CHAPTER 2

Envisioning Troy

The action of the *Iliad* plays out in the city of Ilium and the Greek camp arrayed before it, but most of all on the battlefield that lies between, which constitutes the focus of this study. But before viewing the *Iliad*'s combat zone, we may find it worthwhile to turn our gaze briefly to both the city and the encampment to understand how these spaces are constructed and how their organization contributes to the unfolding narrative. As will emerge, both the techniques used to describe these locations and their roles in the plot differ markedly from each other; nevertheless, both are presented dynamically, as inhabited space, whose form is revealed not through static description, but through the movement of characters as they make their way through the city or within the camp.

The most prominent feature of the architecture and urban layout of Ilium is the walls that define the city and differentiate its space from the world outside.[1] These ramparts constitute the borderline between the warriors on the plain and the non-combatants, above all the women, within. Gates, surmounted by towers, pierce the wall; two are named: the Dardanian, which seems to be a back door or sallyport, turned away from the plain, and the Scaean Gate from which the Trojan army deploys on the plain and into which it retreats. From there, the old men of Troy and the women watch the battlefield below, powerless to change the course of action, for the most part

[1] See Scully (1990) 41–68; and now Trachsel (2007) 12–32. Her detailed discussion of the *Iliad*'s topography, which summarizes previous work and adapts the schema of Hellwig (1964) concerning the human and divine spheres, came into my hands after the present study was completed. Her aim is to describe the Trojan landscape as a preparation for an examination of ancient authors, especially geographers on the Troad. I have tried to integrate some of her observations into my notes.

passionately involved, but sometimes coolly observant. From there, Helen points out the Greek leaders to Priam; and it is there that the touching scene between Andromache and Hector plays out. From there, too, the old king and his wife plead with their son to retreat into the safety of the walls, around which Achilles will pursue Hector three times before his death. In his fatal race around the doomed city, the Trojan prince glimpses the washing troughs to which, before the Greeks laid siege to their city, the local women would bring their laundry. At this point the landscape surrounding the city has become an arena of conflict and no longer a safe possession of the Trojans, whose only security now lies within its ramparts.

To understand the organization of the urban space of Ilium, we can follow the path of Hector as he returns to the city in Book 6.[2] After Diomedes has driven the Trojans back in headlong flight, Helenus, Hector's brother, advises him to regroup the army πρὸ πυλάων, "in front of the gates" (6.80), and then to instruct his mother Hecuba to gather the old women and go up to the temple of Athena on the acropolis (ἐν πόλει ἄκρῃ, 6.88). When exhorting the army, however, Hector announces that he will tell the "old councilors and your wives to pray to the gods" (6.114–15); in the event, he does only the second. This omission draws attention to the almost exclusively female encounters that follow. When Hector then enters the gates, he is surrounded by the female inhabitants of the lower town (6.238–40):

> ἀμφ' ἄρα μιν Τρώων ἄλοχοι θέον ἠδὲ θύγατρες
> εἰρόμεναι παῖδάς τε κασιγνήτους τε ἔτας τε
> καὶ πόσιας . . .
>
> Round about him, the wives and the daughters of the Trojans were running
> Asking about their sons, brothers, and relations,
> And husbands . . .

The order in these lines foreshadows Hector's subsequent meetings with Hecuba, Paris and Helen, and Andromache. From here the Trojan prince proceeds to the vast palace, described in labyrinthine detail as housing Priam's fifty sons and their wives as well as his

[2] See Scully (1990) 64–68; and especially Arthur (1981); Schadewaldt (1965b); and recently, Maronitis (2004) 29–45.

twelve sons-in-law and daughters. We learn elsewhere that the Trojans hold their assemblies "by the gates of Priam's palace" (ἐπὶ Πριάμοιο θύρῃσι, 2.788; cf. 7.345–6, where it is also defined as ἐν πόλει ἄκρῃ). At the palace Hector encounters his mother, who urges him to rest and restore himself with some wine. After rejecting her offer and commanding her to go up to Athena's temple on the citadel, he arrives at the house of Paris, "which he himself had built . . . near the dwellings of Hector and Priam, again "on the acropolis" (ἐν πόλει ἄκρῃ, 6.314–17). Paris' house and, apparently, Hector's too turn out to be somewhat separate from the royal palace, although all, as well as the temples, are located on the heights, which are elsewhere called Pergamus.[3] Discovering Paris polishing his armor in his bedroom – rather than fighting – Hector berates him while Helen, like Hecuba, invites the Trojan prince to rest a while; but he departs and "immediately arrived" (6.370) at his own house (which must be nearby), only to discover that his wife, crazed with anxiety over her husband's welfare, has rushed off to the ramparts taking along their infant son. The same passion that drives Hector to visit the female sphere of his *oikos* compels his wife to make her way toward the masculine sphere of combat. Driven in opposing directions, their motivations are in harmony. Hector now hurries back (6.391–93):

> τὴν αὐτὴν ὁδὸν αὖτις ἐϋκτιμένας κατ' ἀγυιάς.
> εὖτε πύλας ἵκανε διερχόμενος μέγα ἄστυ
> Σκαιάς, τῇ ἄρ' ἔμελλε διεξίμεναι πεδίονδε.
>
> On the same path again through well-constructed roads,
> Until he came to the gates, going through the great city,
> The Scaean Gates, where he was about to exit onto the plain.

At this point we might expect Hector to rejoin his comrades in the field, but Andromache comes running toward him; their two paths unite for the last time. During their conversation, like the other women who seek to delay or deter his return to battle, Andromache urges her husband to station the army by the wild fig tree where the wall is most vulnerable and where it had previously been attacked.

[3] Pergamus is often closely associated with Apollo's temple (4.508; 5.446 and 460; 7.21; and possibly 24.700, where Cassandra glimpses Priam returning with Hector's body), but it is also used of the acropolis more generally (6.512).

To no avail; his wife is no more successful than his mother or sister-in-law. As her love had driven her to the Scaean Gate to observe the combat on the plain, so too her proffer of strategic advice usurps the sphere of male prerogatives; yet her husband's brusque rejection and order to return to her work and *oikos* is momentarily mitigated by their mutual focus on their infant son and Hector's removal of his helmet, a fleeting stripping of his martial accoutrements. As Hector's circular itinerary draws to a close, Paris, now filled with battle spirit, makes common cause with his brother, and both make their way back to the battlefield.

From this sequence we may construct a general sketch of Troy's geography with the lower city surmounted by the citadel that embraces both the royal *oikos* and the temples of the gods, a roughly hierarchical shape. We cannot, however, draw a map of Ilium with any precision because the city is not described spatially, but emotionally. Its geography is defined not by left and right, or spatial proximity, but by male and female, by closeness and distance, a space not physical, but psychological. The narrative progresses not so much in accordance with Hector's itinerary, but moves in harmony with a "scale of affection"[4] as the hero encounters first the women of Troy, then his mother, sister-in-law, and, above all, his wife, for whom he too constitutes the most important and reciprocal emotional bond. Each of the women he meets offers a respite and a possible distraction and a nurturing environment of relaxation, far from the bloody combat at hand, whether it be a cup of wine, a comfortable chair, or playing with an infant son. The juxtaposition of the scene of Paris and Helen with the *homilia* of Hector and Andromache contrasts the dysfunctional barren union of the former with the warm intimacy and marital affection of the latter.[5] Within the female space of the city, the heart rather than the eye reigns supreme. On the battlefield, however, as we shall see, the coordinates are not so much emotional as spatial.

Opposite the city and its ramparts lies the encampment of the Greeks, their ships arrayed in ranks according to contingent along the beach. Although the landscapes of the two poles of the *Iliad*,

[4] The expression comes from Kakrides (1949).

[5] See Schadewaldt (1965b) 214; Griffin (1980) 6–9.

the city and the armed camp, are quite distinct, nevertheless they share a typically Iliadic technique: static descriptions of landscape are rare; for the most part, spatial coordinates emerge from the activities of characters and are marked out by their movements within a setting. Whether it is Hector's visit to Troy or Agamemnon's circuit of his troops, space is delineated as an itinerary. Only once does the poet provide a panoramic description of the Greek fleet drawn up before Troy – significantly at a moment of imminent danger to the ships – when Nestor meets with the wounded chieftains, Diomedes, Odysseus, and Agamemnon, as they come from the ships to observe the battle (14.30–36):

πολλὸν γάρ ῥ' ἀπάνευθε μάχης εἰρύατο νῆες
θῖν' ἔφ' ἁλὸς πολιῆς· τὰς γὰρ πρώτας πεδίονδε
εἴρυσαν, αὐτὰρ τεῖχος ἐπὶ πρύμνῃσιν ἔδειμαν.
οὐδὲ γὰρ οὐδ' εὐρύς περ ἐὼν ἐδυνήσατο πάσας
αἰγιαλὸς νῆας χαδέειν, στείνοντο δὲ λαοί·
τώ ῥα προκρόσσας ἔρυσαν, καὶ πλῆσαν ἀπάσης
ἠϊόνος στόμα μακρόν, ὅσον συνεέργαθον ἄκραι.[6]

For the ships were drawn up far away from the battle
On the beach of the grey sea; for they drew up the first ones
Toward the plain, but they built the wall by the sterns.
For the strand, even though wide, could not
Contain them all, and the men were hemmed in;
Therefore they drew the ships up in ranks and filled
The broad mouth of the whole bay, as much space as the cliffs enclosed.

Such general descriptions are rare in the *Iliad*, but here the rationale becomes immediately apparent. For shortly thereafter, Agamemnon, despairing of the Greek cause, suggests they launch the first line of ships and wait until night for the army to flee *en masse* (14.74–81); he is brusquely rebuked by Odysseus, who points out that the king's plan will lead to panic and total disaster (14.95–102). But this panoramic vision of the massed multitude of Achaean naval power also prepares for the great battle of Book 15 when the Greeks are driven back almost to the sea and their ships threatened with destruction. (On this more below.) In addition, Homer's sweeping seascape offers a wide-angle perspective on the Greek encampment, whose details

[6] For the textual and interpretive difficulties here, see Janko (1992) on lines 30–36.

are filled in by numerous other passages that allow the audience to grasp its physical and narrative configuration. And, finally, its spatial organization provides a critical orientation for viewing the battle, a mental template, for both audience and poet. If, as an ancient commentator noted, the Greek deployment resembles a theatrical space, then Homer provides us a seat – front row, center, next to his own – to view his Trojan theater.

The poet has given us the coordinates of his own position most clearly, and I think not accidentally, at the opening of Book 11 as the great day of battle dawns, the longest day, which extend all the way through Book 18. It begins with Zeus unleashing Eris (11.5–9):[7]

στῆ δ' ἐπ' Ὀδυσσῆος μεγακήτεϊ νηῒ μελαίνῃ,
ἥ ῥ' ἐν μεσσάτῳ ἔσκε γεγωνέμεν ἀμφοτέρωσε,
ἠμὲν ἐπ' Αἴαντος κλισίας Τελαμωνιάδαο
ἠδ' ἐπ' Ἀχιλλῆος, τοί ῥ' ἔσχατα νῆας ἔΐσας
εἴρυσαν, ἠνορέῃ πίσυνοι καὶ κάρτεϊ χειρῶν.

She stood upon the enormous black ship of Odysseus,
Which occupied the middle space, so as to shout to both sides,
Both toward the camp of Telamonian Ajax
And to that of Achilles, who had drawn up their balanced ships
at the farthest ends,
Confident of their manliness and in the strength of their arms.

As I will subsequently demonstrate, Homer positions himself – and hence also his audience – in line with the encampment of Odysseus, where, as we also learn, "[the Greeks] had their place of assembly and council, and there they had also established altars for the gods" (ἵνα σφ' ἀγορή τε θέμις τε | ἦην, τῇ δὴ καί σφι θεῶν ἐτετεύχατο βωμοί, 11.807–808). The center constitutes both the religious and the public space where the community assembles.[8] Here the fateful quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles erupts; and here too it is resolved – at least formally – in Book 19, but not without some complications in a scene that make clear the significance of this communal space.

[7] The lines also occurred earlier, at 8.222–26, when Hera roused Agamemnon to spur on the Greeks.

[8] Cf. Detienne (1965) on the importance of *to meson* as the public space. It is perhaps worth noticing that the Trojan agora (2.788, 7.345) is set not in a communal space, but by the gates of Priam's palace.

At the opening of Book 19, having received his armor newly wrought by Hephaestus and impatient to avenge the fallen Patroclus, Achilles makes his way to the agora and the gathering, whose extraordinary character the poet underlines (19.42–46):

καί ῥ' οἵ περ τὸ πάρος γε νεῶν ἐν ἀγῶνι μένεσκον,
οἵ τε κυβερνῆται καὶ ἔχον οἰήϊα νηῶν
καὶ ταμίαι παρὰ νηυσὶν ἔσαν, σίτοιο δοτῆρες,
καὶ μὴν οἵ τότε γ' εἰς ἀγορὴν ἴσαν, οὕνεκ' Ἀχιλλεὺς
ἐξεφάνη, δηρὸν δὲ μάχης ἐπέπαυτ' ἀλεγεινῆς.

And lo! Even those who were wont to stay where the ships were assembled,
The steersmen who wielded the rudders of the ships,
And those who were stewards by the ships and gave out the bread;
Indeed, even they on that occasion came to the agora, because Achilles
Had materialized, who had long withdrawn from painful battle.

In the assembly that follows, Agamemnon pointedly does not rise "from his seat nor stand in the middle" (αὐτόθεν ἐξ ἕδρης, οὐδ' ἐν μέσσοισιν ἀναστάς [19.77]) as is customary.[9] At the end of his long-winded and self-serving speech, the king allows (19.140–44):

δῶρα δ' ἐγὼν ὅδε πάντα παρασχέμεν, ὅσσα τοι ἐλθὼν
χθιζὸς ἐνὶ κλισίῃσιν ὑπέσχετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς.
εἰ δ' ἐθέλεις, ἐπίμεινον ἐπειγόμενός περ Ἄρηος,
δῶρα δέ τοι θεράποντες ἐμῆς παρὰ νηὸς ἑλόντες
οἴσουσ', ὄφρα ἴδηαι ὅ τοι μενοεικέα δώσω.

I myself will hand over all the gifts, as many as
Odysseus promised you yesterday in your camp.
If you are willing, wait, even though eager for battle,
Servants will bring the gifts, taking them from my ship,
So that you may see what satisfaction I will give you.

While Achilles at this point cares neither for food nor for gifts, Odysseus insists not only that the army eat before entering combat, but also that proper procedures be followed by Agamemnon in making amends; the king cannot treat the gifts as a private transaction between himself and Achilles by proposing to have his servants transport them. Rather, a delegation of noble youths is to bring the

[9] See Clay (1995); cf. Rabel (1991); and Wilson (2002) 116–20 for somewhat different analyses of this scene, which I think underestimate the role of Odysseus.

gifts "into the middle of the of the agora, so that all the Achaeans may see them with their own eyes" (οἰσέτω ἐς μέσσην ἀγορήν, ἵνα πάντες Ἀχαιοὶ | ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωσι, 19.173–74, cf. 19.249), and the king is to stand up to take a public oath that he never slept with Briseis.

This scene illuminates the symbolic significance of *to meson* as the public space, but it also draws attention to the focal point from which the audience views the action, especially throughout the Battle Books (12–17) and provides an axis of orientation for the poet to anchor our viewing. The phrase μάχης ἐπ' ἀριστερά ("to the left of the battle") occurs five times in the *Iliad* (5.355; 11.498; 13.765; 17.116, 682); there is also a variant, νηῶν ἐπ' ἀριστερά ("to the left of the ships," at 12.118, 13.675; cf. 13.326). "Right" and "left" are deictic markers whose meaning, like the pronouns "I" and "you" or "here" or "there," is determined by the speaker's orientation (e.g. my left may be your right).[10] Critical to our understanding of the *Iliad*'s action is the realization that its orientation of right and left remains constant throughout and is always seen from the perspective of a narrator situated in the center of the Greek camp facing the Trojan plain. Thus an Achaean warrior may speak of his location as "to the left of the battle," but while the narrator can locate Hector "to the left of the battle," Hector's comrade Cebriones speaks of the Trojan's position as ἐσχατιῇ πολέμοιο ("at the edge of the war," 11.524; cf. 11.498).[11]

Many scholars have not appreciated the fixity of this point for viewing and narrating the complex activities on the battlefield; more often than not, they assume a perspective centered on Troy or even a shifting perspective where left and right alternate from the Greek or Trojan side.[12] Even the most meticulous study of left and right in Homer has not grasped the importance of the narrator's

[10] For a good introduction to deictics, see the essays in Jarvella and Klein (1982).

[11] Cf. *Il.* 20.328, where Poseidon rescues Aeneas and sets him down ἐπ' ἐσχατιὴν . . . πολέμοιο.

[12] See Ribbeck (1880) and Janko (1992) on 13.675. Hainsworth (1993) 313–14 does not seem to realize this crucial fact. Cf. Trachsel (2007) 57, who does not distinguish the narrator's viewpoint from that of a character. W. Andrae's reconstruction (Fig. 1) in Schuchhardt (1928) 422–33, where the Achaean Wall is depicted from the Trojan perspective, inverts the *Iliad*'s orientation; similarly the schematic plan by Mannsperger (2001) 81 (see Fig. 2, p. 47). Cf. Lowe (2000) 111, who also gives an account of the *Iliad*'s space centered on Troy. See also below p. 103, n. 24.

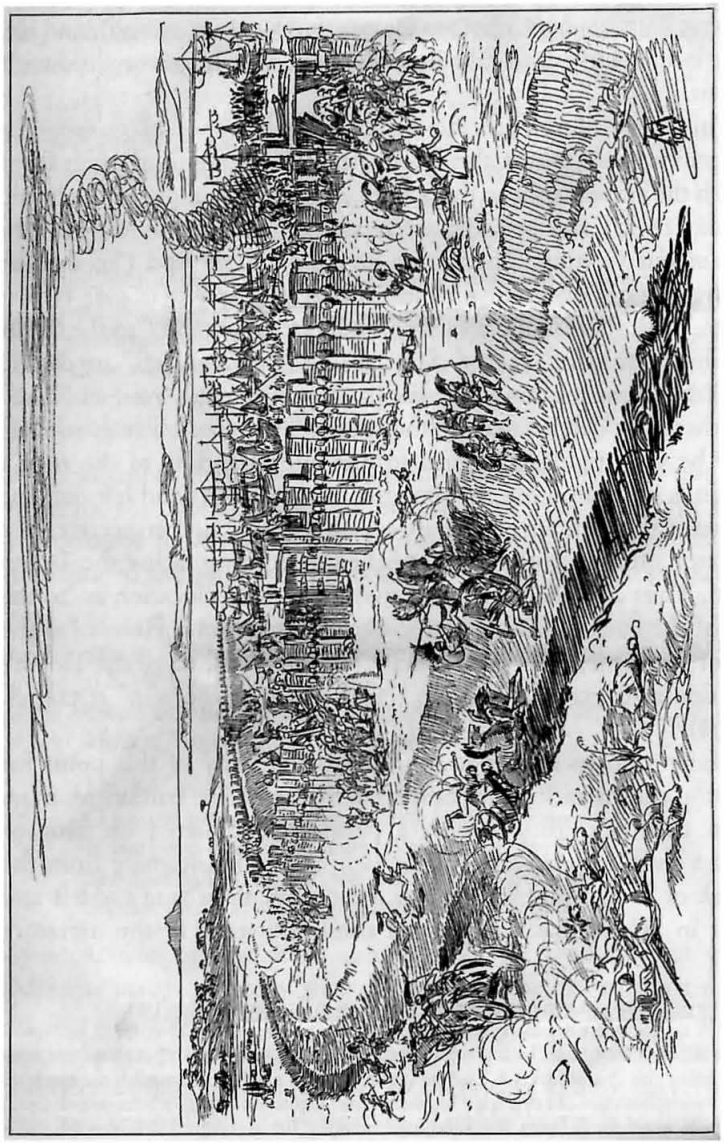

Fig. 1 The *Teichomachy* by W. Andrae, viewed from the Trojan plain. Note the five gates.

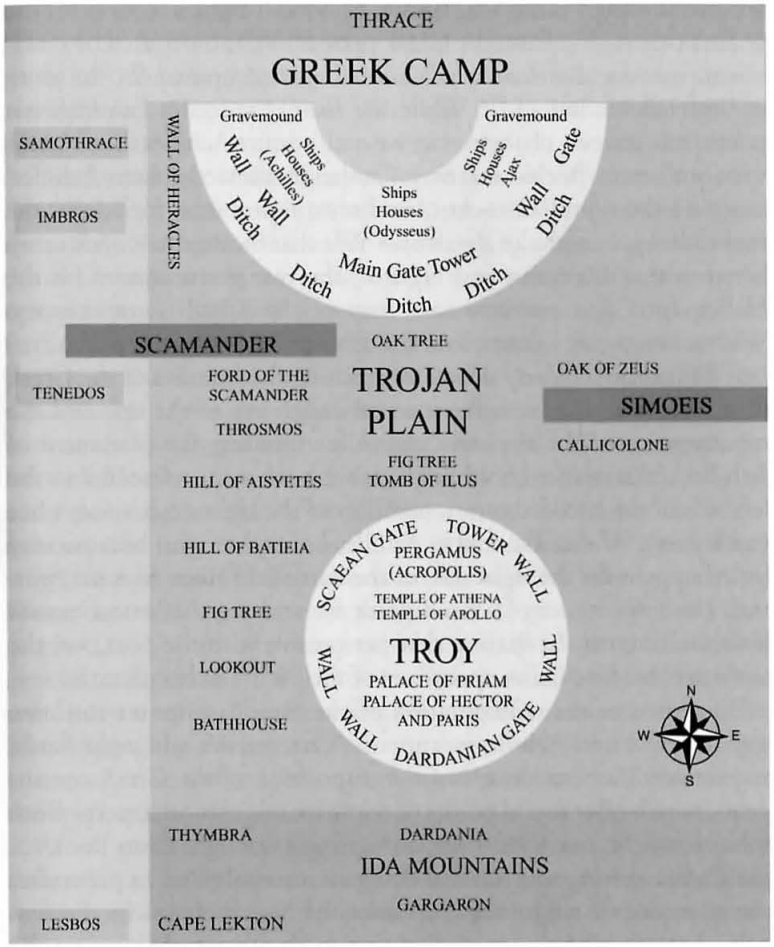

Fig. 2 Plan of Trojan battlefield (inverted; see Fig. 4, p. 104).

self-positioning.[13] Thus Cuillandre, who has it right, accounts for the poem's orientation from the Greek perspective as motivated by patriotism, viewing the *Iliad* as a "national epic composed for the glory of the Hellenic heroes."[14] While the *Iliad* is indeed a Pan-Hellenic poem, it is scarcely chauvinistic; we may admire Achilles, but Hector wins our hearts. Be that as it may, Cuillandre correctly places Achilles' camp on the right flank – but for the wrong reasons. He adopts the traditional geography of the Trojan War that locates the Greek camp between the Rhoetium and Sigeum, the two promontories on the Hellespont,[15] but recourse to a map of the Troad is unnecessary. Without engaging in questions concerning the historicity of the Trojan War or the scholarly debate concerning the location of the Greek fleet, I believe that both the internal coherence of the text and the requirements of the narrative suffice for situating the placement of Achilles' encampment. Although, as we have seen, references to the left side of the battle abound, mention of the right occurs only once (see below). Without a doubt, Achilles holds the right, because very little happens on the right side of the battlefield since *he is not fighting*. The importance of a fixed point for viewing the action cannot be overestimated. In sharing that perspective with the poet, we, the audience, become active spectators of the events in his narrative.

To return to the configuration of the Greek camp: we can now see that Ajax and Achilles occupy the extreme left and right flanks respectively. Further details of the disposition of the Greek contingents, which offer useful points of narrative orientation, emerge from other passages, many of them, intriguingly enough, from Book 10, the *Doloneia*, long suspected of being an interpolation. In particular, the sequence of nocturnal encounters of the chieftains in the first half of the book (10.1–179) allows us to sketch a map locating the most important Greek forces. The *Doloneia* opens after the failure of the Embassy to Achilles in Book 9 as Agamemnon and Menelaus lie sleepless with anxiety; both dress and the Spartan king goes to wake his brother, while the former decides to consult Nestor. When they

[13] Cuillandre (1944) iii, who finds "une ordonance impeccable, minutieusement réglée . . . et d'une cohérence remarquable" ("an ordering impeccable in its minute details and remarkable in its coherence"). Unfortunately, the second part of his study becomes entangled in the symbolic meaning of left and right in augury, Pythagoreanism, and Celtic mythology.

[14] Cuillandre (1944) 41: "poème national composé à la gloire des héros hellènes."

[15] Cuillandre (1944) 19–23.

meet, the two brothers resolve to awaken the other chiefs: Menelaus is to rouse Ajax and Idomeneus, while Agamemnon is to proceed to Nestor; they then decide to make a rendezvous where the guards are stationed. Since we know that Ajax is bivouacked on the left flank, we can deduce that Idomeneus is also on the left, as is also evident later. Meanwhile Agamemnon makes his way in the opposite direction, first to Nestor, then to Odysseus, ensconced as we know in the center, and on to Diomedes, who needs a kick and a scold from the old man to stir him from the deep slumber of the young; he in turn is to rouse the Lesser Ajax and Meges, who must accordingly be farther to the right.[16] This order is borne out by the *Epipolesis* (the Review of the Troops) in Book 4; after the truce is broken by the wounding of Menelaus, Agamemnon makes the rounds of the chieftains as they ready themselves (finally!) for battle. Beginning on the left with Idomeneus and the Ajaxes,[17] followed by Nestor (4.250–326) and proceeding toward the center, he encounters Odysseus and Menestheus, who have not yet heard the call to battle, and peppers them with abuse (4.327–64). Agamemnon concludes his tour by accusing Diomedes, who must be even farther out of earshot, of cowardice (4.365–421). Scattered references elsewhere in the poem reinforce this general configuration,[18] but it is the *Doloneia* above all that sketches out the layout of the Greek contingents and offers a coherent template for mapping their activities. Perhaps, then, Book 10, far from being a later addition to the *Iliad*, must be considered a critical element of the epic's spatial organization.[19]

As we unravel the various textual pointers from which we can deduce the overall placement of the Greek units, we must not become so enchanted with tracking the clues as to lose sight of their purpose. The main utility of establishing the geography of the camp is to direct the action to and from the battlefield. But most important is

[16] See Fig. 3 for a plan of the Greek encampment adapted from Willcock (1984) 225. Note that Willcock also adopts the traditional identification for the location of the Greek camp along the Hellespont. See also Cuillandre (1944) 27–34; and Hellwig (1964) 132–37, who gives a plan of the actors' movements and emphasizes the unusual treatment of parallel episodes as evidence for the *Doloneia*'s lateness.

[17] Probably here Ajax and Teucer. See below, note 78.

[18] See Cuillandre (1944) 18–34; Willcock (1984) in his Appendix to Book 13, p. 225; and Janko (1992) on 13.681.

[19] On the vexed question of the *Doloneia*'s genuineness, see the balanced account of Danek (1988).

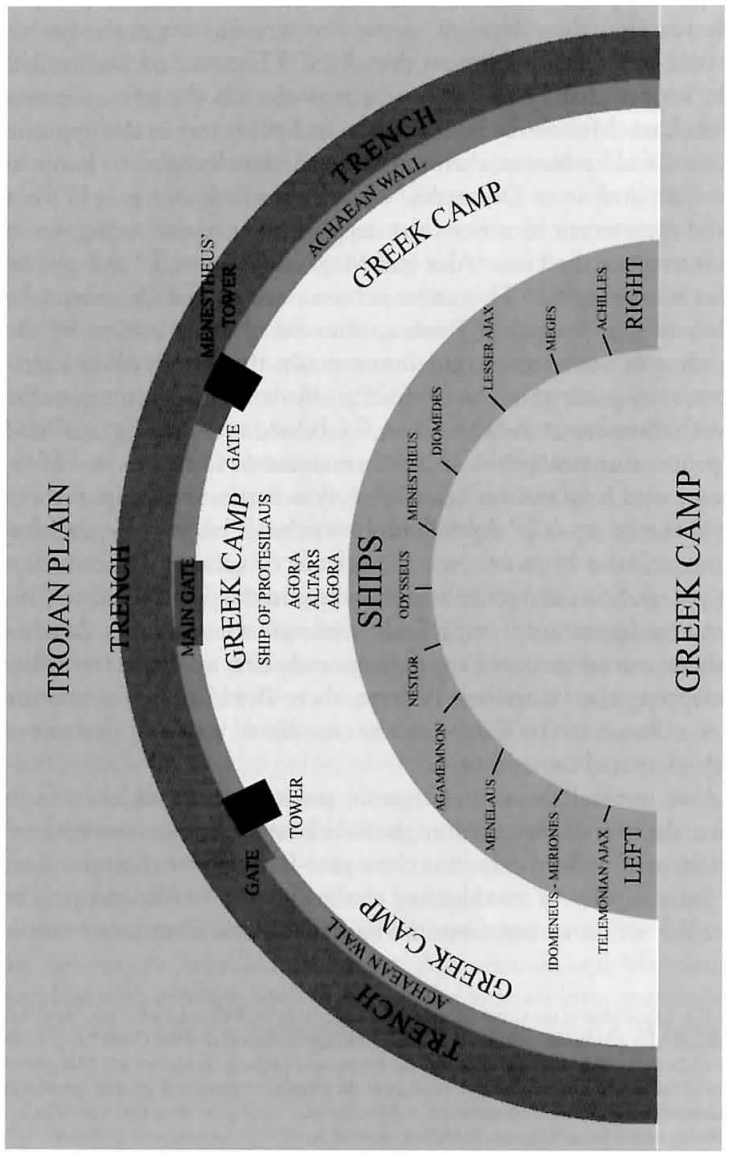

Fig. 3 The Greek camp.

the anchoring of the field of vision and the stable positioning of left and right, which, as we shall see, becomes critical to our understanding of the ensuing battle narrative. However, it bears emphasizing that the spatial orientation of the Achaean camp has no relation to the arrangement of the Catalogue of Ships, which has a different organization (see below, page 117), nor is it justified to assume that the positions of the various contingents of the Greek encampment on the shore correspond to their locations on the battlefield.[20] This is manifestly incorrect: whereas Ajax's camp is on the left wing, throughout Books 12–17 he is usually to be found fighting in the center.

Second, Cuillandre believes that the Scamander flows on the extreme left of the battlefield, which is only partially true, and he also situates Troy on the far left across the river, thus skewing the whole Greek battle line; the Greek left would thus be far closer to Troy than the right flank, but the narrative does not bear out such an orientation; both Achilles on the right and Ajax on the left are equally exposed to the Trojan army. In Book 4 Pandarus, a Lycian, wounds Menelaus, whose camp, as we know, is center left, but this does not justify placing the Lycians center left next to Hector (Hector's right). At this moment Menelaus is not in his camp, nor does Pandarus have to be opposite the Greek to hit him with his arrow; warriors do not necessarily fight in front of their tents. Despite these questionable assumptions, Cuillandre deserves full credit for his painstaking investigation of the *Iliad*'s spatial indications.

We can now turn to the no-man's-land between Ilium and the Greek camp, the war zone where much of the *Iliad* is played out. In following the changing tide of battle, we will find that Homer's complex and dynamic vision is rendered in such a coherent and vivid fashion that we can mentally transport ourselves to the Trojan plain. As with the other landscapes of the *Iliad*, I will analyze the movement of characters and the spatial organization of the action in Books 12–17 with a view to demonstrating its consistency and logic. I began my study of the Homeric battlefield with a simple question. Of the poem's 360 named characters, 232 are warriors killed or

[20] Cf. Cuillandre (1944) esp. 35. He also makes the same mistake with the Trojans, 37.

wounded.[21] Apart from the rare but notorious instances of Homer's nodding when a character, once killed, appears later to fight again,[22] the poet is remarkable in his ability to keep his characters on the battlefield straight. At each moment, he seems to know the location of his characters; and if his attention shifts elsewhere for a while and then returns, he finds them again where they belong, whether in the same place or where they were headed. My question here is: how does he do it? Over the course of thousands of verses, we find astonishingly little confusion. His remarkable control over the activities of his characters becomes most evident when the narrative splits the fighting into several arenas, especially during the long and apparently interminable third day of battle that runs from Book 11 all the way to Book 18. Indeed, the whole sequence constitutes a monumental example of Homeric retardation; nothing decisive occurs. The major Greek heroes, with the exception of Ajax, have all been put out of commission. The wall of the Achaeans, breached at the end of Book 12, must be taken again, and the burning of the Greek ships, long threatened and delayed, finally happens only at the end of Book 15. But as van Wees tries to reassure us: "For all their length, the battle scenes will seem far from boring once we can visualize the action."[23]

To be sure, these books and other battle sequences in the *Iliad* have been studied in some detail. Two approaches have dominated such studies: the historical and the literary. The former have in turn fallen into roughly two categories, first, those concerned with the annals of ancient warfare and the problems involved in using the *Iliad* as a historical source. It is not my intention to draw upon scenes of Homeric combat to explicate early chapters of Greek military history, nor to deal with the old, but continuing, controversies concerning

[21] See Mueller (1984) 82. C. B. Armstrong (1969) 30 gives 238 named casualties and 26 unnamed, 61 of which are Greek and 208 Trojan. Mueller (77–107) also gives a succinct survey of some of the literary strategies used in describing Iliadic battles. He notes the high number of unusual or brutal injuries in Books 13 and 14 (86) and their relation to "gloating speeches" (93), whereas Book 15 is dominated by speeches of exhortation (105); and chains of killings occur more frequently in Books 13–17 than elsewhere (99).

[22] C. B. Armstrong (1969) counts eight nods. At 13.410–12 Hypsanor appears to be killed, but at 423 he is "groaning deeply" and carried off the battlefield. Whatever the source of this error, it is not due to Homer's losing track of his character after only ten lines.

[23] Van Wees (1997) 668.

hoplite fighting or the use of war chariots.[24] Whatever relics from various periods it may incorporate, Homeric warfare, like "Homeric Society," is in the final analysis a poetic construct meant to depict an imagined past, a bygone era of a race of hero men.[25] Nevertheless, one must assume that the battle scenes made some kind of sense to the poet's audience (who must have enjoyed even what strikes us as their *longueurs*) and that we can retrieve that sense through attentive reconstruction.

Another approach concentrates more specifically on the historicity of the Trojan War. Let me make clear from very the start that in what follows I am not concerned with the "real" geography or mapping the *Iliad*'s battles onto the plain below Hisarlik, a task countless scholars, beginning with Heinrich Schliemann, have undertaken, defending Homer's verisimilitude and the poem's historical and topographical accuracy. I also find myself skeptical of (even if intrigued by) attempts to identify specific landmarks of the Troad with those mentioned in the poem. More often than not, such identifications raise as many problems as they resolve, as the current debates attest.[26] But even if the poet were completely familiar with every inch of the Troad, he would nevertheless have had the task of conveying to a Pan-Hellenic audience a convincing backdrop for his narrative. Rather, it is the text of Homer and the spaces created in the text and the mapping of the action within that narrative space that will occupy me.

[24] The bibliography is huge. I list only a few recent contributions from which the reader can begin a survey of the field: Lendon (2005) and his useful bibliographical note; van Wees (1997) 689–93; Singor (1995) 183–200; van Wees (1994a) and (1994b); Pritchett (1985) 4, 7–33; Latacz (1977); and Kirk (1968) 93–117.

[25] Hellmann (2000) argues that combat in the *Iliad* represents neither the poet's own time nor memories of a Mycenaean past; instead it depicts an imagined past of an aristocracy whose prerogatives and privileges were increasingly under attack within the emerging *polis*. See also Graziosi and Haubold (2005) esp. 97.

[26] Fortunately, we need not take sides in the new Trojan War raging in German-speaking academic circles. See, for example, Ulf (2003); *Troia – Traum und Wirklichkeit* (2001); Latacz (2001). For other recent discussions (and lack of consensus), see Pöhlmann (1999) 25–34; Boedeker (1998); Luce (2003); Mellink (1986). Traditionally, the site of the Greek camp has been located between Sigeum and Rhoetium on the Hellespont; the revisionist view, apparently first proposed by Brückner (1912) and defended by M. Korfmann, the recent excavator of Troy, places the encampment on the east coast of the Troad near Beçic Bay. See also Mey (1926) and Kirk (1990) 47–50, for a summary of views.

In the case of literary approaches, a good many scholars have emphasized the importance of ring composition as a basic organizing principle of Homeric combat sequences.[27] This technique, to be sure, plays an important role throughout the epic and seems characteristic of oral performance, structuring certain sequences in such a way that they return to their point of departure and thus facilitating both the poet's task and his auditors' comprehension. Other discussions have analyzed the typical building blocks of the combat episodes[28] and have demonstrated how they are organized by exploiting repetition and symmetry, as well as juxtaposition and contrast, for thematic development and characterization.[29] Alternations of killings on both sides demonstrate the balance of forces or even a stalemate, whereas one-sided strings of deaths reveal the preponderance of one of the forces. Sometimes a complex chain-like structure ensues when a warrior avenges the death of a friend, only to be finally cut down himself. In addition, the Homeric *aristeia* functions as a focusing device that organizes a sequence of slaughters around a single figure.[30] We also find certain formulaic actions such as missing a spear throw or hurling a boulder, not to speak of the great variety of woundings; massed battle frequently alternates or introduces individual duels, and similes and obituaries repeatedly punctuate the action. While these studies have all contributed to the understanding of the patterns of epic combat and the poetic devices that provide variety and depth, they have been largely unconcerned with the spatial and temporal organization of the fighting and its overall progress.

[27] See for example Winter (1956); Stanley (1993). W. H. Friedrich (1956) (Eng. trans. 2003) attempted to distinguish different stylistic strata in the descriptions of killings within an analytic framework.

[28] E.g. Fenik (1968). He concludes, 229: "The poet had certain ready-made compositional elements at his disposal: dictional formulae, formulaic lines, typical details, typical groupings of details, recurrent situations. He created the battle scenes out of pre-formed standardized material that had been used before." See Tsagarakis (1988) 106–33 for a critique of Fenik. Other studies of battle typology: Hainsworth (1966); Krischer (1971) 13–89; and Niens (1987). Visser (1987) uses descriptions of killing or wounding to demonstrate his theory of Homeric verse-making.

[29] Twenty years after *Typical Battle Scenes*, Fenik (1986) 5–43 offered a detailed and subtle discussion of Books 11–13, which dwells less on the typical elements and emphasizes characterization and foreshadowing. His negative judgment of Book 13 as compared with 11 and 12 reveals his lack of interest in issues involving spatial organization.

[30] See Schröter (1950).

Many critics insist that "the reader is given only sparse and poorly visualized spatial information" concerning the action on the plain of Troy: "here is no general design on which we may rely in following the progress of the narrative."[31] About Book 12 in particular, Leaf commented: "The narrative is throughout confused and unfinished, and it is impossible to gain any clear picture of the scene."[32] Yet a more careful examination of this and the following books reveals that the seemingly chaotic arrangement of the fighting is in fact highly structured and clearly visualized. The poet's description, as I will try to show, is organized with care and presented in such a way that the apparently random encounters on the battlefield allow his audience to follow the course of the war at each moment. In addition to showing which side is winning,[33] Homer also seems to know at any given instant where each of the important heroes – and even second-tier figures – is deployed on the battlefield. The *Iliad*, as Cuillandre has claimed, does indeed present "a direct, clear and coherent vision of a theatrical representation on a grand scale, harmoniously arranged, which unfolds before us on a vast but unified stage with multiple arenas."[34]

Moreover, we should also constantly bear in mind that the story was conveyed by an expert performer and storyteller in front of an audience whose attention and receptiveness he courted. Those listeners in turn were attuned to the conventions and verbal cues of battlefield descriptions that formed a common component of heroic narrative. Finally, we should never forget that live performance can facilitate the transmission of complex narrative movements, not only through verbal devices such as deixis, but also by exploiting gesture and vocal intonation.

[31] Andersson (1976) 17 and 23.

[32] Leaf (1900–2) vol. 1, 525; Hainsworth (1993) 313 calls 12 "one of the most weakly constructed Books of the *Iliad*," and his analysis on pp. 314–15 sounds chaotic indeed. But Willcock (1978) 312, is more accurate in saying that "Homer has a clear picture of what he is describing" and in grasping the overall plan of the *Teichomachia*.

[33] Cf. Willcock (1993) 142–46.

[34] Cuillandre (1944) iii: "la vision directe, nette et suivie d'une représentation théatrale à grand spectacle, harmonieusement agencée, qui se déroulerait devant nous sur une vaste et unique scène aux multiples 'mansions'."

BOOK 12

Book 12 depicts the assault on the Achaean Wall that the Greeks had built in Book 7 but which only now takes center stage.[35] Thucydides, who used his Homer as a historical document, suggested with perfect logic that a defensive wall (the word he uses is *eruma*) must have been built as a bridgehead immediately after the Greeks arrived following an initial victory.[36] Homer, however, who was not writing history, but poetry, constructs his wall when he needs it, and he as good as tells us not to waste our time looking for its traces. However, a clear grasp of its construction and topography is critical to our understanding of the battle that rages around it. Book 12 also creates a spatial template that serves to organize the action throughout the subsequent Battle Books. And for those interested in long-range narrative planning in the *Iliad*, it is worth noting that four books intervene between the wall's construction and its poetic utilization. The epic poet is a patient craftsman.

Be that as it may, Homer begins the *Teichomachia* (the battle over the Achaean Wall), bizarrely enough, not by describing the wall to which all eyes will be drawn over the next several books, but by recounting its destruction at a future time when the Trojan War will have become a distant memory. After the deaths of many Greeks and Trojans, after the sack of Ilium, and after the departure of the surviving Greeks (12.17–33):

> δὴ τότε μητιόωντο Ποσειδάων καὶ Ἀπόλλων
> τεῖχος ἀμαλδῦναι, ποταμῶν μένος εἰσαγαγόντες.
> ὅσσοι ἀπ' Ἰδαίων ὀρέων ἅλαδε προρέουσι,
> Ῥῆσός θ' Ἑπτάπορός τε Κάρησός τε Ῥοδίος τε

[35] The wall and ditch do not disappear in the intervening books: cf. 8.177–79, 213–15, 254–55, 343; 9.67, 87, 232, 348–50; 10.198, 564; 11.47–52. After Book 12 they are again mentioned in 14.55–56, 65–68; 15.355–66; 16.558; 18.198, 215, 228; 20.48–49; 24.443. See Reichel (1994) 317–24, who, contrary to my overall conclusions, argues that the consistency in the depiction of the wall and more generally Homeric "topographical precision and the self-conscious poetic arrangement of space should be considered a fundamental characteristic of written poetry" ("Topographische Genauigkeit und die bewusste dichterische Gestaltung des Raumes sind grundsätzlich als ein Charakteristikum schriftlicher Dichtung anzusehen" [324]).

[36] Thucydides 1.11.1. For the controversy, see Page (1959) 315–24, who argued perversely that Thucydides must have known a version of the text of the *Iliad* that did not contain the wall. For rebuttals, see Davison (1965); West (1969); and Tsagarakis (1969). Maitland (1999) has argued for two walls and "a case for multiple authorship" (p. 8); and Finkelberg (2002) sees the wall as an allusion to the traditions concerning the beginning of the War.

> Γρήνικός τε καὶ Αἴσηπος δῖός τε Σκάμανδρος
> καὶ Σιμόεις, ὅθι πολλὰ βοάγρια καὶ τρυφάλειαι
> κάππεσον ἐν κονίῃσι καὶ ἡμιθέων γένος ἀνδρῶν·
> τῶν πάντων ὁμόσε στόματ' ἔτραπε Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων,
> ἐννῆμαρ δ' ἐς τεῖχος ἴει ῥόον· ὗε δ' ἄρα Ζεὺς
> συνεχές, ὄφρά κε θᾶσσον ἁλίπλοα τείχεα θείη.
> αὐτὸς δ' ἐννοσίγαιος ἔχων χείρεσσι τρίαιναν
> ἡγεῖτ', ἐκ δ' ἄρα πάντα θεμείλια κύμασι πέμπε
> φιτρῶν καὶ λάων, τὰ θέσαν μογέοντες Ἀχαιοί,
> λεῖα δ' ἐποίησεν παρ' ἀγάρροον Ἑλλήσποντον,
> αὖτις δ' ἠϊόνα μεγάλην ψαμάθοισι κάλυψε,
> τεῖχος ἀμαλδύνας· ποταμοὺς δ' ἔτρεψε νέεσθαι
> κὰρ ῥόον, ᾗ περ πρόσθεν ἴεν καλλίρροον ὕδωρ.

> Then Poseidon and Apollo conspired
> To blot out the wall, and bringing together the might of the rivers,
> All those that flowed from the mountains of Ida to the sea,
> Rhesus, Heptaporus, Caresus, and Rhodius,
> Granicus, Aesepus, Scamander,
> And Simoeis, where many ox-hide shields and helmet crests
> Had fallen into the dust and the race of the half-god men;
> The mouths of all these Apollo turned,
> And for nine days he drove the current against the wall; and Zeus rained
> Ceaselessly so as to render the wall quickly seaward.
> And the Earth-shaker with the trident in his hands
> Led the way, and he sent into the waves the entire foundations
> Of logs and stones, which the Achaeans had toiled to construct,
> And he smoothed the land by the swiftly flowing Hellespont,
> And he covered the great beach with sand again,
> Having blotted out the wall.

This magnificent scene of verbal annihilation reminds us of the poetry's power. We conclude with Aristotle: what the poet builds, he can destroy: ὁ πλάσας ποιητὴς ἠφάνισεν.[37] His wall of words exists only in his poetry and can be taken as an emblem for his whole undertaking.[38] Indeed, the wall can be considered a concrete manifestation of the *Iliad*'s theme, the *menis* of Achilles, since the

[37] Aristotle, fr. 162 (Rose) = Scholia at *Il.* 12.4 = Strabo 13.598.

[38] Ford (1992) 147–57 likewise sees the wall as self-referential, but believes, unconvincingly to my mind, that the wall represents the written text of the *Iliad* and that the wall's "destruction demonstrates a certain vulnerability of any text of the *Iliad* from an oral poet's point of view" (152). Also Sfyroeras, pers. comm.

need for the defensive barrier arises only after Achilles' withdrawal; but the poem itself will outlast the physical monument.

The fortifications had been built in Book 7 on Nestor's advice under the cover of a truce to bury the dead and construct a tomb (7.325–43). This double function is most peculiar and becomes even more so when Nestor introduces a notorious Homeric crux by suggesting that the bones of the dead be gathered and returned home, a practice unknown elsewhere in the epic.[39] As the Greeks construct this impressive edifice, the gods marvel at the great work, but Poseidon waxes indignant: despite the fact that the Greeks omitted libations to the gods before constructing it, yet its *kleos* will last "as long and far as the dawn is scattered," while the one that he and Apollo built for Laomedon will be consigned to obscurity (ἐπιλήσονται, 7.451–52). Zeus reassures his brother that the wall will indeed be destroyed once the war is over, but Poseidon's worries are nevertheless justified: the fortifications will vanish but not their fame. The demise of the wall, as we learn in Book 12, signals the passing of the heroic race, the *hemitheōn genos andrōn* ("the race of half-god men," 12.23), an expression, unique in Homer, that views the heroes retrospectively as a vanished race; their helmets and armor and even their bones will leave no trace.[40] Significantly the communal tomb of the combatants at Troy will be a cenotaph, a *sema* containing no physical remains;[41] and even that empty *sema* will be obliterated. The *sema*, like the wall, exists only in words; however, the *kleos* of the wall, like the *kleos* of the heroes will endure through the medium of poetry. Our window into the world of the *Iliad* with all its brilliance and vividness depends on

[39] See Kirk (1990) on 7.334–35 who believes the lines are interpolated. Cf. Page (1959) 323. The issue of "bringing home the bones" goes back to Aristarchus. See Jacoby (1944) 44, n. 30, who considers the lines an interpolation after 464 BCE. when the practice of collecting and bringing home the bones of the dead began in Athens. For a summary of scholarly opinion, see Shive (1996). Both Shive and Davies (1986) defend the passage, but neither connects it with hero cult. But cf. Nagy (1979) on the tension between heroes of cult and heroes of epic. I am grateful to Stephen Long for many of these references.

[40] For the heroes and their disappearance, see Clay (2003) 161–74.

[41] Earlier, in Book 7, Hector mentions another *sema* that will not materialize; when he challenges the Greeks to a duel, the Trojan boasts that he will dedicate his opponent's armor to Apollo but give the body to the Achaeans to bury and to erect a *sema* for men of the future to hear about that will proclaim Hector's victory and *kleos*. Finkelberg (2002) 151–53 sees an allusion to the tomb and *heroon* of Protesilaus slain at the beginning of the war by Hector and drawn from the *Cypria* traditions. But in the *Iliad* the duel is stopped and no tomb ever built; Hector's *kleos* depends not on a *sema*, but on Homer's poetry.

the poet's words; like the Achaean Wall, we cannot find it on a map, for it exists solely in the bard's performance.[42] The great central day of battle will take place under its shadow.

After his proleptic description of the future obliteration of the Greek wall, the poet tells us (35–37):[43]

> τότε δ' ἀμφὶ μάχη ἐνοπή τε δεδήει
> τεῖχος ἐΰδμητον, κανάχιζε δὲ δούρατα πύργων
> βαλλόμεν'.
>
> But at that time, battle and tumult were blazing round about
> The well-built wall, and the beams of the towers reverberated
> As they were struck.

In the next few books, the Greek fortifications will exercise a critical narrative function, for they render visible the defensive posture of the Greeks vis–à-vis the Trojans.[44] The wall will also serve as a line demarcating the position of both armies as they struggle now, not on the Trojan plain between the city and the Achaean camp but within the Greek encampment itself immediately in front of their ships.[45] In a dramatic inversion, during the longest day of battle, the Greeks besieging Troy become the besieged, their camp a city under attack.[46]

In front of the wall Hector urges the Trojans to cross the trench, but Polydamas advises them to leave their horses behind and proceed on

[42] While at first glance quite different, the *Odyssey* offers an intriguing parallel in Book 13. While the Phaeacians magically transport Odysseus home, Poseidon complains to Zeus of their lack of respect for him, just as he did when the Greeks built the wall without proper libations. Although here Zeus mollifies his brother by giving his permission for its future destruction, in the *Odyssey* Zeus allows Poseidon to punish the Phaeacians – whether or not covering them with a mountain (13.125–65). We will never know; our only access to the idyllic Phaeacians, like our access to the world of the demi-god heroes, will be by means of Odysseus' tale, which in turn is mediated through the poet's performance.

[43] In this and the two lines that follow, we get a general description (note the imperfects) that summarizes the action of the whole book. Winter (1956) 17 rightly calls it a "Vorgriff" and notes the shift from the distant to the near future. Indeed, the Trojans have not even crossed the ditch. Homer's narrative here does exactly what many critics say he never does, namely goes back over the same time period. See the discussion below.

[44] Cf. Winter (1956) 14: "Sie [die Mauer] dient Dichter wie Hörer als Orientierungspunkt" ("The wall serves as a point of orientation for both the poet and his audience"). Albracht (1895) 9–15 (Eng. trans. [2005] 104–13) in his detailed account of the *Teichomachia* insists on its historical verisimilitude.

[45] For a possible reconstruction of the wall, see Mannsperger (1998); for the purpose of the fosse in front of it, see Mannsperger (1995). Also Albracht (1895) 3–8.

[46] Morrison (1994) shows how Homer's language suggests that the Greek encampment has become a city under siege. Cf. Mannsperger (1998) 288.

foot. Where is Hector along the perimeter of the wall? In Book 11 we had left him about to make his way from the extreme edge (ἐσχατιῇ, 11.524) of the battlefield by the banks of the Scamander – which turns out to have been on the left (μάχης ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ μάρναντο πάσης, 11.498).

At Cebriones' urging, then, Hector makes his way from the extreme left flank (always from the Greek point of view) (11.521–30) to the center where he will remain for the next few books. Meanwhile, Zeus forces Ajax, who has been manning the center, to retreat, which he does with great reluctance and asinine stubbornness (11.544–95). At the opening of Book 12 Hector, now having arrived at the center, prepares for the attack on the wall by dividing his forces into five columns (12.87–107),[47] each with three leaders who include the most prominent of the Trojan warriors:

1	2	3	4	5
Hector	Paris	Helenus	Aeneas	Sarpedon
Polydamas	Alcathous	Deiphobus	Archelochus	Glaucus
Cebriones	Agenor	Asius	Acamas	Asteropaeus

Commentators for the most part dismiss these elaborate preparations. Hainsworth, for example, says that this division of the Trojans "was probably invented to add graphic detail to a momentous occasion" and notes "that such a catalogue should anticipate the form of the subsequent narrative" but that "in the event the theme disintegrates."[48] We might reasonably expect that the five contingents would attack the wall and that the wall itself might have five gates,[49] but that turns

[47] Homer presents other fivefold divisions: Trojans, 11.56–65; Myrmidons, 16.171–97; Pylians, 4.293–96. Cf. Singor (1991); and van Wees (1997) 675, n. 10, who also notes "that Agamemnon makes only five stops in his tour of the Greek army (4.250–421)."

[48] See Hainsworth (1993); also Andrewes (1961) 130. Cf. Leaf (1900): "This division of the army into five bodies is quite forgotten in the following narrative." Cf. Jordan (1905) 79, who suggests 12.88–107 are an interpolation. But van Wees (1986) 285, n. 3, although he does not elaborate, is more perceptive when he characterizes "the five contingents formed to attack the wall around the ships (12.86–104) – a scheme which, in fact, is maintained throughout the storming of the wall." Also Willcock (1978) 312. The catalogue here has been partially anticipated at 11.56–60. Cf. Reichel (1994) 295, who calls the list at the opening of Book 12 "eine prosopographische Vorbereitung der Kämpfe vor allem des N und Ξ" ("A prosopographical preparation for the battles, especially in Books 13 and 14").

[49] As Andrae's plan (Fig. 1) depicts it.

out not to be the case.[50] The fivefold division of the Trojan forces and their allies, however, while indeed a significant feature of the *Teichomachia* and even beyond to the battle by the Greek ships, does not function as expected. Homer's plan turns out to be more complex and more far-reaching; it encompasses the whole third day of battle (Books 11–18), which constitutes the most intricate and multi-faceted description of warfare in the *Iliad*. As will emerge subsequently, at this point Hector and his forces will continue to occupy the center, the three contingents led by Paris, Helenus, and Aeneas will take their positions on the left (speaking always from the narrator's – which is also the Greeks' – point of view) where they will be the leading warriors in the battle that takes up most of Book 13, while Sarpedon and the allies will hold the right.[51] We must keep this configuration in mind to grasp the progress of the subsequent battle.

Book 12 recounts three separate assaults on the wall; the first involves Asius who, displeased with the plan to attack the wall on foot, insists on driving his horses to the left (12.118)[52] whence, the narrator tells us, he will not return, but die at the hands of Idomeneus (cf. 13.384–93). At this point the Achaeans are rushing in from the plain through a gate in the fortifications guarded by two Lapiths, whose fierce resistance surprises Asius and causes him to complain bitterly to Zeus. Asius' attempt to take the wall by driving through an open gate

[50] The question of the number of gates in the Achaean Wall is an old one. Aristarchus insisted that there was only one gate and manipulated the text to make it seem so. Cf. Hainsworth (1993) 313–14 (where he confuses left and right) and on 12.340; the Scholia at 7.339, 12.118, and 12.340; and van der Valk (1963) vol. 1, 575–80. Albracht (1895) 3–4 and 10 makes the reasonable suggestion that the *purgoi* are meant to protect the gates. Nestor's phrasing at 7.339 (ἐν δ' αὐτοῖσι) would seem to strengthen that view. On this assumption, the Achaean Wall might be imagined to have at least three gates, one on the left (Asius), one on the right (cf. Sarpedon, who attacks Menestheus' tower, 12.332–33), and one in the center (Hector). We would in any case be inclined to posit one on the right near the camp of Achilles for Priam to enter in Book 24; cf. Cuillandre (1944) 53. Singor (1992) argues for seven gates, on the basis of the seven ἡγεμόνες φυλάκων (9.80–88) and suggests a connection with the tradition of the seven gates of Thebes. As far as Troy itself is concerned, Homer names only two gates: the Scaean and the Dardanian. On the Dardanian Gate, which she believes was part of the "real" Trojan landscape, see Mannsperger (1993) and below p. 105.

[51] Cuillandre has not acknowledged this absolutely essential point; although it is not immediately apparent, the position of Sarpedon proves critical to the understanding of the subsequent books. We must remember that the stationing of the Lycian contingent could easily have been indicated by a gesture on the part of the bard.

[52] Mannsperger (1998) 293–94 explains the function of the gate on the left as an escape route for the chariots that simultaneously protects the charioteers and exploits the tendency of horses to gallop toward the left.

will end in failure. The two other assaults involve different strategies and meet with success: first, Sarpedon will try to scale the wall, and then Hector will manage to break through the main Achaean gate. Now, in one of those rare references to himself, the poet interrupts his narrative (12.175–81):[53]

> Ἄλλοι δ' ἀμφ' ἄλλῃσι μάχην ἐμάχοντο πύλῃσιν·
> ἀργαλέον δέ με ταῦτα θεὸν ὣς πάντ' ἀγορεῦσαι·
> πάντῃ γὰρ περὶ τεῖχος ὀρώρει θεσπιδαὲς πῦρ
> λάϊνον· Ἀργεῖοι δὲ καὶ ἀχνύμενοί περ ἀνάγκῃ
> νηῶν ἠμύνοντο· θεοὶ δ' ἀκαχήατο θυμὸν
> πάντες, ὅσοι Δαναοῖσι μάχης ἐπιτάρροθοι ἦσαν.
> σὺν δ' ἔβαλον Λαπίθαι πόλεμον καὶ δῃϊοτῆτα.
>
> Others were fighting around other gates;
> It is difficult for me to recount all these things, as if I were a god;
> For in every direction around the stony wall an ineffable fire arose;
> But the Argives, even though sore pressed, by necessity
> Were defending the ships; but the gods were grieved in their hearts,
> All, that is, who were supporters of the Danaans.
> But the Lapiths threw themselves into war and battle.

In what constitutes more or less the first episode of the *Teichomachia*, the poet suddenly intrudes to comment on the difficulty of narrating the story he is in fact recounting. This jarring self-referential interruption momentarily yanks us off the battlefield and draws our attention both to the immediate context of the performance we are experiencing and underlines the complexity of the narrative action encompassing several fronts that will occupy the next two books. At this moment the poet acknowledges the difficulty of his task, and his consciousness of his human limitations ("it is difficult for *me*") unites the mortal poet with his audience.[54] It would take a god – or a mortal inspired by the Muses – to describe the actions of the attackers and defenders taking place simultaneously at the several gates in the ramparts before the Greek camp.[55] Suddenly, before rejoining the

[53] See Hainsworth (1993) for supposed problems with these verses.

[54] See Bakker (2005) 81–82 on the function of the second person deictic ταῦτα (12.176) here. See also Rengakos (1995) 4.

[55] Cauer (1914) 58 notes that here the poet "erinnert so auch uns daran, dass wir es hier nur mit einer Episode zu tun haben" ("reminds us too that we are here involved in only one episode").

combat on the ground, the poet turns briefly to yet another theater of operations, the gods who for now only watch but soon will move into action.[56] This reference to the divine audience, which earlier commentators thought intrusive, displays the narrator's ability to embrace the gods in his panoramic vision, by briefly transporting us to Olympus and back, and simultaneously to encompass the multiple engagements taking place concurrently throughout the field of battle, θεὸν ὣς. His magisterial gaze takes it all in. Thus in addition to exploiting some of the verbal and poetic techniques that facilitate the presentation of the πολυμερὲς μάχη that follows,[57] this passage draws attention to the poet's sovereign mastery over his narrative.

One of the techniques in the poet's arsenal that allows him to formulate concurrent events on several planes is the exploitation of the interplay of verb forms to fore- and background the action. Ἄλλοι δ' ἀμφ' ἄλλῃσι μάχην ἐμάχοντο πύλῃσιν: what we are accustomed to calling the imperfect tense (ἐμάχοντο, "they were fighting") is used here to describe the generalized fighting in the background, so to speak, while the stative (representing a state rather than an action) pluperfect (ἀκαχήατο, "they felt grief," 179) expresses the dismay of the divine partisans of the Greeks before the poet turns – or as here, returns – to the main narrative in the aorist (ἔβαλον, 181).[58] Frequently general descriptions serve as transitional devices to facilitate movement to another part of the battlefield with the imperfects implying that the battle continues in the first location. The distinction between these verbal forms is not so much temporal as aspectual: imperfective or durative action viewed as an ongoing

[56] For Olympus as a secondary locus of action, see Hellwig (1964) 26–28.

[57] The bT Scholia on these lines also add: "Appropriately, he [the poet] reveals the difficulty of narrating such things" and comment on the Homeric *enargeia* of the lines. For *polymeria* as a characteristic of epic, see Aristotle, *Poetics* 1459b.

[58] The Greek aorist is the usual verb form of epic narration of past events when their durative character is not emphasized. We can compare it to the simple past in English: "he sang" as opposed to the durative "he was singing." See de Jong and Nünlist (2004) 74, who mention that "zooming out" "can also be used in order to prepare for an imminent change of scene." The example they give, however, differs from ours; in *Iliad* 1.484–87 the embassy to Chryse returns to the Greek camp in the aorist, but at 1.488 we hear of Achilles raging (μήνιε, imperfect) and refusing to participate (note the iteratives in 490–91) in either agora or warfare. Presumably, Achilles' actions have continued from 1.348 (when Briseis was led away) or 428 (after his conversation with his mother) and retroactively cover the same time period as the trip to and from Chryse – a violation of Zielinski's "Law"! This would seem to be an inversion of the technique I am discussing.

process as opposed to the aorist, which views the action as an event *tout court*. And we should remember that in Greek, the imperfect is the marked form in opposition to the unmarked aorist.[59] The distinction is not confined to the verb forms: in the aorist we usually find individually named warriors and their victims as opposed to the anonymous "they" or "Greeks" and "Trojans" of the generalized activities in the imperfect. This usage, however, does not quite parallel Latacz's distinction between massed battle (*Massenkampf*) and individual encounters (*Einzelkampf*), since both usually use the aorist.[60] However, as we shall see, in those passages that indicate a *spatial* shift to a different area of the battlefield we find the imperfect or, more properly, the imperfective.[61] This form indicates that an action is conceived as continuing in the background while the poet focuses his attention on another part of the battlefield. The alternation of verbal forms thus makes possible the narration of multiple actions.

At line 12.181 we return to the gate on the left as the Lapiths quickly dispatch eight Trojans including two of Asius' five companions (the other three will die in Book 13 along with Asius). Then, while the two Greeks (ὄφρα, 195) are occupied in the imperfect stripping the armor, meanwhile (τόφρα) we return to the center where the best troops were following (imperfect) Hector and Polydamas (12.196, 199). An omen appears (aorists), and Polydamas warns of disaster, but Hector rejects his advice. First we get a general description of the Trojan forces attacking the wall (12.256–61), which is balanced by the Greeks defending it (12.262–64); meanwhile the two Ajaxes, going in all different directions, kept (again imperfects) encouraging the Argives (12.265–77). The first of many similes that punctuate the narrative, here giving a sweeping vision embracing both sides over the whole length of the wall (12.278–89), likening the battle to a

[59] See P. Friedrich (1974). On aspect generally, see Comrie (1976).

[60] In his analysis of the opening battle sequence in *Iliad* 4.446–537, Latacz (1977) 83–85 points to the durative imperfects at lines 4.450–51 as characterizing the *Massenkampf* (massed battle), but in many of the other general descriptions of Greeks or Trojans aorists are more common (e.g. 4.505–507a, which Latacz, 85, calls a "*komplexive Massenkampfschilderung*" ("complex description of massed fighting"); cf. 4.472, 532–35, "*Teilmassenkampfschilderung*" ("description of partial massed fighting"). Latacz insists that the individual combats are selected moments within the generalized fighting.

[61] Bonfazi (2007) argues that the particle αὖ indicates various types of visual shifts from long shot, to close up, to zooming in, and may also indicate a change of scene.

snowstorm,[62] serves as a transition to a resumption of the narrative, often, as here, at a different position on the battlefield.

It is worth considering why similes are so frequently used to facilitate the transition from one theater of action to another.[63] Unlike the similes that characterize the actions of individual warriors, these transitional similes tend to view the action on the battlefield panoramically, zooming out, so to speak, from the fray. More generally, such images represent actions from the remote heroic past by comparing them to contemporary phenomena both natural and domestic, presumably more familiar to the audience. This movement from the distant past to the immediate present of our own experiences not only renders vivid the actions of the long dead heroes but also jolts us into a consciousness of the here and now of the performative context.[64] By bringing us from a specific "there" to a "here," such similes draw attention to the fictive character of the narrative and can serve to transport us to a new theater of action.

As it turns out, we now join the fighting on the right with Sarpedon and his Lycians;[65] the shift is introduced by a rather odd contrafactual (12.290–93):

> οὐδ' ἄν πω τότε γε Τρῶες καὶ φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ
> τείχεος ἐρρήξαντο πύλας καὶ μακρὸν ὀχῆα,
> εἰ μὴ ἄρ' υἱὸν ἑὸν Σαρπηδόνα μητίετα Ζεὺς
> ὤρσεν ἐπ' Ἀργείοισι, λέονθ' ὡς βουσὶν ἕλιξιν.
>
> In fact, the Trojans and Hector would never have
> Broken through the gates of the wall and the long bolt,
> If Zeus of devisings had not roused his own son Sarpedon
> Against the Argives, like a lion among cattle with twisted horns.

[62] On the function of this simile, see Clay (1999) 58–60. See below, p. 66 for more on Homeric similes.

[63] See Martin (1997) 146, who aptly uses the language of cinematography: "similes are not like freeze-frames or slow-motion sequences in film, but like transition shots, often accompanied by theme music."

[64] Cf. S. Richardson (1990) 66: "The illusion that we are present on the scene, that there is no barrier between us and the events of the story, is broken by the reference to something within our own sphere of activity quite separate from the Trojan War. The corollary is that the role of the narrator in bringing us this other world gains greater prominence." Cf. Bakker (2005) 135.

[65] Cuillandre (1944) 47, 85, mistakenly situates Sarpedon and his Lycians at the center with Hector. But then Menestheus would not have had to send for Ajax, who is manning the center facing Hector.

In the event, it is of course Hector who at the very end of the book thrusts an enormous boulder against the central gate; but how Sarpedon's actions on the right form a necessary prelude to that Trojan breakthrough is not immediately clear.[66] However, an analysis of the positions of the various actors around the Achaean Wall reveals the somewhat surprising connection between the two actions. And here it is not difficult to imagine how simple gestures on the part of the bard could clarify the actions of the various cohorts.

Sarpedon begins his assault upon the wall (aorists) and then delivers his famous speech to his companion Glaucus (12.310–28).[67] Observing the two Lycians bearing down on him from his tower, the Athenian Menestheus seeks reinforcements from the two Ajaxes and Teucer, but the din of battle precludes his shouting for help.[68] The Athenian commands a messenger to summon Ajax (12.342–63). Both Menestheus' speech and the herald's transmission are rich in deictics: steep destruction is imminent *here* (τῇδε); but if there is toil *there* (καὶ κεῖθι) too, let Telemonian Ajax alone come and Teucer follow him. The deictics are inverted when the message is conveyed to Ajax: Menestheus bids him to go *there* (κεῖσ'), since steep destruction is imminent *there* (κεῖθι); but if war and strife has arisen *here too* (καὶ ἐνθάδε), let Telemonian Ajax come and Teucer follow. When these two arrive (aorists) at Menestheus' tower, the Lycians are engaged in mounting (imperfects) the breastworks. In the ensuing battle (aorists and named warriors), Sarpedon manages to tear down part of the breastwork and exhorts his comrades to follow his lead. The first encounter between the Lycians and the Greeks facing them (imperfects) ends in a stalemate described in a vivid simile of two men fighting over a boundary stone. This is then followed by a panoramic description of the fighting that extends to all parts of the wall (12.430–31):

[66] Winter (1956) 50 believes 12.290–93 should be interpreted as meaning that the battle would have lasted longer if Zeus had not roused Sarpedon to action. I do not understand this.

[67] For an analysis of this speech, see Clay (2009).

[68] Ajax and Teucer may be nearby (ἐγγύθεν, 12.337), but there is nevertheless no reason to identify Menestheus' tower with the central gate as Mannsperger (1998) 296 does. The elaborate descriptions of both sending for aid and the arrival of Ajax and Teucer to block the assault of the Lycians suggest some distance. Note the brief cinematic vision of the whole battlefield at 12.338–41.

πάντῃ δὴ πύργοι καὶ ἐπάλξιες αἵματι φωτῶν
ἐρράδατ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν ἀπὸ Τρώων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν.

In every direction the towers and breastworks were soaked[69]
With the blood of men on both sides, from the Trojans and the Achaeans.

Again a striking simile, this time of the honest woman carefully weighing out her wool, describes the equal battle with neither side gaining the upper hand (ἐπὶ ἶσα μάχη) and forms the transition back to the center and to Hector's decisive breakthrough that ends the book.

We can now see how Sarpedon's attack on the right contributed to Hector's successful breaching of the gate.[70] For the Lycian's action precipitated Ajax's departure from the center, where he would have stood in the way of Hector's moment of triumph. As Hainsworth notes, "the attack launched by Sarpedon had the effect of diverting the strongest part of the Achaean defense [i.e. Ajax] from the gate that was forced by Hector."[71] The poet carefully keeps the two attempts to take the wall separate by consistently differentiating the πύργοι ("towers") and ἐπάλξεις ("breastworks") and using verbs with *epi* or *hyper* ("on" or "over") to describe Sarpedon's and his Lycians' scaling the battlements on the right, but mentioning πύλαι ("gates") and ἐς ("into") to describe Hector's actions in the center.[72] The assault is then summarized at the end of the book (12.469–71):

[69] My attempt to convey the pluperfect here, which in Homeric Greek is not a relative tense but a real perfective. See Romagno (2005).

[70] This interpretation answers Jordan's (1905) 82 puzzlement: "wo Hector eigentlich steht, wie zu den Lykiern, das ist nicht zu erkennen" ("Where Hector is actually positioned and where in relation to the Lycians cannot be established"). Elsewhere too (83), Jordan despairs of making sense of Homer's descriptions: "wir werden mit einer ziemlich unbestimmten Schilderung abgespeist. Eine straffe Durcharbeitung dieser Dinge wird man in der Ilias nie finden" ("We're left with a quite imprecise description. In the *Iliad* we cannot ever discover a coherent exposition of these matters"). Cf. her comments (85) concerning the left side of the battle. Similarly Leaf (1900–2) who claims that lines 12.290–93 are "practically meaningless . . . for the ineffective attack on the wall by Sarpedon has in the end no bearing whatever on Hector's successful assault on the gate."

[71] Hainsworth (1993) 316; cf. Willcock (1978) 312 and on 12.290. See also Ameis and Hentze (1882) on 12.292.

[72] Cf. 12.291, 308, 341, 375, 385–86, 390, 397, 406, 424, 438, 466. Again, see Mannsperger (1995) on the wall's construction.

αὐτίκα δ' οἳ μὲν τεῖχος ὑπέρβασαν,[73] οἳ δὲ κατ' αὐτὰς
ποιητὰς ἐσέχυντο πύλας· Δαναοὶ δὲ φόβηθεν
νῆας ἀνὰ γλαφυράς, ὅμαδος δ' ἀλίαστος ἐτύχθη.

Straightway, some went *over* the wall, but
Others poured in *through* the wrought gates; and the Danaans fled
Among the hollow ships, and a ceaseless racket arose.

Let me now summarize our findings thus far concerning Homer's procedures in describing the battlefield. First, he has divided the action into three theaters of war – left, right, and center – which are invariable and visualized from the perspective of the Greek camp looking toward Troy. Second, he uses aorists to describe foregrounded actions involving named participants, while imperfects are frequently used to describe generalized actions that often form transitions between different zones of combat. These imperfects in their durative and continuative aspect reveal that these activities are thought to carry on in the background. Finally, such transitions frequently culminate in similes, usually to characterize the preceding general activities, before the poet turns back to the narration of specific events taking place in a different area of the battlefield.

BOOK 13

Book 12 ended with the gripping vision of Hector, looking like swift night, his eyes aflame, hurtling through the gates. The next book opens on another level of activity altogether, with the gods, here Zeus turning his shining eyes away from the theater of Troy, certain that his plan for a Greek rout will quickly be accomplished. And we, the audience, also share the god's momentary respite from the inexorable battle raging below Ida, a respite extended by the description of Poseidon's majestic progress over the sea as he takes advantage of Zeus's distraction to bring aid to the Greeks.

[73] Probably relying on Aristarchus, Aristonicus at 12.468 recognized that the first subject here is the Lycians. Cf. the bT Scholia at 12.461–70, who, after praising the ἐνέργεια of the passage, note that it arises also ἐκ τῶν ὑπερβαινόντων τὸ τεῖχος, καθ' ὃ μέρος ἔρρηξε Σαρπηδών, ἐκ τῶν εἰστρεχόντων εἰς τὰς πύλας, καθ' ὃ μέρος ἔρρηξε αὐτὰς ὁ Ἕκτωρ ("from those going over the wall in the place that Sarpedon broke, from those rushing into the gates in the place where Hector broke through them").

Poseidon's interventions can be plotted as he moves from right to left through the Greek lines, encouraging and exhorting various groups of warriors to withstand the Trojan onslaught. While the Trojans were following Hector and hoping to take the ships and slaughter the Greeks (imperfects, 13.39–42), Poseidon, arriving from the direction of Tenedos and Imbros, namely from the west, first appears to the two Ajaxes.[74] Disguised as Calchas, he directs them to take their positions where the fighting is fiercest (13.49–54):

ἄλλῃ μὲν γὰρ ἔγωγ' οὐ δείδια χεῖρας ἀάπτους
Τρώων, οἳ μέγα τεῖχος ὑπερκατέβησαν ὁμίλῳ·
ἔξουσιν γὰρ πάντας ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοί·
τῇ δὲ δὴ αἰνότατον περιδείδια μή τι πάθωμεν,
ᾗ ῥ' ὅ γ' ὁ λυσσώδης φλογὶ εἴκελος ἡγεμονεύει,
Ἕκτωρ, ὃς Διὸς εὔχετ' ἐρισθενέος πάϊς εἶναι.

Elsewhere I have no fear of the tireless arms
Of the Trojans, who crossed the great wall in a throng;
For the well-greaved Achaeans will withstand them all;
But in that place, indeed, I have a dreadful fear lest we suffer something,
There where that rabid man leads, like to a flame,
Hector, who claims to be the son of mighty Zeus.

Poseidon is not so much worried about the front where the Trojans and their allies managed to go up and over the wall, that is, on the right. Rather, the god directs the Aiantes to the center of the battlefield where Hector had just breached the Achaean Wall at the end of Book 12. Poseidon then proceeds to "those behind," the κοῦροι νέοι ("young youths")[75] who are catching their breath by the ships and weeping tears of despair over their situation, and he gives a rousing speech; the army regroups into closely packed formations around the two Ajaxes (13.83–135).[76]

There are problems here. We had left Telemonian Ajax and his brother Teucer in Book 12 countering the threat posed by Sarpedon

[74] Unfortunately, the fact that Poseidon comes from the west does not finally help us to locate the Achaean camp better or to decide whether it is situated on the Hellespont or at Beçic Bay.

[75] These may well be the same as the *kouroi* sent forth as the seven leaders of contingents of guards posted in 9.81–85. See note 116 below on groups of seven.

[76] Fenik (1968) 38 and 118 argues that "this is another case of simultaneous events," and certainly several things are going on at the same time (cf. ἀλλά, 13.43; ὥς, 13.81; τόφρα, 13.83; ὥς, 13.125), but Fenik is not attentive to the spatial movement of the actors and the verbal tenses.

and the allies. The lesser Ajax was apparently left to defend the center and deal with Hector's onslaught. Now Poseidon's first intervention involved the two Ajaxes, Αἴαντε, who are clearly not in the center opposite Hector, since the god explicitly tells them to go where rabid Hector rages; Ajax Minor, however, was last seen manning the center; not only that, but Teucer, who had previously joined his brother on the right, now shows up as one of the *kouroi neoi* (in fact, the first one named in the catalogue, 13.91) that Poseidon encounters when he joins those behind. The Analysts had fun with this apparent contradiction and concluded that the composer of Book 13 could not be the poet of the *Mauernkampf* of Book 12. The inconsistency cannot be denied, but it arises not from multiple authorship but, as Wackernagel realized long ago, from a misunderstanding of the dual form Αἴαντε that originally meant Telemonian Ajax and his brother, as it clearly does here.[77] Shortly, however, all three, the greater and the lesser Ajax and Teucer, will again be reunited as they make common cause against Hector.

The next sequence presents difficulties only if one does not pay attention to the verb tenses, or rather, their aspect, as the poet leads us briskly over the battlefield. To resume: while the two Ajaxes are engaged in a discussion (ἀγόρευον, imperfective, 13.81), concerning their suddenly renewed strength and eagerness for battle that Poseidon has inspired, meanwhile (τόφρα) the Earth-shaker roused (ὦρσεν, aorist, 13.83) those behind. A ring completes Poseidon's exhortation (see 13.125). It turns out then (ἄρ) that the two Ajaxes,[78] whom we left conversing to the right of the battlefield, have not been

[77] Cf. Wackernagel (1877); also Merkelbach (1960). There is no obvious reason why Oilean Ajax should be the first to see through Poseidon's disguise as the god departs; but it is intriguing that the word ἀρίγνωτος (13.72) used here recurs only at 15.490 in a context involving *Teucer*; and one might speculate that an archer would be especially sharp-sighted. It might be worth thinking about who misunderstood or reinterpreted Αἴαντε and tried to "fix" the text, by placing Teucer among the *kouroi neoi*. Can such a "correction" be attributed to an oral poet or does it require a written version? On this issue, see Nagy (2004) 164–70, who, arguing against Page (1959) 235–38 and the commentaries of both Kirk and Janko, considers the diachronic changes in the meaning of Αἴαντε a kind of paradigmatic example of his evolutionary model for Homeric poetry.

[78] If these are indeed Telemonian Ajax and his brother, then the Αἴαντας at 13.126 may well mean the two Ajaxes. At any rate, all three are together in the center by lines 13.170–205. Cf. 13.313.

idle in the meantime; not only have they proceeded to the central arena as they were instructed by the god, but we learn that two mighty phalanxes were in the process of taking up their positions (an over-translation of the imperfective ἵσταντο, 13.126) around them. These troops, as the poet informs us, neither Ares nor Athena would fault, if they came upon them, for they made an impressively tight formation as they remained waiting (ἔμιμνον, imperfective) for Hector and the Trojans. The Greeks stop the Trojan advance, and Hector is forced to retreat. As he does so, he shouts words of encouragement to the "Trojans, Lycians, and Dardanians." The reference to the force as a whole and to its three most important components has a cinematic effect, allowing us to envision the entire battlefield. Hector shouts διαπρύσιον (13.149)[79] so as to reach the whole army and instills (ὤτρυνε, 13.155, durative imperfect) a fighting spirit in each man.

From this generalized situation (13.156 refers to the whole force; cf. ἑκάστου, "each," 13.155), we now zoom in to focus on a particular individual ἐν τοῖσι ("among them," 13.156), Deiphobus, who, apparently inspired by his brother Hector, "made his stand thinking big thoughts."[80] Where is Deiphobus? In Book 12 he was a leader of one of the contingents that went to the left; later on, we will again find him on the left, hence we have every reason to expect that here also he is on the left.[81] A brief episode with Meriones that leads to the latter's loss of his spear will motivate the Cretan's meeting with Idomeneus later in the book; it also serves as a kind of anchor to which later action will return.[82] Finally, it suggests that the *kouroi neoi*, of which Meriones is a member (13.91–93), will all be found on the left of the battle – as indeed turns out to be the case. These warriors will face off against the three Trojan contingents also to be found on the

[79] διαπρύσιον is usually rendered as "piercing." But Hector's cry is not so much piercing as one that carries over a wide distance. At 8.227, standing on Odysseus' ship, Hera delivers an exhortation to the Greeks διαπρύσιον so that it reaches the outermost encampments of both Ajax and Achilles. There is no need to give the word a different sense at 17.748 as LSJ do.

[80] Willcock (1984) on 13.156–66 insists that "this encounter takes place somewhere near the centre," but ἐν τοῖσι need not refer to the forces near Hector. For βαίνω and the sense of the pluperfect here, see Létoublon (1985) 132–38.

[81] Cf. Janko (1992) 65. Cuillandre (1944) 46 also incorrectly believes Deiphobus is in the center at 13.156–66 but only later is found on the left.

[82] See below p. 72.

left – from, as usual, the perspective of the Greeks. The scene with the two Cretans opens up another arena of action that will become more important in the subsequent books: the Greek encampment along the shore by their ships. At the beginning of Book 14 we will find here Nestor and the other wounded Greek heroes (14.1–134); later also Patroclus tending the wounded Eurypylus (15.390–404). Finally, we shall see the whole battle playing out in the narrow space between the ships and the tents of the Greeks as they desperately defend themselves from the Trojan offensive that threatens to burn the ships and cut off all hope of escape.

A typical transition (οἱ δ' ἄλλοι μάρναντο ("The others were fighting," 13.169 = 13.540; note that μάρναμαι occurs only in the present and imperfect) transports us back to the center of the battlefield opposite Hector; Teucer, who is now where he belongs with the two Ajaxes along with Menestheus (who evidently joined them when they departed from "his" tower) is the first to kill a Trojan. Enraged by the death of his grandson Amphimachus at the hands of Hector, Poseidon continues (κήδε' ἔτευχεν, imperfect, 13.209) to cause trouble for the Trojans as he proceeds still to the left, along the camp and ships of the Greeks. In his final intervention in this book, the god, disguised as Thoas, one of the *kouroi neoi* (cf. 13.92), encounters Idomeneus going to his tent (which we know to be on the left).[83] Poseidon thus reverses the itinerary of Agamemnon in the *Epipolesis* of Book 4. Eager for action, the Cretan king arms and, still near his tent (13.246–47), meets his sidekick Meriones on his way to get another spear to replace the one lost in his recent duel with Deiphobus. After Idomeneus offers one of his own,[84] the two indulge in some friendly banter before considering where to enter the battle (13.308–309):

> ἢ ἐπὶ δεξιόφιν παντὸς στρατοῦ, ἢ ἀνὰ μέσσους,
> ἢ ἐπ' ἀριστερόφιν . . .
>
> Either on the right of the whole army or in the center,
> Or on the left . . .

[83] See above, p. 49.

[84] At 268 Meriones says that his camp is "not near," which has upset some critics. But it is quite reasonable to place the two leaders at either end of the Cretan contingent, which is the largest (eighty ships) after Agamemnon's.

This is the only instance where the right flank is explicitly mentioned, although Sarpedon's assault on the wall took place there. But otherwise, all is quiet on the right front, and one might well wonder why. The answer is not difficult: Achilles holds the right and has withdrawn from the fighting; hence there is little activity to report, despite the fact that the numerous contingents of Trojan allies are arrayed against him.[85] The center, as Idomeneus notes, is well defended, especially with the presence of Ajax, so they should enter on the left as quickly as possible where they can display their mettle.[86] The ensuing arena of combat will remain on the left until 13.676, when we finally shift back to the center.

The action is presented as an *aristeia* of Idomeneus followed by one of Menelaus. In addition to the focal figures, the actors here consist of the *kouroi neoi* (13.91–93) on the Greek side while the Trojans are represented by the three contingents enumerated at 12.93–100. As Idomeneus enters the fray, the Trojans all make a rush at him. A generalized description of the battle, including a simile of a dust storm, is followed by another one of those rare commentaries on the action (13.343–44):

> μάλα κεν θρασυκάρδιος εἴη
> ὅς τότε γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν πόνον οὐδ' ἀκάχοιτο.
>
> He would have to be bold-hearted indeed
> Who then would rejoice observing the toil and not be pained.

While previously it was Ares and Athena who would find no fault in the battle (13.127–28), here too we might posit a god who could find pleasure in watching the slaughter,[87] but we should also include the audience, who, through the poet's mediation, can share in that god-like pleasure. Cleverly, the next line takes us to the gods observing the action, Zeus and Poseidon, the former supporting the Trojans, while the latter encourages the Greeks. Adumbrated here, the divine conflict between these two brothers will move to the forefront in the next two books.[88]

[85] See Cuillandre (1944) 52–54.

[86] τάχιστα (13.326) may indicate that the left side they are entering on is closest.

[87] On the divine audience, see Griffin (1980) 179–204.

[88] Leaf (1900–2) censures 13.345–60: "There appears to be no other case of such lengthy and superfluous repetition in H[omer]." *De gustibus.*

When we return to Idomeneus, he has put the Trojans to flight until Asius, whom we last saw in Book 12 attacking the gate on the left, tries to defend a fallen comrade. In the meantime he has clearly succeeded in entering the gate with his chariot, since it remains just behind him; and as predicted earlier, Asius dies at the hands of Idomeneus (13.387–93, cf. 12.116–17). After a string of killings including the death of the Trojan Alcathous, the first member of the second contingent to be named, a duel between Idomeneus and Deiphobus appears imminent; the latter decides to seek help from Aeneas, the leader of the fourth contingent, whom he finds not participating in the fighting, but standing in the back of the army. Idomeneus, feeling his age as Aeneas bears down on him, calls on the *kouroi neoi* for aid. On the Trojan side, all three columns (led by Deiphobus, Aeneas, and Paris) are now integrated into the fighting, while Idomeneus is forced to withdraw. Meriones finally gets his revenge for his broken spear by wounding Deiphobus (and this time retrieving his spear!), and Helenus takes over as leader of column two, while Menelaus adopts Idomeneus' role and wounds Helenus. The lengthy sequence ends with a kill on the part of Paris, who (ironically?) avenges the death of a *xenos* of his by killing a Greek whose double fate (whether to die of a lingering illness at home or to perish at the hands of the Greeks) recalls that of Achilles (13.660–72).

On the left, then, the Greeks finally appear to have the better of it. The three Trojan columns, however, serve as structuring devices in shaping the course of the battle. First Idomeneus dominates the Greek side as he faces the Trojan's third column; the Cretan king kills one of the leaders of the second Trojan column Alcathous, which in turn brings the first Trojan contingent into the action when Deiphobus seeks aid from Aeneas. We can thus trace how the combat spreads to finally embrace all three Trojan units. Although Idomeneus is forced to retreat and the Greeks lose three of their *kouroi neoi*, on the Trojan side two of the leaders, Alcathous (column 2) and Asius (column 3) have been killed; in addition, the two remaining leaders of the third column have been wounded. This in fact leaves the third contingent without a leader. After a summarizing line that indicates ongoing combat in that sector ("So they fought like burning fire," ὣς οἳ μὲν μάρναντο δέμας πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο, 13.673, imperfect), we return to the center and to Hector (13.674–76):

Ἕκτωρ δ' οὐκ ἐπέπυστο Διῒ φίλος, οὐδέ τι ᾔδη
ὅττί ῥά οἱ νηῶν ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ δηϊόωντο
λαοὶ ὑπ' Ἀργείων.

But Hector, loved of Zeus, was unaware nor did he know
That in fact to the left of the ships his army was being destroyed
By the Argives.

Hector remains in the place we left him when he had broken through the wall, which at that point was lower, where the ships of Ajax Minor and Protesilaus were drawn up.[89] But has anything happened since? An unusual string of imperfects describing not only contingents of Boeotians, Athenians, and Locrians, but even the actions of the two Ajaxes serves to fill the time since we last saw Hector withdraw behind the corpses of two Trojans (13.193). But now the Trojans are on the point of being pushed back from the ships when Polydamas suggests a council of the *aristoi*. Unaware of what has been happening on the left flank (13.674–75, always with the Greek orientation), Hector now learns from Paris that many have been killed or wounded in the meantime. At this point, the Trojans regroup in the center as Hector faces Ajax, and the book ends with the Trojans advancing, while the Greeks remain standing firm (imperfect).[90]

We can now plot the action of Book 13 both spatially and temporally. Poseidon's interventions progress from right to left. First, he sends the Aiantes toward the center; then the god exhorts the *kouroi neoi*, whom we will later find on the left. Finally, Poseidon meets Idomeneus who with his henchman Meriones also enters the battle on the left. There they encounter the three contingents of Trojans enumerated at the beginning of Book 12. The confrontation begins with Deiphobus, one of the leaders of the third or, rather, central column in the original enumeration. In the course of the battle, the other two contingents gradually become absorbed into the fighting, first with Alcathous, then with Aeneas, and finally Paris. At the end, however, the generals of the third group have been either killed or wounded. It is apparent, furthermore, that the battles on the left and

[89] For the lower wall at the center, see Janko (1992): "Less bravery was needed at the centre than on the wings." For the position of the ships of the lesser Ajax, see Cuillandre (1944) 32–33. Cf. Scholium A (Aristonicus) at 13.681.

[90] See Fenik (1968) 152–58 for the unusual features at the end of the book.

the center are waged simultaneously, while the poet moves between them. When he returns to the previous arena, the intervening time is accounted for by a change in the situation. In other words, time does not stand still while the poet directs his attention elsewhere. The end of the book seems to indicate an end to the divided battlefield as the various Trojan forces are united into one under the leadership of Hector.

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that at least two components of Zielinski's "Law" are violated. For the whole narrative sequence in Books 12 and 13 is predicated on simultaneous action on two and sometimes three fronts, and the poet is at pains to show that the events are concurrent. In addition, when shifting from one arena of action to another and then finally returning to his point of departure, the poet demonstrates that the situation has progressed in the interval. There is no empty or dead period, but continuing activity in the background.[91]

BOOK 14

The end of Book 13 signaled the end of the divided battlefield as both the Trojan and Greek contingents regrouped around Hector and Ajax respectively. The spatial configuration of the narrative will henceforth depend less on the division into left, right, and center (although these will not be forgotten), but will continue to focus on the wall and trench as the great divide between the opposing forces from which the Trojans will be driven under Poseidon's influence in Book 14 but which they will retake on Zeus's reawakening in Book 15. If the previous two books plotted the battle with a view to the breadth of the front, the next two will concentrate on its depth always in relation to the wall as the constant marker of victory or defeat.

Not surprisingly, then, Book 14 opens with a scene that again draws our attention to the Achaean Wall, but from a temporal and visual angle very different from the divine perspective that inaugurated Book 12. We begin with an abrupt change of scene and an old crux.[92] Roused by the shouting of the troops, Nestor emerges from his tent where he had been tending the wounded Machaon since the end of

[91] See again Rengakos (1995). [92] See the persuasive discussion of Danek (1999).

Book 11. What the old man sees is an ἔργον ἀεικές ("an unseemly deed," 14.14–15):

> τοὺς μὲν ὀρινομένους, τοὺς δὲ κλονέοντας ὄπισθε,
> Τρῶας ὑπερθύμους· ἐρέριπτο δὲ τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν.
>
> Some were in disorderly motion, but others were pressing behind,
> The overbold Trojans, and the wall was gone.

I have tried to retain the word order in my translation since it seems to represent the order of Nestor's perceptions. First he perceives men in disorderly flight, then others bearing down on them from behind, who it turns out are the Trojans, and beyond them, the wall that has collapsed (note the pluperfect). But while the wall has been breached, it has by no means fallen. Nestor's catastrophic perception of the situation conveys his shock and horror. Shortly afterwards, he reiterates to the wounded chieftains the somewhat chaotic situation he has observed (14.55–60):

> τεῖχος μὲν γὰρ δὴ κατερήριπεν, ᾧ ἐπέπιθμεν
> ἄρρηκτον νηῶν τε καὶ αὐτῶν εἶλαρ ἔσεσθαι·
> οἳ δ' ἐπὶ νηυσὶ θοῇσι μάχην ἀλίαστον ἔχουσι
> νωλεμές· οὐδ' ἂν ἔτι γνοίης μάλα περ σκοπιάζων
> ὁπποτέρωθεν Ἀχαιοὶ ὀρινόμενοι κλονέονται,
> ὡς ἐπιμὶξ κτείνονται, ἀϋτὴ δ' οὐρανὸν ἵκει.
>
> For indeed the wall, in which we placed our trust, is gone,
> That was supposed to be unbreakable and a barrier for the ships and for us too,
> But they are battling ceaselessly by the swift ships,
> Without respite; nor could you still recognize, even if you observed carefully,
> From which direction the Achaeans rushing in disorder are being pressed;
> In such confusion are they being killed, and the shrieking has reached heaven.

Significantly, the order of the description is here reversed, and the situation of the Greeks appears even worse than before; but the fall of the wall is the main thing (note here again the perfect) in Nestor's mind; all else follows from that. The repetition conveys Nestor's alarm and gives his message its urgency.

The problems with this scene are both old and new. Ancient scholars were disturbed by Nestor's excessive drinking, which extends

from Book 11 through the following two books. Modern critics, however, are more concerned that the situation facing Nestor is at odds with the situation presented at the end of Book 13; rather, they argue, it would seem to be synchronous with the end of Book 12, when Hector breaks through the wall. But this would mean that the poet moves back in time, which would violate Zielinski's "Law." Moreover, the shout that inspires Nestor to leave his tent seems to be the shout of the armies at the end of Book 13.

Whitman and Scodel developed a most ingenious solution to this problem that took as its premise Zielinski's view that Homer represents simultaneous action as sequential. In the case of the Battle Books, they claim, concurrent actions are synchronized by a series of shouts. Thus the shout heard by Nestor at the opening of Book 14 would seem to be (Zielinski's *scheinbare Handlung*) the shout that brought the preceding book to a close (13.834). But in reality (Zielinski's *wirkliche Handlung*), it is the uninterrupted racket (ὅμαδος ἀλίαστος, 12.471) that follows Hector's breaching of the Achaean Wall. Furthermore, the great shout of Poseidon (14.147–51) that follows the council of the chiefs coincides with the great war cry (μεγάλος ἀλαλητός, 14.393–401) accompanying the charge of Greeks and Trojans under the leadership of Poseidon and Hector respectively. The *Dios apatē* must, in turn, be thought to transpire concurrently between the first and second shout (see below).[93] In fact, however, the opening scene as Nestor describes it could occur at any time after the breaching of the wall, for it is not a tactical description of any given moment in the narrative: the wall, after all, has not fallen,[94] but, as we saw at the beginning of our discussion, Homer builds the wall to make visible the fact that the Greeks are on the defensive. Nestor's alarming description conveys his shock at the defenselessness of the Greeks, who are now fighting near their ships

[93] Whitman and Scodel (1981); accepted by Janko (1992) 149–50; and S. Richardson (1990) 225. Cf. Stanley (1993) 154, who also detects "a poetic purpose, in which the rebellion of Hera and Poseidon is figured in the disruption of time... In this context, therefore, it is fitting that time should appear to run backward, in apparent defiance of natural experience and in an unparalleled extension of the poetic conventions described by Zielinski's 'law'." See again Rengakos, (1995) 25–28; on the "law of succession" that Homer never goes back through narrated time, see Nünlist (1998). I note in passing that there are many other shouts in these books; e.g. Hector's at 13.149–54 and one at 13.822.

[94] As the bT Scholia on 14.15 acknowledge.

rather than in front of the wall.[95] However, as the narrator tells us, the "real" situation is not quite as dire as it appears to Nestor (14.24–26):

οἳ δ' ἀλλήλους ἐνάριζον
μαρνάμενοι· λάκε δέ σφι περὶ χροῒ χαλκὸς ἀτειρὴς
νυσσομένων ξίφεσίν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύοισι.

But they were killing each other
As they were fighting. And the unwearying bronze about
their flesh rang out
As they were striking each other with spears and swords
double-edged.

This mutual engagement of Greeks and Trojans and the generalized slaughter (note the imperfects) reasonably follows upon the anticipated clash of the armies in 13.833–37.[96] There is then no compelling reason to situate the opening of Book 14 at an earlier time frame and even less reason for the poet to disguise a retrograde temporal movement if he wishes.[97] For just as he can point to future events within the narrative (the destruction of the wall being only the most striking example) and even to the present of his own speaking, he can also point to events prior to his narrative or *within* his narrative. After all, Zielinski's "Law" that the same time period cannot be traversed twice is violated at the very beginning of the poem when the poet asks the Muse to sing Achilles' wrath "from the time when first" Achilles and Agamemnon quarreled. The Muse actually begins earlier from Apollo's wrath, then moves back to the Chryses scene, then returns to Apollo's sending the plague until finally we come back to the quarrel of the two Greek leaders. Nor is there the slightest attempt to hide this backtracking. Moreover, as our examination of the Books 12 and 13 has repeatedly demonstrated, the poet is not only capable of depicting simultaneous activities on several fronts; indeed he seems to revel in such a challenging opportunity by showing off his narrative virtuosity while carefully distinguishing the different sectors through the use of both spatial and temporal deictic markers.

[95] Both Rengakos (1995) 27 and Danek (1999) recognize that lines 13–15 are Nestor's focalization of the scene and that it contrasts with the narrator's more balanced account of the military situation, in fact, the very situation that obtains at the end of Book 13.

[96] Latacz (1977) 193 cites 14.24–25 as a typical description of the hand-to-hand fighting (*Massennahkampf*) that follows the *Massenwurfkampf*.

[97] Danek (1999) still believes in this "Verbot" ("prohibition"), but see Nünlist (1998).

The beginning of Book 14 constitutes a brilliant solution to a narrative rather than a temporal problem. The previous book showed the Trojans bested on the left flank and not making much progress at the center. Yet the Greeks' situation must be dire enough to allow Agamemnon to make his reckless suggestion of flight and to have it roundly rejected (14.64–132). The king's defeatism, which we have seen twice before, once as a pretense in the test of the army in Book 2 and for real at the beginning of Book 9, occurs here a third time (three times is the charm in Homer); but this time it is motivated by Nestor's catastrophic perception, or focalization, of the army's situation. In Book 2 Odysseus and Nestor finally halt the headlong flight of the Greeks to their ships; in Book 9 Nestor himself had handled Agamemnon's despondency with great tact, protecting the king's authority; here, on the other hand, Agamemnon is told off in very blunt terms by Odysseus.

Both Agamemnon's aborted escape plan to drag the ships to the shore and then to launch them at night and the description of the deployment of the ships on the shore only a few lines earlier (14.30–36) set the stage for the battle by the ships that will occupy the next book. They are arranged in rows with the ones drawn farthest inland nearest the ramparts while the tents of the Greeks are set along the shore.[98] At this moment, the fighting is still far off (14.30), again contradicting Nestor's alarm; soon, however, not only the ships but also the encampment itself will be threatened. While, as we have seen, Homer's topography is generally consistent, distances can be quite elastic, depending on how much space he needs for his action. In particular, the area between the Achaean Wall and the ships expands and contracts at will and according to narrative requirements.[99]

The rest of Book 14 is mainly taken up with the *Dios apatē*. It is surely otiose to calculate how much time it takes Hera to seduce her husband or the duration of Zeus's post-coital nap, or indeed how that time is filled on the battlefield. But if we should worry about such matters, we might note how the episode begins (14.153–58):

[98] See Janko (1992) on 14.31–32. For the narrator, the πρῶται νῆες are always the farthest inland (cf. 15.654–56), but Agamemnon refers to the ones nearest the shore (14.75) when he is planning the Greeks' getaway.

[99] On elastic landscapes, see below, p. 102.

Ἥρη δ' εἰσεῖδε χρυσόθρονος ὀφθαλμοῖσι
στᾶσ' ἐξ Οὐλύμποιο ἀπὸ ῥίου· αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω
τὸν μὲν ποιπνύοντα μάχην ἀνὰ κυδιάνειραν
αὐτοκασίγνητον καὶ δαέρα, χαῖρε δὲ θυμῷ·
Ζῆνα δ' ἐπ' ἀκροτάτης κορυφῆς πολυπίδακος Ἴδης
ἥμενον εἰσεῖδε, στυγερὸς δέ οἱ ἔπλετο θυμῷ.

Hera of the golden throne observed with her eyes
As she stood on the tip of Olympus; and straightway she recognized
The one [Poseidon] busying himself throughout the battle where men win glory
Her very own brother and brother-in-law, and she rejoiced in her heart;
But she observed Zeus sitting on the topmost peak of Ida with its many springs,
And loathing filled her heart.

Since Poseidon has been encouraging the Greeks from the beginning of Book 13, Hera's observation could have taken place any time in the interval. The problem only arises if we insist *a priori* that Homer cannot or will not go back in time. One thing, however, is clear: Poseidon's intervention after Zeus has been lulled to sleep is no longer *lathra*, in secret, as he openly leads the attack on the Trojans (14.361–77). Under the guidance of the god, Hector is quickly put out of commission by Ajax and is evacuated unconscious behind the lines to the Scamander (14.409–39). At the close of the book an evenly balanced series of slaughters ends with the Greeks gaining the upper hand and putting the Trojans to flight.

As we have seen, the conclusion of Book 13 brought an end to the divided battlefield; henceforth, combat will be played out not over multiple arenas; rather it will be spatially defined largely by the alternating movement of the battle lines between the ships of the Greeks and the walls of Troy with the Achaean Wall and trench and the Scamander River offering additional coordinates.

BOOK 15

In Book 15 the Greek wall continues to be a salient line of demarcation, but most of the action takes place between the wall and the ships. The book opens with Zeus's awakening and observing the Trojans scrambling over the ditch with the Greeks, inspired by Poseidon,

in hot pursuit and Hector lying unconscious on the plain. Quickly, the situation is reversed; Poseidon is sidelined, Apollo revives Hector, advising the Trojan to gather up his horsemen. His sudden reappearance causes panic among the Greeks, but Thoas proposes a tactical retreat to the ships by the "many," while the "best" will attempt to stop Hector (15.271–305). Apollo, with Hector in tow, sows fear among the Greeks, who are being slaughtered and are finally forced back across both ditch and wall. As Hector drives forward, Apollo easily bridges a path over the trench, and he kicks down the wall as easily as a child destroys a sand castle, "and the Trojans kept pouring over (προχέοντο, imperfect, 15.360, cf. 354, 357) the wall in droves." This breakthrough of the Trojans differs from the earlier one in one important respect: whereas before they fought on foot, they now – thanks to Apollo's helpful intervention – make their way through the ditch and ramparts with their horses and chariots. As a result, they quickly reach the Achaean ships. We have seen how the poet has frequently drawn attention to the different tactics employed in Hector's taking of the wall in Books 12 and 15.[100]

Lines 367–405 have been thought an interpolation on the grounds that the Trojans seem to cross the wall twice (15.360 and 384) and the Greeks already seem to be fighting from the ships hand to hand with the Trojans, which only occurs later.[101] But I believe that we have a change of scene here to a place behind the lines to which the bulk of the Greek forces retreated earlier. Meanwhile (ὣς οἳ μέν, 367), the Greeks who were waiting by the ships, that is, not fighting, were arraying themselves (ἐρητύοντο, imperfect, 367) and calling upon the gods. The anguished prayer of Nestor, who must also be situated in the rear, is answered by a thunderbolt from Zeus that the Trojans, for their part (Τρῶες δ', 15.379), take as a positive omen for themselves. The Trojans then surge forward over the wall like a great

[100] I am thinking of Asius' ill-starred attempt and the strategic discussion of Hector and Polydamas in Book 12. Whitman and Scodel (1981) 10 accuse Homer of nodding in his treatment of the wall: "yet the nod is easier to understand if he regarded the two crossings of the wall as one." They also argue that "The second time Apollo effectively destroys the wall, for the poet has no further use for it." Apollo's actions do not destroy the entire wall; it will play an important role in Book 24. He creates a causeway over the trench and a breach in the wall wide enough to accommodate chariots. Mannsperger (1995) emphasizes the importance of the trench as the means by which the Greeks keep the Trojan cavalry from making their way into the Greek camp.

[101] See Cauer (1914) 65–68.

wave striking a storm-tossed ship broadside (15.381–84).[102] As Janko notes: "This fine simile marks the climax of the Trojan onslaught and advances the narrative from the rampart to the ships." The imperfects, ἔβαινον and μάχοντο (384–85), summarize the ongoing fighting, the Trojans from their chariots, the Greeks from the ships. Meanwhile, the poet turns to Patroclus, also in the rear, who was tending Eurypylus as long as the Greeks, and Trojans were fighting around the wall away from the ships (15.390–92).[103] As soon as he runs off to Achilles' encampment, we return to the Greeks now massed by the ships who await the Trojan offensive. After a considerable interval of indecisive fighting (ἐπὶ ἶσα μάχῃ, 15.413) along various points around the ships (ἄλλοι δ' ἀμφ' ἄλληισι μάχην ἐμάχοντο νέεσσιν, 15.414), first described in general terms (15.405–14) and then filled out with individual encounters that focus mainly on the confrontation between Hector and Ajax (15.415–591), the Greeks are forced to retreat. Hector, propelled forward by Zeus, drives the Greeks into an ever more constricted area in front of the ships that the Trojan threatens to burn. The closer quarters are indicated by Teucer's abandoning his broken bow and taking up the spear. Latacz suggests that thereafter, the Trojans are at least momentarily forced back, which allows the Greeks to regroup and create a fence with their shields in front of the ships (15.566–67).[104] Resisting Hector's onslaught, the Greeks are likened to a stone cliff, battered by winds and waves (15.618–22), while Hector himself, "bright with fire," is likened to a wave swamping a ship and driving fear into the hearts of its crew (15.624–28). This inversion of land and sea depicts the plight of the Greeks, caught now between the twin threats of fire and water. Thereafter, the battlefield is relentlessly compressed as the Greeks retreat even further behind the

[102] For an analysis of the whole sequence 15.384–545 as a *Massennahkampf*, see Latacz (1977) 208–10.

[103] For Whitman and Scodel (1981) 9, the shout Patroclus hears at 15.384 is the same as the one at 14.393–401: "On the surface, it must be the second taking of the wall which he notices, but it is not a problem that he has failed to notice the first, for the two are essentially the same." (Note that the shouting in Book 14 has nothing to do with the taking of the wall, neither the first nor the second time.) But what rouses Patroclus to action is neither a shout nor the crossing of the wall or the fight "for the wall" (cf. Janko [1992]), but the fact that the fighting is no longer ἔκτοθι νηῶν (15.391). Now the battle is fought out by the ships themselves. Again, I note other shouts in the vicinity at 15.312 and 354–55. Apparently, Homeric armies rarely advance without a lot of noise; exception: 4.429–31.

[104] Latacz (1977) 208.

first line of ships by their encampment (15.653–56; cf. 650–52, where the Greeks are unable to rescue a fallen warrior ἐγγὺς ἑταίρων, killed by Hector). In an ironic reversal, they are presented as the besieged rather than the besiegers.[105] Inverting Hector's previous exhortation on behalf of the Trojan wives and children (15.497–99), Nestor's desperate appeal invokes the wives and children of the Greeks far away (οὐ παρεόντων), as if the Argives were fighting to protect their homes and families (15.659–66); and with his enormous pike meant for naval warfare, Ajax, the defensive warrior *par excellence*, scorning the withdrawal of his cohorts, leaps from one ship to another like a circus rider jumping from one horse to another. But soon, in a generalizing description, the fighting around the ship of Protesilaus, which had been the first to come ashore and had been drawn farthest up the beach, becomes hand to hand (15.707–12):

τοῦ περ δὴ περὶ νηὸς Ἀχαιοί τε Τρῶές τε
δῄουν ἀλλήλους αὐτοσχεδόν· οὐδ' ἄρα τοί γε
τόξων ἀϊκὰς ἀμφὶς μένον οὐδ' ἔτ' ἀκόντων,
ἀλλ' οἵ γ' ἐγγύθεν ἱστάμενοι, ἕνα θυμὸν ἔχοντες,
ὀξέσι δὴ πελέκεσσι καὶ, ἀξίνῃσι μάχοντο
καὶ ξίφεσιν μεγάλοισι καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύοισι.

Around his ship both the Achaeans and Trojans
Slaughtered each other hand to hand; nor indeed did they
Await the rush of bows and javelins from a distance,
But standing near each other, with one spirit,
They were fighting with sharp axes and hatchets
Great swords and double-edged lances.

When even Ajax finally retreats, if only a little, from the stern to midships, he pointedly reminds his men that they can expect neither a wall to protect them nor reinforcements "for there is no city nearby fitted with towers" (15.736–37) to which they can withdraw. Significantly, in the hand-to-hand fighting that closes the book, Ajax no longer fights with a pike, but at closer quarters with his spear.

Hemmed in by the sea and the Trojan advance, the space remaining to the Greeks is so reduced that it constitutes no more than the original bridgehead when they made their landing in hostile territory ten years before. Two passages alluding to the very beginning of

[105] See again Morrison (1994).

the war connect the present dire straits of the Greeks with that earlier moment. First, the references to the ship of Protesilaus, who traditionally was the first of the Greeks to disembark on the beach of Troy. Second and more interesting are Hector's enigmatic lines as he urges on his men (15.718–25):[106]

οἴσετε πῦρ, ἅμα δ' αὐτοὶ ἀολλέες ὄρνυτ' ἀϋτήν·
νῦν ἡμῖν πάντων Ζεὺς ἄξιον ἦμαρ ἔδωκε
νῆας ἑλεῖν, αἳ δεῦρο θεῶν ἀέκητι μολοῦσαι
ἡμῖν πήματα πολλὰ θέσαν, κακότητι γερόντων,
οἵ μ' ἐθέλοντα μάχεσθαι ἐπὶ πρυμνῇσι νέεσσιν
αὐτόν τ' ἴσχανάασκον ἐρητύοντό τε λαόν·
ἀλλ' εἰ δή ῥα τότε βλάπτε φρένας εὐρύοπα Ζεὺς
ἡμετέρας, νῦν αὐτὸς ἐποτρύνει καὶ ἀνώγει.

Bring fire, and at the same time all together raise up the battle cry;
Now Zeus has granted to us a day worthy of all the rest
For capturing the ships, which coming hither against the will of the gods,
Gave us many griefs, through the cowardice of the elders,
Who, while I wanted to fight by the sterns of the ships,
Insisted on holding me back and restrained the army.
But if indeed then wide-seeing Zeus confused our minds,
Now he himself rouses and urges us on.

Here Hector apparently refers to the very beginning of the war when the Greek armada had just arrived at Troy; although Priam and the other *gerontes* counseled restraint and perhaps withdrawal into the walls of Troy, Hector claims that he and the rest of the army preferred more offensive tactics. The Trojan prince indicts the elders for their cowardice and by implication blames them for the nine-year siege and its concomitant sufferings. But on this "day worthy of all the rest," the Greeks are reduced to their initial situation; this time, the deluded Hector boasts that, with Zeus's help, they will be driven off. But the fateful παλίωξις παρὰ νηῶν ("retreat from the ships"), of which Polydamas warned at 12.71 and that Zeus has just confirmed (15.601), will soon begin.

The spatial dimensions of Book 15 are straightforward and easy to plot; each phase in the Greek rout is clearly demarcated. It begins with the Trojans in retreat fleeing over the wall, then a short interval

[106] Janko (1992) takes Hector's speech as a sign of his delusion. But the specificity of his charge against the elders makes one wonder. Willcock (1977) 48 considers it an ad hoc invention.

on the plain until the Greeks in turn are forced back across the wall where the battle continues (15.281–345), first just inside the wall in front of the ships, until the Trojan attack pushes them back toward the ships. The Greeks then take their positions behind the first ranks of ships until they are hemmed in between the ships and the camp (15.385–652) and finally pinned down within a narrow space with their backs toward the beach (15.652–715). Finally, Hector grabs hold of one of the ships, and even Ajax is forced to retreat (15.716–46). As an admirer of this book characterized it:

> This piece is a unified whole, ἔχον ἀρχὴν καὶ μέσον καὶ τελευτήν; but also a whole in this respect, that throughout the same spirit reigns that understands how to envision a coherent military action and on that basis how to describe it so that his audience can see it.[107]

BOOK 16

I would now like to turn to Books 16 and 17, which present a rather different set of issues. Unlike Books 12 and 13, they do not have multiple and simultaneous sectors of activity, nor do they focus on an increasingly confined arena of combat that defined the spatial character of Book 15. Rather, each of the following books has a clear and single focus: first, the *aristeia* of Patroclus and, subsequently, the battle over his corpse. But here too, I will argue, the text gives us sufficient verbal cues to suggest that not only did the poet himself have a clear image of the proceedings in his mind's eye, but he allowed his audience to share in his visualization. But before proceeding, let me again stress that I am making no claims about military tactics or historical verisimilitude; I emphasize only the vividness and coherence of the narrative in its spatial dimensions.

The build-up to Patroclus' *aristeia* already begins in Book 11, but only in Book 16 does he become the focus of the action on the battlefield, whose progress we can trace. Again, concentrating on the spatial configuration of Patroclus' movements reveals certain significant elements in the narrative. We begin from the sudden epiphany of Patroclus and his Myrmidons on the field of battle, which causes fear but not immediate flight in the Trojans (16.278–83). Patroclus moves

[107] Cauer (1914) 74 (translation mine).

ἀντικρὺ κατὰ μέσσον (16.285–86) by the ship of Protesilaus, into the thick of things, that is, from the right flank, the site of Achilles' camp, to the center, and makes his first kill, the leader of the Paeonians. He then drives the Trojans back and puts out the fire of Protesilaus' half-burnt ship, where previously Ajax and Hector had fought. Nevertheless, the Trojans, while withdrawing from the ships, are not yet routed (imperfect).[108] Thereupon each of the Greek "leaders" (*hegemones*) makes a kill: first, Patroclus again, then in order: Menelaus, Antilochus and Thrasymedes, who kill two brothers, Lesser Ajax, Peneleos, Meriones, and, as expected, Idomeneus. The ring closes with (16.351):

> οὕτοι ἄρ' ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν ἕλον ἄνδρα ἕκαστος.
>
> Thus indeed each of the leaders of the Danaans took his man.

At this point, the Trojans do take flight. In the meantime, as the imperfects indicate, Ajax has been pursuing Hector although Hector remained standing firm for the sake of his companions (16.358–63); but at a certain point, the rout of the Trojans becomes complete: Hector rides off, while his army is held back by the ditch where their horses and chariots are befouled in the crush. Patroclus drives across the ditch with the immortal horses "whom the gods gave to Peleus as splendid gifts" (16.381) in hot pursuit of Hector, who, however, manages to escape the melee.[109] Throughout this sequence (16.364–93) the focus alternates between the Trojans' increasingly desperate entanglement in the fosse, Hector's flight, and Patroclus' pursuit.[110]

What happens next is critical to our understanding of the *Patrocleia*: Patroclus does not continue his pursuit of Hector as the Trojan prince flees toward Troy (the flight marked by the famous "Hesiodic" simile, 16.384–93), but he turns back toward the ships, cutting off the remaining Trojans who are still in flight (16.394–98):

[108] Fenik (1968) 193–94 sees a contradiction between 16.301–305 and what precedes, which is paralleled by 16.356 and 362–63.

[109] Mannsperger (1995) 348 notes that only Patroclus' (i.e. Achilles' immortal) horses are capable of leaping over the trench.

[110] Cf. Janko (1992), who calls the sequence "a neat ring," which it is on the page, but I believe it would be experienced by an audience as a vivid alternation between the individuals and the masses.

Πάτροκλος δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν πρώτας ἐπέκερσε φάλαγγας,
ἂψ ἐπὶ νῆας ἔεργε παλιμπετές, οὐδὲ πόληος
εἴα ἰεμένους ἐπιβαινέμεν, ἀλλὰ μεσηγὺ
νηῶν καὶ ποταμοῦ καὶ τείχεος ὑψηλοῖο[111]
κτεῖνε μεταΐσσων.

Now when Patroclus had cut off the first ranks,
And pinned them back toward the ships whence they came,
Nor did he allow them to make for the city as they desired, but between
The ships and the river and the high wall
He kept killing them as he darted after them.

At this moment, then, Patroclus is still following the orders given to him by Achilles when he sent his friend out to "drive the Trojans from the ships and then return" (ἐκ νηῶν ἐλάσας ἰέναι πάλιν, 16.87):

μηδ' ἐπαγαλλόμενος πολέμῳ καὶ δηϊοτῆτι,
Τρῶας ἐναιρόμενος, προτὶ Ἴλιον ἡγεμονεύειν,
μή τις ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεῶν αἰειγενετάων
ἐμβήῃ· μάλα τούς γε φιλεῖ ἑκάεργος Ἀπόλλων·
ἀλλὰ πάλιν τρωπᾶσθαι, ἐπὴν φάος ἐν νήεσσι
θήῃς, τοὺς δ' ἔτ' ἐᾶν πεδίον κάτα δηριάασθαι.

Nor exalting in war and combat,
While slaughtering Trojans, press on towards Ilium,
Lest some one of the eternal gods from Olympus
Attack you; for far-shooting Apollo loves them dearly;
But turn back when you bring salvation to the ships,
And leave them still struggling on the plain.
(16.91–96)

At this point, then, while continuing his massacre of Trojans, Patroclus appears to be making his way back to Achilles' encampment, that is, toward the right flank of the Greek encampment. Now Sarpedon, whom we left on the right[112] and who I assume is still there with his Lycians, catches sight of Patroclus (16.419–25). Their duel, also on the right, punctuated by the agonized resignation of Zeus at the loss of his son, ends with Sarpedon's death (16.426–507). Miraculously healed

[111] This wall must be the fortifications of Troy, as Janko (1992) notes, and not the Achaean rampart, as Cuillandre (1944) 61 believes, which wrongly leads him to place Patroclus on the left of the Greek camp.

[112] Sarpedon has not been heard from since Book 12 except for a brief appearance in Book 14 where he, along with the other Trojan *aristoi*, protected the wounded Hector (14.426).

from his earlier wounding, Glaucus, his second in command, now seeks reinforcements from Hector and the Trojans in the center,[113] and together they return to the site of Sarpedon's corpse (16.508–53). Patroclus, for his part, also gets help from the two Ajaxes and later Meriones, although they contribute little in the sequel. Each side now takes up positions at the site of Sarpedon's body, where they alternately have the upper hand, until finally Zeus decides to allow Patroclus to drive the Trojans back to the city and kill many. Thereupon, the god strikes terror first in Hector and then in the assembled Trojans and Lycians, which allows the Greeks to strip the armor from Sarpedon, after which Apollo spirits the body off to Lycia.

Meanwhile, Patroclus, now back on his chariot, pursues the Trojans.[114] This, the poet tells us is the critical moment when he ignores the warnings of Achilles that he seemed to heed earlier (16.684–88):[115]

Πάτροκλος δ' ἵπποισι καὶ Αὐτομέδοντι κελεύσας
Τρῶας καὶ Λυκίους μετεκίαθε, καὶ μέγ' ἀάσθη
νήπιος· εἰ δὲ ἔπος Πηληϊάδαο φύλαξεν,
ἦ τ' ἂν ὑπέκφυγε κῆρα κακὴν μέλανος θανάτοιο.
ἀλλ' αἰεί τε Διὸς κρείσσων νόος ἠέ περ ἀνδρῶν.

Giving orders to his horses and Automedon,
He pursued the Trojans and Lycians, and fell into great *atē*
(Poor fool!) – but if he had remembered the advice of the son of Peleus,
He would have escaped his evil fate of black death.
But the intent of Zeus is always stronger than that of men.

After killing nine Trojans in rapid succession, Patroclus attacks the walls of Troy three times and on the fourth retreats. Roused by Apollo, Hector, watching from the Scaean Gate, goes after Patroclus. Finally face to face, Patroclus misses Hector but kills Cebriones, whereupon a great battle ensues over the latter's corpse, until the sun begins to set. Again Patroclus attacks the Trojans three times, but on the fourth is struck by Apollo, then Euphorbus, and finally Hector. The book closes with Hector charging after Automedon, who flees with his chariot and the immortal horses of Achilles.

[113] The four Trojans listed are the remaining leaders enumerated in Book 12.

[114] Fenik (1968) 38 mentions 16.663–84 as another example of simultaneous action.

[115] See Reinhardt (1961) 345–48.

To summarize: Patroclus' fateful *aristeia* can be plotted onto the plain of Troy as a zigzagging path. Patroclus first advances from the right to the center and then drives the Trojans away from the ships and beyond the ditch; at that point, he turns back, presumably in the direction of Achilles' encampment, toward the right. There he encounters Sarpedon, who had been holding the right wing (always from the Greek perspective) with his Lycians; after Sarpedon is killed, his men seek reinforcements from the center, after which all return to the site of Sarpedon's body, again on the right. Only now does Patroclus charge after the Trojans as they flee, presumably again toward the center, and attacks the city. Driven back by Apollo, he is killed somewhere in the center of the Trojan plain. Thus, Patroclus' itinerary on the battlefield at first corresponds to the instructions and warnings given him by Achilles at the beginning of the book, as he loops his way back to his starting point. After his fateful killing of Sarpedon and flushed with that victory, Patroclus fatally changes course and makes for the walls of Troy. In addition, his path is in harmony with the deployment of the Greek and Trojan forces implied elsewhere in the poem. In mapping Patroclus' route over the Trojan plain, we thus become aware of the crucial role of the Sarpedon episode. The encounter with Sarpedon constitutes not only the dramatic high point and fulcrum of Patroclus' *aristeia*; spatially, it also marks the crossroad and momentous turning point in the fateful path to the Greek hero's death.

BOOK 17

Book 17 presents the protracted battle over the corpse of Patroclus. At first glance it seems to describe a jumble of toings and froings as the Trojans try to capture the body of the fallen hero, while the Greeks for their part fight fiercely to defend it. Yet again it can be shown that the apparently random sequence of confrontations is carefully orchestrated and planned according to recognizable spatial coordinates.

Unlike Book 16, the spatial organization of Book 17 cannot be visualized as a path taken by one of the characters; rather it resembles a central point with various centrifugal and centripetal trajectories surrounding it. The immobile position in the middle is occupied by

the body of the fallen Patroclus. I also note that the names of the Greek *hegemones* listed in 16.311–51 at the very beginning of Patroclus' *aristeia* reappear here.[116] Their cataloguing there seems to prepare for their involvement here, much as the listing of the Trojan leaders at the beginning of Book 12 prepared for and organized their role in Book 13 and beyond.

We begin with Menelaus taking his stand (note the imperfects, 17.4, 6, 7) to defend Patroclus' corpse. Euphorbus is the first to attempt to strip the body but is killed by Menelaus. When, in turn, the latter tries to strip a fallen enemy, Hector, whom we last saw chasing after Achilles' horses (16.864–68),[117] is warned by Apollo that he cannot tame them, but that he should instead avenge the killing of Euphorbus. This is only the first of the Trojan prince's many "loops" around Patroclus. With Hector and his troops bearing down on him, Menelaus slowly withdraws and then searches for Ajax, whom he finds μάχης ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ πάσης (17.116). We have already observed how the poet keeps characters waiting on the left wing until they are needed (11.524, cf. 5.35–36, 355, where Athena similarly puts Ares in temporary storage). The two now return to Patroclus, where Hector has already stripped his armor and is attempting to cut off his head (imperfect). Ajax's arrival, however, forces Hector to withdraw, and, mounting his chariot, he hands over the armor to be taken back to the city. This second loop on the part of the Trojan prince begins not with Apollo but Glaucus (17.140–68) remonstrating with Hector to return to face Ajax. If, as it is fair to assume, the allies of the Trojans have continued to man the right, then Hector's retreat to the right to get reinforcements balances Menelaus' earlier loop to the left to enlist Ajax for the same purpose (17.89–124). After rousing his troops, Hector runs after the chariot and in a fateful gesture dons

[116] Perhaps this is what Beye (1964) 363 means when he claims that "[w]henever he [the bard] could, he seems to have introduced groups of names in order to rehearse them for himself so that he would be better able to formulate them in the more expanded Battle lists." While calling this "a rather definite mnemonic device," Beye gives no further examples. For Homeric mnemonics, see below, p. 113. Note that this is one of several overlapping groups of seven Greek warriors including the guards stationed at 9.81–84 and the *kouroi neoi* at 13.91–93, whom Poseidon encourages. Researchers on memory have found that the human mind can comfortably retain seven (plus or minus two) items. See Miller (1956) and Baddeley (1994).

[117] We are told that the horses "carried" Automedon, their charioteer, "out of the battle" (16.866), i.e. toward the Greek ships, as is borne out at 17.432–33.

Achilles' armor. As Hector, now with both the Trojans and the allies as reinforcements,[118] bears down on the two defenders of Patroclus' body, Ajax suggests they had better call for help from the ἀριστῆας Δαναῶν. The lesser Ajax, Meriones, Idomeneus, who will play a critical role in the subsequent fighting, as well as unnamed others rush up to help, balancing the fresh Trojan troops. First the Trojans drive the Greeks from the body; then the Greeks counterattack under the leadership of Ajax. The sequence here (17.274–318) offers a nice example of Latacz's *Selektionstechnik*; for the general description (17.274–87) is subsequently elaborated in a more detailed one (17.288–318) in which one Greek and two Trojans are killed. Note, however, the use of aorists and not the imperfects employed in the scene-switching technique discussed above. And, yes, Zielinski's "Law" is clearly violated since the same time period is described twice.

At any rate, a near rout of the Trojans, who are almost driven back to the city, is prevented by Aeneas, who likewise inspired by Apollo again berates Hector. Now whirling back a third time, the Trojans counterattack under Hector's command. General slaughter ensues in the imperfect (17.354–65) with the whole scene summed up by a variant of the common transition formula ("So they fought in the semblance of fire," 17.366) and an overview of the entire battlefield. But here it is punctuated by one of those addresses to a potential participant that contrasts the dark mist and intensity of the battle in the center (ἐν μέσῳ) with the ease of the fighting elsewhere in the sunlight (17.366–77):

> ὣς οἳ μὲν μάρναντο δέμας πυρός, οὐδέ κε φαίης
> οὔτε ποτ' ἠέλιον σῶν ἔμμεναι οὔτε σελήνην·
> ἠέρι γὰρ κατέχοντο μάχης ἐπί, ὅσσοι ἄριστοι[119]
> ἕστασαν ἀμφὶ Μενοιτιάδῃ κατατεθνηῶτι.
> οἳ δ' ἄλλοι Τρῶες καὶ ἐϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοὶ
> εὐκηλοι πολέμιζον ὑπ' αἰθέρι, πέπτατο δ' αὐγὴ
> ἠελίου ὀξεῖα, νέφος δ' οὐ φαίνετο πάσης
> γαίης οὐδ' ὀρέων· μεταπαυόμενοι δὲ μάχοντο,
> ἀλλήλων ἀλεείνοντες βέλεα στονόεντα,
> πολλὸν ἀφεσταότες. τοὶ δ' ἐν μέσῳ ἄλγε' ἔπασχον
> ἠέρι καὶ πολέμῳ, τείροντο δὲ νηλέϊ χαλκῷ
> ὅσσοι ἄριστοι ἔσαν . . .

[118] Cf. Edwards (1991) on lines 17.215–18.

[119] For this line, see Edwards (1991).

So they fought in the likeness of fire, nor would you have thought
That either the sun or the moon remained steady:
For they were enclosed in mist in the battle, all the best
Who made their stand around the dead Patroclus.
But the rest of the Trojans and well-greaved Achaeans
Fought at their ease under a clear sky and the sharp beams of
The sun were spread about them, and no cloud appeared from the
Whole earth and mountains; but they fought intermittently with periods of rest,
Avoiding the painful missiles,
Standing at a great distance from each other. But the ones at the center suffered woes,
From the mist and the battle, and they were worn down by the pitiless bronze,
Those that is who were the best . . .

As often, such a generalized description prepares for a transition to another part of the battlefield. Here we learn that the sons of Nestor, Antilochus and Thrasymedes, fighting on the left, were unaware of Patroclus' death (17.377–83). This little scene resembles the "anchoring" technique used in Book 13, for it places the Neleids on the left, whence Antilochos will later be summoned.[120]

Up to now in Book 17 (and as will generally remain the case throughout), we have followed Homer's characters as they move around the battlefield.[121] On this occasion, however, it is not a character, but the narrator who loops away from and then back to the center. His address to an imagined participant inserted into the action (οὐδέ κε φαίης, 17.366) has drawn attention to the poet's presence and prepared for his intervention. In Book 12 (176) he had lamented the difficulty of recounting the combat at the various gates and, in fact, revealed his skillfulness; here too he makes clear the audience's dependence upon him: only he can penetrate the darkness at the center of the battlefield and make it visible to us. There, as we return, the battle continues to rage indecisively around the corpse (note the imperfects) and, in a marvelous, but somewhat gruesome, transitional simile, is likened to men circling and stretching an oiled ox hide (17.384–401).

[120] See above, p. 71.

[121] This does not mean that the narrator does not skip around to different parts of the battlefield; but in this book in particular, he will then follow his characters either away from or toward the center.

Now, having looped to the left, the narrator loops to the right of the central action where Achilles, like Nestor's sons, remains unaware of Patroclus' death. Back again to the center, with iteratives (17.414, 420, 423), until, picking up from Hector's aborted pursuit of Achilles' horses (16.864–68 and 17.75–81), the scene shifts to their charioteer Automedon located somewhere between the ships and the battlefield (17.432–33). Apparently, the immortal steeds have remained immobile (note the imperfects, 432, 436, 438, 439) during most of the book, until Zeus's intervention finally gets them moving again. Automedon then loops back into the thick of battle where the infinitely distractible Hector, along with Aeneas, once again pursues Achilles' charioteer and his horses, until the Trojans are forced to withdraw by the two Ajaxes; meanwhile Automedon departs, having made a kill (17.458–542).

Nevertheless, the battle over the corpse continues unrelentingly while in carefully balanced scenes Athena encourages Menelaus, and Apollo spurs on Hector; finally, Zeus grants victory to the Trojans, sending Idomeneus hurtling back toward the ships.[122] Ajax suggests that someone should bring the news of Patroclus' death to Achilles, but because of the darkness Zeus has spread over the battlefield, he cannot find anyone for the task. Responding to Ajax's laconic prayer, Zeus scatters the mist; Menelaus seeks out Antilochus, whom he finds, as expected "on the left of the whole battle," and dispatches him to report the news of Patroclus' death to Achilles. Meanwhile, in the last loop, Menelaus first returns to his post, and finally, while the Ajaxes guard his rear, he, along with Meriones, manages to rescue the body of Patroclus to the accompaniment of a flurry of similes. Patroclus, now a corpse, will shortly return to the place whence he set forth two books earlier. The great loop extending from Patroclus' sallying forth in Book 16 now closes as he begins his journey back to the tent of Achilles. The book ends with the Greeks in flight, their armor falling round about the ditch (17.543–761).

The spatial schema of this book contrasts nicely with the previous one. Here, on the battlefield, the focus never departs from Patroclus who, like an unmoved mover, is both the cause and origin of all the activity around him. Each incident revolves, departs, and returns

[122] Willcock (1987) has some interesting things to say about this section of the book.

to that central point. The spatial as well as conceptual anchoring of the action on this focal point, the way each incident throughout the greatly drawn out, but largely indecisive, fighting emanates and returns to this fixed point whence it derives its meaning, prevents the narrative from representing a random number of individual but unconnected actions. Thus the centrality of Patroclus' corpse at the very axis of the battlefield focuses both the poet's narrative and the audience's comprehension.

But more can be said about the arrangement of the action. Scholars have frequently drawn attention to certain verbal and thematic repetitions and patterns of ring composition within this book.[123] The above analysis has revealed an additional organizational component, a spatial one, with fixed spatial coordinates: left, right, and center; but also along an axis that bisects the battlefield and runs from the Greek ships toward Troy. Moreover, the ordering of the movements of the characters betrays a striking symmetrical pattern: a shift to the left is balanced by one to the right, as a move toward the city is likewise paired with one toward the beach. Mapping the action over the course of the book produces a striking visual pattern that reveals a coherent organization.[124] Plotting these various narrative units or loops, as I have called them, resembles nothing so much as the rhythms of a choreographed dance.

[123] Fenik (1968) *passim*; Thornton (1984) 86–92; and Stanley (1993) 175–81.

[124] I encourage my readers to view the mapping of Book 17 on my website (www.homerstrojantheater.org/).

HOMER'S TROJAN THEATER

Space, Vision, and Memory in the Iliad

JENNY STRAUSS CLAY

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In memory of Roger Breed Stein

One had to be versed in country things
Not to believe the phoebes wept.

Robert Frost