.165.

The "Iliadic" scenes in which Briseis appears, moreover, likewise often call attention to scenes that are not featured in our *Iliad*. On the Ilioupersis cup by the Brygos painter Briseis and Phoinix are depicted together within the tent of Achilles, whose shield hangs on the wall.[29] Briseis pours wine while Phoinix sits in a chair. Both figures are labeled, and Briseis may hold a flower in her left hand, much as in the scenes discussed above.[30] Another painting by the Brygos painter is likely to be this same scene, but without labels.[31] There is no such scene in the *Iliad* in which Briseis and Phoinix are featured alone together. But it seems clear that the Brygos painting is depicting a narrative of some kind.[32] The painter even went so far as to label the characters. Again I suggest that this is a traditional scene that finds expression in painting, and may at one time have been represented verbally in epic poetry.

One of the most frequent representations of Briseis depicts her with Achilles at the ransom of Hector.[33] Although her presence may be assumed in the Iliadic scene, she is not mentioned by name until Achilles retreats to bed (*Iliad* 24.676). Several commentators have interpreted the effect of this last mention of Briseis in the *Iliad* as providing a kind of closure.[34] Her presence in visual

---

[29] Louvre G 152 (*ARV*² 369.1; *Paralipomena* 365; *Addenda* 111).

[30] See Friis Johansen 1967.154.

[31] Tarquinia RC 6846 (*ARV*² 369.4; *Addenda* 111). See also Friis Johansen 1967.154.

[32] The scene is no doubt to some degree sympotic. The shape of the vase (a drinking cup) is similar to the one that Phoinix holds, into which Briseis pours wine. But I do not think we should exclude the possibility that a traditional scene from a no longer surviving narrative is depicted here.

[33] There are six black-figure, and three red-figure vases. See Kossatz-Deissmann 1986 (*LIMC* nos. 24-29).

[34] See, e.g., Macleod 1982, *ad loc.* and Edwards 1987.58.

representations of the ransom of Hector also has a powerful effect: the taking of Briseis had set in motion the chain of events that leads to Hector's death and ultimately Achilles'. Likewise the return of Briseis to Achilles presupposes his return to battle, which in turn guarantees the death of Hector.

All of these scenes suggest a certain degree of multiformity to the Briseis story that is not generally recognized in current scholarship on Briseis,[35] which sees her as an invented character or at best a minor figure.[36] The narratives about Briseis that I have explored on vases may have been a part of verbal epic at one time. Many studies have shown that archaic vase painters often represented scenes that are not found in our *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but that are nonetheless traditional scenes from heroic tales.[37] I argue that Briseis and Phoinix in the tent of Achilles and the pairing of Achilles and Briseis in as yet unidentified, possibly romantic scenes are traditional narratives that are not featured in our *Iliad*, but that found expression in vase painting and perhaps other epic poetry that no longer survives.[38]

Archaic vase painting then can help us appreciate the multiformity of the heroic narratives of the Greek epic tradition, and make it possible for us to reconstruct variant traditions to which the *Iliad* alludes. It is important, however, to make a distinction between the *Iliad* - the fixed text as we now know it - and

---

[35] Lowenstam 1997 is a notable exception, although he discusses only the scenes depicting the taking of Briseis.

[36] On Briseis as an invented character see below, pp. 106-112

[37] Many of these scenes are thought to have been narrated in the Cyclic epics, which may or may have reached their final form prior to the archaic representations on vases. See Snodgrass 1998.140-142 (with his review of earlier studies).

[38] Cf. Lowenstam 1992.165: "Archaic paintings... can even preserve some very early epic scenes that have not survived in written versions."

Iliadic or Cyclic traditional narratives. No study of the relationship between the Homeric epics and vase paintings can work without appreciating this distinction. In our *Iliad* Agamemnon sends two heralds to take Briseis, but, according to another way of telling the story, Agamemnon comes in person. The archaic artists knew both variants of the tale, and "told the story" both ways, choosing between them like an epic poet in performance.

As I explore the paradigmatic power of the figure of Briseis in the following three chapters, I also necessarily explore the multiformity of the epic tradition as it is evidenced by Briseis' story. Because of the nature of what survives, we have only a narrow window into the larger tradition from which painters and poets drew their narratives. Reconstruction of the larger tradition can be difficult and often impossible, but, as an examination of the remaining sources will show, the ancient Greek artistic and epic traditions were at one time very fluid. We will see that we cannot think in terms of a "singer of tales," but rather singers and tales. The *Iliad* is one way of telling the tale of Troy, but it is by no means the only way.

Prize

The *Iliad*, as its first word makes clear, is about wrath. This wrath is no ordinary wrath, but μῆνις, a cosmic wrath that cause human loss and suffering.[1] Achilles' μῆνις causes the deaths of countless Achaeans, and fuels the killing spree that results in the deaths of countless Trojans, most notably Hector's. The cause of Achilles' μῆνις is the taking of Briseis by Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1.[2] As we will see, an exploration of Briseis uncovers essential themes and structures built into not just the plot of *Iliad* but the entire narrative cycle of the Trojan War as well.

When we first encounter Briseis in *Iliad* 1, she is not referred to by name. She is simply a prize. Two chieftains are fighting over a prize of honor, a spoil of war. That prize happens to be a girl, but, at least initially, she may as well be a tripod or a herd of cattle. The point is status, and the man who gets her has more status. Agamemnon, whose claim to honor (τιμή) is that he is leader of the expedition and commands the combined Greek forces, insists that he have a prize to compensate for the loss of his own. He threatens, moreover, to seize another man's prize if he is not given one:

> εἰ δέ κε μὴ δώωσιν ἐγὼ δέ κεν αὐτὸς ἕλωμαι
> ἢ τεὸν ἢ Αἴαντος ἰὼν γέρας, ἢ Ὀδυσῆος
> ἄξω ἑλών· ὸ δέ κεν κεχολώσεται ὅν κεν ἵκωμαι. (1.137-139)

---

[1] See especially Watkins 1977; Nagy 1979 (=1999).72-83; O'Brien 1993.78-80; and Muellner 1996. See also Schadewaldt 1938; Kakridis 1949.47-49; Adkins 1960; Considine 1966; and Nagler 1974.131ff.

[2] Cf. Athenaeus *Deipnosophistae* 13.560: Οὐδένα δὲ ὑμῶν ἀγνοεῖν οἶομαι, ἄνδρες φίλοι, ὅτι καὶ οἱ μέγιστοι πόλεμοι διὰ γυναῖκας ἐγένοντο. ὁ Ἰλιακὸς δι' Ἑλένην, ὁ λοιμὸς διὰ Χρυσηίδα, Ἀχιλλέως μῆνις διὰ Βρισεΐδα.

> But if they don't give me [a prize] I myself will take one,
> your prize, or the one of Ajax or Odysseus
> I'll go and take; and the one whom I visit will be angered.

Later Agamemnon makes the threat more explicit. He is going to take *Briseis*, Achilles' prize:

> ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον
> αὐτὸς ἰὼν κλισίην δὲ τὸ σὸν γέρας ὄφρ' ἐῢ εἰδῇς
> ὅσσον φέρτερός εἰμι σέθεν... (1.184-186)

> And I myself will go to the hut and take the fair-cheeked Briseis,
> your prize, in order that you know well
> how much greater I am than you...

The more explicit threat humanizes Briseis by giving her a name, but the motivation that Agamemnon gives for his threat seems to reveal her true worth in this opening scene. Agamemnon will take Briseis in order to prove that he can, and that he does in fact outrank Achilles and everyone else.

It is appropriate therefore that we begin the investigation of Briseis with an exploration of her role as a prize in *Iliad* 1. It is a role that is misunderstood even by characters in the epic itself. When Achilles refuses the compensation offered by Agamemnon in *Iliad* 9, Ajax exclaims in exasperation:

> σοὶ δ' ἄληκτόν τε κακόν τε
> θυμὸν ἐνὶ στήθεσσι θεοὶ θέσαν εἵνεκα κούρης
> οἵης· νῦν δέ τοι ἑπτὰ παρίσχομεν ἕξοχ' ἀρίστας.
> ἄλλά τε πόλλ' ἐπὶ τῇσι· (9.636-639)

> The gods made the heart in your breast
> both implacable and mean - for the sake of a
> single girl. But now we're offering you seven outstanding girls,
> and many more things on top of these.

Ajax doesn't get it: for him Briseis is a prize that can be exchanged for another of equal or greater value. But Briseis is much more than a "mere girl."[3] Just as Achilles' wrath is more cosmic and awful than the wrath of any other mortal in the *Iliad*, so the cause of it is much larger than might appear at first glance.[4]

Achilles gives us an indication of the greater significance of the taking of Briseis earlier in book 9, when he replies to the speech of Odysseus:

> τί δὲ δεῖ πολεμιζέμεναι Τρώεσσιν
> Ἀργείους; τί δὲ λαὸν ἀνήγαγεν ἐνθάδ' ἀγείρας
> Ἀτρεΐδης; ἦ οὐχ Ἑλένης ἕνεκ' ἠϋκόμοιο;
> ἦ μοῦνοι φιλέουσ' ἀλόχους μερόπων ἀνθρώπων
> Ἀτρεΐδαι; ἐπεὶ ὅς τις ἀνὴρ ἀγαθὸς καὶ ἐχέφρων
> τὴν αὐτοῦ φιλέει καὶ κήδεται, ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ τὴν
> ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον δουρικτητήν περ ἐοῦσαν. (9.337-343)
>
> Why should the Argives fight the Trojans?
> Why did the son of Atreus gather the army and lead them here?
> Was it not for the sake of fair-haired Helen?
> Are the sons of Atreus the only mortal men who love their wives?
> Just like any man who is good and sensible loves and cherishes his wife,
> so I loved her, even though she was won by the spear.

As Achilles points out, the Achaeans have gone to war against Troy over the taking of a woman. Achilles makes it clear that not only are the situations the same, but Briseis is the equivalent of Helen for him. Even though she is a captive of war, he loves her as a man loves his wife.[5]

---

[3] On Ajax' comment see especially Muellner 1976.106 and Nagy 1997. See also Taplin 1986.16-17. Taplin notes the preponderance of women in the restitution offered to Achilles by Agamemnon, who misunderstands Achilles' anger.

[4] μῆνις is linked closely with Zeus The only mortal besides Achilles who possesses μῆνις is Aeneas. Nagy 1979.73 note 2, suggests that the wrath of Aeneas must have been the central theme of another epic tradition (see also Nagy 1979.265-266 and 1990(b).24-28). Apollo's wrath at the treatment of Calchas and the subsequent destruction that he brings against the Achaeans is called μῆνις at *Iliad* 1.75.

[5] I pass over the question of Briseis' actual or possible status as a legitimate wife of Achilles because of the difficulty of analyzing social instituions in a poem that cannot be pinned down to any one time or place of composition.

Achilles' equating of Briseis with Helen on an emotional level allows us to see the formal connections between the two narratives. The dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 reenacts the taking of Helen from Menelaus by Paris. Suzuki has written of Briseis as a "second Helen" in connection with the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1.[6] As Suzuki writes: "the dispute between Achilles and Agamemnon reenacts the Trojan War in miniature."[7] Briseis substitutes for Helen in this compressed reenactment, and the wrath of Achilles is thereby equated with the cause of the entire Trojan War.

The mechanics of compression at work in this story within a story are a traditional way of incorporating chronologically earlier parts of the Trojan saga into the narrative frame of the *Iliad*. It has been a long admired feature of the *Iliad* that temporally earlier events are enfolded into the tenth year setting in order to present an almost complete narrative of the Trojan War. As Taplin has written:

> The *Iliad* is much too good to begin at the beginning (or to end at the end)... [the past] is conveyed by a wide variety of narrative techniques, ranging from direct narration, to symbolic re-enactment, to passing allusions fitting the 'jig-saw' as it had been pieced together so far.[8]

Among such episodes are the so-called *teichoscopia* and the duel between Menelaus and Paris in *Iliad* 3 and the Catalogue of Ships in *Iliad* 2. The *Iliad* can also foreshadow events as monumental as the death of Achilles and the fall of Troy. One of the ways that the *Iliad* foreshadows events is through a process of substitution. The best example of this substitution is Patroclus, who literally goes into battle in place of Achilles, wearing Achilles' armor, and dies in place of

---

[6] Cf. Suzuki 1989.21-29 and Lang 1995.

[7] Suzuki, p. 22.

Achilles. This substitution is similar to the way that Briseis can substitute for Helen in order to recall chronologically prior events.

In order to show how these substitutions convey meaning, I find it useful to analyze the narrative structure of the *Iliad* in terms of "micro-" and "macronarratives." If we think of the entire Trojan saga as an all encompassing macronarrative, Achilles' wrath and his withdrawal from battle in the tenth year of the war may be termed a micronarrative, or a story within that story. The *Iliad* itself likewise contains further micronarratives, which will have a relationship to the *Iliad* that is similar to the *Iliad* 's relationship to the overall Trojan saga. As we have already begun to see, the figures in any compressed (micro-) narrative can be substitutes for those of the expanded (macro-) narrative.

It is typical of micronarratives that Briseis be a "substitute" for Helen in the dispute of *Iliad* 1.[9] Helen was herself a prize, awarded by Aphrodite in the judgement of Paris.[10] By reenacting the central conflict of the Trojan war between Menelaus and Paris, the dispute of *Iliad* 1 alludes to and incorporates this important chain of events within its own narrative sequence.[11] Menelaus

---

[9] Taplin 1992.83. See also Lang 1995 and Ebbott 1999.

[9] Suzuki 1989.25 also uses the term substitute for Briseis in connection with Chryseis.

[10] Helen was a prize even before that in the competition for her marriage. The wooing of Helen is nowhere explicitly mentioned in the *Iliad* , *Odyssey*, or the *Cypria* (as far as we can tell), but there may be some allusion to this tradition in the formula of *Iliad* 3 "Helen and all her possessions" (3.70, 91). There is a partially preserved account of the wooing in the Hesiodic corpus (fragments 196-204 MW), in which all of the suitors send gifts (with the exception of Odysseus). Stesichorus also recounted the wooing in the (now lost) *Helen*. See Gantz 1993.564-567 for these and later sources.

[11] Doubt as to whether the *Iliad* assumes or alludes to the judgement of Paris has been expressed since ancient times. The only place where it is explicitly mentioned is at 24.23-30. The bT scholia, Aristonicus, and Aristarchus athetized some or all of this passage on a wide variety of grounds. Many scholars have since defended them. For a detailed summary of all arguments see Richardson 1993 *ad loc*. In any case the *Cypria* narrated the judgement (summarized by Proclus; see also Davies 1988 fr. 1), and it was the subject of vase paintings from at least 640 BC on. See especially Gantz 1993.567-571.

recounts a compressed version of the story when he boasts over the corpse of the Trojan Peisander:

> ὃ δὲ λὰξ ἐν στήθεσι βαίνων
> τεύχεά τ' ἐξενάριξε καὶ εὐχόμενος ἔπος ηὔδα·
> λείψετέ θην οὕτω γε νέας Δαναῶν ταχυπώλων
> Τρῶες ὑπερφίαλοι δεινῆς ἀκόρητοι ἀϋτῆς,
> ἄλλης μὲν λώβης τε καὶ αἴσχεος οὐκ ἐπιδευεῖς
> ἣν ἐμὲ λωβήσασθε κακαὶ κύνες, οὐδέ τι θυμῷ
> Ζηνὸς ἐριβρεμέτεω χαλεπὴν ἐδείσατε μῆνιν
> Ξείνιου, ὅς τέ ποτ' ὔμμι διαφθέρσει πόλιν αἰπήν·
> οἵ μευ κουριδίην ἄλοχον καὶ κτήματα πολλὰ
> μὰψ οἴχεσθ' ἀνάγοντες, ἐπεὶ φιλέεσθε παρ' αὐτῇ· (13.618-627)
>
> And he, digging his heel into his chest,
> stripped his arms and boasting spoke a word:
> "In this way at least you will leave the ships of the Danaans with swift horses,
> arrogant Trojans insatiate of the terrible war cry,
> in no need of further outrage and disgrace,
> which you outraged me with, you evil dogs. Nor did you in any way
> fear the grievous wrath of Zeus the thunderer,
> protector of guests and hosts, who will some day destroy your lofty city.
> You went away leading back with you in vain my
> wedded wife and her many possessions, when you were treated kindly by her.

In the *Iliad* , in fact, Helen continues to be a prize. In the duel of *Iliad* 3 "Helen and all her possessions" (Ἑλένη καὶ κτήμασι πᾶσι 3.70, 91) are to go to the winner.[12] More fundamentally, in the struggle between Greeks and Trojans, the person who gets Helen gets Troy and all of its wealth.

Micro- and macronarratives are made possible by the traditional nature of Homeric poetry. Briseis can bring the abduction of Helen to life because both characters are part of a system of traditional songs.[13] Every epithet, verse, and

---

[12] Cf. κτήμαθ' ἑλὼν εὖ πάντα γυναῖκά τε οἰκαδ' ἀγέσθω· (3.72,93); αὐτὸς ἔπειθ' Ἑλένην ἐχέτω καὶ κτήματα πάντα (3.282); and Τρῶας ἔπειθ' Ἑλένην καὶ κτήματα πάντ' ἀποδοῦναι (3.285).

[13] On parallel representations of the abduction of Briseis and Helen in vase-paintings see pp. 39-40, above.

theme brings with it the associations of countless past performances.[14] These associations create levels of meaning that are extremely rich, and each verse requires investigation from many different angles if we are to recover its full complexity. In *Iliad* 1 Briseis evokes Helen. But parallels between Briseis and Agamemnon's prize Chryseis should not be overlooked.

In the foregoing discussion we have already begun to see the way in which both Briseis' and Helen's value fluctuates in *Iliad* 1 between prize and wife. As one critic has written: "the poet presents two contrasting but overlapping ways in which men ascribe value to women-as wife and as *geras*, signifier of prestige."[15] When Briseis is a prize, we may compare her to Helen (and all her possessions) as the prize or reward of Paris. When she is a wife, we may compare her to Helen as wife of Menelaus (and later Paris). Achilles himself sets up this relationship in *Iliad* 9, when he asks if only the sons of Atreus love their wives, therey making Briseis his "wife." Agamemnon, however, is the first to collapse the two categories when he protests the return of his own prize Chryseis to her father: καὶ γάρ ῥα Κλυταιμνήστρης προβέβουλα / κουριδίης ἀλόχου ("For I prefer her to my Clytemnestra, my wedded wife" 1.113-114).[16]

As we shall see in the next chapter, the two star prizes Briseis and Chryseis are bound together in significant and interesting ways. Agamemnon professes to prefer Chryseis to his κουριδίη ἄλοχος Clytemnestra. In *Iliad* 19

---

[14] Cf. the formulation of Lord 2000.65 (quoted above, p. 1).

[15] Suzuki 1989.24. Suzuki focuses on the way that Helen and Briseis each become scapegoats: Helen for the Trojan War as a whole, Briseis for the destruction caused by the wrath of Achilles.

[16] The phrase κουριδίη ἄλοχος is difficult to translate into English. A κουριδίη ἄλοχος is a wife to whom one was betrothed in youth or young adulthood. See Nagy 1970.104-5, note 9.

Briseis laments that Patroclus promised to make her Achilles' κουριδίη ἄλοχος.[17] It is clear that each of these two girls represents something more than a prize. Already in *Iliad* 1 important connections between the two women are apparent. Agamemnon, despite his protestations, readily exchanges one for the other. Their names, both patronymic in form, are derived from their (presumed) towns of origin, Brisa/Brêsa and Chryse.[18] The metrical similarities in the names of Chryseis and Briseis allows them to share epithets as well: both are κούρη and καλλιπάρηος.[19]

Emmet Robbins has argued that parallels between Briseis and Chryseis are part of a larger connection between Achilles and Chryses in *Iliad* 1.[20] That Achilles' actions mirror Chryses' can be seen most clearly in Achilles' own narration of the events to his mother Thetis:

> χωόμενος δ' ὁ γέρων πάλιν ᾤχετο· τοῖο δ' Ἀπόλλων
> εὐξαμένου ἤκουσεν, ἐπεὶ μάλα οἱ φίλος ἦεν,
> ἧκε δ' ἐπ' ἀργείοισι κακὸν βέλος· (1.380-382)
>
> The old man was angered and went back. But Apollo
> heard his prayer,[21] since he was dear to him,
> and launched an evil arrow upon the Argives.

Chalcas becomes angry, retreats, and prays to Apollo, who brings destruction upon the Greeks. There are some significant differences. Chalcas becomes angry

---

[17] Helen is twice referred to as the κουριδίη ἄλοχος of Menelaus (7.392, 7.696).

[18] See above. p. 4, note 10.

[19] For Briseis as κούρη see above, p. 5 note 13, and "Girl," below; She is καλλιπάρηος at 1.184, 1.323, 1.346, 19.246. Chryseis is κούρη at 1.111; καλλιπάρηος at 1.143.

[20] Robbins 1990. For further discussion of Robbins' arguments, see also p. 73, below.

[21] ἤκουσεν in this context has the added sacral sense of "granted" or "heeded." See Muellner 1976.31-43.

(χωόμενος 380), but it is Apollo who conceives μῆνις (1.75).[22] Achilles, moreover, prays to Zeus through an intermediary, his mother. Nevertheless, Robbins argues, Achilles perceives their situations to be the same, and this in part justifies his actions. The juxtaposition of Briseis and Chryseis in *Iliad* 1, in Robbins' words "intensifies his sense that his own situation is like Chryses'."[23]

What is the significance of the relationships between Briseis and Helen and Briseis and Chryseis? Suzuki speaks of the "universality of Briseis' fate as woman's fate in the *Iliad*." She argues: "Briseis thus functions as a typical female in the poem, related to all other young female figures."[24] De Jong makes a similar observation about Briseis' lament in 19: "Thus Briseis, for once given a part as a speaking character, has become the mouthpiece of a whole group of characters."[25] In this way Briseis is a paradigmatic figure. Her life experiences evoke emotions and associations that apply to each of the mortal women to whom she is related in the *Iliad*.[26]

But the formulation of Suzuki, I would argue, is incomplete.[27] To what extent is Briseis her own person, with her own story? If the force of her character

---

[22] On the relationship between the μῆνις of Achilles and Apollo see also Nagy 1999. 74: "Just as Apollo chronologically has **mênis** over the abduction of Chryseis (I 75) before Achilles has **mênis** over the abduction of Briseis, so also the Achaeans have **álgea** from Apollo before they get **álgea** from Achilles."

[23] Robbins 1990.10.

[24] Suzuki 1989.29.

[25] De Jong 1987b.113.

[26] Segal 1971.55 makes a similar observation about Andromache: "She is the bearer of the suffering of all the women in the war, and perhaps all women in all war." Briseis' representation of women's suffering, however, is more complete than Andromache's; the capture and slavery or concubine status that is always foreshadowed for Andromache is realized in the figure of Briseis.

[27] Suzuki concludes that Homer has introduced Briseis in order to question the heroic code and call attention to its "inhumaneness" (1989.29). Suzuki argues: "he subtly criticizes Achilles' and Agamemnon's objectification of Briseis as scapegoat by endowing her with subjectivity and a

is only paradigmatic in that she substitutes for the other mortal women of the *Iliad*, why does her abduction set in motion the μῆνις of Achilles and its terrifying consequences? This question will be the focus of the next chapter. For now, however, let me make a start by suggesting that even the paradigmatic aspects of Briseis' character may be more powerful than might appear on the surface level of the narrative.

For Briseis, to go back to Ajax' complaint, is no mere girl. Within the *Iliad* she is equated with Helen, the ostensible cause of the Trojan War. Even on her own terms she plays a fundamental role in the plot of the *Iliad*. As I noted above, the taking of Briseis sets in motion the wrath of Achilles, the organizing force on which all other events of the *Iliad* depend. But by *Iliad* 9, Achilles' decision about whether or not to go back to battle has taken on a much greater significance. It is no longer a question of compensation for loss, but compensation for life:

> μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα
> διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλος δέ.
> εἰ μέν κ' αὖθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,
> ὤλετο μέν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται·
> εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
> ὤλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰὼν
> ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ' ὦκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη. (9.410-416)
>
> For my mother the silver-footed goddess Thetis claims
> that a two-fold destiny brings me to the fulfillment of death.
> On the one hand if I stay here and fight around the city of the Trojans
> my homecoming is lost, but my *kleos* will be unwilting.
> But if I return home to my dear fatherland,
> my noble *kleos* is lost, and my life will be long-lasting,
> nor will the fulfillment of death come swiftly to me.

---

voice" (1989.27-28). Although I do not agree with this line of argumentation, I do think that the emotions evoked by the figure of Briseis have a power that is not incompatible with Suzuki's interpretation. For my objections to the focus on the intention of "Homer," see above pp. 21-25. On Briseis as the invention of "Homer" see pp. 106-112, below.

A return to battle means swift but glorious death for Achilles. In *Iliad* 9, the prospect of a long but unremarkable life is appealing to Achilles.

I would argue that from the standpoint of the song culture in which the *Iliad* was composed and performed, the dispute over Briseis between Agamemnon and Achilles in *Iliad* 1 is already about life or death. And even more importantly, it is about immortality, *after death*, through cult. Achilles' choice as he formulates it in *Iliad* 9 is between a homecoming with a long life and *kleos* - that is, immortality through poetry and cult.[28] The poetic and religious significance of Achilles' choice is in fact first articulated in connection with Briseis. For in her role as prize, Briseis (along with Helen and Chryseis) is equated in *Iliad* 1 with τιμή.[29] Τιμή, generally translated as "honor," means (in religious contexts) specifically cult honor.[30] If we are to understand the full significance of Briseis' role in *Iliad* 1, we must consider this religious aspect of the word in context.

When Achilles gives his own reasons for fighting at Troy, τιμή is his chief concern:

> οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ Τρώων ἕνεκ' ἦλυθον αἰχμητάων
> δεῦρο μαχησόμενος, ἐπεὶ οὔ τί μοι αἴτιοί εἰσιν·
> οὐ γὰρ πώποτ' ἐμὰς βοῦς ἤλασαν οὐδὲ μὲν ἵππους,
> οὐδέ ποτ' ἐν Φθίῃ ἐριβώλακι βωτιανείρῃ
> καρπὸν ἐδηλήσαντ', ἐπεὶ ἦ μάλα πολλὰ μεταξὺ
> οὔρεά τε σκιόεντα θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα·
> ἀλλὰ σοὶ ὦ μέγ' ἀναιδὲς ἅμ' ἑσπόμεθ' ὄφρα σὺ χαίρῃς,
> τιμὴν ἀρνύμενοι Μενελάῳ σοί τε κυνῶπα
> πρὸς Τρώων· τῶν οὔ τι μετατρέπῃ οὐδ' ἀλεγίζεις·
> καὶ δή μοι γέρας αὐτὸς ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἀπειλεῖς,
> ᾧ ἔπι πολλὰ μόγησα, δόσαν δέ μοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν.

---

[28] For what follows I rely throughout on the arguments and methodology of Nagy 1979.

[29] On the connection between τιμή and μῆνις in epic and in cult see Nagy 1979.72-83 and discussion below.

[30] See especially the summary in Nagy 1979.118 and bibliography *ad loc.*

οὐ μὲν σοί ποτε ἶσον ἔχω γέρας ὁππότ' Ἀχαιοὶ
Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ' εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον·
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο
χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ'· ἀτὰρ ἢν ποτε δασμὸς ἵκηται,
σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μεῖζον, ἐγὼ δ' ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε
ἔρχομ' ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεί κε κάμω πολεμίζων.
νῦν δ' εἶμι Φθίην δ', ἐπεὶ ἦ πολὺ φέρτερόν ἐστιν
οἴκαδ' ἴμεν σὺν νηυσὶ κορωνίσιν, οὐδέ σ' ὀΐω
ἐνθάδ' ἄτιμος ἐὼν ἄφενος καὶ πλοῦτον ἀφύξειν. (1.154-171)

For I did not come here to fight on account of the Trojan spearmen
since to me they aren't responsible in any way.
For they never drove away my cattle or my horses,
nor did they ever in fertile man-nourishing Phthia
destroy my crop, since indeed there are many shadowy mountains and
the roaring sea in between us.
Rather, o great shameless one, we followed you so that you might be
happy,
while we won honor for Menelaus and for you, dog-face,
at the expense of the Trojans. To these things you don't pay any attention
nor do you care.
And look how you threaten to deprive me of my prize yourself,
for which I toiled much, and which the sons of the Achaeans gave to me.
Not ever do I have a prize equal to yours whenever the Achaeans
sack a well inhabited citadel of the Trojans.
But the greater part of the grief-filled fighting
my hands accomplish. Yet whenever the division occurs,
your prize is much greater, and I with something small but dear
go to my ships, when I am weary from fighting.
But now I will go to Phthia, since it is indeed much better
to go home with my curved ships, nor do I think that
I will accumulate wealth and riches for you while I am without honor.

On one level Achilles the warrior seems to be saying that he fights solely for the material possessions that are awarded to him. But a closer look reveals that the acquisition of a prize is closely associated with τιμή. When Agamemnon takes away Achilles' prize, his γέρας, Achilles becomes ἄτιμος (171). The loss of material honor in the narrative of the *Iliad* threatens Achilles' status as a recipient of cult honors in Greek religious practice.

When the Achaeans fight at Troy for the restoration of Helen they are winning τιμή for Menelaus (159). Likewise when Achilles refers to his γέρας -

the loss of which causes him to be ἄτιμος - he means Briseis. Briseis and Helen and Chryseis are prizes on the level of narrative, but on the level of poetry and cult nothing less than immortality is at stake. In *Iliad* 1, an argument over a woman who is a prize becomes a struggle between two epic figures for τιμή. Agamemnon responds to Achilles' threat to return home by saying that others, including Zeus, will honor him, even if Achilles leaves (τιμήσουσι 174). Achilles then asks for his mother's help in securing punishment for Agamemnon, because he did not show him any τιμή (ὅ τ' ἄριστον Ἀχαιῶν οὐδὲν ἔτισεν 1.412). Thetis supplicates Zeus at Achilles' request, and asks repeatedly for τιμή:

> Ζεῦ πάτερ εἴ ποτε δή σε μετ' ἀθανάτοισιν ὄνησα
> ἢ ἔπει ἢ ἔργῳ, τόδε μοι κρήηνον ἐέλδωρ·
> τίμησόν μοι υἱὸν ὃς ὠκυμορώτατος ἄλλων
> ἔπλετ'· ἀτάρ μιν νῦν γε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
> ἠτίμησεν· ἑλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας.
> ἀλλὰ σύ πέρ μιν τῖσον Ὀλύμπιε μητίετα Ζεῦ·
> τόφρα δ' ἐπὶ Τρώεσσι τίθει κράτος ὄφρ' ἂν Ἀχαιοὶ
> υἱὸν ἐμὸν τίσωσιν ὀφέλλωσίν τέ ἑ τιμῇ. (1.503-510)
>
> Father Zeus, if ever I helped you among the immortals,
> either in word or deed, fulfill for me this wish:
> Honor my son, who is the most short-lived of all others.
> Since as it now stands the lord of men Agamemnon
> has dishonored him. For he took his prize and keeps her, he himself
> having taken her away.
> But do you honor him, wise Olympian Zeus.
> Give power to the Trojans until the Achaeans
> honor my son and strengthen him with honor.

When Agamemnon insists on taking Briseis he attempts to take τιμή away from Achilles and secure it for himself. But Thetis' entreaty makes it clear that neither character can win τιμή without Zeus. Here the religious dimension of the word becomes most apparent. At the same time, Thetis makes the connection between τιμή and Briseis as γέρας explicit. Agamemnon has dishonored Achilles by taking his prize and keeping it.

As Nagy has shown, the loss and restoration of τιμή are fundamentally connected with the grief (ἄχος 1.188) and cosmic μῆνις of Achilles. We may compare the wrath of Achilles with the pattern of the Homeric *Hymn to Demeter*:

> The **ákhos** of Demeter is instantaneous with the abduction of the Kore (*H.Dem.* 40, 90-91). Her resulting **mênis** (*H.Dem.* 350) causes devastation in the form of cosmic infertility (351 ff.). The **timaí** 'honors' of the Olympians are this threatened (353-354), and it is only with the restoration of Kore that Demeter's **mênis** ceases (410), as her **ákhos** abates (ἀχέων: 436). Demeter thereupon gets her appropriate **timaí** (461), and her anger (468) is replaced with fertility (469, 471 ff.).[31]

Achilles, like Demeter, conceives instantaneous ἄχος when Agamemnon threatens to take Briseis (1.188). But for Achilles, as Nagy goes on to show, the restoration of τιμή and the cessation of μῆνις in connection with the abduction and return of Briseis do not bring an end to ἄχος; the intervening death of Patroclus brings about permanent ἄχος.

The abduction of a woman as demonstrated by Helen and then Briseis seems to be a theme with deep poetic and religious significance. The superficial consequences of the loss of a prize within the poetic narrative are primarily material and social, but the consequences on the level of cult are acknowledged and even emphasized by various characters. It is therefore too simplistic to accept the formulation of Achilles himself, who articulates the importance of Briseis in purely emotional terms. Briseis as "prize" unites three cosmic themes that are crucial to the plot of the *Iliad* and the character of Achilles: μῆνις, τιμή, and ἄχος.

---

[31] Nagy 1979.80

Girl

In the account of the Trojan War by Dictys of Crete Briseis is very much a young (or at least unmarried) girl, the daughter of King Brises of Pedasos, whom Achilles receives as a prize along with Diomedeia, the daughter of King Phorbas of Lesbos.[1] I this chapter I explore to what extent, if at all, the *Iliad* conceives of Briseis' girlhood. Briseis is referred to as simply κούρη in at least 11 places in the *Iliad*. Yet we know from Briseis' lament in *Iliad* 19 that she was married. Might there be in the appellation κούρη a reflection of an alternative tradition in which Briseis is an unmarried girl? If so, what would such a story be like? I believe there are passages in the *Iliad* that reflect to some extent such an alternative tradition. It is my aim in this chapter to try to reconstruct some possible variants on the Briseis story. I pay very close attention to traditional, formulaic phrases in order to uncover a history behind Briseis' brief appearances in the *Iliad*. I also explore the story patterns preserved in other, primarily later sources as I attempt to reconstruct Briseis' role as a "girl" in an Aeolic epic tradition.

In the previous chapter I explored the way that Briseis and Chryseis function as prizes in *Iliad* 1. For Agamemnon at least the two prizes are interchangeable. This interchangeability has an interesting corollary in the formulae associated with their metrically equivalent names. Both are patronymic

[1] See Dictys of Crete 2.16-19. For more on Dictys see p. 5 note 15, above, and discussion below, p. 74-77.

in form and seem to be derived from their (presumed) towns of origin, Brisa (Brêsa) and Chryse.[2] If this is correct, it could mean one of two things. Either the father of each woman is traditionally associated with a particular town, and that the name of each daughter has been formed as a patronymic,[3] or (at least in the case of Chryseis) the woman herself is associated with a particular town, and the name of the father has been formed based on the daughter's. The matter is further complicated by the fact that the names Chryseis and Briseis seem to have added significance. Chryseis may be related to the word for gold (χρυσός), Briseis to words for martial strength.[4] These two concepts define the men to whom they are attached. Throughout the history of the poem the names were no doubt interpreted in different ways. I would argue that the multiple meanings were appreciated simultaneously at various stages of the evolution of the poem. The complication is actually a part of the sophistication of this tradition.

It is a mistake I think to discount the importance of the father of each woman (as some scholars have done) by assuming that they are invented characters whose names derive from their (likewise invented) daughters.[5] I argue this because formulaically Briseis and Chryseis are more often than not defined by their girlhood, and they are consistently referred to as the daughters of their

---

[2] For the geography, see the commentary of Leaf 1900-1902 at 1.37 and 1.184. (See also below, note 30.)

[3] So Kirk 1985.57 of Chryses.

[4] See p. 4 note 10, above.

[5] See, e.g., Murray 1911.221 ("She has no father or mother: no history apart from the one incident for which she was invented"), and similarly Friis Johansen 1967.153. For more on the concept of "invention" and the phrase "Homer invented" see discussion below, 106-112.

fathers. Briseis is defined patronymically or in relation to her father in the following ways:

> Βρισηΐς (19.282), Βρισηΐδα (1.184, 323, 346)
> κούρης... Βρισηΐδος (2.689), Βρισηΐδος... κούρης (1.336), κούρη Βρισηΐδι (19.261)
> κούρη Βρισῆος (9.132), κούρην Βρισῆος (1.392)

And as I mentioned above Briseis is simply κούρη in at least 11 places in the *Iliad*.[6] Likewise Chryseis is κούρη at 1.98 and 1.111.

Carolyn Higbie has shown that the naming of Briseis and Chryseis conforms to the way that other women in the *Iliad* are named, although it is unclear to what extent the patronymic has replaced an actual name.[7] Women in the *Iliad* can be named by means of several combinations, including their own personal name, patronymic (with or without their personal name), husband's name, and homeland.[8] Even married women are often referred to by patronymic (with or without their husband's name). The prize of Nestor, Hecamede, is identified by personal name, her father's name, and land:[9]

> τοῖσι δὲ τεῦχε κυκειῶ ἐϋπλόκαμος Ἑκαμήδη,
> τὴν ἄρετ' ἐκ Τενέδοιο γέρων, ὅτε πέρσεν Ἀχιλλεύς,
> θυγατέρ' Ἀρσινόου μεγαλήτορος, ἣν οἱ Ἀχαιοὶ
> ἔξελον οὕνεκα βουλῇ ἀριστεύεσκεν ἁπάντων. (11.624-627)
>
> And Hecamede with beautiful tresses made for them an elixir,
> she whom the old man took from Tenedos, when Achilles sacked it,
> the daughter of great-hearted Arsinoos, whom the Achaeans
> chose for Nestor since he excelled all in counsel.

---

[6] 1.275, 298, 336, 337; 2.377; 9.637; 16.56, 85; 18.~~444~~; 19.58, 272.

[7] Higbie 1995.113.

[8] Higbie 1995.111.

[9] Higbie 1995.113.

We are not told whether Hecamede was married and whether Achilles killed her husband, in the pattern of Briseis and later Andromache. Scholars generally assume that Chryseis too, like Briseis and Andromache, was married and in her husband's city when she was captured.[10] The stories of these four captive women (Hecamede, Chryseis, Briseis, and Andromache) would then be nearly identical.

According to most interpretations of the relevant passages Briseis and Chryseis were born in Brisa and Chryse, but then moved to Lyrnessos and Thebe when they married.[11] Achilles captured them when he sacked these towns in a series of raids that took place just before our *Iliad* begins. We may compare the following passages:

> ὡχόμεθ' ἐς Θήβην ἱερὴν πόλιν Ἠετίωνος,
> τὴν δὲ διεπράθομέν τε καὶ ἤγομεν ἐνθάδε πάντα·
> καὶ τὰ μὲν εὖ δάσσαντο μετὰ σφίσιν υἷες Ἀχαιῶν,
> ἐκ δ' ἔλον Ἀτρεΐδῃ Χρυσηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον. (1.366-369)
>
> We went to Thebe the holy city of Eëtion,
> and we sacked it and brought everything here.
> And the sons of the Achaeans divided up everything well among themselves,
> and they chose beautiful-cheeked Chryseis for the son of Atreus.
>
> κεῖτο γὰρ ἐν νήεσσι ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
> κούρης χωόμενος Βρισηΐδος ἠϋκόμοιο,
> τὴν ἐκ Λυρνησσοῦ ἐξείλετο πολλὰ μογήσας
> Λυρνησσὸν διαπορθήσας καὶ τείχεα Θήβης,
> κὰδ δὲ Μύνητ' ἔβαλεν καὶ Ἐπίστροφον ἐγχεσιμώρους (2.688-693)
>
> For swift-footed brilliant Achilles lay among his ships
> angered over the fair-haired girl Briseis
> whom he took from Lyrnessos with great toil,
> when he sacked Lyrnessos and the walls of Thebe,
> and he slew the spearfighters Mynes and Epistrophus.

---

[10] Leaf 1912. 244; Taplin 1986.18, 1992.84-86. Kirk, however, suggests that she was visiting Thebe when she was captured (Kirk 1985.57, 91).

[11] See the commentary of Leaf 1900-1902 at 1.37 and 184, 2.690, and 19.286. For the location of ancient Chryse, see also note 30, below.

In the first passage Achilles narrates his own deeds (and those of his comrades) in the sack of Thebe. The Achaeans chose Chryseis out of the spoils of the town as a prize for Agamemnon. In the second passage, the narrator recounts Achilles' sack of Lyrnessos, after which he chose Briseis as his prize. The close relationship between the sacks of the two cities is reflected above all in line 2.692, in which the narrator includes both towns as part of a single expedition, even though the subject of this particular micro-narrative is Lyrnessos.

If Chryseis was married, as with Hekamede we never learn the name of her husband. Instead Chryseis and Hekamede (and likewise Briseis) are associated with their fathers and referred to as κούρη or alternatively as θυγάτηρ (11.626). War prizes, in fact, seem to be eternal κοῦραι, whether married or not. In the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, women whose husbands have been killed revert to their father's household: once widowed, they become girls again.

This sequence of events in a woman's life can be illustrated quite clearly in the case of Penelope in the *Odyssey*. As Higbie points out, the suitors never refer to her except as "the κούρη of Icarius, wise Penelope" (*Odyssey* 16.435; 18.245, 285; 21.321):

> This suggests, perhaps, that they wish to see her not as the wife of Odysseus and thus unavailable to them as suitors, but as an unmarried female, still under the protection and control of her father, or as a widow who has been returned to her father's authority. Indeed they urge that Penelope go back to her father's home so that she may leave it again as a bride (2.195-97).[12]

Higbie cautions against taking this argument too far, since elsewhere married women are identified by their father's name. But the parallels in the *Iliad* support Higbie's thesis. If Odysseus is in fact dead - and the suitors assume this to be the

[12] Higbie 1995.130.

case - Penelope is a war widow, and thus reverts to "girlhood" under her father's control.

It is helpful here to examine more closely the force of the word κούρη as it is used in the *Iliad*. In addition to applications of the word to Chryseis and Briseis, there are three major categories into which the uses fall. The first category is (goddesses) daughters of Zeus. These are Athena (5.733, 875; 6.305, 312; 8.384; 10.296; 24.26), Artemis (21.505), and Aphrodite (20.105), as well as the Muses (2.598), the Nymphs (6.420), and the Prayers, or Λιταί (9.502, 9.513). Helen is also κούρη Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο (3.426), and elsewhere she is Διὸς θυγάτηρ (*Odyssey* 4.227) and Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα (*Iliad* 3.199; *Odyssey* 4.184 and 23.218). The second category, perhaps not to be distinguished from the first, is comprised of the daughters of mortal men. Cleopatra, the wife of Meleager and daughter of Marpessa and Idas (9.557), and the daughters of Priam (6.247, 13.173), Phoinix (14.321), Agamemnon (9.388), and the rest of the Achaeans (9.396) are all κοῦραι.

The third category of uses of κούρη involves comparisons of warriors to girls. The first occurs at *Iliad* 2.870-875, in the catalogue of Trojan allies:

> τῶν μὲν ἄρ' Ἀμφίμαχος καὶ Νάστης ἡγησάσθην,
> Νάστης Ἀμφίμαχός τε Νομίονος ἀγλαὰ τέκνα,
> ὃς καὶ χρυσὸν ἔχων πόλεμον δ' ἴεν ἠΰτε κούρη
> νήπιος, οὐδέ τί οἱ τό γ' ἐπήρκεσε λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον,
> ἀλλ' ἐδάμη ὑπὸ χερσὶ ποδώκεος Αἰακίδαο
> ἐν ποταμῷ, χρυσὸν δ' Ἀχιλεὺς ἐκόμισσε δαΐφρων. (2.870-875)
>
> Of these men Amphimachus and Nastes were the leaders,
> Nastes and Amphimachus, the shining sons of Nomion.
> Amphimachus[13] went to battle wearing gold like a girl,
> the fool, nor did it ward off baneful destruction in any way,
> but he was overcome by the hands of the swift-footed Aeacid

---

[13] In the Greek text it is not clear whether Nastes or Amphimachos is referred to as the wearer of gold. Amphimachos is the last to be mentioned by name; Aristarchus understood him to be the referent. Others understand Nastes. See Kirk 1985 *ad loc.*

in the river, and war-like Achilles carried off the gold.

In this passage a Trojan warrior is compared to a girl on the basis of the gold that he wears, possibly in his hair like Euphorbus at 17.51-52.[14] The adjective νήπιος at first glance may or may not be connected with what precedes; we may compare 20.296 νήπιος, οὐδέ τί οἱ χραισμήσει λυγρὸν ὄλεθρον. κούρη refers to gender and age class, and may be descriptive rather than pejorative.

Susan Edmunds has shown that νήπιος is used of adults who because of "mental disconnection" put their trust in the wrong things, and hence lack awareness of their impending death.[15] Edmunds in an exhaustive study of the word defines νήπιος as the state of being mentally and socially disconnected in a way that is characteristic of children. νήπιος is in fact a negative expression of a root of which ἤπιος is a positive.[16] ἤπιος is to be "like a father" while νήπιος is to be "like a child."[17] νήπιος in this passage therefore applies both to what precedes (the state of being a κούρη) and to what follows (Amphimachus' trust in his gold). The implication is that to be a κούρη in this passage is to be a child and a daughter - that is a young girl who still lives in her father's house.

In the second of the two passages in the *Iliad* in which warriors are compared to girls, a similar collocation is made. Achilles describes Patroclus, who laments the deaths of the Greeks:

> Τίπτε δεδάκρυσαι Πατρόκλεες, ἠΰτε κούρη
> νηπίη, ἥ θ' ἅμα μητρὶ θέουσ' ἀνελέσθαι ἀνώγει
> εἰανοῦ ἅπτομένη, καί τ' ἐσσυμένην κατερύκει,

---

[14] See Kirk 1985 *ad loc.*

[15] Edmunds 1990.89-90.

[16] Preface to Edmunds 1990.

[17] Edmunds 1990.98.

δακρυόεσσα δέ μιν ποτιδέρκεται, ὄφρ' ἀνέληται (16.7-10)

Why ever do you cry, Patroclus? (You are) like a
νήπιος girl, who running along with her mother begs to be picked up,
grabbing onto her robe, and she hinders her as she is trying to go,
and tearfully she looks at her, in order that she be picked up.

Here, as in the preceding passage, a form of νήπιος is coupled with κούρη in order to convey a mental state that is characteristic of children (and not fathers). The application of κούρη νηπίη to a child running after her mother brings out even further the association with daughters contained in both words.

When we now consider the application of the term κούρη to prize women like Chryseis and Briseis, it seems clear that in the *Iliad* κούρη refers above all to the state of being a daughter, particularly a daughter who is under the control of her father. Only twice in the *Iliad* are married women who are *not* widows called κοῦραι of their fathers. As my last two examples show, the term κούρη contains connotations of gender and age class but is very much connected with the father/child relationship. The basic meaning of the word as we understand it outside of the *Iliad* is "maiden" - that is a young female who has not yet been married but is eligible to become married or on the verge of marriage.[18] Gloria Ferrari has recently shown that the state of being a νύμφη is one that a woman can experience multiple times.[19] Similarly Giulia Sissa has argued that Greek virginity (παρθενεία), once given up, is not forever lost but is actually recoverable.[20] If a woman is returned to her father's house, she becomes a "maiden" again, and eligible for marriage.

---

[18] Cf. the definitions given by LSJ[9] (s.v. κόρη): "girl"; "maiden"; "of a bride, Hom. *Od.* 18.279, young wife, Hom. *Il.* 6.247, Eur. *Orest.* 1438 (lyr.), Hdn.3.10.8, or concubine"; "daughter."

[19] Ferrari (forthcoming).

[20] Sissa 1987 (= 1990).

This is precisely what would have happened to Penelope, had she ever accepted Odysseus' death, and what does happen to her on the level of Homeric diction. Likewise Briseis and Chryseis become "girls" after the deaths of their husbands. It is Chryseis' father who comes to ransom her; she has no other male protector who can do so. After her ransom she is returned not to Thebe but to her father's household in Chryse. We may compare the fate of Andromache's mother, who was like Chryseis a married woman living in Thebe, married to King Eëtion:[21]

> μητέρα δ', ἣ βασίλευεν ὑπὸ Πλάκῳ ὑληέσσῃ,
> τὴν ἐπεὶ ἄρ δεῦρ' ἤγαγ' ἅμ' ἄλλοισι κτεάτεσσιν,
> ἄψ ὅ γε τὴν ἀπέλυσε λαβὼν ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα,
> πατρὸς δ' ἐν μεγάροισι βάλ' Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα. (6.425-428)
>
> And my mother, who was queen under wooded Plakos
> her he led here together with the rest of the possessions,
> but he released her after taking countless ransom,
> And Artemis who showers down arrows slew her in the halls of her father.

Like Penelope, Andromache's mother is a woman who has been married and has grown children, and yet returns to her father's household once widowed.

The state of being a κούρη implies marriageability. Girls are κοῦραι in so far as they have a male (usually their father) who can give them in marriage. The designation of Chryseis and Briseis as κοῦραι may help to explain the use of the phrase κουριδίη ἄλοχος in connection with the two women. Agamemnon prefers Chryseis to his own κουριδίη ἄλοχος; Briseis says that Patroclus had promised to make her Achilles' κουριδίη ἄλοχος. Earlier commentators have been troubled by the application of the phrase to Briseis not only because of her concubine

---

[21] Cf. Taplin 1986.18, note 6.

status but because she was married before. But Briseis and Chryseis, who are repeatedly referred to as the κοῦραι of their fathers, are on the level of Homeric diction explicitly marriageable.

The purpose of this examination of the term κούρη has been to determine to what extent Chryseis and Briseis are the quintessential girls and daughters of the *Iliad*. The *Iliad* after all begins with a man coming to ransom his daughter. As I noted above, the ransoming of a daughter is a theme that functions as both a macronarrative (Chryses and Chryseis) and micronarrative (Achilles and Andromache's mother) in the *Iliad*. Emmet Robbins has argued that the two stories should be read together and serve an important purpose in characterizing the behavior of Agamemnon (and later Achilles).[22] Agamemnon's harsh treatment of Chryses and initial refusal to give up Chryseis contrasts with Achilles' more reasonable (and respectful) treatment of Andromache's mother and grandfather. The ransom of Hector by Achilles in *Iliad* 24 then takes on even further significance in light of these two contrasting treatments.

The father-daughter relationships set up by the word κούρη are therefore very important for our understanding of two crucial and framing episodes of the *Iliad*, namely the ransoming of Chryseis and the ransoming of Hector. But to what extent may we view Chryseis and Briseis in that other aspect of κούρη - that is, as girls? As we have seen, the word κούρη, though it refers to an age class, may be applied to even middle aged women. Thus the term "girl," which is the

[22] Robbins 1990.

title of this chapter, may be an inappropriate one, even when κούρη is used of Chryseis and Briseis without further specification.

In Dictys of Crete, however, Briseis does seem to be a young girl under the protection of her father. In Dictys she lives and is captured in Pedasos, not Lyrnessos, and she's young enough that the Achaeans give Achilles both Briseis (who is named Hippodameia in this story) and a girl named Diomedeia[23] as prizes, because the Achaeans thought that it would be cruel to separate girls of their age:

> *ipse etiam Achilles praeter Brisi filiam Hippodamiam Diomedeam sibi retinuit, quod eiusdem aetatis atque alimonii non sine magno dolore divelli poterant et ob id iam antea genibus Achillis obvolutae, ne separarentur, magnis precibus oraverant.* (2.19)
>
> Achilles himself in addition to Hippodameia the daughter of Brises kept Diomedeia for himself, because they could not be separated without much grief since they were of the same age and rank, and because of this they had already before beseeched Achilles having fallen at his knees that they not be separated.

Dictys' version suggests to me the possibility at least that Briseis is a young (unmarried) girl in some traditions.

In such a tradition Briseis' father might play a role, perhaps as king of the city of Brisa (or Pedasos as here) and the father of Briseis' brothers whom Achilles kills (*Iliad* 19.293-294). The sack of Pedasos is narrated in Dictys of Crete as follows:

> *Ceterum Achilles haud contentus eorum, quae gesserat, Cilicas adgreditur, ibique Lyrnesum paucis diebus pugnando cepit. interfecto deinde Eetione, qui his locis imperitabat, magnis opibus naves replet, ducens Astynomen, Chrysi filiam, quae eo tempore regi denupta erat. propere inde Pedasum expugnare occepit, Lelegum urbem, sed eorum rex Brises ubi animadvertit in obsidendo saevire nostros, ratus nulla vi*

[23] Cf. *Iliad* 9.663-665, where Achilles goes to sleep with Diomedeia, now that Briseis is with Agamemnon.

> *prohiberi hostes aut suos satis defendi posse, desperatione effugi salutisque attentis ceteris adversum hostes domum regressus laqueo interiit. neque multo post capta civitas atque interfecti multi mortales et abducta filia regis Hippodamia.* (2.17)
>
> But Achilles, not at all content with what he had done, attacked the Cilicians, and there took Lyrnessos by assault within a few days. Then after Eetion, who ruled over this area, had been killed, he filled his ships with great wealth, taking Astynome, the daughter of Chryses, who at that time was married to the king. From there he began in haste to besiege Pedasos, the city of the Leleges, but when Brises their king understood that we were relentless in our siege, thinking that the enemy could be warded off or his family sufficiently defended by no amount of force, in despair of flight and safety and with the rest of the people focused against the enemy returned home and hung himself. Not much later the city was captured and many people were killed and the daughter of the king Hippodameia was abducted.

I note the variations from the Iliadic references to Briseis as follows: Here she is the daughter of Brises, but she has a personal name Hippodameia, which is nowhere in the *Iliad*. She is not married, but lives in Pedasos and is the daughter of the king. It is possible that Dictys of Crete incorporates into his retelling of the Trojan War a variant tradition in which Briseis is an unmarried princess. If this narrative is in fact a compression of an epic tradition or a fuller treatment elsewhere, it is clear that in that treatment the king Brises played a very important role involving the defense of his family, failure, and then suicide.

If we want to postulate that in a tradition not featured in our *Iliad* Briseis plays an important role as the daughter of a local king, just as Chryseis figures prominently in *Iliad* 1 as the daughter of the priest Chryses, we necessarily rely on a great deal of speculation, due to the nature of our sources about Briseis and archaic epic traditions outside of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Nevertheless, our sources present us with at least three possible local connections for Briseis, each

associated with very old traditions. It is my contention that these different locales also have different story patterns associated with Briseis.

In several places in the *Iliad* we learn that Briseis was taken from Lyrnessos (2.690, 19.59-60). But in the *Cypria*, as we are told by the scholia to the *Iliad*, Briseis comes not from Lyrnessos, but from Pedasos:

τὴν Πήδασον οἱ τῶν Κυπρίων ποιηταί, αὐτὸς δὲ Λυρνησ‹σ›όν[24]

One scholion also notes that "ἄλλοι ἀρχαῖοι" name Briseis Hippodameia.[25] In these two significant respects Dictys of Crete is in agreement with very old traditions against the *Iliad*. The association of Briseis with Pedasos and the name Hippodameia should perhaps indicate that Dictys had access to the "ἄλλοι ἀρχαῖοι" cited by the scholia, and that in some archaic traditions Briseis in fact gets captured in Pedasos.[26]

---

[24] From the T scholia at 16.57.

[25] From the A scholia at 1.392: ἔοικε πατρωνυμικῶς τὰ ὀνόματα αὐτῶν σχηματίζειν ὁ ποιητής. ὡς γὰρ ἄλλοι ἀρχαῖοι ἱστοροῦσι ἡ μὲν Ἀστυνόμη ἐκαλεῖτο, ἡ δὲ Ἱπποδάμεια. Note that here Chryseis is named Astynome, as in Dictys. Cf. Eustathius 121.10. The term ἀρχαῖοι in the scholia refers to Homer and earlier poets in contrast with οἱ νεώτεροι, who include Hesiod, the archaic poets, the tragedians, and Alexandrian poets like Callimachus. See Henrichs 1993.189 note 44. For the poets of the Epic Cycle as νεώτεροι see Davies 1989.4.

[26] Dictys' version, like many works of the Second Sophistic that claim to provide a truer and more accurate account of the Trojan War than that of Homer, is radically different than the version presented in the *Iliad*. Dictys claims to be an eyewitness to the Trojan War who accompanied Idomeneus and kept a journal. The authoritative frame of Dictys' eyewitness account is further supported by a dry, chronicle like style that adds credibility to the claim that the text is a war journal from the Trojan War. Paola Venini (1981) has described in detail the ways in which Dictys' narrative differs from the Homeric poems. The account is rationalized in accordance with the premise that it is a diary written by someone who fought at Troy. The gods do not intervene in the action, Achilles and other heroes do not possess superhuman abilities, and the Trojans are presented less sympathetically than they are in Homer. There are also a number of variations in Dictys that cannot be so easily explained. For example, in 2.47 Chryseis returns his daughter to Agamemnon in gratitude because she was treated so well by him. Such variations, when they are unattested elsewhere, certainly impart a fictional, novelistic quality to the narrative, especially for modern readers who do not have access to the full range of Dictys' sources. [For Dictys' sources see Griffin 1907.3 note 1 and the citations in Venini 1981 *passim*.] But it is important to note that very often the variations in Dictys are attested elsewhere. [See Venini 1981.175-196 with notes and citations *ad loc*.] This is the case with Briseis. For two recent discussions of the truth behind the "fiction" of many works of the Second Sophistic, see Merkle 1994 and Bowersock 1994.

In the *Iliad* there are suggestions that Briseis has still a third possible origin. In *Iliad* 9 and 19 Briseis is associated with seven other women who have been taken from Lesbos and are particularly famed for their beauty and handiwork:[27]

> δώσω δ' ἑπτὰ γυναῖκας ἀμύμονα ἔργα ἰδυίας
> Λεσβίδας, ἃς ὅτε Λέσβον ἐὐκτιμένην ἕλεν αὐτὸς
> ἐξελόμην, αἳ κάλλει ἐνίκων φῦλα γυναικῶν.
> τὰς μέν οἱ δώσω, μετὰ δ' ἕσσεται ἣν τότ' ἀπηύρων
> κούρη Βρισῆος (9.128-132)
>
> I will give him seven women of Lesbos, skilled in faultless handiwork,
> whom I myself chose when he sacked well-fortified Lesbos,
> who surpass the tribes of women in beauty.
> I will give him these, and with them the one whom I took away,
> the daughter of Brises.
>
> ἐκ δ' ἄγον αἶψα γυναῖκας ἀμύμονα ἔργα ἰδυίας
> ἕπτ', ἀτὰρ ὀγδοάτην Βρισηΐδα καλλιπάρῃον. (19.245-246)
>
> They led out quickly the seven women skilled in faultless handicrafts
> *and eighth was the beautiful-cheeked Briseis.*

At the end of book 9 Achilles goes to sleep with Diomedeia, the daughter of King Phorbas of Lesbos, who substitutes for the absent Briseis,[28] and with whom Briseis is paired interestingly enough in Dictys of Crete.[29] Briseis therefore seems to have some connection with Lesbos, although the *Iliad* never specifies what that connection is. As I noted above it has been thought that Briseis should be

---

[27] On Briseis as one of the beautiful Lesbian women see also Aloni 1986, who interprets these two passages as I do here.

[28] Aloni 1986 also interprets this substitution as indicating a connection between Briseis and Lesbos.

[29] Dictys of Crete 2.19.

connected with the town of Brisa (Bresa) on Lesbos. A town of Chryse has also been located on the island of Lesbos.[30]

A Lesbian origin for Briseis accords well with linguistic analysis of Homeric diction that shows that the *Iliad* passed through an Aeolic phase of transmission before reaching its final Ionian phase in which we now have it.[31] This Aeolic phase has been further identified as specifically connected with Lesbos.[32] The linguistic evidence has led several scholars to postulate a flourishing tradition of Lesbian epic poetry, to which Sappho 44, The Wedding of Hector and Andromache, may be related.[33] Gregory Nagy has demonstrated the way that the final lines, Πάου' ὀνκαλέοντες ἐκάβολον εὐλύραν / ὕμνην δ' Ἔκτορα κ'Ανδρομάχαν θεοεικέλο[ις, interact with Iliadic epic traditions about Apollo, Hector, and Achilles. In this poem, moreover, Priam's name is given as Πέραμος (44.16). Martin West has pointed out that this Aeolic form, like Πέρραμος at Alcaeus 42.2, shows that the Aeolians had an independent tradition about Priam and the Trojans.[34]

Richard Janko and Antonio Aloni have each discussed the historical circumstances that underlie competing Aeolic and Ionic epic traditions in the

---

[30] See Leaf 1900-1902 at 1.184. A town of Chryse was known in historical times on the west coast of the Troad. Fick derived Briseis' name from the town of Brisa and argued that in earlier tellings of the story both Briseis and Chryseis were taken in Achilles' sack of Lesbos.

[31] This was most convincingly established by Parry 1932, who showed that the diction of Alcaeus and Sappho is likewise traditional. For the Aeolic features of Homeric diction see also Palmer 1962, Hoekstra 1965, and Janko 1982. I note here that the territory of archaic Lesbos would have included the mainland opposite the island.

[32] See Janko 1982.91.

[33] See West 1973 and Nagy 1974.134-139.

[34] West 1973.191.

Troad.[35] Whereas Janko has discussed generally the Aeolic dialectical layer and the geographic implications, Aloni takes a more historicist approach in his analysis of conflicts between the Mytilene, the preeminent city of Lesbos, and Athens in the era of the Peisistratids.[36] Aloni argues that the political conflicts between the Mytilenaeans and the Athenians had their counterparts in competing epic traditions involving Athenian and Mytilenaean activities in the Troad.

I would like to build on the work of these scholars by trying to place Briseis within an Aeolic epic tradition. Her patronymic name is in fact characteristic of the Aeolic dialect.[37] What would an Aeolic epic narrative about Briseis and Achilles be like? As I noted above, the three different localities associated with Briseis (Lyrnessos, Pedasos, and Lesbos) are each connected with details that suggest different stories. In the Lyrnessos pattern, Briseis is married and Achilles kills her husband, who is the king of the city. This is the pattern most represented in the *Iliad*.[38] Chryseis, Andromache, and perhaps Hekamede are part of such a pattern.

In a Lesbian tradition, Briseis might be associated with an epic tale about Achilles' sack of the island and the "beauty queens" that he captures from each of the towns of Lesbos.[39] The A scholia at *Iliad* 9.129 note in reference to the seven

---

[35] See also Carpenter 1946.56-69.

[36] Aloni 1986. Janko 1982.92 notes that Phthian Achilles is an Aeolian hero, and that Lesbos made claims on the Hellespontine region in historical times. He argues: "All the essentials for a 'national' epic on the Trojan theme were present in Aeolis..."

[37] Parry 1932.28 (=1971.345) and Palmer 1962.98.

[38] See especially 2.688-693 and 19.295-296.

[39] For more on the epic traditions of Lesbos centered around Achilles see Aloni 1986.

women of Lesbos famed for their beauty that there was a beauty contest held in the precinct of Hera on Lesbos called the καλλιστεῖα:[40]

> παρὰ Λεσβίοις ἀγὼν ἄγεται κάλλους γυναικῶν ἐν τῷ τῆς Ἥρας τεμένει λεγόμενος καλλιστεῖα

Agamemnon, moreover, refers to Achilles' capture of the island of Lesbos and the seven beautiful Lesbian women when he offers them as compensation.[41] Achilles might also be interpreted as referring to this conquest when he boasts of the twenty-three cities that he has captured by land and sea:

> δώδεκα δὴ σὺν νηυσὶ πόλεις ἀλάπαξ' ἀνθρώπων,
> πεζὸς δ' ἔνδεκά φημι κατὰ Τροίην ἐρίβωλον·(9.328-329)

> I sacked twelve cities of men with my ships,
> and on land I claim that I sacked eleven below fertile Troy.

Could beautiful-cheeked Briseis be one of those beauty queens in a Lesbian epic tradition? The *Iliad* may evoke such a tradition, imbedded as it is in both the traditional order of the catalogue of Agamemnon's gifts ("and eighth was the beautiful-cheeked Briseis"), and the verse that describes them as conquering the tribes of women with their beauty.[42]

In the Pedasos pattern, as we find it represented in Dictys of Crete, Briseis is the unmarried daughter of the king of a city. Achilles kills the king - perhaps in order to carry off his daughter. Because we have only a free Latin translation of

---

[40] See Nagy 1993. Nagy shows that the sacred contest was not only for beauty, but was also choral. Cf. Alcaeus 130. 32-35:

> ὄππαι Λ[εσβί]αδες κριννόμεναι φύαν
> πώλεντ' ἐλκεσίπεπλοι, περὶ δὲ βρέμει
> ἄχω θεσπεσία γυναίκων
> ἴρα[ς ὀ]λολύγας ἐνιαυσίας

For more on the social and ritual context of archaic choral performances of aristocratic girls see Calame 1977 (=1997).

[41] *Iliad* 9.128-130.

[42] 9.128 (...αἳ κάλλει ἐνίκων φῦλα γυναικῶν).

an original Greek Dictys, it is impossible to know exactly how the capture of Briseis/Hippodameia was represented in the original text. Such a story pattern would have a very old epic parallel in the now lost *Capture of Oichalia* attributed to the Samian epic poet Kreophylos.[43]

A slightly different pattern emerges from an account of the siege of Pedasos related in the scholia.[44] Walter Leaf summarizes the account as follows:

> The siege of Pedasos seems to have enjoyed greater fame than fell to those of Thebe and Lyrnessos. It has an echo in a late story preserved by the Scholiasts on *Il.* vi. 35.[45] "It is said that this town of Pedasos was formerly called Monenia; and that Achilles after besieging it for a long time was on the point of retiring, when a maiden named Pedasa, who had fallen in love with him, wrote these words on an apple:
>
> Faint not, Achilles, till thou take the town:
> Water has failed them, and they thirst to death.
>
> Upon this Achilles stayed till he captured the place, and called it Pedasos, after the maiden." The whole spirit of the story is late, and the iambic lines show that is does not come directly from an epic source; but it is possible that it may be in some distant degree a descendant from the original Tale of the Foray.[46]

Leaf suggests that this story might go back to an epic tradition about the raids around Troy, which he terms "The Great Foray."

Leaf reconstructs this tradition from references in the *Iliad* to a series of attacks on towns in the area of the Troad. These towns include not only Lyrnessos, Pedasos, and Thebe, but also Skyros, Tenedos and others. Leaf

---

[43] See Burkert 1972 and 1979.78ff. and Davies 1991.xxii-xxxvii with bibliography *ad loc.*

[44] See the scholia at 6.35 The story is attributed in the scholia to Hesiod (= fr 214 MW).

[45] ταύτην τὴν Πήδασον πρότερον μὲν Μονηνίαν φασὶ καλεῖσθαι. Ἀχιλλέως δὲ αὐτὴν ἐπὶ πολὺ πολιορκοῦντος, εἶτα μέλλοντος ἀναχωρεῖν †πεισιδίκη† παρθένος τις ἐρασθεῖσα αὐτοῦ ἐν μήλῳ ἔγραψεν· "Μὴ σπεῦδ', Ἀχιλλεῦ, πρὶν Μονηνίαν ἕλῃς· / ὕδωρ γὰρ οὐκ ἔνεστι. †διψῶσι† κακῶς". ὁ δὲ περιμείνας ὑπέταξε τὴν πόλιν (bT) καὶ Πήδασον ὠνόμασε διὰ τὴν παρθένον (b). A fuller narration is provided by the A scholia, which assign the story to Demetrius and Hesiod. See Hesiod fr. 214 MW.

[46] Leaf 1912.247-248.

believed that these raids were narrated in a famous epic poem that was an important predecessor of the *Iliad*:

> When we place these [references to the raids] together, we see at once that they all belong to a consistent whole-the story of a raid by Achilles along the southern Troad to the very head of the Gulf of Adramyttium. They are, besides, so allusive in character, so graphic and yet so imperfectly told, that they can only be understood as references to a story, the main lines of which were quite familiar to those for whom the *Iliad* was composed. It is indeed possible to reconstruct the outline of the tale. It was evidently a famous epic poem... We will call it the poem of the Great Foray.[47]

Leaf, who was a part of the so-called "analyst" school of Homeric scholarship, is very text-centered in his theory of a famous epic poem. Nevertheless, if we substitute the phrase "well-known epic tradition" for "famous epic poem" Leaf's analysis is very similar to my own interpretation.

The tradition of the raids does not come down to us in a single fixed poem. This tradition, like that of the *Iliad*, was a fluid one, and our reconstruction of it must take into account a number of variations on the tale. One variation is that of the *Cypria*, which survives for us primarily in summary form. We know that the *Cypria* narrated the sacks of Lyrnessos and Pedasos, and perhaps much more.[48] Other variations are indicated in the *Iliad* itself. Allusive references to the raids form a relatively unified narrative that Leaf is able to reconstruct in striking detail.[49] The *Iliad* and the *Cypria* do not agree in every respect, however. An important detail concerns Briseis directly. As the scholiast at 16.57 notes, in the

---

[47] Leaf 1912.242-243. See also Zarker 1965-66.110-111, where the same passage is quoted.

[48] Since the *Cypria* only survives for us in summary form in Proclus' *Chrestomathia*, it is impossible to know the full contents of the poem. Likewise, it is difficult to reconstruct even earlier *Cypria* traditions to which the *Iliad* may refer. On the imperfect representation of the *Cypria* in the summary of Proclus see Scaife 1995.164-166.

[49] See Leaf 1912.243-252.

Cypria Briseis was taken from Pedasos, not Lyrnessos. The *Iliad* and the *Cypria* as we know them today are each variant manifestations of a tradition of the raids. As Jonathan Burgess has pointed out, the two treatments of the raids are similar in many ways, but they are nevertheless independent retellings of the same traditional material.[50]

The capture of Lyrnessos, Pedasos, the cities Lesbos and the others in and around the Troad are part of an epic tradition that is distinctly Aeolic.[51] As Rhys Carpenter and subsequently Nagy, Janko, and Aloni have pointed out, the pre-history of the *Iliad*, as it is narrated in the *Iliad* itself, takes place in Aeolic areas.[52] Achilles' associations with Lesbos in the *Iliad* connect him directly with Aeolic traditions, as his Thessalian birthplace of Phthia would suggest.[53] Another such connection is attested in an account of Achilles' sack of Methymna on Lesbos by

---

[50] Burgess 1996.

[51] Nagy 1979.272-273 argues for a *Capture of Lyrnessos and Pedasos* as local *ktisis* ("foundation") poetry.

[52] Carpenter 1946.56-59; Nagy 1979.140-141, 272-273 and 1990.75, note 114; Janko 1982.89-93; and Aloni 1986. See also Bethe 1927.66ff.

[53] See Nagy 1979.140-141: "We are about to see that there are Iliadic references to local epic traditions concerning Achilles, although they are as a rule merely marginal. In the *Iliad*, such references could not be allowed to interfere with the Panhellenic central theme of the expedition to Troy - an expedition that goes far beyond local epic interests. The Trojan expedition, as it is presented in its ultimate form by our *Iliad*, is a grand theme, which, by converging on the one main goal of Troy, unites on the level of content the heroic and material resources of the various cultural centers that may each once have had their own epic traditions about conquering various territories. Aside from its centralized thematic concern about the expedition to Troy, however, the *Iliad* also manages some marginal references to epic traditions about various other expeditions to other places, notably Lesbos (IX 129, 271, 664), Skyros (IX 668), Tenedos (XI 625), and Lyrnessos and Pedasos (XIX 60; XX 90-92, 188-194; cf. XI 104-112). These expeditions all involve territories that would have been Aeolic at the time that our Iliad took its present shape, and the Iliadic references to them consistently stress the heroic preeminence of Achilles. This emphasis on Achilles is particularly striking in the case of Lesbos: the *Iliad* says that Achilles himself captured all Lesbos (IX 129, 271), and the significance of such a heroic deed seems to have less to do with the epic fate of nearby Troy and far more with the here-and-now of a Homeric audience in the eighth or seventh century B.C. The *Iliad* is here verifying something that applies from the standpoint of this era: that the affinity of the Achilles figure with this particular Aeolic island is a matter of acknowledged tradition, incorporated even by Panhellenic Epos."

Parthenius.[54] This story is similar to the Hesiodic account of the siege of Pedasos discussed above. Parthenius cites 21 lines from a poem on the founding of Lesbos that has been attributed by modern scholars to Apollonius of Rhodes, in which an unmarried girl named Peisidike falls in love with Achilles after looking out on him from the walls.[55] With the hope of a wedding to Achilles back in Phthia she unlocks the gates of the town, admits the Achaean army, and sees her parents killed:

> δέκτο μὲν αὐτίκα λαὸν Ἀχαιϊκὸν ἔνδοθι πάτρης
> παρθενικὴ κληῖδας ὑποχλίσσασα πυλάων·
> ἔτλη δ' οἷσιν ἰδέσθαι ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι τοκῆας
> χαλκῷ ἐληλαμένους καὶ δούλια δεσμὰ γυναικῶν
> ἑλκομένων ἐπὶ νῆας, ὑποσχεσίῃς Ἀχιλῆος,
> ὄφρα νυὸς γλαυκῆς Θέτιδος πέλοι, ὄφρα οἱ εἶεν
> πενθεροὶ Αἰακίδαι, Φθίῃ δ' ἔνι δώματα ναίοι
> ἀνδρὸς ἀριστῆος πινυτὴ δάμαρ·
>
> Straightaway the maiden received the Achaean army within her country and unlocked the gates,
> and she dared with her eyes to look upon her parents being pierced by bronze and the enslaving bonds of women
> being dragged to the ships, in order that (at the promise of Achilles) she be the daughter-in-law of gray Thetis, in order that she have Aeacid marriage connections, and live in a house in Phthia
> as the understanding wife of the best man.

This kind of story, of which at least two local versions are attested, may be a traditional pattern associated with Achilles' raids against Aeolic towns. No narrative survives about a capture of the town of Brisa on Lesbos. The story of Pedasa related by the scholia nevertheless makes it tempting to imagine that Briseis' name is a variant related to such a pattern.

---

[54] Parthenius, Ἐρωτικὰ Παθήματα ("Love Stories") 21. See the edition of Lightfoot 1999. See also Nagy 1979.141, note 6.

[55] See the editions of Stern 1992 and Lightfoot 1999. See also Nagy 1979.140, note 6.

If there were indeed local Aeolic traditions in which Achilles has a love interest who helps him storm Pedasos and/or Methymna (and possibly other towns as well), I suggest that the *Iliad* associates Briseis with them on some level. Archaic vase paintings depict Briseis and Achilles together in a way that suggests a romantic encounter in which Briseis falls in love with and aids Achilles in the pattern of Theseus and Ariadne or Jason and Medea.[56] The *Iliad* would be likely to screen out such an erotic narrative,[57] but I argue that it does not do so entirely. In *Iliad* 1 Briseis leaves "unwillingly" (ἀέκουσ' 1.348),[58] and in *Iliad* 9 Achilles proclaims that he loves her as a man loves his wife, even though he won her in war (ἐκ θυμοῦ φίλεον δουρικτητήν περ ἐοῦσαν 9.343). In Briseis' lament for Patroclus in 19 we learn of her hope, like that of Peisidike, to become Achilles' κουριδίη ἄλοχος in Phthia.

To conclude I return to the title of this chapter. In two of the possible narratives that I have reconstructed, Briseis would still be a girl living in her father's house when her city is sacked. It is worth considering, therefore, that there is more to the ever-present appellation κούρη in the *Iliad* than we would assume at first glance. κοῦραι have fathers, just as traditionally Chryseis and Andromache and Iole have fathers. Embedded in the word there is already a story, and this story can be evoked whenever we imagine Briseis and other captive women as daughters. We might think of Andromache's words to Hector

---

[56] See discussion above, pp. 45-46.

[57] See Nagy 1990.72, note 99.

[58] Cf. Ovid, *Heroides* 3. Ovid transforms that single expressive word ἀέκουσα into a lover's lament in which Briseis rebukes Achilles for letting her go.

as she recalls the death of Eëtion: "you are my father and mother" ("Εκτορ ἀτὰρ σύ μοί ἐσσι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ 6.429). Captive women in the *Iliad* fall into one of two paradigms: unmarried women who have lost their fathers, or married women who have lost their husbands. Briseis, I suggest, can evoke both paradigms, because of the multiformity of the traditional stories associated with her.[59]

[59] So too Andromache, who loses her father in the sack of Thebe, but her husband in the sack of Troy.

αὐτὴ δὲ δούλη ναῦς ἐπ' Ἀργείων ἔβην
κόμης ἐπισπασθεῖσ'· ἐπεὶ δ' ἀφικόμην
Φθίαν, φονεῦσιν Ἕκτορος νυμφεύομαι.
Euripides *Andromache* 401-403

I myself embarked on an Argive ship as a slave,
dragged by my hair. And when I arrived in
Phthia, I became the bride of Hector's killers.

Wife

We have seen that in one of the traditional patterns that Briseis fulfills she is the wife of a king who gets killed in battle. In *Iliad* 9.340-341, moreover, Achilles asks if only the sons of Atreus love their wives (ἀλόχους), thereby likening Briseis to Helen and Clytemnestra and inviting us to think of her as Achilles' "wife."[1] In Briseis' lament for Patroclus in book 19 she says that Patroclus had promised to make her Achilles' κουριδίην ἄλοχον. I argued in the previous chapter that Briseis can be a κουριδίη ἄλοχος because, as a widow, she reverts to her father's household and becomes a κούρη again. But Briseis can also be imagined as a wife because of the narrative substitutions that unite her with Helen, the wife of Menelaus, Clytemnestra, the wife of Agamemnon, and Andromache, the wife of Hector. And just as we can imagine the captive Briseis as the wife or betrothed of Achilles, we can conversely appreciate Helen (the wife/stolen concubine of Paris) as a captive woman in a foreign land, longing for legitimate status.[2]

---

[1] Achilles goes on to make the analogy explicit in 9.340-343. See discussion above, p. 52.

[2] On the shame and self-blame that is such a pervasive part of Helen's character see Ebbott 1999 and discussion below.

In this chapter I propose to explore the way in which Briseis' lament for Patroclus in essence allows her to become a wife and a widow three times.[3] In this lament for Patroclus, she plays the role of a weeping widow, previewing the lament that she will sing for her new "husband" Achilles, for whom Patroclus is only a substitute.[4] As I noted above, her lament is so evocative of the plight of Andromache that it has been viewed by some as an awkward duplication of Andromache's own proleptic lament for her husband in *Iliad* 6.[5] And yet Briseis' song also evokes the death of parents, the hopes of a bride, and lost love. In this way Briseis' lament explores many stages of life, and a lifetime of sorrow is expressed in a single moment. Her song is both traditional, in that it incorporates conventions of Greek lament that are still alive today,[6] and personal in that it shows us, as nowhere else in the *Iliad*, Briseis' own life experiences from νύμφη to widow.

This duality is already a fundamental aspect of the ritual lament for the dead in Greek tradition. As Margaret Alexiou has shown on a functional level: "objectively, it is designed to honor and appease the dead, while subjectively, it

---

[3] Cf. Ovid *Heroides* 3.14-16: *ei mihi! discedens oscula nulla dedi! / at lacrimas sine fine dedi rupique capillos; / infelix iterum sum mihi uisa capi.*

[4] Both Quintus of Smyrna (3.551) and Propertius (2.9.9-14) depict Briseis weeping over the body of Achilles, although such a scene is not preserved in the fragments of the *Aethiopis* or in Proclus' summary of it - or in Agamemnon's description of the funeral of Achilles in *Odyssey* 24.36-94.

[5] See Erbse 1983.

[6] On the continuity and form of the Greek lament tradition from ancient to modern times see especially the foundational work of Alexiou 1974. For continuation and application of this work as well as further fieldwork, see Caraveli 1986; Seremetakis 1990; Holst-Warhaft 1992; Herzfeld 1993; Sultan 1993; and Danforth 1997.

gives expression to a wide range of conflicting emotions."[7] In terms of narrative, Briseis' widowed status is quite personal, but, as others have noted, it gains a great deal of power from the fact that Briseis' grief foreshadows the grief of every Trojan wife. When Briseis throws herself down on the body of Patroclus she is already a captive woman - something that Andromache only imagines herself to be in *Iliad* 6.

If we compare Andromache's speech in *Iliad* 6 with the lament of Briseis in *Iliad* 19, we find many traditional features that are typical of laments for the dead:[8]

> Ἀνδρομάχη δέ οἱ ἄγχι παρίστατο δάκρυ χέουσα,
> ἔν τ' ἄρα οἱ φῦ χειρὶ ἔπος τ' ἔφατ' ἔκ τ' ὀνόμαζε·
> δαιμόνιε φθίσει σε τὸ σὸν μένος, οὐδ' ἐλεαίρεις
> παῖδά τε νηπίαχον καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον, ἢ τάχα χήρη
> σεῦ ἔσομαι· τάχα γάρ σε κατακτανέουσιν Ἀχαιοὶ
> πάντες ἐφορμηθέντες· ἐμοὶ δέ κε κέρδιον εἴη
> σεῦ ἀφαμαρτούσῃ χθόνα δύμεναι· οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄλλη
> ἔσται θαλπωρὴ ἐπεὶ ἂν σύ γε πότμον ἐπίσπῃς
> ἀλλ' ἄχε'· οὐδέ μοι ἔστι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ.
> ἦτοι γὰρ πατέρ' ἀμὸν ἀπέκτανε δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,
> ἐκ δὲ πόλιν πέρσεν Κιλίκων εὖ ναιετάουσαν
> Θήβην ὑψίπυλον· κατὰ δ' ἔκτανεν Ἠετίωνα,
> οὐδέ μιν ἐξενάριξε, σεβάσσατο γὰρ τό γε θυμῷ,
> ἀλλ' ἄρα μιν κατέκηε σὺν ἔντεσι δαιδαλέοισιν
> ἠδ' ἐπὶ σῆμ' ἔχεεν· περὶ δὲ πτελέας ἐφύτευσαν
> νύμφαι ὀρεστιάδες κοῦραι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο.
> οἵ δέ μοι ἑπτὰ κασίγνητοι ἔσαν ἐν μεγάροισιν
> οἵ μὲν πάντες ἰῷ κίον ἤματι Ἄϊδος εἴσω·
> πάντας γὰρ κατέπεφνε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς
> βουσὶν ἐπ' εἰλιπόδεσσι καὶ ἀργεννῇς οἰέσσι.
> μητέρα δ', ἣ βασίλευεν ὑπὸ Πλάκῳ ὑληέσσῃ,
> τὴν ἐπεὶ ἂρ δεῦρ' ἤγαγ' ἅμ' ἄλλοισι κτεάτεσσιν,
> ἂψ ὅ γε τὴν ἀπέλυσε λαβὼν ἀπερείσι' ἄποινα,
> πατρὸς δ' ἐν μεγάροισι βάλ' Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα.
> Ἕκτορ ἀτὰρ σύ μοί ἐσσι πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> ἠδὲ κασίγνητος, σὺ δέ μοι θαλερὸς παρακοίτης·
> ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἐλέαιρε καὶ αὐτοῦ μίμν' ἐπὶ πύργῳ,
> μὴ παῖδ' ὀρφανικὸν θήῃς χήρην τε γυναῖκα·(*Iliad* 6.405-432)

---

[7] 1974.55.

[8] On Andromache's speech as a traditional lament see also Foley 1999.188-198.

> Andromache stood near to him, shedding a tear,
> and she reached towards him with her hand and spoke a word and addressed him:
> "*daimonios* one, your own spirit will destroy you, nor do you pity
> your infant son nor me, ill-fated, I who will soon be
> your widow. For soon the Achaeans will kill you,
> making an attack all together. It would be better for me
> to plunge into the earth if I lost you. For no longer will there be any
> comfort once you have met your fate,
> but grief. Nor are my father and mistress mother still alive.
> For indeed brilliant Achilles killed my father,
> and he utterly sacked the well-inhabited city of the Cilicians,
> high-gated Thebe. And he slew Eëtion,
> but he did not strip him, for in this respect at least he felt reverence in his *thumos*,
> but rather he burned his body together with his well-wrought armor,
> and built a funeral mound over him. And mountain nymphs,
> the daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus, planted elms around him.
> I had seven brothers in the palace;
> all of them went to Hades on the same day.
> For brilliant swift-footed Achilles killed all of them
> among their rolling-gaited cattle and gleaming white sheep.
> But my mother, who was queen under wooded Plakos,
> he led here together with other possessions
> and then released her after taking countless ransom,
> and Artemis who pours down arrows struck her down in the halls of her father.
> Hector, *you* are my father and mistress mother,
> you are my brother, and you are my flourishing husband.
> I beg you, pity me and stay here on the tower,
> don't make your child an orphan and your wife a widow.

Alexiou has described the three-part structure of traditional Greek laments, and notes that the laments of *Iliad* 24 all conform to this three-part pattern.[9] It consists of a direct address, a narrative of the past or future, and then a renewed address accompanied by reproach and lamentation. Andromache's speech to Hector in *Iliad* 6, though it is not explicitly termed γόος or θρῆνος (which are the usual Greek words for lament),[10] nevertheless exhibits this same structure. She first

---

[9] Alexiou 1974.133. See also Lohmann 1970.108-112 and Foley 1991.168-174.

[10] γόος is usually applied to the laments of non-professional female relatives, while θρῆνος is used of lament "especially composed and performed at the funeral by non-kinsmen" (Alexiou

addresses Hector in the second person directly, then narrates the deaths of her family members in the sack of her city, and then concludes by addressing Hector once again.

Upon Hector's departure, moreover, Andromache returns home and initiates an antiphonal refrain of lamentation among her serving women:[11]

> ὣς ἄρα φωνήσας κόρυθ' εἵλετο φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ
> ἵππουριν· ἄλοχος δὲ φίλη οἶκον δὲ βεβήκει
> ἐντροπαλιζομένη, θαλερὸν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσα.
> αἶψα δ' ἔπειθ' ἵκανε δόμους εὖ ναιετάοντας
> Ἕκτορος ἀνδροφόνοιο, κιχήσατο δ' ἔνδοθι πολλὰς
> ἀμφιπόλους, τῇσιν δὲ γόον πάσῃσιν ἐνῶρσεν.
> αἳ μὲν ἔτι ζωὸν γόον Ἕκτορα ᾧ ἐνὶ οἴκῳ·
> (*Iliad* 6.494-500)

> So he spoke and brilliant Hector took up his helmet
> of horse hair. And his dear wife went home,
> though frequently she turned back, shedding abundant tears.
> And when she quickly reached the well-inhabited house
> of man-slaying Hector, and found inside her many
> attendants, she initiated lamentation in all of them.
> They lamented Hector in his own home, although he was still alive.

Although there is a spatial and temporal gap between Andromache's speech and the γόος for Hector among the women, we may compare the juxtaposition of the two scenes in *Iliad* 6 to the conclusion of Briseis' lament in 19.301. Many have commented on the element of antiphonal refrain: "ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες / Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν, σφῶν δ' αὐτῶν κήδε' ἑκάστη"

1974.12). As Alexiou points out, in the *Odyssey* the lamentation of the ocean nymphs, who are Achilles' female relatives, is termed γόος, but the Muses sing a θρῆνος. At Hector's funeral a contrast is made between the γόος of the kinwomen, and the θρῆνοι of the professional singers (*Iliad* 24.720-723). In tragedy, however, there is little distinction between the two terms. For terminology of Greek laments see Alexiou 1974.11-12 and Sultan 1993.93-94.

[11] On the antiphonal refrain of Greek laments, already present in the laments of the *Iliad*, see Alexiou 1974.131-160.

(19.301-302).[12] Verse 19.301 also concludes Andromache's laments for Hector at *Iliad* 22.515 and 24.746. For στενάχοντο as antiphonal wailing I adduce *Iliad* 24.720-723 with Alexiou's translation:

> παρὰ δ' εἶσαν ἀοιδοὺς
> θρήνων ἐξάρχους, οἵ τε στονόεσσαν ἀοιδὴν
> οἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἐθρήνεον, ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.
> τῇσιν δ' Ἀνδρομάχη λευκώλενος ἦρχε γόοιο
>
> They brought in singers,
> leaders of the dirges, who sang laments
> in mournful tune, while the women wailed in chorus.
> White-armed Andromache led their keening.[13]

Finally, Hecuba's lament at *Iliad* 24.760 concludes with a similar instigation of antiphonal weeping: ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσα, γόον δ' ἀλίαστον ὄρινε ("so she spoke, weeping, and she initiated unabating lamentation"). Thus both the form of Andromache's speech and the antiphonal response evoke traditional laments for the dead. Andromache is shown to mourn for Hector, as the text at *Iliad* 6.500 comments, while he is still alive.

The content of Andromache's speech in *Iliad* 6 likewise resonates with other traditional laments in the *Iliad*. The reproach that has been noted as characteristic of laments often takes the form of an accusation of abandonment.[14] Andromache does not reproach Hector directly in this speech, but she does warn him not to leave her a widow and their son an orphan. Hector admits he'd rather die than see Andromache led off into captivity (6.464-465). Andromache herself expresses a wish to die if she loses Hector (6.410-411), and this wish too is a

---

[12] Alexiou 1974.132. Cf. p. 134: "There is no example in Greek antiquity of a lament which has lost all traces of refrain." See e.g. de Jong 1987b.113 and Edwards 1991 (*ad loc.*), who remark upon the response of the women but who do not relate it to traditional lament patterns.

[13] Alexiou 1974.12. Cf. 22.515 (=24.746): ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες.

[14] Alexiou 1974.182-184.

common feature of laments.[15] The accusation of abandonment in both ancient and modern Greek laments is typically accompanied by a description of the lamenting woman's endangered position in the community.[16] Andromache relates how she has lost the protection of all of her family members, and sets up Hector as her last resource.

We may compare here the way that Briseis too relates the deaths of her husband and brothers:

> ἄνδρα μὲν ᾧ ἔδοσάν με πατὴρ καὶ πότνια μήτηρ
> εἶδον πρὸ πτόλιος δεδαϊγμένον ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> τρεῖς τε κασιγνήτους, τούς μοι μία γείνατο μήτηρ,
> κηδείους, οἳ πάντες ὁλέθριον ἦμαρ ἐπέσπον. (19.291-294)
>
> The husband to whom my father and mistress mother gave me
> I saw pierced by the sharp bronze before the city,
> and my three brothers, whom one mother bore together with me,
> beloved ones, all of whom met their day of destruction.

Andromache's and Briseis' laments are representative of the way that wives and females in general comment on their status in the community once the man whom they are mourning is dead. Michael Herzfeld has shown in his study of a modern Cretan funeral how women may actually manipulate their status by evoking the sympathy of their audience and warding off potential reproach.[17] Mary Ebbott, following up on the work of Herzfeld, has analyzed Helen's language of self-blame in the *Iliad* in order to show how Helen uses the language of lament in even non-lament contexts to voice a view of herself that other

---

[15] Alexiou 1974.178-181 and citations at note 46. Cf. *Iliad* 22.481, where Andromache wishes she had never been born, and Helen's similar wish at 24.764.

[16] Alexiou 1974.165-184; Caraveli 1986; Herzfeld 1993.

[17] Herzfeld 1993.

characters in the *Iliad* never express.[18] We can see in Andromache's speech a similar kind of positioning through lament language even before Hector's death.

Many of the traditional lament themes that are featured in Andromache's speech recur when she learns of the death of Hector in *Iliad* 22 and in her lament at Hector's funeral in *Iliad* 24.[19] She relates how Hector has left her a widow and their son an orphan (ἄνερ ἀπ' αἰῶνος νέος ὤλεο, κὰδ δέ με χήρην / λείπεις ἐν μεγάροισι· πάϊς δ' ἔτι νήπιος αὖτως 24.726-727 ~ οὐδ' ἐλεαίρεις / παῖδά τε νηπίαχον καὶ ἔμ' ἄμμορον, ἣ τάχα χήρη / σεῦ ἔσομαι 6.407-409).[20] She describes the life of servitude that will be hers, and speculates that Astyanax will likewise be a slave or else hurled to his death from the walls (24.727-728, 732-735). Andromache addresses both Hector and Astyanax directly, in essence lamenting both of them. In *Iliad* 6 Andromache argues that life will not be worth living if Hector dies; in her lament in 24 Andromache makes a traditional comment on the sorrowful life that Hector has left behind for her:

> οὐ γὰρ ἔτ' ἄλλη
> ἔσται θαλπωρὴ ἐπεὶ ἂν σύ γε πότμον ἐπίσπῃς
> ἀλλ' ἄχε'· (6.411-413)

For there will no longer be

---

[18] Ebbott 1999.

[19] See *Iliad* 22.477-514. On the relationship between Andromache's speech in 6 and her lament in 24 see also Lohmann 1988.70-74. Charles Segal explores what he terms "formulaic artistry" in Andromache's lament in *Iliad* 22, and examines specifically the way in which Andromache's position as ἄλοχος is brought out in the lament: "Indeed, she is not referred to by name in the entire passage. Her personal identity is defined by her status as "Hector's wife." And it is precisely in this role that, after father and mother, she laments the fallen warrior" (Segal 1971.37).

[20] Cf. as well Andromache's final plea at the end of the speech: ἀλλ' ἄγε νῦν ἐλέαιρε καὶ αὐτοῦ μίμν' ἐπὶ πύργῳ. / μὴ παῖδ' ὀρφανικὸν θήῃς χήρην τε γυναῖκα· (6.431-432). In *Iliad* 22.482-486 her reproach is even stronger: ἔρχεαι, αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ στυγερῷ ἐνὶ πένθεϊ λείπεις / χήρην ἐν μεγάροισι· πάϊς δ' ἔτι νήπιος αὖτως, / ὃν τέκομεν σύ τ' ἐγώ τε δυσάμμοροι· οὔτε σὺ τούτῳ / ἔσσεαι Ἕκτορ ὄνειαρ ἐπεὶ θάνες, οὔτε σοὶ οὗτος. ("Now you are gone to the house of Hades under the paths of the earth, / but you leave me behind in hateful grief, / a widow in the palace. And your child is still an infant,/ whom you and I, ill-fated, bore. You will be no help/ to this one now that you are dead, nor will he be any help to you.")

any comfort once you have met your fate,
but grief.

ἐμοὶ δὲ μάλιστα λελείψεται ἄλγεα λυγρά.
οὐ γάρ μοι θνήσκων λεχέων ἐκ χεῖρας ὄρεξας,
οὐδέ τί μοι εἶπες πυκινὸν ἔπος, οὔ τέ κεν αἰεὶ
μεμνήμην νύκτάς τε καὶ ἤματα δάκρυ χέουσα. (24.742-745)

But for me especially you have left behind grievous pain.
For when you died you did not stretch out your arms to me from our
marriage bed,
nor did you speak to me an intimate phrase, which I could always
remember when I weep for you day and night.

In her lament Andromache incorporates the traditional accusation of abandonment within a song that mournfully contrasts past, present, and what might have been. The themes of lament present in Andromache's speech in *Iliad* 6, because they are traditional, do not merely foreshadow but actually evoke the inevitable death of Hector and funeral laments of *Iliad* 24.

Briseis' lament for Patroclus likewise allows Briseis to lament Achilles before death. I have already noted that the traditional phraseology that describes Briseis' actions after she sees the body of Patroclus evokes the death of her own warrior husband.[21] That this phraseology is particularly associated with laments triggered by the death of husbands in battle is suggested by the simile of the unnamed lamenting woman of *Odyssey* 8.[22] The initial comparison of Briseis to "golden Aphrodite" in 19.282 seems to be fundamentally connected with Briseis' evocation of the role of a wife in this passage. Penelope, the quintessential epic wife, is twice compared to Aphrodite.[23] Likewise Andromache is metonymically connected to Aphrodite as she begins her lament for Hector in *Iliad* 22.470: when

---

[21] See page 13, above.

[22] See my discussion in the introduction, pp. 8-9.

[23] *Odyssey* 17.36-37; 19.53-54; see also above, p. 5 and note 14.

she realizes that Hector is dead she throws down from her head the adornments that "golden Aphrodite" had given her on her wedding day.[24] These associations are borne out just a few lines later when Briseis recalls how Achilles killed her husband in the sack of Lyrnessos:

> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' ἔασκες, ὅτ' ἄνδρ' ἐμὸν ὠκὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς
> ἔκτεινεν, πέρσεν δὲ πόλιν θείοιο Μύνητος,
> κλαίειν... (*Iliad* 19.295-297)
>
> Nor did you allow me, when swift Achilles killed my husband,
> and sacked the city of god-like Mynes,
> to weep...

The imperfect tense of ἔασκες coupled with the repetition of οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ μ' connotes frequency; Patroclus repeatedly put an end to Briseis' lamentation for her former husband by promising to marry her to Achilles, her husband's killer.

In this way Achilles becomes substituted for her former husband and Briseis becomes a bride a second time. This will be the fate of Andromache as well, who is awarded to Achilles' son Neoptolemus after the fall of Troy.[25] Briseis' song in fact laments her substitute husband Achilles as much as it does Patroclus or her former husband. Two late authors, Quintus of Smyrna and Propertius, present us with a Briseis who laments Achilles after death,[26] but in archaic epic tradition our only glimpse of such a lament is contained in Briseis' lamentation for Patroclus.[27]

---

[24] τῆλε δ' ἀπὸ κρατὸς βάλε δέσματα σιγαλόεντα,/ ἄμπυκα κεκρύφαλόν τε ἰδὲ πλεκτὴν ἀναδέσμην / κρήδεμνόν θ', ὅ ῥά οἱ δῶκε χρυσῆ Ἀφροδίτη / ἤματι τῷ ὅτε μιν κορυθαίολος ἠγάγεθ' Ἕκτωρ / ἐκ δόμου Ἠετίωνος. (On the *Iliad* 22 passage see also Segal 1971.49.)

[25] As related in the *Little Iliad* (fr. 20 Davies = fr. 21 Bernabé) and *Iliou Persis* (as summarized by Proclus); see also Euripides' *Andromache* 14 and *Trojan Women* 658-66.

[26] See above, p. 88 note 4; Afterward, p. 136; and Appendix , p. 151.

[27] As I argue throughout this chapter, I believe the traditional phrases describing the actions of Briseis, as well as the words of her lament itself, evoke primarily a husband and wife or bride and

That Briseis laments Achilles when she laments Patroclus is in perfect accordance with Patroclus' relationship with Achilles in the *Iliad*. Patroclus is Achilles' θεράπων, a word which has been shown to convey a relationship of ritual substitution.[28] This relationship becomes fulfilled when Patroclus leads the Myrmidons into battle in place of Achilles, wearing Achilles' armor. Patroclus' subsequent death previews in exact detail the way that Achilles will die. Achilles'

---

groom relationship with Achilles. Under this reading Patroclus is a direct substitute for Achilles. This reading is complicated, however, by the fact that the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus was most likely interpreted in different ways by different communities and over the course of time, as evidenced by the various interpretations of Classical times. It has been shown that in the earliests phases of the Greek epic tradition the relationship is one of ritual substitution, as witnessed in the term θεράπων (see further below). In later phases their relationship may have been understood to be that of ἐραστής and ἐρώμενος. If that is the case, Briseis' lament takes on a slightly different significance. Patroclus (as ἐραστής) would then be a father figure/lover, who might arrange a marriage for his ἐρώμενος. (For a casting of the ἐραστής/ἐρώμενος relationship as that of father and son, see Plato, *Laws* 838A-B, *Republic* 403B5. For the model of the ἐραστής who helps to procure a bride for his ἐρώμενος we may compare the myth of Poseidon and Pelops. [See Dover 1989.198.] Achilles' grief for Patroclus is often represented in the *Iliad* as that of a father for his child and vice-versa. See, e.g., 18.314-322, 19.315-337, 23.221-225, 24.507-512.) In this scenario Briseis laments Patroclus as a κούρη, both in the sense of daugter and in the sense of unmarried girl.

It would be difficult, however, to prove a universal ἐραστής/ἐρώμενος reading for Patroclus and Achilles (with Patroclus as ἐραστής and Achilles as ἐρώμενος) even as late as archaic times. In the *Iliad* Patroclus is represented as being older than Achilles (11.786), but Aeschylus' *Myrmidons* portrayed Achilles as the ἐραστής of Patroclus. (See *Myrmidons* fr. 228-229 and Dover 1989.197-198.) Archaic vase painting is divided in its representation of the respective ages of Achilles and Patroclus. In b;ack-figure Achilles is very often bearded, but sometimes not; in red-figure he usually not bearded, but sometimesis. A Corinthian oinochoe in Brussels from ca. 550 (Musée du Cinquantenaire A4) shows a bearded Achilles mourning for Patroclus. But a black-figure kantharos, also from ca. 550 (Berlin F 1737), depicts both Achilles and Patroklo as beardless, in contrast to Odysseus and Menestheus who have beards. In the famous red-figure representation of Achilles tending to the wounded Patroclus (Berlin F 2278; *ARV*[2] 21.1, 1620; *Paralipomena* 323; *Addenda* 154), Patroclus appears to be only slightly older than Achilles. In Plato's *Symposium* (180a 4-7), Phaedrus vehemently objects to Aeschylus' portrayal of Achilles as ἐραστής, arguing instead that Achilles' youth and beauty make him the ἐρώμενος, whereas Aeschines' *Against Timarchus* (18ff.) assumes Achilles to be the ἐραστής. (On the various interpretations of the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus over time see Dover 1989.197-199. See also Halperin 1990.75-87 and Calame 1999.190 note 15.)

But regardless of how we interpret the relationship between Patroclus and Achilles, it seems clear that Briseis laments Patroclus to some extent as a father figure, in that he was apparently going to arrange for her marriage, and he might even be interpreted as her κύριος. (Cf. *Iliad* 1. 345-346, where Patroclus leads her from the tent and hands her over to the two heralds. He does this at Achilles' command, but his role in the exhange seems not unlike that of a κύριος.) In this way Briseis fulfills multiple, shifting roles in her lament, as she moves from wife, to daughter, to sister, to bride and daughter again.

[28] See Whitman 1958.199-203.; Nagy 1979.33, 72, and 292-293; Sinos 1980; Lowenstam 1981; Aitken (forthcoming). For θεράπων as ritual substitute see Van Brock 1959.

death does not take place within the narrative confines of the *Iliad* itself, but it is nonetheless enacted in the sacrificial death of Patroclus.[29]

Just as the ritual sacrifice of Patroclus substitutes for the death of Achilles in the *Iliad*, so the funeral rites for Patroclus substitute for and actually enact the funeral rites for Achilles. As Nagy notes: "the Iliadic tradition requires Achilles to prefigure his dead self by staying alive, and the real ritual of a real funeral is reserved by the narrative for his surrogate Patroclus."[30] Nagy goes on to argue that only retrospectively can we witness the actual wake of Achilles, in the form of a flashback in the *Odyssey*.[31] But we do get a preview of that wake in the form of Briseis' lament for Patroclus, Achilles' ritual substitute.

Briseis' lament for Patroclus deals more with defining her relationship to Achilles than it does with Patroclus. Like Andromache, Briseis uses the medium of lament to narrate the pains of her life and manipulate her status within her community. Like Andromache, Briseis sets up first Patroclus and then Achilles as her primary resource after the deaths of her brothers and husband. She uses the kindness of Patroclus (19.300) to comment on her own vulnerability. When she notes that Patroclus always promised to make her Achilles' κουριδίη ἄλοχος she seeks to legitimize her position *through lament*. She creates a status for herself that might protect her in some way when Achilles himself dies.

---

[29] See Scheliha 1943.264 and 397-398 (with bibliography *ad loc.*); Whitman 1958.201 ("The death of Patroclus is a shadow play of the death of Achilles, a montage of one image upon another..."); Reinhardt 1961.354; Nagy 1979.33, 63, 143-145, and 293; Sinos 1980.55; Mueller 1984.53; Lowenstam 1981.116-117; Schein 1984.26 and 155; Janko 1992 at 16.77-867; Dowden 1996.56.

[30] Nagy 1979.113.

[31] See *Odyssey* 24.58-61.

Kirk Ormand explores this kind of manipulation of status through lament in relation to Tecmessa, the concubine of Ajax. [32] In Sophocles' *Ajax* Tecmessa pleads with Ajax in a speech that, like Andromache's, is in many ways a lament for Ajax before death. Tecmessa's lament is a rhetorical attempt to position herself as Ajax's wife, even though, like Briseis, she is a captive concubine:

> The three points that echo the *Iliad* (501-503, 510-513, 515-518)[33] strengthen Tecmessa's social standing, implicitly casting Tecmessa and Ajax in the roles of Andromache and Hector, respectively. This becomes a powerful suggestion that Tecmessa's legitimate place is by Ajax's side. We must notice, however, that the allusions to the *Iliad* are a rhetorical device, and involve a bit of careful deception. While readers have often noted that Ajax does not act like Hector here, few have pointed out that Tecmessa is not, properly speaking, socially parallel to Andromache. In fact, in one of the key parallel passages, Tecmessa lets this difference slip. Tecmessa imagines the insults that she will receive from one of her future masters: "ἴδετε τὴν ὁμευνέτιν Αἴαντος, ὃς μέγιστον ἴσχυσεν στρατοῦ" ("'Look at the bedmate/ of Ajax, he who had the greatest strength of the army,'" 501-502). When Hector predicts similar abuse of Andromache (6.460-65), he calls her his *gune*, a proper word for wife; Tecmessa realizes she is only the *homeunetis* ("bedmate") of Ajax, at least to outside observers. Sophocles makes the comparison to Andromache, but also deftly undercuts it, hinting that Tecmessa's status is not so exalted as that of her epic predecessor.[34]

I would interpret Tecmessa's rhetoric slightly differently than Ormand does here. If we understand the lament traditions from which both Andromache's and Tecmessa's speeches emerge, we can see that Tecmessa's arguments are a traditional way for a woman to ensure a certain status in the community. Even Tecmessa's predictions of future taunts are an attempt to ward off reproach

---

[32] Ormand 1999.110-119.

[33] ἴδετε τὴν ὁμευνέτιν / Αἴαντος, ὃς μέγιστον ἴσχυσεν στρατοῦ. / οἵας λατρείας ἀνθ' ὅσου ζήλου τρέφει... οἰκτιρε δ', ὤναξ, παῖδα τὸν σόν, εἰ νέας / τροφῆς στερηθεὶς σοῦ διοίσεται μόνος / ὑπ' ὀρφανιστῶν μὴ φίλων, ὅσον κακὸν / κείνῳ τε κἀμοὶ τοῦθ', ὅταν θάνῃς, νεμεῖς / ἐμοὶ γὰρ οὐκέτ' ἔστιν εἰς ὅ τι βλέπω / πλὴν σοῦ. σὺ γάρ μοι πατρίδ' ἤστωσας δόρει./ καὶ μητέρ' ἄλλη μοῖρα τὸν φύσαντά τε / καθεῖλεν Ἄιδου θανασίμους οἰκήτορας./ τίς δῆτ' ἐμοὶ γένοιτ' ἂν ἀντὶ σοῦ πατρίς; (*Ajax* 501-503; 510-518)

[34] Ormand 1999.113.

while at the same time establishing, through the speech act of lament, that she and no other woman was Ajax's *homeunetis*.

Tecmessa's speech is conventional in that it draws on traditional lament techniques, but I do not deny that a great deal of its power lies in its intertextual relationship with the *Iliad*. This intertextual relationship is not limited to Andromache's speech, however; it is equally reminiscent of Briseis' lament for Patroclus.[35] And when we understand that the speeches of Andromache and Tecmessa are in fact laments, we can appreciate the connections between Andromache, Briseis, and Tecmessa on another level: all three are well-born women who become captive concubines. Andromache and Tecmessa *once were and will be* social equals, and that is part of the power of Tecmessa's speech. In fact Greek laments traditionally articulate a woman's life history while they at the same time define a woman's particular relationship with her community. Tecmessa's speech is remarkable both for its traditional content as well for the literary bridge that it creates between epic and tragic interpretations of captive women's lament traditions.

Of all the song and speech traditions that are incorporated into Homeric poetry, lament is perhaps the most pervasive. Alexiou points out that to lament Hector before his death is unlucky.[36] In fact not just Hector but also Achilles is lamented repeatedly throughout the *Iliad*. Thetis and her sister Nereids lament

---

[35] See Rose 1995.64 and Ormand 1999.112-113. Both note in passing the connection with Briseis. For Tecmessa and Andromache see also Brown 1965 and Kirkwood 1965. Tecmessa's lament resonates throughout Greek and Roman literature in the form of the desperation speech, which, as I argue elsewhere, is not a generic feature of all tragic figures but rather the particular province of barbarian or captive women. On the desperation speech and its echoes in literature see Dué 2000, as well as Fowler 1987.

[36] Alexiou 1974.4.

Achilles as soon as Achilles becomes aware of Patroclus' death, when Thetis knows that Achilles will return to battle:

> αἳ δ' ἅμα πᾶσαι
> στήθεα πεπλήγοντο. Θέτις δ' ἐξῆρχε γόοιο·
> κλῦτε κασίγνηται Νηρηΐδες, ὄφρ' ἐὺ πᾶσαι
> εἴδετ' ἀκούουσαι ὅσ' ἐμῷ ἔνι κήδεα θυμῷ.
> ὤ μοι ἐγὼ δειλή, ὤ μοι δυσαριστοτόκεια,
> ἥ τ' ἐπεὶ ἄρ τέκον υἱὸν ἀμύμονά τε κρατερόν τε
> ἔξοχον ἡρώων· ὃ δ' ἀνέδραμεν ἔρνεϊ ἶσος·
> τὸν μὲν ἐγὼ θρέψασα φυτὸν ὡς γουνῷ ἀλωῆς
> νηυσὶν ἐπιπροέηκα κορωνίσιν Ἴλιον εἴσω
> Τρωσὶ μαχησόμενον· τὸν δ' οὐχ ὑποδέξομαι αὖτις
> οἴκαδε νοστήσαντα δόμον Πηλήϊον εἴσω. (*Iliad* 18.50-60)
>
> And all the Nereids together
> beat their breasts, and Thetis led off the lament:
> "Hear me, sister Nereids, in order that you all
> know well, hearing how many cares I have in my heart.
> Alas how I am wretched, alas how unluckily I was the best child bearer
> since I bore a child that was faultless and strong,
> outstanding of heroes. And he shot up like a sapling.
> After nourishing him like plant on the hill of an orchard
> I sent him forth in the hollow ships to Ilion
> to fight with the Trojans. But I will not receive him again
> returning home to the house of Peleus.

Throughout the *Iliad* we are constantly being prepared for the death of Achilles.[57] Thetis tells Achilles that his death is guaranteed upon the death of Hector, to which he responds: "αὐτίκα τεθναίην" ("then may I die straightaway"). In *Iliad* 23 the Achaeans build a funeral mound for both Achilles and Patroclus: κὰδ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς βάλλον ἐπισχερώ, ἔνθ' ἄρ' Ἀχιλλεὺς / φράσσατο Πατρόκλῳ μέγα ἠρίον ἠδὲ οἳ αὐτῷ ("They threw [the wood] down in rows upon the beach, where Achilles had indicated a great mound was to be built for Patroclus, and for himself" 23.125-126).

---

[57] Cf. *Iliad* 1.352, 416; 9.410-413; 18.59-60, 89-90, 95-96; 24.132.

That Patroclus and Achilles will be buried together is established earlier in *Iliad* 23, when the ψυχή of Patroclus visits Achilles in a dream (23.65-107). Patroclus entreats Achilles to bury him in the golden amphora that Thetis gave to Achilles in anticipation of Achilles' death:

> μὴ ἐμὰ σῶν ἀπάνευθε τιθήμεναι ὀστέ' Ἀχιλλεῦ,
> ἀλλ' ὁμοῦ ὡς ἐτράφημεν ἐν ὑμετέροισι δόμοισιν...
> ὣς δὲ καὶ ὀστέα νῶιν ὁμὴ σορὸς ἀμφικαλύπτοι
> χρύσεος ἀμφιφορεύς, τόν τοι πόρε πότνια μήτηρ. (*Iliad* 23.83-84,91-92)
>
> Do not bury my bones apart from yours, Achilles,
> but together, as we were raised in your house...
> so may the same vessel contain both our bones,
> the golden amphora, which your lady mother gave you.[38]

This golden amphora is one of the only concrete symbols of Achilles' immortality after death in the *Iliad*. Elsewhere in the poem only his short life and his grief while alive are emphasized. The anticipation of the finality of his death is so great that the mourning for Achilles begins while he is still alive. The *Iliad* is for that very reason open-ended. It does not end with the death of Achilles, but with the death of Hector, whose own death seals that of Achilles (18.96).

With the laments of book 24 comes an awareness that Andromache, Hecuba, and every Trojan wife will soon be captive women. And just as Achilles' death is constantly foreshadowed, but does not occur, so the capture of Andromache by Greek warriors, an event that is foretold in books 6, 18, and 24, does not take place within the confines of the *Iliad* itself. Her capture is instead

---

[38] For the golden amphora see *Odyssey* 24.73-77: δῶκε δὲ μήτηρ / χρύσεον ἀμφιφορῆα· Διωνύσοιο δὲ δῶρον / φάσκ' ἔμεναι, ἔργον δὲ περικλυτοῦ Ἡφαίστοιο. / ἐν τῷ τοι κεῖται λεύκ' ὀστέα, φαίδιμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, / μίγδα δὲ Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο θανόντος. On the importance of the golden amphora for "Elysium"-type narrative closure, see Nagy 1979 chapters 9-10. See also Stewart 1983, who argues for a compositional unity to the François Vase centered on the golden amphora depicted on it. The wedding of Peleus and Thetis is set amidst narratives that explore the tensions between mortality and immortality, peerless heroism and savage wrath, and mighty prowess and terrible hubris in the figure of Achilles. He notes: "Appropriately, all these themes intersect in the motif of Dionysus' amphora and its twin promises of death and immortality" (p. 66).

realized in the figure of Briseis, the "wife" of Achilles. Just as Patroclus and then Hector are substitutes in death for Achilles within the poem, so Briseis can be a substitute for Andromache. And as the funeral of Hector foreshadows that of Achilles, Andromache's fears for herself in turn reverberate back to Briseis, whose story, upon the death of Achilles, will come full circle, and she will be a widow and a captive once more.

Similarly, Odysseus and Telemachus are lamented repeatedly throughout the *Odyssey* by Penelope.[39] The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are incongruous in that the *Odyssey* is about the successful homecoming of both father and son, while in the *Iliad* Achilles must choose either νόστος or κλέος (9.410-413). But here again the religious dimension of Homeric poetry aids our interpretation. As Nagy has argued, the funeral rituals and lamentation of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are a reflection of actual cult practice in the worship of heroes like Achilles and Odysseus as religious figures.[40] The songs of lament for Achilles and Odysseus

---

[39] *Odyssey* 1.363-364; 4.716-741, 800-801,810-823; 18.202-205, 603-605; 20.57-90; 21.54-57, 356-358.

[40] See "Lamentation and the Hero" (Nagy 1979.94-117), especially 116-117: "As Rohde [1898] himself had noticed, the Funeral of Patroklos at *Iliad* XXIII has several features that connote the rituals of hero cults. For example, the wine libation (XXIII 218-221) and the offering of honey with oil (XXIII 170; cf. xxiv 67-68) "can hardly be regarded as anything but sacrificial." Such marginal details of cult, as also the integral element of singing lamentations at XXIII 12 and 17, give ritual *form* to the **akhos** of Achilles for Patroklos at XXIII 47. Even the central epic action of Book XXIII, the Funeral Games of Patroklos, has ritual form. In Homeric narrative, the funeral of a hero is the primary occasion for athletic contests (XXIII 630-631: Amarynkeus; xxiv 85-86: Achilles himself). In classical times, local athletic contests were still motivated as funeral games for the epichoric hero (cf., e.g., Pausanias 8.4.5). As a general principle, the **agôn** was connected with the cult of heroes, and even the Great Panhellenic Games were originally conceived as funeral games for heroes. The custom of mourning for Achilles at the beginning of the Olympics (Pausanias 6.23.3) is a striking instance of this heritage. As a parallel, epic offers a corresponding single event in the mourning for Patroklos that inaugurates the Funeral Games in Book XXIII. Even though there are hints within the *Iliad* that the Funeral of Patroklos is presented as a grand beginning of cult (XXIV 592-595), the overt singularity of the event forced Rohde to rule it out as a parallel to the cult of heroes, which is recurrent. And yet, the *Iliad* itself is a singularity. What is recurrent in ritual is timeless in the epic tradition, just like the **kleos aphthiton** of Achilles."

within the epic are an important part of ritual lamentation for the hero on the part of the community for whom the epics are performed.

Briseis' lament in *Iliad* 19 expresses private grief that becomes transformed into a collective sorrow for her audience both within the epic and beyond it:

> ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δὲ στενάχοντο γυναῖκες
> Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν, σφῶν δ' αὐτῶν κήδε' ἑκάστη (19.301-302)
>
> So she spoke lamenting, and the women wailed in response,
> with Patroclus as their pretext, but each woman for her own cares.

The ability to turn the personal into the paradigmatic is a fundamental feature of lament, as Herzfeld has shown:

> More formally, we can say that performance creates meaning by playing on the complex links between three kinds of time. The longest is the *longue durée* of *textual evolution*, in which the grand events commemorated in the song texts are scarcely more than generic markers for repetitive experience. This kind of time undergoes transmutation into *biographical time*: the imagery of the fall of cities or of death personified informs the public view of personal disaster. The effectiveness of such imagery, finally depends on the *interactional* or *performative time*, which corresponds closely to Bourdieu's (1977:7) *tempo*. It is the management of this interactional time that allows actors to recast biographical time metonymically as the *longue durée*... Such linkage contributes to a lamenter's effectiveness: if she can evoke a sufficiently rich image of collective suffering, she will move others to tears because she has recast individual as common experience, her personal pain as shared past and present.[41]

Briseis, in the role of the lamenting wife, exemplifies this process by which the personal is transformed into the collective. Briseis' song extends not only to the collective experience of the women around her who lament their fallen husbands, but to the audience of the epic as well. Briseis' lamentation for Patroclus, because it is also a lament for Achilles, becomes on the level of cult a communal expression of lamentation for the hero Achilles. It is not insignificant

---

[41] Herzfeld 1993.244.

then that the final lament of the *Iliad*, sung by Helen (who is the cause of the war), ends not with the antiphonal wailing of the women (as at 6.499, 19.301, 22.515, and 24.746), but of the δῆμος: ὣς ἔφατο κλαίουσ', ἐπὶ δ' ἔστενε δῆμος ἀπείρων ("So she spoke lamenting, and the people wailed in response" 24.776).[42]

---

[42] Cf. the bT scholia on this line: "οὐ μόνον αἱ γυναῖκες· πλείονα γὰρ ἐκίνησεν οἶκτον. ἐπὶ πλείστῳ δὲ ἐλέῳ καταστρέφει τὴν Ἰλιάδα."

Conclusion: Tradition and Innovation

> A single man or even a group of men who set out in the most careful way could not make even a beginning at such an oral diction. It must be the work of many poets over many generations. When one singer... has hit upon a phrase which is pleasing and easily used, other singers will hear it, and then, when faced at the same point in the line with the need of expressing the same idea, they will recall it and use it. If the phrase is good poetically and so useful metrically that it becomes in time the one best way to express a certain idea in a given length of verse, and as such is passed on from one generation of poets to another, it has won a place for itself in the oral diction as a formula. But if it does not suit in every way, or if a better way of fitting the idea to the verse and the sentence is found, it is straightaway forgotten, or lives only for a short time, since with each new poet and with each new generation of poets it must undergo the twofold test of being found pleasing and useful. In time the needed number of such phrases is made up: each idea to be expressed in the poetry has its formula for each metrical need, and the poet, who would not think of trying to express ideas outside the traditional field of thought of the poetry, can make his verses easily by means of a diction which time has proved to be the best.[1]

Literary criticism of Homeric poetry is often concerned with finding the particular aspects of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* that are the invention of Homer. Under this model, Homer is envisioned as a master poet who took the raw material of the epic tradition and created something new. This newness is equated with poetic genius. It has been argued for example that Homer "invented" Briseis, and even such a central figure to our *Iliad* as Patroclus.[2] But in the system of Homeric poetry as it has been defined by Parry and Lord, innovation is a complex concept. As Parry shows in analysis of epic diction, change within the system occurs slowly and in very specific ways. I propose to conclude my analysis of the

---

[1] Parry 1932.7-8 [= Parry 1979.330].

[2] On the inherent flaws in any combination of "Homer + verb," see Nagy 1996b.20-22. The particular combination "Homer invented" is connected with a common misconception of Homer as a master poet who has somehow "broken free" of the oral tradition. See 1996b.26-27. On Patroclus as an invented character see Howald 1924.11-12 as well as Dihle 1970.159-60 and bibliography *ad. loc.* Phoinix is another character who is thought to be "invented." Bruce Braswell has suggested: "The character of Phoinix was either invented or adapted by the poet to give the embassy greater weight" (Braswell 1971.22-23). Interestingly enough, two archaic cups in the Louvre by the Brygos Painter (B 22 a and B 22 b) depict Briseis and Phoinix, two frequently cited "invented" characters, together in a scene not found in our *Iliad*. See discussion above, p. 47. The scene is very likely symposiastic in nature (Briseis is pouring wine into a drinking cup held by Phoinix), but the possibility of a narrative is nevertheless there.

place of Briseis in the Homeric tradition by exploring the concept of innovation on the part of individual poets and on the part of the tradition with specific reference to Briseis' character.

Both Knud Friis Johansen and Gilbert Murray speak of Briseis as invented. Murray writes: "In the *Iliad* Briseis is a shadow, a figment of the poet."[3] Friis Johansen argues likewise:

> Briseis... is no true legendary figure. She is not, like all genuine figures of legend, firmly rooted in a well-known family with a well-defined genealogy. In *Il.* XIX, 291 sqq., where she bewails her fate and recalls her parents, her three brothers, and her husband, whom Achilles has slain, their very anonymity betrays their unreality. She, too, has no real name, and must be content with being called "the girl from Brisa", a locality on Lesbos. She is a pale figure created by poetry and has no existence outside the Ionian epics. When we meet her in art, the source is undoubtedly Homer.[4]

I submit that Briseis is far from anonymous. I have tried to demonstrate in this dissertation that when a character is introduced elliptically, a vast storehouse of tradition connected with that figure is often assumed by the poetry.[5] We may compare the formulation of Richard Martin: "The full 'meaning,' and the full enjoyment, of traditional poetry come only when one has heard it all before a hundred times, in a hundred different versions."[6] But it is not enough to have heard the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* a hundred times. One must have heard hundreds of other tales as well. These hundreds of tales and versions of those tales form a backdrop of tradition every time a song is sung.

---

[3] Murray 1911.221 [= 1960.205]. On that same page Murray refers to her as "Briseis, the character of fiction."

[4] Friis Johansen 1967.153. On the problematic concept of the text of the *Iliad* as a "source" for or influence on artistic traditions, see discussion above, pp. 42-44.

[5] See Lang 1995.149 and discussion above, p. 16.

[6] Martin 1993.228.

Not all tales and versions of those tales can have coexisted however. Some are tied to specific localities, others were no doubt well known at one time but less well known at other times over the history of the epic tradition. There are no doubt some traditions about Briseis that are, from a diachronic perspective, later than others.[7] One might argue that the name Briseis ("daughter of Brises") is earlier, and Hippodameia is later. Hippodameia could in theory be hundred of years later, even post-classical, although I have argued throughout this dissertation that this is not the case. Following the work of Nagy on the Epic Cycle, I have argued that Hippodameia is a local variant, and as such, potentially much older than the relatively more Panhellenic Briseis.

The system in which the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* were composed allows that both older and later traditions be "authentic."[8] A diachronic perspective accommodates and accounts for innovation over time. For innovation can and certainly does occur within the Homeric system. Parry demonstrated how new formulas could be created in performance on the principle of analogy,[9] and Lord's work shows how poetry that is centuries old can be applied to new conflicts and thus gain new significance.[10] Linguistic evidence proves that over centuries in the ancient Greek tradition new formulas and new grammatical

---

[7] For the terms *synchronic* and *diachronic* with reference to the system of Homeric poetry see Nagy 1990(a).4: "By *synchronic* I mean the workings of a system as it exists at a given time and place; by *diachronic*, the transformations of this system through time."

[8] For Homeric poetry as a system see Parry 1928.6-8 [= Parry 1971.6-8].

[9] Parry 1928.85-99 [= Parry 1971.68-79].

[10] For Lord's comparative work see Lord 1960, 1991, and 1995; this work has been expanded upon by many subsequent studies of oral traditional epic in the Balkans, Egypt, and elsewhere. For application of this principle to Homeric poetry see Aloni 1986 and Higbie 1997.

forms replaced old ones, even while other extremely old forms survived.[11] Nagy has shown how Homeric poetry gradually became Panhellenized, and local versions of stories were screened out in a slow process.[12]

It is important to understand that any of these changes in the system of Homeric poetry happens gradually, and innovation on the part of any individual poet is subconscious. Individual poets "innovated" throughout their careers, emphasizing the deeds of one hero or another as local custom and occasion called for it. Nevertheless, as Lord has shown, the individual poet does not *strive* for anything "new." A poet within a traditional system does not step outside of his tradition and want to be different.[13] The poet of a traditional song culture rather claims to sing the songs exactly as he heard them, even though this never in fact occurs.[14]

When we speak of the invention of a character like Briseis, who appears in both epic poetry and the visual arts, we are dealing with two different kinds of innovation. For the invention of a character involves not only a radical addition

---

[11] For three different approaches see Parry 1932; Palmer 1962; and Janko 1982.

[12] For Panhellenization, see discussion above, pp. 29-33.

[13] See Lord, 1995.3. See also Nagler 1974.xxiii. Cf. Parry 1932.9-10 [= Parry 1971.331]: "Whatever change the single poet makes in the traditional diction is slight, perhaps the change of an old formula, or the making of a new one on the pattern of an old, or the fusing of old formulas, or a new way of putting them together. An oral style is thus highly conservative; yet the causes for change are there, and sooner or later they must come into play. These causes for change have nothing to do with any wish on the part of the single poet for what is new or striking in style. They exist above the poets, and are two: the never-ceasing change in all spoken language, and the association between peoples of a single language but of different dialects." Parry's observations about Homeric style are equally applicable to Homeric content.

[14] See especially Lord 2000.27-29.

to the system of traditional epic composition and song, it also involves the creation of the myth around which the system of composition is built.[15]

Malcolm Willcock was one of the first to theorize about a Homer who invented myth *ad hoc* to suit the purposes of the character or the narrative.[16] Willcock speaks of invention "for the needs of the moment." His arguments suggest that the pressure of performance causes invention, as the poet struggles to make mythological exempla suit the needs of the context.[17] In reference to the use of the Niobe story as a *paradeigma* in *Iliad* 24 he writes: "The Niobe story shows that, in order to produce his parallel in the paradeigma, the author of the *Iliad* is prepared to *invent the significant details of the myth*" [emphasis Willcock's].[18] For Willcock, the process of composition-in-performance causes the oral epic poet to invent myth for the moment.

But in the *Iliad* Briseis is not part of a *paradeigma*, nor does the invention of a character who is fundamental to the plot fit any of the other scenarios that Willcock and his followers have attempted to define.[19] Briseis was part of Cyclic

---

[15] For a refutation of the arguments of those who speak of the invention of myth see Nagy 1992 and 1996b.113-146. Nagy argues from the perspective of social anthropology that for the ancient Greek poets "creativity is a matter of applying, to the present occasion, myths that already exist" (Nagy 1992.312). Lowell Edmunds also speaks of the application of traditional stories or myth to the present occasion: "A story, or myth, is therefore, in retrospect, a set of variants on a fundamental pattern, while, on the occasion of any retelling, the present, individualist version is the authoritative one. Myth occurs, one could say, at the juncture of performance with tradition" (Edmunds 1996.420). On the application of mutually contradictory variations of the same myth on different occasions within the same poem see Edmunds 1996.421-422.

[16] Willcock 1964 and 1977. For arguments regarding mythological invention in Homer see also March 1987.

[17] See especially Willcock 1977.45.

[18] Willcock 1964.142, following the arguments of Kakridis 1949.96-105, and with further bibliography at notes 1, 2, and 4. For more on the story of Niobe and its place in *Iliad* 24 see discussion below, pp. 141-142.

[19] See Willcock 1964 and 1977, as well as Braswell 1971 and Griffin 1980.185.

traditions; she is mentioned by name in Proclus' summary of the *Cypria*. If more of the *Cypria* survived we would no doubt know more about at least one version of her story.

The work of Parry and Lord, moreover, refutes Willcock's suppositions about the pressure of performance. Composition-in-performance cannot occur without a traditional system of epic diction in place. This traditional system of epic diction presupposes traditional content. If the content of the epic narrative changes, the epic diction must evolve in order to express the new content. In the citation of Parry with which I opened this concluding chapter, he discusses the process by which a new formula enters a traditional system. It is only after a new formula has been found to be both pleasing and useful to a generation of poets that it becomes part of the traditional diction. In other words, epic diction changes very slowly. Because the content of the narrative can only be expressed in traditional phraseology and within a traditional system of themes, change can only take place gradually, over several generations of poets.

It cannot be claimed therefore that Briseis or any character is the "invention" of any one poet, even though traditional tales can be shown (by an outsider to that tradition) to change over time. If we are to appreciate the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* as oral traditional poetry, a different model must account for Briseis' and other minor characters' brief appearances. Such a model presents itself in the poetic technique of compression and expansion. As the formulation of Martin that I have quoted above suggests, the appearance of Briseis or any other character in the *Iliad* operates within a traditional system of expanded tales and variations on those tales. In the more fluid stages of the evolution of the *Iliad*, it is possible that multiple variations on expanded narratives about Briseis coexisted.

Briseis had not only a history, but possibly many histories. In less fluid stages of a poem there are fewer variations, but variation continues to occur on the level of expansion and compression.[20] I argue that Briseis' relatively minor role in the *Iliad*, like that of many other characters, is a compression of at least one variation on her story.

But as I have argued in this dissertation, it is not enough to recover Briseis' story in however many variations it existed; we must also contextualize Briseis' story within traditional story patterns. Much of the meaning of the poetry comes from the interaction of the Briseis narrative with other traditional narratives: love stories of maidens and foreign enemies, the capture and destruction of cities, the carrying off of daughters, the loss of husbands, the enslavement of royal women.[21] This interaction with traditional patterns becomes even more important when we consider the gradual screening out of local versions in the context of the Panhellenic festival of the Panathenaia, a process that coincided with the process of text fixation for the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. As the text became more fixed, so many local and variant traditions were lost to the culture. A fifth-century Athenian audience of the *Iliad* may have known very little more about Briseis than modern readers do now.[22] Instead, much of the

---

[20] It is useful to think here of horizontal and vertical axes of selection and combination, as they are formulated by Jakobson. (See, e.g., Jakobson 1960.) In more fluid stages of the tradition, there would have been more variation on the vertical axis of selection. In less fluid stages variation happens in the form of compression or expansion along the horizontal axis of combination.

[21] On the interaction of traditional themes see Lord 1960.95-98.

[22] A fifth-century Athenian audience would have been acquainted with some version of what we know as the *Cypria* at least. Aeschylus' *Myrmidons* must have also featured Briseis, and it has been suggested that she may have had a role other tragedies as well. There is a reference to Mynes (to whom Briseis refers in her lament at *Iliad* 19.296) in Sophocles' lost *Aichmalotides*; Blumenthal 1927 suggests that the title of that play refers to Briseis and her fellow captives. For Briseis in these and other lost tragedies see Jacobson 1971.335 and note 11, with references *ad loc*.

force of her character would have been paradigmatic, in that the compressed references to her story served mainly to evoke traditional patterns.

We have seen that this kind of interaction with traditional patterns is important also in vase paintings. Certainly there were different rules of composition for the visual artists, who were constrained neither by the dactylic hexameter nor by the pressure of performance at high speed. But I have argued that, like the epic poet in a traditional song culture, vase painters did not conceive of breaking free of tradition. One can strive to be the best painter without deliberately changing traditional patterns.[23] Snodgrass has noted for example that in the geometric period, the best paintings and sculpture are the ones that are most "geometric."[24] In the archaic period, Briseis appears in scenes that are above all traditional: she is a lovely maiden holding a flower, a wine pourer, and she is led away by the wrist in a scene of abduction. The scenes are not generic. They are a visual representation of narrative. But the narratives in which Briseis plays a role evoke other similar narratives about other women, to the point that if many of the Briseis scenes weren't labeled, we would most likely identify them as generic, or else as depicting someone else.

The *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are a synoptic representative of an entire system of individual singers that developed over hundreds of years. As Parry already shows in his analysis of Homeric diction, any innovations that are present in the

---

[23] See also discussion above, pp. 40–41, for arguments that others have made for believing that artists strove to work within tradition rather than break free of it.

[24] Snodgrass1998.48–49. He cites Martin Robertson (1951): "the finer the work of art, the more geometric."

text as we now have it were introduced by means of a complex process over time, and cannot be attributed to any one poet. The same is true for the content expressed by that diction. Briseis, like many other minor characters in the *Iliad*, can best be understood as a figure with a long history, whose role in the epic tradition became increasingly compressed over time. The loss to the Homeric tradition of traditional narratives about Briseis occurred concurrently with the Panhellenization of the *Iliad* in the context of the Panathenaia.

In this dissertation I have tried to reconstruct the force of Briseis' character from a diachronic perspective. In earlier, more fluid stages of the epic tradition I have argued that Briseis had a story that was well known, involving the sack of her city and capture by Achilles. It seems likely moreover that there were at least two variations on her story, because of the two-fold pattern she fulfills in ancient references. In one variation she is a wife whose husband is killed by Achilles in the sack of his city; in another she is an umarried girl, the daughter of a king, whose parents are killed in the sack of her city. Our *Iliad* seems to allude to multiple variations on these two basic themes.

But the loss of a more expanded version of Briseis' life and capture, whenever that occurred in the history of Greek poetic traditions, did not prevent Briseis from retaining a powerful role in the structure and poetics of the *Iliad*. The traditional patterns that she evokes unite her in meaningful connections and substitutions with the other women of the *Iliad*. Briseis' lament is on one level a timeless expression of love and loss, on another a communal outpouring of grief for the hero Achilles, for whom Patroclus substitutes. As Briseis shifts roles from daughter to sister to wife her lament becomes ever more universal, even as she is expressing her most personal feelings. The traditional lament links Briseis with

the most ancient and basic story of them all, around which epic poetry is built and with which epic poetry is infused at every point, the song of sorrow.

Afterward: Elegizing Briseis in Augustan Rome

The poetic potential of our glimpse of Briseis in the *Iliad* was not lost on the Augustan poets, who also had access to the Epic Cycle, which we only have in summary form.[1] Propertius and later Ovid seize on the figure of Briseis and the tragic aspects of her relationship with Achilles as the perfect nexus of epic and elegiac agenda.[2] In Book 2 of his elegies, Propertius transforms epic into elegy and elegy into epic through the figure of Briseis. A close reading of the four poems in which Briseis appears will show how Propertius constantly reinterprets heroic exempla from the lover's perspective (and vice-versa).[3] This reinterpretation is part of an ongoing engagement of epic poetry in which Propertius refuses to write epic while he at the same time transforms heroic models into elegiac ones. In order to refuse epic poetry, Propertius subsumes it to his own poetic goals.

---

[1] That the Roman elegiac poets had access to the epic cycle seems to me certain. They knew at least a good deal of traditional material that was narrated in the cycle (although much of this material may have been mediated through tragedy). Names of the poems of the Epic Cycle (and the authors to whom they are attributed) are inscribed on the so-called *Tabulae Iliacae* (found in and around Rome and dated to Augustan times). On the *Tabulae Iliacae* see Sadurska 1964 and Horsfall 1979.

[2] On the "elegizing" of Briseis in Ovid (and Propertius) see especially Jacobson 1971 and Barchiesi 1992.185ff. I have borrowed the term "elegize" from Barchiesi. For Propertius, see also Dalzell 1980.30: "the whole plot of the *Iliad* is conceived in romantic terms: Achilles, Briseis, and Patroclus are the central figures in a drama of passion and suffering. This is an elegiac *Iliad*, brought down to humanlevel, where the characters are motivated by the emotions which move the elegiac lover."

[3] Running commentaries tend to encounter heroic exempla on a case by case basis and therefore do not treat them as a unified system. The resulting analysis focuses on each instance as a distortion of the heroic exemplum that requires explanation. Butler and Barber 1933, Richardson 1976, and Camps 1966 alternatively excuse the poet or point out his errors. I would like to show the pattern by which Propertius deliberately reinterprets the exempla in the context of love elegy. This reinterpretation by nature distorts the model, but as I will demonstrate, the "distortion" often offers a great deal of insight into both the Propertian poem and its source.

These poetic goals are declared in a number of ways, all of which can be explored through the figure of Briseis. First, Propertius equates the epic and the elegiac poet - and the lover and the statesman and warrior. Propertius asserts in Book 2 and elsewhere that elegiac struggles are heroic, and that a lover is a fighter. Secondly, Propertius explicitly inserts himself into the history of Greek and Latin literature by alluding to and incorporating other genres within his elegiac mode of expression. Finally, Propertius affirms a Callimachean system of poetics that rejects the grandiose, martial, and political. Propertius' transformation of epic into elegiac and Callimachean poetry is a *recusatio* that runs throughout the Propertian corpus.

Briseis is part of a system in which the role of poet, citizen, elegy and epic are explored. Propertius 2.1 is the ideal starting point for my own exploration of this system, because with this poem Propertius sets forth his goals for Book 2 as a whole. The seemingly minor figure of Briseis unites many of the themes that are programmatically laid out in 2.1 well before Briseis appears.

Make Love AND War: The Lover as Warrior in 2.1

Book 2 of Propertius' elegies begins with a programmatic poem about the elegist's place in Augustan Rome. Propertius[4] refuses epic by equating love and

---

[4] I refer to "Propertius" or "the poet" and "Cynthia" not biographically, but as characters in a poetic narrative constructed by the "real" Propertius who is the author of the poems. It is often difficult or impossible to distinguish between the two, since the narrator of the poems is also an elegiac poet and refers to himself as "Propertius" in 2.8. For the poetic persona we may compare Catullus and others, whose narrators likewise refer to themselves in a way that suggest that they should be equated with the author, but who seem to be poetic constructs none the less.

war,[5] thereby justifying his choice to be a love poet. The poem is structured around a series of rejections of other, more weighty forms of literature that a statesman and poet might be expected to write. The poem is addressed to Maecenas and therefore must fulfill a dual purpose: it is a dedication to a literary patron and at the same time *recusatio* of state-oriented epic or historical poetry. Propertius, just as Horace and Virgil and other poets in Augustan Rome, must find his own voice within a system in which literary and political patronage are united and in which the poet's role is tied to an administration far more closely than it ever was before.

Propertius creates poetic independence for himself first by asserting that his poetic inspiration is Cynthia and only Cynthia – he is simply incapable of other forms of poetry, notably epic:

> *non haec Calliope, non haec mihi cantat Apollo.*
> *ingenium nobis ipsa puella facit.* (2.1.3-4)
>
> It is not Calliope, not Apollo that puts these songs in my mind.
> My girl herself creates the inspiration.[6]

Cynthia, whose very name is connected with Apollo, here replaces both Apollo and the epic muse as the source of Propertius' poetic inspiration. Calliope is perhaps to be associated with Hesiod, Apollo with Homer.[7] The substitution of Cynthia for Apollo and Calliope marks a rejection of epic poetry for elegy, as well as a rejection of war and the life of a statesman for the life of the elegiac lover.

---

[5] See Stahl 1985. See also, e.g., Propertius 1.6, where Propertius calls love his *militiam* (1.6.30).

[6] All translations of Propertius are adapted from those of Goold 1999.

[7] Cf. Hesiod, *Theogony* 79. Camps notes that Calliope is elsewhere Propertius' Muse (3.2.16, 3.3.38 and 51). See Camps 1966, *ad. loc.*

Propertius goes on to equate the "struggles" of lovemaking with the epic hero's ordeals (*luctatur*) on the battlefield:

> *seu nuda erepto mecum luctatur amictu,*
> *tum vero longas condimus Iliadas.* (2.1.13-14)
>
> Or if she struggles with me nude, her dress torn off,
> then indeed I compose long Iliads.

Here sex is a substitute for battle, and a poem about sex is Propertius' *Iliad*.[8] Propertius (no doubt playfully) justifies his choice by portraying the life of a lover in heroic terms.

But poem 2.1 is not only a justification the part of the author of the apolitical life and work of a poet. The poem also creates a place for love elegy in the literature of Augustan Rome. In line 17 begins a *recusatio* proper that encompasses the history of Greek and Latin literature. Propertius begins by stating that it is not his fate to write epic poetry (17), but if it were, his subject would be Caesar and Maecenas:

> *quod mihi si tantum, Maecenas, fata dedissent,*
> *ut possem heroas ducere in arma manus,*
> *non ego Titanas canerem, non Ossan Olympo*
> *impositam, ut caeli Pelion esset iter,*
> *nec veteres Thebas, nec Pergama nomen Homeri,*
> *Xerxis et imperio bina coisse vada,*
> *regnave prima Remi aut animos Carthaginis altae,*
> *Cimbrorumque minas et bene facta Mari...*
> *bellaque resque tui memorarem Caesaris, et tu*
> *Caesare sub magno cura secunda fores.* (2.1.17-26)
>
> But if only fate had so endowed me, Maecenas,
> that my Muse could lead a hero's hands to arms,
> I should not sing of Titans, or Ossa on Olympus
> piled, that Pelion might become the path to heaven;
> or of ancient Thebes, or Pergamum, Homer's glory,
> and the union of two seas at Xerxes' command,
> or the early reign of Remus or the fury of lofty Carthage,

[8] See Camps 1966, *ad loc.*

the Cimbrian menace and the splendid feats of Marius:
I should tell of your Caesar's wars and policies and you
after mighty Caesar would be my second theme.

The poet rejects theogony (19-20), the Theban cycle (21), the Trojan war (21), The Persian wars (21), the founding of Rome (23), the Punic wars (23), and the Celtic invasions (24) as subjects for his epic poetry. This *recusatio* is a formal refusal of not only themes but also genres and poets. Again he indirectly cites Hesiod (19-20) and more explicitly Homer (21), as well as Herodotus, Ennius, Naevius and possibly Livy - to name just the most obvious.[9] In so doing Propertius refuses wisdom poetry, epic poetry, tragedy, and history. We may recall here lines 15-16, which render Propertius' love poetry "the greatest history": *seu quidquid [Cynthia] fecit sive est quodcumque locuta,/ maxima de nihilo nascitur historia.* It is interesting to note that Propertius does not yet reject pastoral poetry, a point to which I'll return shortly.

Just as Cynthia becomes Propertius' "epic" Muse, Propertius' patron Maecenas likewise takes on an epic persona. He becomes Patroclus:[10]

nam quotiens Mutinam aut civilia busta Philippos
aut canerem Siculae classica bella fugae,
eversosque focos antiquae gentis Etruscae,
et Ptolomaeei litora capta Phari,
aut canerem Aegyptum et Nilum, cum attractus in urbem
septem captivis debilis ibat aquis,
aut regum auratis circumdata colla catenis,
Actiaque in Sacra currere rostra Via;
te mea Musa illis semper contexeret armis,
et sumpta et posita pace fidele caput:
Theseus infernis, superis testatur Achilles,
hic Ixioniden, ille Menoetiaden. (2.1.27-38)

For as often as I sang of Mutina or graves dug at Philippi in civil war,

---

[9] On the poetic references and sources see Butler and Barber 1933, *ad loc.*

[10] On Maecenas as Patroclus see Stahl 1985.165.

or the navel war and the rout of Siciliy,
or the ruined hearths of Etruria's ancient race,
and the coasts of Ptolemaic Pharos captured;
or I should sing of Egypt and the Nile, when haled into Rome,
it flowed flagging with its seven streams captive;
or the necks of kings encircled with chains of gold
and Actian prows speeding along the Sacred Way:
my Muse would always be weaving you into these exploits,
you the soul of loyalty in commending as in rejecting peace.
Theseus to the shades below, Achilles to the gods above proclaims a comrade's love,
the one of Ixion's, the other of Menoetius' son;

With these lines Propertius continues his sweeping review of Greek and Roman history, taking the survey down to the time of composition. He concludes by asserting that he has been unable to write about these historical events without weaving in Maecenas, and compares him to Perithous and Patroclus. In this way Propertius celebrates his patron as a hero. And by implication of course, Augustus is Achilles. On this analogy the world of the elegist becomes thoroughly heroic: Cynthia, Maecenas and Augustus all have their Iliadic counterparts, and, if we follow the analogy through, Propertius is Homer himself.

But a Homer Propertius refuses to be. Despite his attempts at epic poetry, the poet maintains that his slender Callimachean poetics (*angusto* 38, 45) are not up to the task of composing hard epic narratives (*duro* 40):

sed neque Phlegraeos Iovis Enceladique tumultus
intonet angusto pectore Callimachus,
nec mea conveniunt duro praecordia versu
Caesaris in Phrygios condere nomen avos.
navita de ventis, de tauris narrat arator,
enumerat miles vulnera, pastor ovis... (2.39-44)

But neither would the slender utterance of Callimachus suffice to thunder
forth the battle waged on Phlegra's plain between Juppiter and Enceladus,
Nor are my powers fitted to enshrine in martial strains
the name of Caesar among his Phrygian ancestors.

> The sailor tells of winds, the ploughman of oxen;
> the soldier counts his wounds, the shepherd his sheep...

In lines 39-40 the poet compares his poetics to those of Callimachus, who was not able to "thunder forth" the Titanomachy. In the next two lines is a reference to the *Aeneid*, which is still at this point a work-in-progress. Virgil is a Roman poet who could write epic; Propertius' calling is elsewhere. In 43-44 the poet notes that every person tells stories about what they know best. The verses are structured with adversative asyndeton at the caesura, with the result that oppositions are set up between sailor and farmer, soldier and shepherd. These oppositions mirror those set up throughout the poem between lover and statesman, elegist and epic poet.

Propertius associates himself with the Hellenistic poetry of Callimachus, but Propertius is not a pastoral poet like Theocritus or Virgil. His field of expertise is love:

> *nos contra angusto versantes proelia lecto:*
> *qua pote quisque, in ea conterat arte diem.*
> *laus in amore mori...* (2.1.45-47)

> I for my part wage wars within the narrow confines of a bed:
> let everyone spend his life in the trade he practises best.
> To die in love is glory...

Here, as in 13-14, the language of love and battle are mixed so as to make battle a metaphor for love and to effect an equivalency between the two. The elegist wages war, but in bed. Likewise it is glorious for the elegist to die on the battlefield of love. This idea is picked up again in the final lines of the poem, in which the poet imagines his tombstone, as though he were a fallen warrior.

Lines 49-70 continue the *recusatio* with a literary *tour de force* in which mythological exempla from tragedy and the epic cycle abound.[11] With Phaedra and Medea in lines 51 and 54 the genre of tragedy, noticeably absent from the earlier survey,[12] gains a place within the overall theme of refusal. Many of the remaining exempla come from the Trojan cycle, and here Achilles makes his second appearance, referred to indirectly (by way of his spear) as simply "the Thessalian" (*Haemonia... cuspide* 63). Propertius' inescapable sufferings are then compared to the famous punishments of the underworld and the binding of Prometheus.

The poem concludes with a return to Maecenas (73), and the hope that the patron will honor the poet once he has died:

quandocumque igitur vitam mea fata reposcent,
et breve in exiguo marmore nomen ero,
Maecenas, nostrae spes invidiosa iuventae,
et vitae et morti gloria iusta meae,
si te forte meo ducet via proxima busto,
esseda caelatis siste Britanna iugis,
taliaque illacrimans mutae iace verba favillae:
'Huic misero fatum dura puella fuit.' (2.1.71-78)

When, therefore, fate claims back from me my life,
and I become a brief name on a tiny marble slab,
then, Maecenas, hope and envy of Roman youth,
my rightful pride in life and death,
should your travels chance to bring you close to my tomb,
halt your British chariot with its figured harness,
and, shedding a tear, pay this tribute to my silent embers:
"An unrelenting girl was the death of this poor man!"

---

[11] See Butler and Barber 1933, *ad loc.*

[12] It could be argued that *veteres Thebas* is an allusion to tragedies set in Thebes, but the place of the phrase within a seemingly chronological catalogue indicates I think that the Theban cycle of epic poetry is meant.

Here the poet imagines that his tomb, not unlike the tomb of a Greek hero,[13] will be visited by travelers. Maecenas is also imagined heroically or, at the very least, as a warrior in his chariot. True to Propertius' Callimachean poetics, however, the tombstone will be slender (*exiguo* 72). The punch line as it were is that the cause of this hero's death is not a fatal wound in battle but a fatal love affair: *Huic misero fatum dura puella fuit* (78). Nevertheless, as I noted above, this death will be for Propertius a source of glory: *laus in amore mori* (47). The adjective *dura* applied to Cynthia recalls the *duro versu* of line 40. Again an equivalency is made between the harsh ordeals of the warrior and those of the lover. Thus the final lines of the poem bring together the themes of dedication, *recusatio*, and Hellenistic poetics, as a final connection between the warrior and poet is made in the image of the hero's tomb.

In 2.1 Propertius makes two types of refusal to write epic poetry. In 39-46 he argues that his poetics are not of kind to suit epic themes. Like Callimachus, he is incapable. But the poem as a whole argues for an equivalency between love and war that overrides the poet's professed lack of ability. Stahl has written of 2.34: "Propertius dedicates the larger part of the Second Book's epilogue to explaining his relationship with Virgil: a natural counterpiece to his own introductory refusal to write an epic on Augustus' deeds..."[14] Similarly, I argue that Propertius' metaphorical combination of the semantic realms of love and war in 2.1 indicate a special way in which the elegist can and will write epic. Epic will be transformed into elegy throughout book 2. Just as Maecenas can become

---

[13] Cf., e.g, *Iliad* 7.87-91 and *Alcestis* 996-1004.

[14] Stahl 1985.173

Patroclus, Cynthia will become Briseis. And Propertius (like Augustus) will become Achilles.

Briseis and Cynthia: 2.8 and 2.9

As I have argued above, in the *Iliad* Briseis can be a prize, a girl, a daughter, a wife, or a captive. In *Iliad* 9.340-341 Achilles asks if only the sons of Atreus love their wives (9.340-341) (ἀλοχόυς), thereby likening her to Clytemnestra and inviting us to think of Briseis as a "wife."[15] In Briseis' lament for Patroclus in 19 she says that Patroclus had promised to make her Achilles' κουριδίην ἄλοχον. A κουριδίη ἄλοχος is a wife to whom one was betrothed in youth or young adulthood;[16] Agamemnon uses this phrase of Clytemnestra in *Iliad* 1.114. But of course Briseis has already been married. In the *Iliad* Briseis is a captive foreigner and Achilles' concubine, a prize of war (*Iliad* 1.392). Achilles himself killed her husband (19.295-296).

Propertius exploits this tension between Briseis as wife and Briseis as captive concubine, never to be resolved in the *Iliad* itself,[17] in a masterly way in Book 2 of his elegies. Propertius' elegiac mistress Cynthia plays a number of seemingly contradictory roles in this book (and throughout the Propertian

---

[15] See above, p. 52 and p. 87.

[16] See Nagy 1970.104-5, note 9.

[17] *Iliad* 24.675-676 offers some closure to the quarrel over Briseis as Achilles and Briseis go off into Achilles' tent together to sleep. See Macleod 1982, *ad loc.* and Edwards 1987.58. But the *Iliad* is open-ended in that Achilles' death is constantly foreshadowed. Although the relationship between Achilles and Briseis is restored upon her return, Achilles' death guarantees that she will never be more than a captive concubine.

corpus).[18] At times she seems to be a *meretrix*, at other times an upper-class wife committing adultery.[19] In 2.6 Propertius highlights the ambiguity: *Nos uxor numquam, numquam seducet amica: / semper amica mihi, semper et uxor eris* (2.6.41-42). The poetics of Propertius are quite different from those of Homeric poetry, but the parallels between Propertius' portrayals of Briseis and Cynthia and the use of Briseis as an *exemplum* show us that has exploited a striking (if initially unintentional) affinity between these two characters.

I would now like to look more closely at the poems in which Briseis appears, in order to show how Propertius "elegizes" epic by elegizing Briseis. Propertius makes Briseis a central character in an ongoing *recusatio* that transforms epic and heroic traditions by infusing them with the agenda of love elegy. In these four poems, Cynthia can be Briseis, or she can be the antithesis of Briseis. The portrayals of both Cynthia and Briseis are shaped by the dictates of the poems' narratives. The flexibility built into their characters allows a re-interpretation of each woman with each new episode. And yet a unity emerges that shows that the arrangement of the four poems and the portrayal of the characters is anything but random.

---

[18] See Richardson 1976.3-4: "The picture of Cynthia that must be put together is of a woman who is shown us by turns as a *casta puella* who spurns the poet's desperate love and devotion (1.1), a frivolous and vain creature of fashion preoccupied entirely with her own appearance (1.2), a devoted wifely companion who can berate the poet for his desertion of her for an evening while he has gone off carousing (1.3), a doxy willing to threaten to follow a rich suitor to wintry Illyria (1.8), yet tearfully insistent that P. give up thought of a career and the chances of lining his pocket in Asia to dance constant attentendance on her in Rome (1.6), a vindictive little trollop ensconced in the society of the demimonde of Rome (1.5), and a courtesan accustomed to spend her holidays grandly among the pleasures and temptations of Baiae (1.11) – to name only some of the guises in which we meet her in the first half of the first book."

[19] See Williams 1968.529ff. and Richardson 1976.143ff.

Poems 8 and 9 of Book 2 have been read as a complimentary pair. In both poems the narrative context is Cynthia's unfaithfulness. In poem 8 she has been snatched away by another (*eripitur* 8.1); in poem 9 Cynthia is portrayed as a deceiver (*fraudes* 9.31). Briseis is the explicit analogy in both cases. Poem 8, however, has been attacked on grounds of unity.[20] The wild bursts of emotion seem incoherent and irreconcilable. Although it is not a programmatic *recusatio*, as in poem 2.1 non-elegiac genres and themes are inserted into the medium of elegy and transformed. But it is precisely Briseis and the analogy with Cynthia that unites the poem.

Poem 2.8 begins: *eripitur nobis iam pridem cara puella* (1). As many commentators have noticed, the verb already sets up an analogy with Briseis, who will not appear by name until line 35. Briseis was captured by Achilles and is called δουρικτητήν (9.343) by him. In the *Iliad*, Briseis loves her captor, and when she is stolen a second time in *Iliad* I, this time by Agamemnon, she goes "unwillingly" (ἀέκουσ' 1.348). The analogy with Cynthia is unexpected but nonetheless meaningful. Cynthia herself has been "captured" and is possessed by Propertius whether we think of her as a married woman or a *meretrix*.[21] Now someone has stolen what he had rightfully stolen.

By imagining her as Briseis, the poet can portray Cynthia, at least in this poem, as unwilling to leave him. Propertius reinterprets the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 as a love triangle: *nullae sunt inimicitiae nisi*

---

[20] See especially Butler and Barber 1933, *ad loc.*

[21] If Cynthia is a married woman, he has stolen her from her husband; if a *meretrix*, he has stolen her from her many would-be lovers.

amoris acerbae (3).[22] None of this becomes clear, however, until the final exemplum of the poem. Before engaging the epic analogy to which he only alludes in the opening lines, the poet first analyzes great themes of history and tragedy in terms of love.

In lines 7-10 Propertius moves from epic and goes on to rethink the monumental *History* of Herodotus from an elegiac perspective. He encapsulates the driving theme of Herodotus' *History* as it is formulated in Herodotus 1.5:

> Ἐγὼ δὲ περὶ μὲν τούτων οὐκ ἔρχομαι ἐρέων ὡς οὕτως ἢ ἄλλως κως ταῦτα ἐγένετο, τὸν δὲ οἶδα αὐτὸς πρῶτον ὑπάρξαντα ἀδίκων ἔργων ἐς τοὺς Ἕλληνας, τοῦτον σημήνας προβήσομαι ἐς τὸ πρόσω τοῦ λόγου, ὁμοίως μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλα ἄστεα ἀνθρώπων ἐπεξιών. Τὰ γὰρ τὸ πάλαι μεγάλα ἦν, τὰ πολλὰ αὐτῶν σμικρὰ γέγονε· τὰ δὲ ἐπ' ἐμέο ἦν μεγάλα, πρότερον ἦν σμικρά. Τὴν ἀνθρωπηίην ὦν ἐπιστάμενος εὐδαιμονίην οὐδαμὰ ἐν τὠυτῷ μένουσαν, ἐπιμνήσομαι ἀμφοτέρων ὁμοίως. (Herodotus I.5.3-4)
>
> But concerning these things I do not plan to say how they happened one way or another, but rather having indicated the one who I myself know first committed unjust acts against the Greeks I shall proceed with my history, treating small and great cities of men alike. For many cities that were once great have now become small; and some that were great in my time were small before. Knowing therefore that human prosperity never continues in the same place, I shall mention both alike.

Propertius applies to love the idea that great cities fall and small ones become great and the fact that human fortune is never constant:

> *omnia vertuntur: certe vertuntur amores:*
> *vinceris aut vincis, haec in amore rota est.*
> *magni saepe duces, magni cecidere tyranni,*
> *et Thebae steterant altaque Troia fuit.* (2.8.7-10)

---

[22] Compare Ovid's *Tristia* 2.371-4 for a similar transformation:
> *Ilias ipsa quid est aliud nisi adultera, de qua*
> *inter amatorem pugna virumque fuit?*
> *quid prius est illi flamma Briseidos, utque*
> *fecerit iratos rapta puella duces?*

All things change, and loves not least of all:
you lose to those you vanquished – so turns the wheel in love.
Great generals and tyrants have oft taken a fall.
Thebes is destroyed and lofty Ilion has ceased to be.

Troy and Thebes are great cities that are now destroyed and insignificant. If these can be overthrown, it is no wonder that love can too. Love's fortune is cyclical, imagined as a wheel (*rota* 8). We may compare the following passages:

> εἰ δ' ἔγνωκας ὅτι ἄνθρωπος καὶ σὺ εἷς καὶ ἑτέρων τοιῶνδε ἄρχεις, ἐκεῖνο πρῶτον μάθε ὡς κύκλος τῶν ἀνθρωπηίων ἐστὶ πρηγμάτων, περιφερόμενος δὲ οὐκ ἐᾷ αἰεὶ τοὺς αὐτοὺς εὐτυχέειν. (Herodotus I 207.2)
>
> But if you recognize that you are a man and that you rule over other men, learn first that there is a cycle of human affairs, and wheeling around it does allow the the same people to remain always fortunate.
>
> ἀλλ' ἐπὶ πῆμα καὶ χαρὰ
> πᾶσι κυκλοῦσιν, οἷον Ἀρ-
> κτου στροφάδες κέλευθοι. (Sophocles *Trachiniae* 131-133)
>
> But pain and joy
> exist in a circle for all, just like
> the rotating paths of the Great Bear.

The wheel or κύκλος of human fortune is a pervasive concept in the tragedies of Sophocles.[23] It is also an important metaphor for Herodotus, as exemplified not only in the opening chapters of the work but also in the story of Croesus in Book 1. Although the cyclical nature of human fortune may well be to some extent a universal concept, I think that in 2.8.7-10 Propertius does in fact refer to the monumental work of Herodotus' *History*. As I noted above, already in 2.1 Propertius said that out of Cynthia's words and deeds "*maxima... historia*" is born (2.1.15-16).[24] Here that promise comes to fruition, but through elegy and the

---

[23] I have explored this at length in an unpublished paper.

[24] In Book 1.15.24 Cynthia becomes *nobilis historia* because of the magnitude of her treachery and infidelity. (See Stahl 1985.163.) In 1.15, as in this poem, women of the Greek heroic past (in this case Calypso and Hypsipyle) are put forth as models of fidelity in comparison with Cynthia.

elegist's poetics. Propertius' poem is only 40 lines long, it is in elegiac couplets, and the history is that of a love affair. But just as there are seeds of elegy already in the *Iliad*, so Herodotus 1 offers appropriate material for the elegist: the opening chapters of the book are all about wife stealing.

It is nice that the metaphor of the wheel of human fortune is one that Herodotus and Sophocles share. The next Greek model that Propertius reinterprets is Antigone:

> *quid? non Antigonae tumulo Boeotius Haemon*
> *corruit ipse suo saucius ense latus,*
> *et sua cum miserae permiscuit ossa puellae,*
> *qua sine Thebanam noluit ire domum?* (2.8.21-24)

> What? Did not Boeotian Haemon at Antigone's tomb
> destroy himself, stabbed in the side by his own sword,
> and did he not mix his bones with the unhappy girl's,
> since without her he would not enter his Theban home?

In these lines Propertius takes a complex set of heroic actions and values and analyzes them from the point of view of the lover. From this point of view Haemon killed himself for love, because he could not live without Antigone. Scholars have objected to discrepancies with known literary versions of the myth.[25] Butler and Barber write that whatever version Propertius has in mind, "the parallel is inept." Camps tries to excuse Propertius: "The fact that the circumstances attending the loss are quite different in the two cases is not a fault; the speaker's thoughts are rendered incoherent by emotion."[26]

But as we have seen, the Antigone-Haemon exemplum is the second of three great literary models to which Propertius equates his own loss of Cynthia.

---

[25] See Butler and Barber 1933, Camps 1966, and Richardson 1976, *ad loc.* Sophocles' *Antigone* is the best known and most obvious literary model. Hyginus (*Fab.* 72) also has a version in which Haemon kills Antigone and then himself.

The poem begins with a veiled allusion to epic and the figure of Briseis; in lines 29-40 the analogy is fully realized as the third of the three:

> *ille etiam abrepta desertus coniuge Achilles*
> *cessare in tectis pertulit arma sua.*
> *viderat ille fuga, stratos in litore Achivos,*
> *fervere et Hectorea Dorica castra face;*
> *viderat informem multa Patroclon harena*
> *porrectum et sparsas caede iacere comas,*
> *omnia formosam propter Briseida passus:*
> *tantus in erepto saevit amore dolor.*
> *at postquam sera captiva est reddita poena,*
> *fortem illum Haemoniis Hectora traxit equis.*
> *inferior multo cum sim vel matre vel armis,*
> *mirum, si de me iure triumphat Amor?* (2.8.29-40)

> Even great Achilles, left alone when his wife was stolen,
> allowed his arms arms to lie idle in the face of the Trojans.
> He had seen the Achaeans in flight cut down along the shore,
> and the Greek camp ablaze with Hector's torch;
> he had seen the unlovely corpse of Patroclus
> lying stretched out on a heap of sand and his locks caked with blood,
> enduring it all for the sake of lovely Briseis:
> such is the grief that sears a man when his love is stolen.
> But when with tardy redress his captive was restored,
> he dragged the valiant Hector behind his Thessalian horses.
> Since I am far inferior to him in mother and in arms,
> why wonder that Love naturally triumphs over me?

Here, just as in the Antigone-Haemon passage, the elegiac poet/lover interprets the model from the lover's point of view. In the elegist's analysis, Achilles allowed his dearest friend Patroclus to die for love of Briseis (*omnia formosam propter Briseida passus* 35). Even the dragging of Hector is attributed to retroactive *dolor* for the taking of Briseis.

In all three of his uses of Greek literary models in this poem Propertius distorts and reinterprets the analogy, forcing his exempla to fit within a lover's paradigm. Many scholars have tried to show how Propertius gets the model

---

[28] Camps 1966, *ad loc.*

wrong, and then they explain why he did so. Richardson for example writes on these lines: "Whether we are to see this distortion as a lapse of the poet's memory of the *Iliad* or rather as the half-deliberate falsification of his fevered imagination at this point does not greatly matter..." Similarly: "In 2.8 the poet could not stop to think where to begin or what to do, and things came off rather to his discredit."[27] This interpretation, like that of Camps on the Antigone analogy, attributes an inability on the part of the poet to control his own emotions. Consequently his poetry become incoherent and imprecise.

Emotional and intellectual turmoil may well be the construct that Propertius (the author) develops for the poetic persona that is the speaker of the poem. But I argue that the distortion of famous literary models is intentional and part of an on-going *recusatio*, in which Propertius (the author) asserts the place of elegy in Greek and Roman literary history. Propertius has not, in a fit of jealous emotion, misinterpreted the act of dragging Hector. The dragging of Hector is one of the most primal and atrocious responses to grief in the *Iliad*. No ancient reader of the poem could mistake Achilles' grief for Patroclus for anger over the taking of Briseis. Propertius, moreover, could have easily left out lines 37-38, which at first seem almost an afterthought. But Propertius has deliberately composed and included them. In so doing, he signals even more provocatively his appropriation of epic into an elegiac world.

This appropriation of epic begins even before 2.8.29. Already in the Antigone-Haemon exemplum a conflation of epic, elegy and tragedy has taken place. In line 23 Haemon is said to mix his bones with those of Antigone (*sua cum*

---

[27] Richardson 1976.236.

miserae permiscuit ossa puellae). Both Richardson and Camps point out that we know of no tradition in which Antigone and Haemon share a tomb. Achilles and Patroclus, however, are a famous example of a pair whose bones are mixed in a single funeral urn. Propertius makes brilliant use of this exemplum in poem 4.7, in which Cynthia returns after death in a dream and makes this same request of Propertius. Here in 2.8 I think we have an even earlier reference to the mixing of the bones of Achilles and Patroclus. By mixing epic and tragic allusions in the Antigone example Propertius both signals his innovative use of the material but also appropriates them with his own elegiac system.

Propertius' use of Briseis as a model for Cynthia is the crucial and culminating appropriation of epic in this poem. Line 1 refers to Cynthia (*Eripitur... puella*), but recalls Briseis. In line 29 Propertius compares his emotions to those of Achilles, *abrepta desertus coniuge*. A form of *rapio* brings the two together. There is a disjunction, however. Cynthia is a *puella*, but Briseis is called a *coniunx*. Propertius exaggerates the relationship between Briseis and Achilles in order to make the theft seem all the more terrible and the loss all the more painful. In exaggerating their relationship, Propertius gives more weight to his own relationship. And yet Briseis is just as much Achilles' *puella* as Cynthia is Propertius'. Here again I think the disjunction is intentional. In line 37 Propertius plays on Briseis' status by calling her *captiva*: it is unclear whether *captiva* refers to her theft by Agamemnon, or Achilles, or both. The analogy with Briseis and the poem as a whole cast the sufferings of the lover in heroic terms. The obvious parallels between Briseis and Cynthia allow Propertius to elegize the epic material as well as call attention to the fact that he is doing so. And yet

Propertius is never far off from his Iliadic model even when departing from it. For as we have already seen, the attribution of the status of wife to the captive Briseis is one made already in the *Iliad* by Achilles himself.[28]

Poems 2.8 and 2.9 are together a brilliant depiction of the progression of the emotions of the abandoned lover. In poem 2.8 the analogy with Briseis is made in order to entertain the idea that Cynthia has been unwillingly taken from him. In 2.9 there is no such illusion, and instead Cynthia becomes a failed Briseis. Briseis is imagined as the quintessential faithful Greek bride, and Cynthia is a poor comparison:

Penelope poterat bis denos salva per annos
vivere, tam multis femina digna procis;
coniugium falsa poterat differre Minerva,
nocturno solvens texta diurna dolo;
visura et quamvis numquam speraret Vlixem,
illum exspectando facta remansit anus.
nec non exanimem amplectens Briseis Achillem
candida vesana verberat ora manu;
et dominum lavit maerens captiva cruentum,
propositum flavis in Simoenta vadis,
foedavitque comas, et tanti corpus Achilli
maximaque in parva sustulit ossa manu;
cum tibi nec Peleus aderat nec caerula mater,
Scyria nec viduo Deidamia toro.
tunc igitur veris gaudebat Graecia nuptis,[29]
tunc etiam felix inter et arma pudor. (2.9.3-18)

Penelope was able to keep her honour intact for twice ten years,

---

[28] 9.340-343. Cf. 19.297-298.

[29] *Nuptis* is Baehrens' emendation for *natis*. If *natis* is kept the meaning is that children have certain parentage. This seems a strange thing to say of the children of Briseis or Deidamia, and even stranger in connection with Cynthia. Richardson objects to *nuptis* on the grounds that it is "inappropriate for Briseis, when the poet has just characterized her as *captiva*." Yet in line 29 of the same poem (2.8) Briseis is referred to as Achilles' *coniunx*. In this poem Penelope and Briseis are juxtaposed as faithful women, and the juxtaposition seems to equate Penelope and Briseis. As I argued above, I think the disjunction between Briseis as a captive and a wife is intentional, although I do not regard the emendation as certain, and both readings emcompass the ambiguity.

a woman well meriting that multitude of suitors;
her crafty loom enabled her to put off the hour of marriage,
undoing the day's weaving in nightly deceit;
and although she never expected to see Odysseus again,
she stayed true and became an old woman waiting for him.
Briseis, too, holding the lifeless Achilles
beat her fair cheeks with frantic hand:
the mourning captive washing her bleeding lord
as he lay beside the sandy shoals of the Simois;
she soiled her hair and her little hand
took up the body of the huge Achilles and his giant bones.
Peleus was not there for him then, nor his sea-born mother,
nor Deidamia, who slept in a deserted bed on Scyros.
Thus in those days Greece rejoiced in faithful brides,
and in those days chastity existed even amid slaughter and strife.

Here not just Briseis but even Penelope becomes incorporated into the elegiac realm.[90] The faithful wife of twenty years would seem to have no place in the (adulterous) world of the elegiac lover, but Propertius expects no less than perfect "fidelity" from his mistress Cynthia. The possibility that Cynthia could be a Penelope is brought out even further by the juxtaposition of Briseis with Penelope as another example of a devoted consort. Like Cynthia, Briseis is no wife, and yet, like Penelope, she is a model of fidelity.

The powerful image of the weeping Briseis (2.9.9-14) serves a number of purposes that tie in well with poems 2.1 and 2.8. First and foremost Briseis is a foil for the unfaithful Cynthia, devoted and loyal beyond all others. Briseis was there for Achilles when his father, mother, and the mother of his son were not. Secondly, in portraying Briseis this way, as with Penelope, Propertius transforms epic into elegy while at the same time casting his own sufferings in a heroic light.

The elegizing of epic, however, as we have seen in 2.1 and 2.8, involves more than rewriting epic narratives to focus on romantic love. The Roman elegist

---

[90] For Penelope cf. 2.6.23: *felix Admeti coniunx et lectus Ulixis.*

is also asserting a system of poetics that is modeled on learned Alexandrian poets like Callimachus and Theocritus. Propertius often displays his own learnedness and familiarity with Alexandrian poetic techniques by means of sophisticated allusions to Greek and Roman poetry that operate on multiple levels. The death of Achilles does not take place within the confines of the *Iliad*, but in the *Aethiopis*. In the summary form in which we have it there is no episode in the *Aethiopis* in which Briseis laments Achilles as she does here, but in this or some other tradition she must have done so. Quintus of Smyrna (3.551) contains a similar scene, and probably drew on the same source as Propertius.

Propertius employs Alexandrian learning by alluding here as elsewhere to "non-Homeric" Cyclic traditions.[31] But the lamenting Briseis is also eminently Iliadic. The only words that she speaks in the epic are a lament for Patroclus (19.282-300).[32] Propertius' Briseis laments Achilles, but at the same time reenacts her Iliadic lament for Patroclus (and presumably her lament for her first husband).[33] The range of referents for the allusion is extended, and as a result Briseis laments more than one man. In this poem the unfaithful Cynthia is *not* Briseis. Or is she? In 2.8 the poet compares her directly to Briseis, and in 2.20 and 2.21 he will do so again. The multiple referents for Briseis' lament may be connected with Cynthia's multiple lovers. If this is right we may be able to read a

---

[31] Homer was considered by the Alexandrians to be the author of only the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. On Alexandrian allusion to variants and alternative traditions see Rengakos 1993 and discussion below.

[32] On the laments of Briseis see my discussions above at pp. 7-9 and 11-20, and especially my chapter entitled "Wife."

[33] For Briseis' original lament for her first husband, who died in the sack of their city at the hands of Achilles, cf. *Odyssey* 8.521-531, which illustrates the fate of Briseis as much as it does the fate of Andromache and every Trojan wife. See also above, p. 7 note 20.

similar meaning into the seemingly out of place reference to Deidamia, the mother of Neoptolemus, as Achilles' widow (16). If Propertius is Achilles, what does this say about his own fidelity? The perfection of the Achilles-Briseis relationship crumbles as each is revealed to be less than monogamous, and the relationship between Propertius and Cynthia is revealed to be equally fragile.

Poem 2.9 presents Briseis as above all a creature of lament. At first the devoted Briseis is merely a foil for the faithless Cynthia, with whom the lamenting woman seems to have little connection. But as I have argued above, the poem tests the applicability of the analogy, which may be more fitting than it seems at first glance. In poems 2.20 and 2.22 Cynthia is very much a lamenting woman who, as an abandoned lover, expresses all the tortured emotions that the Greek lament tradition and the Roman elegiac love tradition share. In 2.9 we may already see traces of the affinity between these two poetic systems in the combination of Briseis and Cynthia.

Epic and Elegy, Love Song and Lament: 2.20 and 2.22

In the second pair of poems in which Briseis appears in Book 2 she and Cynthia are linked closely with Andromache (2.20.1-2, 2.22.29-32). As I noted in my introduuction to this dissertation, Briseis and Andromache are marked in the *Iliad* as both objects of love and singers of lament. The special combination of love song and lament that they perform is already proto-elegy, incorporated into epic.[34] The elegiac meter has its origins in lament poetry, but in the archaic period

[34] On lament and love song, see p. 6, above.

the elegiac meter became divorced from the genre of lament because of anti-aristocratic laws that prohibited elaborate funerals. In Euripides' *Andromache,* Andromache sings a lament in elegiacs that may be the first reclaiming of lament in the elegiac meter (103-116). Andromache, whose proleptic lament for Hector in *Iliad* 6 and formal lament at Hector's funeral in *Iliad* 24 make her the archetypal singer of lament in Greek song tradition, is an ideal figure with which to re-explore the connection between elegy (with it erotic connotations) and lament. In 2.9, 2.20, and 2.22 Propertius exploits the very similar connection between lament and love song that is so central to Roman elegiac love poetry. By linking Cynthia closely with Briseis and Andromache, Propertius, like Euripides, reunites epic and elegy, lament and love song.

But of course in Roman elegiac poetry it is generally the male lover who laments and loves, and the mistress who is cold and impenetrable. In a famous example Catullus compares himself to a flower that has been "touched" by the plough (11.23-24). In Propertius Book 2 the roles are, on the surface, (re-) reversed: Propertius becomes the warrior figure Achilles, and Cynthia is either the lamenting Briseis or Andromache (2.8, 2.20.1-2, 2.22. 29-32), or else a failed Briseis or Andromache (2.9). The analogy between the lover and the fighter that is so prevalent in 2.1 and other poems throughout the Propertian corpus fits perfectly into this scheme. Through the shifting signs of the metaphor heroic values are reinterpreted and reassigned.

But if Propertius is to be a fighter then Achilles must be a lover. Already in 2.8 Achilles is as much the persecuted elegiac lover as Propertius is the epic warrior: *tantus in erepto saevit amore dolor* (2.8.36). By portraying Achilles as a tortured lover Propertius brings out a very important aspect of Achilles'

character in the *Iliad*. As Hélène Monsacré has shown, Achilles performs a series of laments that connect him to the erotic world of women's lament and love song.[35] Briseis' lament in fact mirrors Achilles' own.[36] The corresponding laments of Achilles and Briseis in the *Iliad* are reflected in the four poems in which Briseis appears in this book. In 2.8 and 2.9 Propertius is the tormented elegiac lover whose emotions find expression in lament poetry. In 2.20 and 2.22, the situation is reversed, and it is Cynthia who grieves.

Thus poems 2.20 and 2.22 are in many ways a pair that balance and contrast 2.8 and 2.9. In the first two poems Cynthia has found another lover; in the second pair, Propertius is the one who is suspected and then proved (by his own admission) to be unfaithful. Now Propertius is the deceitful one (*fraude* 3). In 2.9 Achilles is associated with two women whom he has widowed, and I have argued that Propertius hints already there that he too has multiple associations. But in 2.20 he swears that that is not the case, declaring that he has *una fides* (18).

In this poem Cynthia laments, and surpasses even Briseis and Andromache in her grief:

> *Quid fles abducta gravius Briseide? quid fles*
> *anxia captiva tristius Andromacha?*
> *quidve mea de fraude deos, insana, fatigas?*
> *quid quereris nostram sic cecidisse fidem?*
> *non tam nocturna volucris funesta querela*
> *Attica Cecropiis obstrepit in foliis,*
> *nec tantum Niobe, bis sex ad busta superba,*
> *sollicito lacrimans defluit a Sipylo.* (2.20.1-8)

Why do you weep more bitterly than the abducted Briseis? Why

---

[35] See Monsacré 1984.

[36] See Lohmann 1970.102-5 and 1988.13-32.

in your anxiety do you weep more sorrowfully than captive
Andromache?
And why do you frantically weary the gods with tales of my infidelity?
Why do you complain that my loyalty has sunk so low?
Not so shrilly does the mourning bird of Attica
utter her nightly dirge in Athenian trees;
not so does Niobe, whose pride caused twice six deaths,
pour down her tears from anguished Sipylus.

The elegiac Cynthia is *gravius* and *tristius* than her epic counterparts. If we read these lines in the context of *recusatio gravius* takes on even greater meaning: epic/martial poetry is *gravis*, but Propertius' elegy is *gravius*.[37]

Propertius here compares the complaints of Cynthia to four heroic exempla of lament. Next after Briseis and Andromache Propertius adduces Philomela, who was transformed into the nightingale, a bird of lament in perpetual mourning for her son Itys. *Querela* is the Latin word for lament. It is also a word used of lover's complaints, as in the closing lines of Propertius 4.11: *haec postquam querela mecum sub lite peregit,/ inter complexus excidit umbra meos* (4.11.95-96).[38] This word more than any other unites lament and elegy. We might apply this duality of meaning to the story of Philomela, whose murder of her son was an act of revenge for her husband's rape of her sister. It is possible that here as elsewhere Propertius interprets the mythological exemplum from the lover's perspective, and that Philomela is meant to be lamenting betrayed love and its disastrous consequences.

---

[37] Cf. Propertius 4.1.109, in which the seer Calchas at Aulis before Troy is a *grave exemplum*. I think that *grave* has a double meaning: Calchas is both an example from epic as well as a weighty or serious example.

[38] 4.11 (*Sunt aliquid Manes...*) is itself another exercise in elegizing epic. It alludes throughout to the dream of Achilles in *Iliad* 23.62-107. Cynthia, like Patroclus, appears to Propertius in a dream after her death and reproaches him for neglect of her funeral rites. *Sunt aliquid Manes* is a verbal echo of the exclamation of Achilles, in which the hero, after attempting in vain to embrace the shade of Patroclus, suddenly realizes the nature of the ψυχή after death. See Dué 2001(b).

The final exemplum is steeped in both lament and epic traditions. Here Propertius refers to Niobe, whose twelve children Artemis and Apollo killed after Niobe boasted that she was a more successful mother than Leto. Although Briseis and Andromache are the prototypical lamenting women from the standpoint of Propertius Book 2, Niobe is the traditional figure of lament from the standpoint of the *Iliad*. In *Iliad* 24 Achilles urges Priam to share a meal with him after he has ransomed the body of Hector. Even Niobe had to eat:

νῦν δὲ μνησώμεθα δόρπου.
καὶ γάρ τ' ἠύκομος Νιόβη ἐμνήσατο σίτου,
τῇ περ δώδεκα παῖδες ἐνὶ μεγάροισιν ὄλοντο
ἓξ μὲν θυγατέρες, ἓξ δ' υἱέες ἡβώοντες.
τοὺς μὲν Ἀπόλλων πέφνεν ἀπ' ἀργυρέοιο βιοῖο
χωόμενος Νιόβῃ, τὰς δ' Ἄρτεμις ἰοχέαιρα,
οὕνεκ' ἄρα Λητοῖ ἰσάσκετο καλλιπαρήῳ·
φῆ δοιὼ τεκέειν, ἣ δ' αὐτὴ γείνατο πολλούς·
τὼ δ' ἄρα καὶ δοιὼ περ ἐόντ' ἀπὸ πάντας ὄλεσσαν.
οἳ μὲν ἄρ' ἐννῆμαρ κέατ' ἐν φόνῳ, οὐδέ τις ἦεν
κατθάψαι, λαοὺς δὲ λίθους ποίησε Κρονίων·
τοὺς δ' ἄρα τῇ δεκάτῃ θάψαν θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες.
ἣ δ' ἄρα σίτου μνήσατ', ἐπεὶ κάμε δάκρυ χέουσα.
νῦν δέ που ἐν πέτρῃσιν ἐν οὔρεσιν οἰοπόλοισιν
ἐν Σιπύλῳ, ὅθι φασὶ θεάων ἔμμεναι εὐνὰς
νυμφάων, αἵ τ' ἀμφ' Ἀχελώϊον ἐρρώσαντο,
ἔνθα λίθος περ ἐοῦσα θεῶν ἐκ κήδεα πέσσει.
ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ καὶ νῶϊ μεδώμεθα δῖε γεραιὲ
σίτου· ἔπειτά κεν αὖτε φίλον παῖδα κλαίοισθα
Ἴλιον εἰσαγαγών· πολυδάκρυτος δέ τοι ἔσται. (*Iliad* 24.601-620)

But now let us think of dinner.
For even Niobe of the beautiful tresses took thought of food,
she whose twelve children died in her halls,
six daughters, and six sons in the bloom of youth.
Apollo slay the sons with his silver bow,
angered at Niobe, And Artemis who pours down arrows killed the daughters,
since Niobe had equated herself with Leto the beautiful-cheeked:
she asserted that Leto had borne two children, but she herself had borne many.
And they although being two destroyed them all.
The bodies lay there amidst the slaughter for nine days, nor was there anyone

> to bury them; Zeus had turned the people to stone.
> But on the tenth day the Heavenly gods buried them.
> But she indeed thought of food, when she was weary of weeping.
> And now somewhere among the rocks in the lonely mountains
> in Sipylos, where they say are the haunts of goddesses,
> the nymphs who dance around the Acheloos river,
> there as a stone she weighs her cares from the gods.
> But come let us two also take thought, brilliant old man,
> for food. Then in turn you may lament your dear son,
> once you have led him back into Ilion. Indeed he will be much-lamented.

The story of Niobe is significant in its own right. The story and its applicability to the context in which it is used troubled Alexandrian scholars.[39] Propertius alludes directly to lines that were athetized by Aristophanes (of Byzantium) and Aristarchus. As Anton Rengakos has shown, Alexandrian poets like Callimachus and Apollonius of Rhodes displayed their learnedness by alluding to the variant readings of Homer known to them and to the textual problems encountered in the work done by the Alexandrian scholars on the text of Homer.[40] I would argue that in these lines Propertius practices an Alexandrian method of alluding to Homer. Propertius uses Homer, but in an untraditional, Callimachean way.

Even more significant for this discussion, however, is the Iliadic context within which the story is told. Just before this exemplum Achilles and Priam weep for sons and fathers. Just after this episode, as 24.620 already predicts, begins the funeral of Hector with its succession of laments by Hecuba, Helen, and Andromache. And it is with this funeral that the *Iliad* comes to an end. When Propertius compares Cynthia's lament to Niobe's, he also evokes the fullest expressions of lament in archaic Greek literature.

---

[39] For the various issues involved, see Richardson 1993, *ad loc.*

[40] Rengakos 1993.

These four exempla, when taken together, are a reintegration of lament and love song, epic and elegy. Homeric poetry already incorporates women's lament traditions within its epic framework. Propertius simply recreates, from the opposite direction, something that epic already does. Homeric poetry incorporates lament into epic; Propertius reinterprets elegy as lament and in doing so incorporates epic into lament. In order to achieve this Propertius adopts the techniques of Alexandrian poets whose "slender" poetics transform weighty epic hexameters into finally crafted and delicate elegiacs. Propertius combines the substance of epic with the poetic techniques of Callimachus and creates Roman love elegy.

In 2.22, the final poem in which Briseis appears, Propertius reasserts himself as the lover and warrior Achilles, declaring that one woman is not enough for him.[41] Poem 2.22 aggressively equates the lover and the fighter in the way of 2.1. Hector and Achilles are examples of warriors whose martial strength and abilities are in no way diminished by sex and love:

Iuppiter Alcmenae geminas requieverat Arctos,
et caelum noctu bis sine rege fuit;
nec tamen idcirco languens ad fulmina venit:
nullus amor vires eripit ipse suas.
quid? cum e complexu Briseidos iret Achilles,
num fugere minus Thessala tela Phryges?
quid? ferus Andromachae lecto cum surgeret Hector?
bella Mycenaeae non timuere rates?
ille vel hic classis poterant vel perdere muros:
hic ego Pelides, hic ferus Hector ego. (2.22.25-34)

For Alcmena's sake Jupiter put the twin Bears to rest,

[41] Poem 2.22 is usually divided into at least two parts. See Richardson 1976, who makes 2.22.43-50 the beginning of a new poem and transposes 22.17 to follow 2.22.50 as part of the same poem. For a defense of the unity of 2.22 see Williams 1980 and Hendry 1998-2000.

and for a doubled night did heaven lack a king;
yet he was not therefore faint when he turned to wield the thunderbolt:
never does the act of love rob a lover of his strength.
What? When Achilles came from Briseis' embrace,
did not the Trojans flee the Thessalian's shafts?
And when fierce Hector rose from Andromache's bed,
did not Mycenae's fleet tremble before his onset?
They had the power to destroy either ship or walls;
in love I will be Achilles, in love fierce Hector.

These lines bring together a number of points in my discussion. First, we see Briseis and Andromache here more than anywhere else as objects of desire, which is a necessary image if Propertius is to "elegize" them.[42] By portraying them both as lovers Propertius allows Briseis and Andromache to become elegiac mistresses, and conversely he allows the elegiac mistress to become Briseis or Andromache. By combining the object of desire (as here) and the singer of lament (as in 2.9 and 2.22) Propertius captures the essence of the emotions of elegy. Elegy conveys anger, grief, sorrow, despair, loss, and fond remembrance, all of which emotions Roman elegiac love poetry and Greek funeral lament share. Although formal lament certainly exists and existed outside of epic, Propertius in these four poems engages heroic and specifically Iliadic lament in a complex process of *recusatio*. By comparing himself to Achilles and Cynthia to Briseis Propertius does more than claim equal validity for love elegy as other love poets

---

[42] Cf. Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* 2.711-714:

Fecit et in capta Lyrneside magnus Achilles,
cum premeret mollem lassus ab hoste torum.
Illis te manibus tangi, Brisei, sinebas,
imbutae Phrygia quae nece semper erant?

I find this passage to be one of the most striking examples of an "elegized" epic exemplum involving Briseis. Here Ovid alludes to one of the most solemn and moving scenes of the *Iliad*, the kissing of Achilles' "man-slaying" hands by Priam. Cf. *Iliad* 24.504-506: ἐγὼ δ' ἐλεεινότερός περ. / ἔτλην δ' οἷ οὔ πώ τις ἐπιχθόνιος βροτὸς ἄλλος. / ἀνδρὸς παιδοφόνοιο ποτὶ στόμα χεῖρ' ὀρέγεσθαι.

do.[43] Through the figure of Briseis Propertius is able to reinterpret epic and transform it into elegy, thereby asserting his own poetic goals in a heroic realm.

I have argued above that Propertius deliberately inserts himself into the history of Greek and Latin literature by reinterpreting his models from the point of view of the lover and recasting them as elegy. By declaring all of literature a source for elegiac exempla Propertius affirms the preeminence of love elegy as a genre. In doing this Propertius consistently refuses to write epic above all and constantly justifies his own choice to write elegy. But in refusing Propertius displays a commanding awareness of the epic tradition. Thus his refusal is also an inclusion. This technique is grounded in Alexandrian learning and connects Propertius with the Callimachean poetic program that he claims for himself throughout the elegies.[44]

Propertius' elegiac portrayal of Briseis has its origins in this Hellenistic tradition of poetry.[45] Callimachus and Philitas are the poets cited by Propertius as Greek models for Roman love elegy.[46] Apollonius' *Argonautica*, however, though hexameter epic poetry, is revolutionary from the point of view of poetics and extremely important in the history of love elegy. Medea's soliloquy in Book 3 of the *Argonautica* expresses all of the tortured emotions of Catullus and Propertius.

---

[43] Cf., e.g., Horace 1.1.

[44] See especially 4.1.64: "*Umbria Romani patria Callimachi!*" On Propertius's use of Callimachean poetic techniques in his fourth book see Sullivan, p. 138ff., as well as Hubbard, p. 68ff., and Camps, p. 4.

[45] It is possible that one or more Roman tragedies on the wrath of Achilles may have emphasized the romantic relationship between Achilles and Briseis, though Barchiesi (1992.186-187) does not think it likely.

[46] See 2.34.31 and 3.1.1.

Catullus' portrayal of Ariadne (64) and Virgil's portrayal of Dido (*Aeneid* 4) are comparable responses to Apollonius' treatment of Medea and are infused with Alexandrian learning and poetic techniques. Both Catullus 64 and Virgil's *Aeneid* are themselves reconciliations of Callimachean poetics and heroic poetry. Unlike Catullus or Virgil, Propertius distances himself from epic subjects by claiming that he can only write about Cynthia. But by constantly comparing Cynthia to epic models Propertius becomes an epic poet on his own (elegiac) terms.

Book 2 of Propertius' elegies presents notorious difficulties for the critical reader.[47] Divisions between the poems are not always clear or consistent in the manuscripts, and the unusual length of the book (1,362 lines) indicates the possibility that two books, one or both perhaps damaged, have been conflated in our manuscript tradition. As Hubbard notes: "The problem of what constitutes a poem and what principles of unity we can invoke is thus sharply posed by book II in a way in which it is not posed by other books of Propertius."[48] Four poems do not guarantee that Book 2 as we now have it is a unity. But the balance of

---

[47] See the recent edition by Goold 1999, as well as Tarrant 1983.324-326 and Sullivan 1976. The nearest parallel for book length in Latin literature is the third book of Horace's *Odes* at 1004 lines. The other books of Propertius are 706, 990, and 952 lines long. The Alexandrian poets/critics seem to have been very aware of book lengths. The history of book/scroll lengths is very much related to Homeric book divisions, which seem to have become canonical sometime after Aristarchus. Greek tragedies could be as long as 1800 lines, but were generally around 1400. The four books of Apollonius' *Argonautica* range from 1285-1781 lines long. Pre-Aristarchean Homeric papyri show possible scroll lengths of 1000-2000 lines according to calculations by Van Sickle 1980 and Irigoin 1952. The canonical Homeric book divisions range from 461-877 lines long. The books of Virgil's *Aeneid* average 850 lines, while those of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* average 800 lines, both basically conforming to the Post-Aristarchean Homeric model. See Nagy 1996.183-184. All of this indicates to me that even book length is a profession of poetics on the part of the poet and that there may be a literary intent behind a single extra long book of Propertius. Unfortunately the severely corrupt state of the Propertian corpus as a whole prevents scholars from anything more than a guess as to what the original length of Book 2 might have been, and therefore it can't be stated with certainty that Propertius has deliberately composed an extra long book. On Greek book lengths see Irigoin 1952.141 and Van Sickle 1980.9ff.

[48] Hubbard 1974.45.

comparison and contrast, oppositions and reversals in the analogy between Cynthia and Briseis, and Propertius and Achilles are a unity that problematizes traditional attempts to divide the book, forcing the reader to reconsider the integrity of the poems handed down to us as Book 2. This unity encompasses a large portion of the 34 poems handed down to us as Book 2. In poem 2.1 Augustus and Maecenas are Achilles and Patroclus. But in 2.8, 2.9, 2.20, and 2.22 Propertius is Achilles and Cynthia is Briseis. Does that make Propertius the poetic equivalent of Augustus? Can Maecenas (as Patroclus) make Cynthia Propertius' κουριδίην ἄλοχον? The substitutions at work in the analogy of Achilles and Briseis in this book collapse all distinctions between lover and warrior, poet and statesman, and finally elegist and epic poet that are so crucial to our understanding of Propertius.

Appendix: Selected Ancient Literary References to Briseis

Apollodorus, *Library*, Epitome 4.1, 4.3, 4.7

> Ἀχιλλεὺς δὲ μηνίων ἐπὶ τὸν πόλεμον οὐκ ἐξῄει διὰ Βρισηίδα (Ep. 4.1)
>
> οἱ δὲ πέμπουσι πρὸς Ἀχιλλέα πρέσβεις Ὀδυσσέα καὶ Φοίνικα καὶ Αἴαντα, συμμαχεῖν ἀξιοῦντες καὶ Βρισηίδα καὶ ἄλλα δῶρα ὑπισχνούμενοι (Ep. 4.3)
>
> Ἀχιλλεὺς δὲ τὴν ὀργὴν ἀποθέμενος καὶ τὴν Βρισηίδα κομζεται. (Ep. 4.7)

Athenaeus, *Deipnosophistae* 13.560

> Οὐδένα δὲ ὑμῶν ἀγνοεῖν οἶομαι, ἄνδρες φίλοι, ὅτι καὶ οἱ μέγιστοι πόλεμοι διὰ γυναῖκας ἐγένοντο. ὁ Ἰλιακὸς δι' Ἑλένην, ὁ λοιμὸς διὰ Χρυσηίδα, Ἀχιλλέως μῆνις διὰ Βρισείδα.

Bacchylides 13.131-138

> ὡς Τρῶες, ἐπεὶ κλύον αἰ-
> χματὰν Ἀχιλλέα
> μίμνοντ' ἐν κλισίῃσιν
> εἵνεκεν ξανθᾶς γυναικός,
> Βρισηΐδος ἱμερογυίου,
> θεοῖσιν ἄντειναν χέρας,
> φοιβὰν ἐσιδόντες ὑπαὶ
> χειμῶνος αἴγλαν·

Cypria [From the summary of Proclus, *Chrestomathia*]:

> εἶτα ἀπονοστεῖν ὡρμημένους τοὺς Ἀχαιοὺς Ἀχιλλεὺς κατέχει. κἄπειτα ἀπελαύνει τὰς Αἰνείου βοῦς, καὶ Λυρνησσὸν καὶ Πήδασον πορθεῖ καὶ συχνὰς τῶν περιοικίδων πόλεων, καὶ Τρῳλον φονεύει.
> Λυκάονά τε Πάτροκλος εἰς Λῆμνον ἀγαγὼν ἀπεμπολεῖ.
> καὶ ἐκ τῶν λαφύρων Ἀχιλλεὺς μὲν Βρισηΐδα γέρας λαμβάνει, Χρυσεΐδα δὲ Ἀγαμέμνων.

Dares 13

> *Briseidam formosam, alta statura, candidam, capillo flavo et molli, superciliis junctis, oculis venustis, corpore aequali, blandam, affabilem, verecundam, animo simplici, piam.*

Dictys of Crete (Hippodameia = Briseis) 2.17, 2.33, 2.49, 3.12, 4.15

Homer, *Iliad* 1.184, 1.322, 1.335, 1.345, 1.390, 19.246, 19.260, 19.282, 19.295, 24.676

Hyginus, *Genealogiae* (*Fabulae*) 106:

> Agamemnon Briseidam Brisae sacerdotis filiam ex Moesia captivam propter formae dignitatem, quam Achilles ceperat, ab Achille abduxit eo tempore, quo Chryseida Chrysi sacerdoti Apollinis Zminthei reddidit; quam ob iram Achilles in proelium non prodibat, sed cithara in tabernaculo se exercebat. Quod cum Argivi ab Hectore fugarentur, Achilles obiurgatus a Patroclo arma sua ei tradidit, quibus ille Troianos fugavit aestimantes Achillem esse, Sarpedonemque Iovis et Europae filium occidit. Postea ipse Patroclus ab Hectore interficitur, armaque eius sunt detracta Patroclo occiso. Achilles cum Agamemnone redit in gratiam Briseidamque ei reddidit. Tum contra Hectorem cum inermis prodisset, Thetis mater a Vulcano arma ei impetravit, quae Nereides per mare attulerunt. Quibus armis ille Hectorem occidit astrictumque ad currum traxit circa muros Troianorum, quem sepeliendum cum patri nollet dare, Priamus Iovis iussu duce Mercurio in castra Danaorum venit et filii corpus auro repensum accepit, quem sepulturae tradidit.

Ovid, *Heroides* 3; *Tristia* 2.373; *Ars Amatoria* 2.403, 2.711

> *Quam legis, a rapta Briseide littera uenit*
> *uix bene barbarica Graeca notata manu.*
> *quascumque adspicies, lacrimae fecere lituras;*
> *sed tamen et lacrimae pondera uocis habent...* (*Heroides* 3.1-4)

> *Ilias ipsa quid est aliud nisi adultera, de qua*
> *inter amatorem pugna virumque fuit?*
> *quid prius est illi flamma Briseidos, utque*
> *fecerit iratos rapta puella duces?* (*Tristia* 2.373-374)

> *Fertur et abducta Lyrneside tristis Achilles*
> *Haemonia curas attenuasse lyra* (*Tristia* 4.1.15-17)

> *Dum fuit Atrides una contentus, et illa*
> *casta fuit: vitio est improba facta viri.*
> *Audierat laurumque manu vittasque ferentem*
> *pro nata Chrysen non valuisse sua:*
> *audierat, Lyrnesi, tuos, abducta, dolores,*
> *bellaque per turpis longius isse moras.*
> *Haec tamen audierat. Priameida viderat ipsa.* (*Ars Armatoria* 2.399-405)

> *Fecit et in capta Lyrneside magnus Achilles,*
> *cum premeret mollem lassus ab hoste torum.*
> *Illis te manibus tangi, Brisei, sinebas,*
> *imbutae Phrygia quae nece semper erant?* (*Ars Armatoria* 2.711-714)

Propertius 2.8.35, 2.9.9, 2.20.1, 2.22.29

> *ille etiam abrepta desertus coniuge Achilles*
> *cessare in tectis pertulit arma sua.*

viderat ille fuga, stratos in litore Achivos,
fervere et Hectorea Dorica castra face;
viderat informem multa Patroclon harena
porrectum et sparsas caede iacere comas,
omnia formosam propter Briseida passus:
tantus in erepto saevit amore dolor.
at postquam sera captiva est reddita poena,
fortem illum Haemoniis Hectora traxit equis.
inferior multo cum sim vel matre vel armis,
mirum, si de me iure triumphat Amor? (2.8.29-40)

Penelope poterat bis denos salva per annos
vivere, tam multis femina digna procis;
coniugium falsa poterat differre Minerva,
nocturno solvens texta diurna dolo;
visura et quamvis numquam speraret Vlixem,
illum exspectando facta remansit anus.
nec non exanimem amplectens Briseis Achillem
candida vesana verberat ora manu;
et dominum lavit maerens captiva cruentum,
propositum flavis in Simoenta vadis,
foedavitque comas, et tanti corpus Achilli
maximaque in parva sustulit ossa manu;
cum tibi nec Peleus aderat nec caerula mater,
Scyria nec viduo Deidamia toro.
tunc igitur veris gaudebat Graecia nuptis,
tunc etiam felix inter et arma pudor. (2.9.3-18)

Quid fles abducta gravius Briseide? quid fles
anxia captiva tristius Andromacha?
quidve mea de fraude deos, insana, fatigas?
quid quereris nostram sic cecidisse fidem?
non tam nocturna volucris funesta querela
Attica Cecropiis obstrepit in foliis,
nec tantum Niobe, bis sex ad busta superba,
sollicito lacrimans defluit a Sipylo. (2.20.1-8)

Iuppiter Alcmenae geminas requieverat Arctos,
et caelum noctu bis sine rege fuit;
nec tamen idcirco languens ad fulmina venit:
nullus amor vires eripit ipse suas.
quid? cum e complexu Briseidos iret Achilles,
num fugere minus Thessala tela Phryges?
quid? ferus Andromachae lecto cum surgeret Hector?
bella Mycenaeae non timuere rates?
ille vel hic classis poterant vel perdere muros:
hic ego Pelides, hic ferus Hector ego. (2.22.25-34)

Quintus of Smyrna 3.551-576, 687; 4.276; 7.723

Πασάων δ' ἔκπαγλον ἀκηχεμένη κέαρ ἔνδον
Βρισηὶς παράκοιτις ἐυπτολέμου Ἀχιλῆος
ἀμφὶ νέκυν στρωφᾶτο καὶ ἀμφοτέρῃς παλάμῃσι
δρυπτομένη χρόα καλὸν ἀύτεεν· ἐκ δ' ἀπαλοῖο
στήθεος αἱματόεσσαι ἀνὰ σμώδιγγες ἄερθεν
θεινομένης· φαίης κεν ἐπὶ γλάγος αἷμα χέασθαι
φοίνιον. Ἀγλαΐῃ δὲ καὶ ἀχνυμένης ἀλεγεινῶς
ἱμερόεν μάρμαιρε, χάρις δέ οἱ ἄμπεχεν εἶδος.
Τοῖον δ' ἔκφατο μῦθον ὀιζυρὸν γοόωσα·
"Ὤ μοι ἐγὼ πάντων περιώσιον αἰνὰ παθοῦσα·
οὐ γάρ μοι τόσσον περ ἐπήλυθεν ἄλλό τι πῆμα,
οὔτε κασιγνήτων οὔτ' εὐρυχόρου περὶ πάτρης,
ὅσσον σεῖο θανόντος· ἐπεὶ σύ μοι ἱερὸν ἦμαρ
καὶ φάος ἠελίοιο πέλες καὶ μείλιχος αἰὼν
ἐλπωρή τ' ἀγαθοῖο καὶ ἄσπετον ἄλκαρ ἀνίης
πάσης τ' ἀγλαΐης πολὺ φέρτερος ἠδὲ τοκήων
ἔπλεο· πάντα γὰρ οἷος ἔῃς δμωῇ περ ἐούσῃ,
καί ῥά με θῆκας ἄκοιτιν ἑλὼν ἄπο δούλια ἔργα.
Νῦν δέ τις ἐν νήεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν ἄξεται ἄλλος
Σπάρτην εἰς ἐρίβωλον ἢ ἐς πολυδίψιον Ἄργος·
καί νύ κεν ἀμφιπολεῦσα κακὰς ὑποτλήσομ' ἀνίας
σεῦ ἀπονοσφισθεῖσα δυσάμμορος. Ὡς ὄφελόν με
γαῖα χυτὴ ἐκάλυψε πάρος σέο πότμον ἰδέσθαι."
Ὣς ἣ μὲν δμηθέντ' ὀλοφύρετο Πηλείωνα
δμωῆς σὺν μογερῇσι καὶ ἀχνυμένοισιν Ἀχαιοῖς
μυρομένη καὶ ἄνακτα καὶ ἀνέρα· (3.551-576)

Seneca *Troades* 222; *Agamemnon* 186

Inhospitali Telephus regno impotens
dum Mysiae ferocis introitus negat,
rudem cruore regio dextram imbuit
fortemque eandem sensit et mitem manum.
Cecidere Thebae, vidit Eetion capi
sua regna victus; clade subversa est pari
apposita celso parva Lyrnesos iugo,
captaque tellus nobilis Briseide
et causa litis regibus Chryse iacet
et nota fama Tenedos et quae pascuo
fecunda pingui Thracios nutrit greges
Scyros fretumque Lesbos Aegaeum secans
et cara Phoebo Cilla; quid quas alluit
vernis Caycus gurgitem attollens aquis (*Troades* 215-228)

ablatam Achilli diligit Lyrnesida
nec rapere puduit e sinu auulsam uiri. (*Agamemnon* 185-186)

Abbreviations

Addenda Carpenter, T. H., T. Mannack, and M. Mendonca. *Beazley Addenda: Additional References to ABV, ARV² and Paralipomena*. 2nd ed. Oxford, 1989.

AJA American Journal of Archaeology

ARV² Beazley, J. D. *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*. 2nd ed. Oxford, 1963.

AthMitt Mitteilungen des deutschen Archaologischen Instituts, Athenische Abteilung

CJ Classical Journal

CP Classical Philology

CQ Classical Quarterly

FGrHist Jacoby, F., ed. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin and Leide, 1923-.

GRBS Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies

HSCP Harvard Studies in Classical Philology

JHS Journal of Hellenic Studies

LIMC Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae. Zurich and Munich, 1981-1997.

LSJ⁹ Liddell, H., R. Scott, and H. S. Jones. *A Greek-English Lexicon*. 9th ed. Oxford, 1940.

NJbb Neue Jahrbücher für Philologie und Pädagogik

Paralipomena Beazley, J. D. *Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-figure Vase-painters and to Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*. Oxford, 1971.

PCPhS Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society

RE Pauly, A., G. Wissowa, and W. Kroll, eds. *Realenzyklopädie der klassischen Altertumswissenschaft*. Stuttgart, 1893-.

RM Rheinisches Museum

TAPA Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association

Bibliography

Adkins, A. W. K. "Threatening, Abusing, and Feeling Angry in Homeric Poems," *JHS* 89 (1960): 7-21.

Ahlberg-Cornell, G. *Myth and Epos in Early Greek Art: Representation and Interpretation*. Jonsered, 1992.

Aitken, E. "ὀπάων and ὀπάζων: A Study in the Epic Treatment of Heroic Relationships." Forthcoming.

Alexiou, M. *The Ritual Lament in Greek Tradition*. Cambridge, 1974. 2nd edition, forthcoming, 2001.

Allen, T. W. "Dictys of Crete and Homer." *Journal of Philology* 31 (1910): 207-233.

--- *Homer: The Origins and Transmission*. Oxford, 1924.

--- ed. *Homeri Ilias*. I-III. Oxford, 1931.

Allen, T. W., W. R. Halliday and E. E. Sikes, eds. *The Homeric Hymns*. Oxford, 1936.

Aloni, A. *Tradizioni archaiche della Troade e composizione dell' Iliade*. Milan, 1986.

Anderson, M. J., ed. *Classical Drama and its Influence: Essays Presented to H. D. F. Kitto*. London, 1965.

Baca, A. R. "The Themes of *Querela* and *Lacrimae* in Ovid's *Heroides*." *Emerita* 39 (1971): 195-201.

Barchiesi, A., ed. *P. Ovidii Nasonis Epistulae Heroidum 1-3*. Florence, 1992.

Beazley, J. D. *Attic Black-figure Vase-painters*. Oxford, 1956.

--- *Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*. 2nd ed. Oxford, 1963.

--- *Paralipomena: Additions to Attic Black-figure Vase-painters and to Attic Red-figure Vase-painters*. Oxford, 1971.

Becker, A. S. *The Shield of Achilles: The Poetics of Ekphrasis*. Lanham, MD, 1995.

Bekker, I. *Scholia in Homeri Iliadem*. Berlin, 1825.

Bernabé, A., ed. *Poetae Epici Graeci: Testimonia et Fragmenta*. Vol. I. Leipzig, 1987.

Bethe, E. *Homer: Dichtung und Sage. III. Die Sage vom Troischen Kriege.* Leipzig, 1927.

Blumenthal, A. von. "Sophokles." *RE* 3 A (1927)1052.

Boardman, J. *Athenian Red Figure Vases: The Archaic Period.* Oxford, 1975.

Boardman, J. and C. E. Vaphopoulou-Richardson, eds. *Chios.* Oxford, 1986.

Boedeker, D. "Protesilaos and the End of Herodotus' Histories." *CA* 7 (1988): 30-48.

Bowersock, G. W. *Fiction as History: Nero to Julian.* Berkeley, 1994.

Bowie, E. L. "Philostratus: Writer of Fiction." Morgan-Stoneman 1994: 181-199.

Bowra, M. "Composition." Wace-Stubbings 1962: 38-74.

Braswell, B. K. "Mythological Invention in the *Iliad*," *CQ* 21 (1971): 16-26.

Brelich, A. *Gli eroi greci.* Rome, 1958.

Bremer, J. M., I. J. F. de Jong and J. Kalff, eds. *Homer: Beyond Oral Poetry.* Amsterdam, 1987.

Brommer, F. *Odysseus: Die Taten und Leiden des Helden in antiker Kunst und Literatur.* Darmstadt, 1983.

Brown, W. E. "Sophocles' Ajax and Homer's Hector." *CJ* 65 (1965-1966): 118-121.

Bulas, K. *Les illustrations antiques de l'Iliade. Eos* Supplement 3, 1929.

Burgess, J. S. "The Non-Homeric *Cypria*." *TAPA* 126 (1996): 77-99.

Burkert, W. "Die Leistung eines Kreophylos: Kreophyleer, Homeriden, und die archaische Heraklesepik." *Museum Helveticum* 29 (1972): 74-85.

--- "The Making of Homer in the Sixth Century B.C.: Rhapsodes vs. Stesichoros." *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World.* Malibu, 1987: 43-62.

Butler, H. E. and E. A. Barber, eds. *The Elegies of Propertius.* Oxford, 1933.

Calame, C. *Les choeurs de jeunes filles en Grèce archaïque.* Rome, 1977.

--- *Choruses of Young Women in Ancient Greece: Their Morphology, Religious Role, and Social Function.* trans. D. Collins and J. Orion. Lanham, MD, 1999.

--- *The Poetics of Eros in Ancient Greece.* trans. J. Lloyd. Princeton, 1999.

Camps, W. A., ed. *Propertius: Elegies Book II.* Cambridge, 1966.

Caraveli, A. "The Bitter Wounding: Lament as a Social Protest in Rural Greece." Dubisch 1986: 169-194.

Carlisle, M. and O. Levaniouk, eds. *Nine Essays on Homer.* Lanham, MD, 1999.

Carpenter, R. *Folk Tale, Fiction, and Saga in the Homeric Epics.* Berkeley, 1946.

Carpenter, T. H., T. Mannack, and M. Mendonca. *Beazley Addenda: Additional References to ABV, ARV² and Paralipomena.* 2nd ed. Oxford, 1989.

Carter, J. B. and S. P. Morris, eds. *The Ages of Homer: a Tribute to Emily Townsend Vermeule.* Austin, 1995.

Caskey, L. D. and J. D. Beazley, eds. *Attic Vase Paintings in the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston* III. Oxford, 1963.

Càssola, F., ed. *Inni Omerici.* Milan, 1975.

Considine, P. "Some Homeric Terms for Anger," *Acta Classica* 9 (1966): 15-25.

Cook, R. M. "Art and Epic in Archaic Greece." *Bulletin van de Vereeniging tot Bevordering der Kennis van de Antike Beschaving* 58 (1983):1-10.

Dalzell, A. "Homeric Themes in Propertius." *Hermathena* 129 (1980): 29-36.

Danforth, L. *The Death Rituals of Greece.* Princeton, 1997.

Davidson, O. M. *Comparative Literature and Classical Persian Poetics.* Costa Mesa, CA, 2000.

Davies, A. M. and W. Meid, eds. *Studies in Greek, Italic, and Indo-European Linguistics Offered to Leonard R. Palmer.* Innsbruck, 1976.

Davies, M., ed. *Epicorum Graecorum Fragmenta.* Göttingen, 1988.

--- ed. *Sophocles Trachiniae.* Oxford, 1991.

--- *The Epic Cycle.* Bristol, 1989.

De Jong. *See* Jong.

Descoeudres, J. P., ed. *Eumousia: Ceramic and Iconographic Studies in Honour of Alexander Cambitoglou.* Sydney, 1990.

Dihle, A. *Homer-Probleme.* Opladen, 1970.

Döhle, B. "Die 'Achilleis' des Aischylos in ihrer Auswirkung auf die attische Vasenmalerei des 5. Jahrhunderts." *Klio* 49 (1967): 63-149.

Dover, K. J. Greek *Homosexuality*. 2nd ed. Cambridge, MA, 1989.

Dowden, K. "Homer's Sense of Text." *JHS* 116 (1996): 47-61.

Dubisch, J., ed. *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*. Princeton, 1986.

Ducrot, O. and T. Todorov. *Dictionnaire encyclopédique des sciences du langage*. Paris, 1972. [= *Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Sciences of Language*. trans. C. Porter. Baltimore, 1979.]

Dué, C. "Tragic History and Barbarian Speech in Sallust's *Jugurtha*." *HSCP* 100 (forthcoming, 2000).

"Achilles' Golden Amphora in Aeschines' *Against Timarchus* and the Afterlife of Oral Tradition" *CP* 96 (forthcoming, 2001[a]).

--- "*Sunt Aliquid Manes*: Homer, Plato, and Alexandrian Allusion in Propertius 4.7." *CJ* 96 (forthcoming, 2001[b]).

Ebbott, M. "The Wrath of Helen: Self-Blame and Nemesis in the *Iliad*." Carlisle-Levaniouk 1999: 3-20.

Edmunds, L. "Myth in Homer." Powell-Morris 1996: 415-441.

Edmunds, S. Homeric ΝΗΠΙΟΣ. New York, 1990.

Edwards, M. W. "*Topos* and Transformation in Homer." Bremer-de Jong–Kalff 1987: 47-60.

--- ed. *The Iliad: A Commentary*. Volume V. Cambridge, 1991.

Eisenhut, W. "Spätantike Troja-Erzählungen - mit einem Ausblick auf die mittelalterliche Troja-Literatur." *Mittellateinisches Jahrbuch* 18 (1983): 1-28.

--- ed. *Dictys Cretensis: Ephemeridos Belli Troiani Libri a Lucio Septimio ex Graeco in Latinum Sermonem Translati*. Stuttgart, 1994.

Emlyn-Jones, C., L. Hardwick, and J. Purkis, eds. *Homer: Readings and Images*. London, 1992.

Erbse, H., ed. *Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem* I-VII. Berlin, 1969-1988.

--- "Ilias und 'Patroklie'" *Hermes* 111 (1983): 1-15.

Farnell, L. *Greek Hero Cults and Ideas of Immortality*. Oxford, 1921.

Fedeli, P., ed. *Sexti Properti Elegiarum Libri IV*. Stuttgart, 1984.

Fedeli, P. and P. Pinotti, eds. *Bibliografia properziana*. Assisi, 1985.

Fenik, B. *Typical Battle Scenes in the Iliad: Studies in the Narrative Techniques of Homeric Battle Description*. *Hermes* Einzelschriften 21. Wiesbaden, 1968.

--- ed. *Homer: Tradition and Invention*. Leiden, 1978.

Ferrari, G. "Menelas." *JHS* 107 (1987): 108-182.

--- "Heracles, Pisistratus, and the Panathenaea." *Metis* 9-10 (1994-1995): 219-226.

--- "Figures in the Text: Metaphors and Riddles in the *Agamemnon*." *CP* 92 (1997): 1-45.

--- *Figures of Speech: Men and Maidens in Ancient Greece*. Forthcoming.

Fittschen, K. *Untersuchungen zum Beginn der Sagendarstellungen bei den Griechen*. Berlin, 1969.

Foley, H. "Reverse Similes and Sex Roles in the *Odyssey*." *Arethusa* 11 (1978):14-21.

Foley, J. M., ed. *Oral Traditional Literature: A Festschrift for Albert Bates Lord*. Columbus, OH, 1981.

--- *Oral-Formulaic Theory and Research: An Introduction and Annotated Bibliography*. New York, 1985.

--- *Immanent Art*. Bloomington, 1991.

--- *The Theory of Oral Composition: History and Methodology*. Bloomington, 1988.

--- *The Singer of Tales in Performance*. Bloomington, 1995.

--- "Oral Tradition and Its Implications." Powell-Morris 1996: 146-173.

--- "*Guslar* and *Aoidos*: Traditional Register in South Slavic and Homeric Epic." *TAPA* 126 (1996): 11-41.

--- *Homer's Traditional Art*. University Park, 1999.

Ford, A. *Homer: The Poetry of the Past*. Ithaca, 1992.

Fornara, C. W. *The Nature of History in Greece and Rome*. Berkeley, 1983.

Fowler, R. L. "The Rhetoric of Desperation." *HSCP* 91 (1987): 5-38.

Frame, D. *The Myth of Return in Early Greek Epic*. New Haven, 1978.

Frazer, R. M. *The Trojan War: The Chronicles of Dictys of Crete and Dares the Phrygian*. Bloomington, 1966.

Friis Johansen, K. *The Iliad in Early Greek Art*. Copenhagen, 1967.

Gantz, T. *Early Greek Myth*. Baltimore, 1993.

Ghali-Kahil, L. B. *Les enlèvements et le retour d'Hélène*. Paris, 1955.

Gianotti, G. F. "Le metamorfosi di Omero: Il 'Romanzo di Troia' dalla specializzazione delle scholae ad un pubblico di non specialisti." *Sigma* 12, no.1 (1979): 15-32.

Goff, B., ed. *History, Tragedy, Theory: Dialogues on Athenian Drama*. Austin, 1995.

Goold, G. P., ed. *Propertius: Elegies*. Cambridge, MA, 1990. Revised ed. 1999.

Grenfell, B. P., A. S. Hunt, and E. J. Goodspeed, eds. *The Tebtunis Papyri Part II*. London, 1907.

Griffin, N. E. *Dares and Dictys: An Introduction to the Study of Medieval Versions of the Story of Troy*. Baltimore, 1907.

Griffin, J. "The Epic Cycle and the Uniqueness of Homer." *JHS* 97 (1977): 39-53.

--- *Homer on Life and Death*. Oxford, 1980.

Guteman, A. "Literary Frauds Among the Romans." *TAPA* 25 (1894): 140-164.

Hainsworth, J. B. "The Criticism of an Oral Homer." *JHS* 90 (1970) 90-98 [repr. in Emlyn-Jones-Hardwick-Purkis 1992: 65-75.]

Hall, J., ed. *Tristia P. Ovidi Nasonis*. Stuttgart, 1995.

Halperin, D. M. *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality*. New York, 1990.

Harrauer, H. *A Bibliography to Propertius*. Hildesheim, 1972.

Heberdey, R. "Die Briseis-Vase des Hieron." *AJA* 38 (1934): 133-136.

Hedreen, G. "The Cult of Achilles in the Euxine." *Hesperia* 60 (1991): 313-330.

--- "Image, Text, and Story in the Recovery of Helen." *Classical Antiquity* 15 (1996) 152-184.

Heiden, B. "The Three Movements of the *Iliad*." *GRBS* 37 (1996):5-22.

--- "The Ordeals of Homeric Song." *Arethusa* 30 (1997):221-240.

--- "The Placement of 'Book Divisions' in the *Iliad*." *JHS* 118 (1998):69-82.

Hendry, M. *Problems of Unity and Design in Propertius II*. University of Virginia Doctoral Dissertation, 1990.

--- "Inadvisable Mutilations: The Unity of Propertius 2.22." http://www.curculio.org/apa97.html. 1998-2000.

Henrichs, A. "Response." Bulloch-Gruen-Long-Stewart 1993: 171-195.

Hercheri, R., ed. *Apollodori Bibliotheca*. Berlin, 1894.

Herington, J. *Poetry into Drama: Early Tragedy and the Greek Poetic Tradition*. Berkeley, 1985.

Herzfeld, M. "In Defiance of Destiny: The Management of Time and Gender at a Cretan Funeral." *American Ethnologist* 20.2 (1993): 241-255.

Hexter, R. and D. Selden, eds. *Innovations of Antiquity*. New York, 1992.

Higbie, C. *Heroes' Names, Homeric Identities*. New York, 1995.

--- "The Bones of a Hero, The Ashes of a Politician: Athens, Salamis, and the Usable Past." *Classical Antiquity* 16 (1997): 279-308.

Hinds, S. *Allusion and Intertext: Dynamics of Appropriation in Roman Poetry*. Cambridge, 1998.

Hoekstra, A. *Homeric Modifications of Formulaic Prototypes*. Amsterdam, 1965.

Holst-Warhaft, G. *Dangerous Voices: Women's Lament and Greek Literature*. London, 1992.

Hommel, H. *Der Gott Achilleus*. Heidelberg, 1980.

Horsfall, N. "Stesichorus at Bovillae?" *JHS* 99 (1979): 26-48.

Howald, E. "Meleager und Achill." *RM* 73 (1924): 402-425.

Hubbard, M. *Propertius*. London, 1974.

Hubbard, T. K. "Nature and Art in the Shield of Achilles." *Arion*, 3rd Series, 2 (1992): 16-41.

Hunter, R. L., ed. *Apollonius of Rhodes Argonautica Book III*. Cambridge, 1989.

Irigoin, J. *Histoire du texte de Pindare*. Paris, 1952.

Jacobson, H. "Ovid's Briseis: A Study of *Heroides* 3." *Phoenix* 25 (1971): 331-356.

--- *Ovid's Heroides*. Princeton, 1974.

Jacoby, F., ed. *Die Fragmente der griechischen Historiker*. Berlin and Leiden, 1923-.

Jakobson, R. "Linguistics and Poetics." Sebeok 1960: 350-377.

Janko, R. *Homer, Hesiod, and the Hymns: Diachronic Development of Epic Diction*. Cambridge, 1982.

--- ed. *The Iliad: A Commentary*. Vol. IV. Cambridge, 1992.

Jong, I. J. F. de. *Narrators and Focalizers*. Amsterdam, 1987.

--- "Silent Characters in the *Iliad*." Bremer-de Jong–Kalff 1987(b): 105-122.

Kakridis, J. T. *Homeric Researches*. Lund, 1949

Kannicht, R. "Poetry and Art: Homer and the Monuments Afresh." *Classical Antiquity* I (1982): 70-86.

Kay, M. *The Index of the Milman Parry Collection, 1933-35: Songs, Conversations and Stories*. New York, 1995.

Kazazis, J. N. and A. Rengakos, eds. *Euphrosyne: Studies in Ancient Epic and its Legacy in Honor of Dimitris N. Maronitis*. Stuttgart, 1999.

Kearns, E. *The Heroes of Attica*. London, 1989.

Kenney, E. J., ed. *Amores; Medicamina faciei feminiae; Ars amatoria; Remedia amoris*. Oxford, 1961.

Kirk, G. S., ed. *The Iliad: A Commentary*. Vol. I. Cambridge, 1985.

Kirkwood, G. M. "Homer and Sophocles' *Ajax*." Anderson 1965: 51-70.

Knox, P., ed. *Ovid Heroides: Select Epistles*. Cambridge, 1995.

Koch-Harnack, G. *Erotische Symbole : Lotosblüte und gemeinsamer Mantel auf antiken Vasen*. Berlin, 1989.

Kossatz-Deissmann, A. "Achilleus." *LIMC* I (1981): 37-200.

--- "Briseis." *LIMC* III (1986): 157-167.

Kullmann, W. *Die Quellen der Ilias. Hermes* Einzelschriften 14, Wiesbaden, 1960.

Lamberton, R. and J. Keaney, eds. *Homer's Ancient Readers: The Hermeneutics of Greek Epic's Earliest Exegetes*. Princeton, 1992.

Lang, A. "Dictys Cretensis and Homer." *Journal of Philology* 32 (1913): 1-18.

Lang, M. L. "Reverberation and Mythology in the *Iliad*." Rubino-Shelmerdine 1983: 140-164.

--- "War Story into Wrath Story." Carter-Morris 1995: 149-162.

Langdon, S., ed. *New Light on a Dark Age: Exploring the Culture of Geometric Greece*. Columbia, 1997.

Lannoy, L. de. *Flavii Philostrati Heroicus*. Leipzig, 1977.

Leach, E. "Introduction." Steblin-Kamenskij 1982: 1-20.

Leaf, W., ed. *The Iliad I-II*. London, 1900-1902.

--- *Troy: A Study in Homeric Geography*. London, 1912.

Lessing, G. E. *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*. trans. E. A. McCormick. Baltimore, 1984.

Levaniouk, O. "Penelope and the *Pênelops*." Carlisle-Levaniouk 1999: 95-136.

--- "Odyssean Usages of Local Traditions." Harvard University Doctoral Dissertation, 2000.

Levi, P. *The Lamentation of the Dead*. London, 1984.

Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae. Zurich and Munich, 1981-1997.

Lightfoot, J. L., ed. *Parthenius of Nicaea: The Poetical Fragments and the* Ἐρωτικὰ Παθήματα. Oxford, 1999.

Lissarrague, F. *Un flot d'images: une esthétique du banquet grec*. Paris, 1987. [= *Aesthetics of the Greek Banquet: Images of Wine and Ritual*. trans. A. Szegedy-Maszak. Princeton, 1990.]

Lohmann, D. *Die Komposition der Reden in der Ilias*. Berlin, 1970.

--- *Die Andromache-Szenen der Ilias*. Spudasmata 42, Hildesheim 1988.

Lord, A. B. "Homer's Originality: Oral Dictated Texts." *TAPA* 94 (1953): 124-134.

--- *The Singer of Tales*. Cambridge, MA, 1960. 2nd edition, 2000.

--- *Epic Singers and Oral Tradition*. Cornell, 1991.

--- *The Singer Resumes the Tale*. Cornell, 1996.

Lowenstam, S. *The Death of Patroklos: A Study in Typology*. Beiträge zur Klassischen Philologie 133. Königstein, 1981.

--- "The Uses of Vase-Depictions in Homeric Studies." *TAPA* 122 (1992): 165-198.

--- "Talking Vases: The Relationship between the Homeric Poems and Archaic Representations of Epic Myth." *TAPA* 127 (1997): 21-76.

Luck, G. *The Latin Love Elegy*. 2nd ed. London, 1969.

Luckenbach, H. "Das Verhältnis der griechischen Vasenbilder zu den Gedichten des epischen Kyklos." *NJbb* Supplement 11 (1880): 491-638.

Lyne, R.O. A. M. *The Latin Love Poets*. Oxford,1980.

Macleod, C., ed. *Homer Iliad Book XXIV*. Cambridge, 1982.

Mantero, T. *Ricerche sull'Heroikos di Filostrato*. Genova, 1966.

Marblestone, H. J. *Dictys Cretensis: A Study of the Ephemeris Belli Troiani as a Cretan Pseudepigraphon*. Brandeis University Doctoral Dissertation, 1970.

March, J. *The Creative Poet: Studies of the Treatment of Myth in Homeric Poetry*. Bulletin of the Institute of Classical Studies Suppl. 49. London, 1987.

Marshall, K., ed. *Rediscovering the Muses: Women's Musical Traditions*. Boston, 1993.

Martin, R. P. *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad*. Ithaca, 1989. rev. ed., 1992.

--- "Telemachus and the Last Hero Song." *Colby Quarterly* 29 (1993): 222-240.

Merkelbach, R. and M. L. West, eds. *Fragmenta Hesiodea*. Oxford, 1967

Merkle, S. *Die Ephemeris Belli Troiani des Diktys von Kreta*. Frankfurt am Main, 1989.

--- "Telling the Truth of the Trojan War: The Eyewitness Account of Dictys of Crete." Tatum 1994: 183-96.

Mette, H. J. *Die Fragmente der Tragödien des Aischylos*. Berlin, 1959.

Monro, D. B. "On the Fragment of Proclus' Abstract of the Epic Cycle Contained in the Codex Venetus of the *Iliad*." *JHS* 4 (1883): 305-334.

--- "The Poems of the Epic Cycle." *JHS* 5 (1884): 1-41.

Monro, D. B., and T. W. Allen, eds. *Homeri Opera*. 3rd ed. Oxford, 1920.

Monsacré, H. *Les larmes d'Achille: le héros, la femme et la souffrance dans la poésie d'Homère*. Paris, 1984.

Morgan, J. R. and R. Stoneman, eds. *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*. New York, 1994.

Morris, S. "Anthony Snodgrass, *Homer and the Artists: Text and Picture in Early Greek Art.*" *BMCR* 1999.10.32.

Mueller, M. The *Iliad*. London, 1984.

Muellner, L. *The Meaning of Homeric EYXOMAI through its Formulas*. Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft 13. Innsbruck, 1976.

--- *The Anger of Achilles: Mênis in Greek Epic*. Ithaca, 1996.

Müller, F. *Die antiken Odyssee-Illustrationen in ihrer kunsthistorischen Entwicklung*. Berlin, 1913.

Murray, G. *The Rise of the Greek Epic*. Oxford, 1907. 2nd rev. ed. 1911. 4th rev. ed. 1960.

Nagler, M. *Spontaneity and Tradition: A Study in the Oral Art of Homer*. Berkeley, 1974.

Nagy, G. *Greek Dialects and the Transformation of an Indo-European Process*. Cambridge, MA, 1970.

--- *Comparative Studies in Greek and Indic Meter*. Cambridge, MA, 1974.

--- "The Name of Achilles: Etymology and Epic." Davies-Meid 1976: 227-230.

--- *Best of the Achaeans: Concepts of the Hero in Archaic Greek Poetry*. Baltimore, 1979. 2nd ed., 1999.

--- "An Evolutionary Model for the Text Fixation of the Homeric Epos." Foley 1981: 390-393.

--- "The Sign of Protesilaos." *Metis* 2 (1987): 207-213.

--- *Pindar's Homer: The Lyric Possession of an Epic Past*. Baltimore, 1990(a).

--- *Greek Mythology and Poetics*. Ithaca, 1990(b).

--- "Mythological Exemplum in Homer." Hexter-Selden 1992: 311-331.

--- "Alcaeus in Sacred Space." Pretagostini 1993: 221-225.

--- *Poetry as Performance*. Cambridge, 1996(a).

--- *Homeric Questions*. Austin, 1996(b).

--- "The Shield of Achilles: Ends of the *Iliad* and Beginnings of the Polis." Langdon 1997: 194-207 .

--- "Irreversible Mistakes and Homeric Poetry." Kazazis-Rengakos 1999(a): 259-274.

--- Comments on *SO* Debate. *Symbolae Osloensis* 74 (1999[b]): 64-68.

--- "Martin L. West, ed., *Homeri Ilias. Recensuit / testimonia congessit. Volumen prius, rhapsodias I-XII continens.*" *BMCR* 2000.09.12

Neils, J. "The Loves of Theseus: An Early Cup by Oltos." *AJA* 85 (1981): 177-179.

Notopoulos, J. A. "Parataxis in Homer: A New Approach to Homeric Literary Criticism." *TAPA* 80 (1949): 1-23.

--- "Towards a Poetics of Early Greek Oral Poetry." *HSCP* 68 (1964): 45-65.

O'Brien, J. V. *The Transformation of Hera*. Lanham, MD, 1993.

Ormand, K. *Exchange and the Maiden*. Austin, 1999.

Palmer, L. R. "The Language of Homer." Wace-Stubbings 1962: 75-178.

Papanghelis, T. *Propertius: A Hellenistic Poet on Love and Death*. Cambridge, 1987.

Parry, A., ed. *The Making of Homeric Verse: The Collected Papers of Milman Parry*. Oxford, 1971.

Parry, M. *L'épithète traditionelle dans Homère: essai sur un problème de style homérique*. Paris, 1928. [repr. and trans. in A. Parry 1971: 1-190.]

--- "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Versemaking. I. Homer and Homeric Style." *HSCP* 41 (1930): 73-147. [repr. in A. Parry 1971: 266-324.]

--- "Studies in the Epic Technique of Oral Versemaking. II. The Homeric Language as the Language of Oral Poetry." *HSCP* 43 (1932): 1-50. [repr. in A. Parry 1971: 325-364.]

Postgate, J. P., ed. *Select Elegies of Propertius*. London, 1885.

Powell, B. and I. Morris, eds. *A New Companion to Homer*. Leiden, 1997.

Powell, J. U., ed. *Collectanea Alexandrina*. Oxford, 1925.

Pretagostini, R., ed. *Tradizione e innovazione: scritti in onore di Bruno Gentili* I. Rome, 1993.

Privitera, G. A. *Dioniso in Omero e nella poesia greca arcaica*. Rome, 1970.

Pucci, P. *Odysseus Polutropos: Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad*. Ithaca, 1987.

Reden, S. von. *Exchange in Ancient Greece*. London, 1995.

Reichel, M. *Fernbeziehungen in der Ilias*. Tübingen, 1994.

Reinhardt, K. *Die Ilias und ihr Dichter*. Göttingen, 1961.

Reinsberg, C. *Ehe, Hetärentum und Knabenliebe im antiken Griechenland*. München, 1989.

Rengakos, A. *Der Homertext und die hellenistischen Dichter*. Hermes Einzelschriften 64, Stuttgart, 1993.

Reynolds, L. D. *Texts and Transmission*. Oxford, 1983.

Richardson, L., ed. *Propertius: Elegies I-IV*. Oklahoma, 1976.

Richardson, N. J. "Aristotle's Reading of Homer and its Background." Lamberton-Keaney 1992: 30-40.

--- ed. *The Iliad: A Commentary. Vol. VI*. Cambridge, 1993.

Robbins, E. I. "Achilles to Thetis: *Iliad* 1.365-412." *Classical Views* 9 (1990): 1-15.

Robertson, M. "The Place of Vase-painting in Greek Art." *Annual of the British School at Athens* 46 (1951): 151-159.

--- *A History of Greek Art*. Cambridge, 1975.

--- "Menelaos and Helen in Troy." Carter-Morris 1995: 431-436.

--- "Troilos and Polyxene: Notes on a Changing Legend." Descoeudres 1990: 63-70.

Rohde, E. *Psyche: Seelencult und Unsterblichkeitsglaube der Griechen*. I/II. Freiburg im Breisgau, 1898. trans. W.B. Hillis. New York, 1925.

Rose, P. W. "Historicizing Sophocles' *Ajax*." Goff 1995: 59-90.

Rosner, J. A. "The Speech of Phoenix: *Iliad* 9.434-605." *Phoenix* 30 (1976): 314-327.

Rubino, C. A. and C. W. Shelmerdine, eds. *Approaches to Homer*. Austin, 1983.

Sadurska, A. *Les tables iliaques*. Warsaw, 1964.

Scaife, R. "The *Kypria* and its Early Reception." *Classical Antiquity* 14 (1995): 164-192.

Schadewaldt, W. *Iliasstudien*. Leipzig, 1938.

--- *Von Homers Welt und Werk*. Stuttgart, 1959.

Schefold, K. *Götter- und Heldensagen der Griechen in der spätarchaischen Kunst*. Munich, 1978.

Schein, S. *The Mortal Hero*. Berkeley, 1984.

Scheliha, R. von. *Patroklos*. Basel, 1943.

Schmid, B. *Studien zu griechischen Ktisissagen*. Freiburg, 1947.

Schwartz, *Scholia in Euripidem*. I-II. Berlin, 1887-1891.

Scodel, R. "Pseudo-Intimacy and the Prior Knowledge of the Homeric Audience." *Arethusa* 30 (1997): 201-219.

Sebeok, T. *Style in Language*. Cambridge, MA, 1960.

Segal, C. P. "Andromache's Anagnorisis: Formulaic Artistry in *Iliad* 22.437-76." *HSCP* 75 (1971): 33-57.

--- "Kleos and its Ironies in the *Odyssey*." *L'Antiquité Classique* 52 (1983): 22-47.

--- "Bard and Audience in Homer." Lamberton-Keaney 1992: 3-29.

Seremetakis, C. N. "The Ethics of Antiphony: The Social Construction of Pain, Gender and Power in the Southern Peloponnese." *Ethos* 18 (1990): 281-511.

Severyns, A. *Le cycle épique dans l'école d' Aristarque*. Paris, 1928.

--- *Recherches sur la Chréstomathie de Proclos*. Vols. I-II. Paris, 1938.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R. "Echoes of Propertius." *Mnemosyne* ser. 4 vol. 5 (1952): 307-333.

--- *Propertiana*. Cambridge, 1956.

Simon, E. *Die griechischen Vasen*. Munich, 1976.

Sinos, D. S. *Achilles, Patroklos, and the Meaning of Philos*. Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft 29. Innsbruck, 1980.

Sissa, G. *Le corps virginal : la virginité féminine en Grèce ancienne*. Paris, 1987. [= *Greek Virginity*. trans. by A. Goldhammer. Cambridge, MA, 1990].

Skutsch, O. "The Second Book of Propertius." *HSCP* 79 (1975):229-33.

Slatkin, L. *The Power of Thetis: Allusion and Interpretation in the Iliad*. Berkeley, 1991.

Snell, B., ed. *Bacchylides*. Leipzig, 1958.

Snodgrass, A. "Poet and Painter in 8th-Century Greece."*PCPhS* 205 (1979): 118-130.

--- "Towards the Interpretation of the Geometric Figure-scenes," *AthMitt* 95 (1980): 51-58.

--- *Narration and Allusion in Archaic Greek Art*. London, 1982.

--- *An Archaeology of Greece. Towards the History of a Discipline*. Berkeley, 1987.

--- *Homer and The Artists: Text and Picture in Early Greek Art*. Cambridge, 1998.

Stahl, H. *Propertius: "Love" and "War."* Berkely, 1985.

Stansbury-O'Donnel, M. T. "Reading Pictorial Narrative: the Law-court Scene of the Shield of Achilles." Carter-Morris 1995: 315-334.

--- *Pictorial Narrative in Ancient Greek Art*. Cambridge, 1999.

Stauber, J., ed. *Die Bucht von Adramytteion*. vol. II. Inschriften griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 51. Bonn, 1996.

Steblin-Kamenskij, M. I. *Myth*. trans. M. P. Coote. Ann Arbor, 1982.

Stern, J., ed. *Parthenius Erotika Pathemata: The Love Stories of Parthenius*. New York, 1992.

Stewart, A. "Narrative, Genre, and Realism in the Work of the Amasis Painter." *Papers on the Amasis Painter and his World*. Malibu, 1987: 29-42.

Stolz, B. and R. Shannon, eds. *Oral Theory and the Formula*. Ann Arbor, Michigan, 1976.

Sullivan, John P. *Propertius: A Critical Introduction*. Cambridge, 1976.

Sultan, N. "Private Speech, Public Pain: The Power of Women's Laments in Ancient Greek Poetry and Tragedy." Marshall 1993: 92-110.

--- *Exile and the Poetics of Loss in Greek Tradition*. Lanham, MD, 1999.

Suzuki, M. *Metamorphoses of Helen: Authority, Difference, and the Epic*. Ithaca, 1989.

Taplin, O. "The Shield of Achilles within the *Iliad*," *Greece and Rome* 27 (1980): 1-21.

--- "Homer's Use of Achilles' Earlier Campaigns in the *Iliad*." Boardman-Vaphopoulou-Richardson 1986: 15-19.

--- *Homeric Soundings*. Oxford, 1992.

Tarrant, R. J. "Propertius." Reynolds 1983: 324-326.

Tatum, J., ed. *The Search for the Ancient Novel*. Baltimore, 1994.

Teffeteller, A. "ΑΥΤΟΣ ΑΠΟΥΡΑΣ, *ILIAD* 1.356." *CQ* 40 (1990):16-20.

Van Brock, N. "Substitution rituelle." *Revue Hittite et Asianique* 65 (1959): 117-146.

Van Sickle, J. "The Book-roll and Some Conventions of the Poetic Book." *Arethusa* 13 (1980): 5-126.

Venini, P. "Ditti Cretese e Omero." *Memorie dell' Istituto Lombardo* 37 (1981-82): 161-198.

Vian, F., ed. [*Posthomerica.*] *La suite d'Homère par Quintus de Smyrne*. Paris, 1963-1969.

Wace, J. B. and F. H. Stubbings. *A Companion to Homer*. London and New York, 1962.

Wade-Gery, H. T. *The Poet of the Iliad*. Cambridge, 1952.

Watkins, C. "On μῆνις," *Indo-European Studies* 3 (1977): 686-722.

Wegner, M. *Brygosmaler*. Berlin, 1973.

West, M. L. "Greek Poetry 2000-700 B.C." *CQ* 23 (1973): 179-192.

White, H. "Parthenius and the Story of Pisidice." *Maia* 34 (1982): 147-152.

Whitman, C. *Homer and the Heroic Tradition*. Cambridge, MA, 1958.

Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, U. von. *Homerische Untersuchungen*. Berlin, 1884.

Willcock, M. "Mythological Paradeigma in the *Iliad*." *CQ* 14 (1964): 141-154.

--- "Ad Hoc Invention in the *Iliad*." *HSCP* 81 (1977): 41-53.

Williams, G. *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*. Oxford, 1968.

--- *Figures of Thought in Roman Poetry*. New Haven, 1980.

Zarker, J. W. "King Eëtion and Thebe as Symbols in the *Iliad*," *CJ* 61 (1965-66): 110-114.

Zwierlein, O., ed. *L. Annaei Senecae Tragoediae*. Oxford, 1986.