Nor Could I Name Them: Homer Plays the Muse

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…how to say many false things similar to true things -Hesiod, *Theogony* 27

Aristotle and Horace give the palm to Homer, the former saying that his lies are beyond equal and the latter that his characters are inimitable… -Giambattista Vico, *La scienza nuova*

I The Messenger

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος

Sing, O Goddess, Muse, the rancor of Pelides Achilleus[1]

Thus are intoned the immortal words, ever and again inspired by the hoary Muse over countless generations, invoking that singular *illo tempore* of history's greatest tale, history's greatest war, history's greatest hero! And now, as the words are intoned yet again, lo, a vision of myriad bright faces of youths looking up to their teachers guiding them in their recitations through the challenging scansion of this irregular line—perhaps we might conjecture, however ironically, that the Muse had yet to quite fully take possession of our bard, Homer!—countless students of the glorious past participating in the unbroken chain of transmission of the hallowed tradition, back through the ages, back through the centuries in cloistered halls of the west, to those students in ancient Hellas herself, back to Alexandria, to Hellenistic Greece, back to Classical Greece, back further to Archaic Greece, back, indeed, to Homer *himself*… Homer, but a boy, a student of the reverend tradition of his fathers, perhaps struggling too as he strives to master the unwieldy instrument of epos, such that one day the blessed Muses would breath in him, would play *him* as theirs.

Indeed, it seems we actually find Homer himself, humbly, attesting to the daunting poetic challenge and solemn responsibility put upon him as but the mere mortal instrument of the all-knowing Muses on Olympus[2] as he arrives at that moment in his song that calls for the most faithful and historically exacting commemoration of precisely who was arrayed there on the coastline of Troy those ages afore.[3] Daunting indeed, for the bard's task in this instance cannot be supposed to admit the possibility of an *interpretation* of the traditional narrative the thematic details of which aid the bardic performer in his oral composition, and the details of which could be somewhat altered within the confines that the oral tradition would allow (assuming this was how our Iliad was composed). No, in this specific instance it is rote recitation that is called for lest any of those then arrayed and their descendants to follow be slighted.[4] For this daunting task an oral poet would need to call upon the Muses. And daunted our poet does appear to be, for his short speech invoking the muses does, in form, itself not attain to the metrical consistency as would be expected of an accomplished master of mythos, for it seems to resemble, remarkably, more the likes of *Thersites*' garbled words, such as heard earlier in the book. For here a mere four out of ten lines are exempt from such instances of correption and synizeses that Richard Martin identified as characteristic of that specifically ametroepes bungler as a slurring of words.[5] Indeed, these are distinctly Thersitean numbers:

> ἔσπετε νῦν μοι **Μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια** δώματ᾽ ἔχουσαι:
> ὑμεῖς γὰρ **θεαί ἐστε** πάρεστέ τε ἴστέ τε πάντα,
> ἡμεῖς δὲ κλέος οἶον ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν:
> οἵ τινες ἡγεμόνες Δαναῶν καὶ **κοίρανοι ἦσαν**:
> πληθὺν δ᾽ οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ **μυθήσομαι οὐδ** ὀνομήνω,
> οὐδ᾽ εἴ μοι δέκα μὲν γλῶσσαι, δέκα δὲ στόματ᾽ εἶεν,

φωνὴ δ᾽ ἄρρηκτος, χάλκεον δέ **μοι ἦτορ** ἐνείη,

εἰ **μὴ Ὀλυμπιάδες** Μοῦσαι Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο

θυγατέρες μνησαίαθ᾽ ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον:

ἀρχοὺς αὖ νηῶν ἐρέω νῆάς τε προπάσας. (2.484-93)

Lead me in song, oh my Muses who have your halls on Olympus,

For you, goddesses, are there and know all things,

While we hear only the rumors and know nothing.

Who were the leaders and chieftains of the Danaans?

For I could not tell the mythos [μυθήσομαι] of the host nor name them [ὀνομήνω],

Even had I ten tongues, and ten mouths,

And an unbroken voice, and even were my heart of bronze,

I would be unable unless you Olympian Muses, daughters of aegis-bearing Zeus

Reminded [μνησαίαθ᾽] me of all those who came to Ilion.

May I retell the leaders of ships and each of the ships without fail.

In his *Powers of Expression, Expressions of Power*, Andrew Laird grants Thersites a privileged place, indicating how his cameo role serves to foreground the imposition upon him of Odysseus' greater authority to speak. Odysseus' strong arm tactic is emblematized in the scepter he brandishes not only as symbol of the authority of mythos but also, as Laird emphasizes, as the blunt instrument with which he cudgels down Thersites' dissent. Thus I would venture to postulate here, provisionally, an analogous relationship on this level of rhetorical form, however seemingly unlikely, between, on the one hand, Thersites—Thersites "the rash"? or, is it Thersites "the bold"?[6]—as dissident defying the autocratic Odysseus' authority of *secularized* mythos, and, on the other, Homer as subordinate to the Muses, albeit

apparently happily so in his ostensibly compliant surrender to the Muses as mistresses of divine mythos. We may pause here for a moment, however, to ask whether we might not also sense some measure of self-enforced censure in Homer's apparently humble and willing compliance reflected in whatever anxiety the bard may feel in finding himself obliged to relate his counterpart Thamyris' fall from grace as one among the entries in the catalog, one specifically linked with Nestor, as is Thersites, although less obviously so.

So returning to Homer's invocation, it seems as if, quite apart from or rather quite pointedly at odds with the sort of *illo tempore* that our poet calls upon the Muses to re-instill, we gain perhaps instead a glimpse at an *unenthused*, that is, *sober*, albeit not exactly composed, poet disclosing himself in his lived present moment, a specifically post-heroic Iron generation moment as indicated by the impossibility of being possessed any longer of a bronze, that is, heroic, heart. In this unique moment we can imagine the poet as having provided for, however wittingly or otherwise, some possibility of access across all these centuries to himself unguarded, to himself, the very living, breathing, man, whose passing moment of self-reflection, self-*conscious* reflection, threatens to break the spell! Must this moment not thus constitute *the* quintessential expression, indeed the very *revelation*, of the naïve poet in all his simple, genuine, naïveté, in which whatever measure of fledgling formal displacement of the poet in his narrator collapses as he lays himself bare—what? *Unwittingly*?[7] —to us in all his humility and simplicity? No, *I*, ἐγὼ, I, *Homer*, could not tell the mythos of all of the host who were there, nor could *I*, ἐγὼ, name them, no, not without the Muses…

But name them I must, even as I come so close to identifying myself—I might have outright *named myself* here!—yea, I must name them *verbatim*. If indeed this invocation of the Muses, unlike any other, holds out this peculiar prospect of direct, unmediated access, direct, unmediated access even across

all these ages, to the poet, to the man himself—and where else are we more given to wonder at the very name of *this* man?—it does so precisely in that case where it seems Homer is experiencing his own obligation to surrender himself to the Muses. And do we not sense a certain tension produced in my not expressing any equivocation on the name, the name "Homer," just there? For would he not here be experiencing the call to consign himself over fully to completely adequated and unmediated access to the Muses in order to serve as the entirely transparent medium of transmission of what they, what only the Muses, can be relied upon to remember: the exact catalogue of men and ships?

In this moment, hinged as it is on the immediate exposure *first* to us as audience *and immediately thereupon* to the divine Muses, we find the poet *as presenting himself* as preparing to surrender to the Muses to serve thereby absolutely transparently and adequately as pure medium of the transmission—that is, as medium of unmediated transmission, the unmediated transmission of mythos—of the message, the content of which *he presents himself* as claiming no warrant to manipulate or negotiate in any way. Yet in coming to this assessment of his capacity here, we can see how he (assuming we can attribute this to "his" agency, that is, to the agency of "Homer," which, as will be seen, I do, skirting right along the edge of a verging intentionalism) has already figured—what merely incidentally? Or rather prognostically?—just such a channel of transmission at the very opening of book two in the role of Dream, Ὄνειρος. For Dream is presented as serving as messenger for Zeus, figured *allegorically*, as we may frame it in the terms of Laird's conception of the role of the messenger speech, to which I turn presently. We may thus look to the transmission of Zeus' message as leading up to what is presented here at the opening of the catalogue as being directly disclosed in this putatively unguarded moment.

Laird frames his reading of the narrative structure, as opposed to content, of the messenger scene as allegorically figuring poetic communication, the narrative form of Muse-inspired epic communication specifically, as such:

> The association between appeals to the Muses and the production of poetry with the convention of the messenger scene in epic remains to be explored in greater depth… Muses are goddess [sic.]; epic poets (incarnated either as rhapsodes or literary authors) are human with divine qualities. The audiences of epic poems are human *tout court*. The epic genre repeatedly presents us with a paradigm for the process of divine → mortal communication in the convention of the divine messenger scene in which a celestial deity communicates to mortals through a divine messenger… these messenger scenes could be seen as a metafictional paradigm for the process of epic communication itself… (300-01)

Moreover, in "Figures of Allegory from Homer to Latin Epic," Laird turns to "questions of truth and falsity" (in Boys Stones 159) in the broader framework of a generalized reading for the textual play of allegory along with metapoetic figurations of allegory in Latin epic, reading back as well thereby to Homer, looking first to the messenger scene that opens *Iliad* two. I concur with his broader contention regarding the relationship between such messenger scenes and the role of the poet, itself defined by the relationship of poet to the, to his, Muses (begging here the question, just incidentally for the moment, whether the poet is the Muses' or the Muses the poet's). Yet I can go further in affirming the specific relevance of Zeus' dispatching of Dream, Ὄνειρος, that opens book two to the invocation that introduces the catalogue. For beyond what it imports in the course of the narrative events, it serves precisely to make *rote* recitation an explicit topos in itself. Just as Homer would turn to invoke the Muses out of his solemn sense of the necessity that the catalogue be recited verbatim, so also does Zeus charge Dream with

the task of relaying his message to Agamemnon *exactly* as he conveys it. Thus we hear the very words of Zeus—or perhaps I should better say equivocally here 'Zeus,' if we are to credit at least provisionally Laird's contention of the allegorical, metafictional status of the speech—quoted as he instructs Dream.

And moreover we must recognize that we are being asked to accept at face value these words, *ostensibly* unlike those words that introduce the catalogue later in the book, *as quoted*, that is, as *already*, *eo ipso*, quoted *as* these words are narrated by our poet already in the thrall of the Muses, and as thus thereby themselves already quoted *verbatim* once even prior to Dream's verbatim recitation of them to follow. For by whatever other means could Homer, and thereby we, have access to the divine mind of Zeus, have access on a putative certainty to *exactly* what he instructed Dream to say, what he instructed Dream to say *exactly*? To put a finer point on it, in the very moment in which "*Zeus*," and *in that* "*Zeus*," is commanding *exact* recitation, he would, in a way tantamount to the incidental role of "the Muses," thereby be operating on the expectation that any reporting of his command to "Dream" (such as that of the bard to us) must just as exactly reproduce the words he demands of Dream be exactly conveyed. So thus the very status of the Muses, as if by contagion, is at risk of the same allegorical equivocation to which Zeus was given. For how could the bard's assertion be taken as reliable that "Zeus" —indicating here the quotation of the poet's reporting as opposed to any indication of allegorical equivocation such as indicated above with the scare quotes 'Zeus'—demanded that the words in question be transmitted by Dream **exactly** if the very words of the assertion by Homer as the messenger of the Muses would not also be held to the same standard of exactitude? What is more, the identical expectation of that standard is reflected in the description of Zeus' edict as being expressed in "**winged words**,"[8] that is, the same sort of winged words as qualify epic poetry per se throughout the poem:

καί μιν φωνήσας ἔπεα **πτερόεντα προσηύδα**:

ZEUS:

βάσκ᾽ ἴθι οὖλε ὄνειρε θοὰς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν:

ἐλθὼν ἐς κλισίην Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἀτρεΐδαο

πάντα μάλ᾽ **ἀτρεκέως ἀγορευέμεν** ὡς ἐπιτέλλω: (2.7-10)

And calling to him out loud, he [Zeus] addressed him in **winged words**

ZEUS:

Go forth then baneful Dream alongside the ships of the Achaeans,

And arriving at the tent of Agamemnon Atreides

convey [**ἀγορευέμεν**] all these things **exactly** [**ἀτρεκέως**] as I command:

And thereupon Dream, having assumed Nestor's image, and after a short introduction, does do as told, **conveying**, **ἀγορευέμεν**, the message to Agamemnon, **exactly** as commanded, 2.28-32 = 2.11-15 with the minimal adjustment of the pronouns, σε (2.28) for ἑ (2.11).

Should we take special note of the use of **ἀγορευέμεν** here? Well, of course we would be hard pressed to find evidence to support a simple contention that Homer would have in mind such as the significantly later use of the word as it emerges as the technical rhetorical term (not until the third century) that serves as the root of allo-agoreuein, and of allegoresis. Yet we do in fact see something that would quite literally qualify as allo-agoreuein, at least in adopting Laird's informal and broad definition of such as simply stating something otherwise than it is, as Agamemnon does in addressing the *agora* of the Achaean host after his address to his *boulê* of scepter-holding basileis. After himself reproducing *verbatim* for a third time Dream's message for the boulê, (2.65-69 ≡ [9] 2.28-32 = 2.11-15), he then

fabricates *his* false message, misconstruing what was already Dream's, that is, Zeus' false message. For Agamemnon purports that Zeus, in his own way referring we may thus say allegorically *within the narrative* to what is thus his own patently allegorical and fallacious "Zeus," *directly* bid him, με κελεύει, to return to Argos. The upshot here is that after an exegesis of the chain of inheritance of the scepter (101-09), starting *not* from Zeus, but tellingly rather from the *artificer* Hephaistos as a hint to where such messages in fact originate, who then hands it off to Zeus, who then passes it down through the chain of scepter-holding mythos monger kings finally to Agamemnon, we find Agamemnon generating his own spurious message that he simply purports was communicated to him by Zeus with no further representations as to the means of the message's conveyance.

So tracing now the transmission of the message, we start with Zeus, or rather 'Zeus' as we will see… so, starting again, we start with Zeus-'Zeus' who states, or **conveys**, **ἀγορευέμεν**, the (false) message to Dream. Now here, as we are about to get going, we cannot, however, simply progress to the next step in the chain of transmission of the message through the narrative, as we must at once reckon as well with the oblique axis of the *metapoetic* transmission. Yet I might simply rather say just poetic transmission pure and simple, that is poetic *qua* poetic. In other words, we must consider the putatively *direct, unmediated transmission by the Muses*, to *us* as mortal audience in—how shall I put it?—the grand historical public *agora* of all readers in perpetuity. This putatively direct, unmediated transmission is made possible incidentally by the thrall induced in Homer's first invocation of the Muses at the opening of book one, which, however glitchy it may have been, is still in effect. Alright, so then from Dream to Agamemnon the message is conveyed with the addition of the brief introduction, but also with the attendant aspect of Dream adopting the appearance of Nestor.

Now here the question arises as to how it is Nestor's image that is chosen. Was it Zeus' idea for Dream to appear thus? Or, was it Dream's own choice? I will return to this question in just a bit.[10] Meanwhile, the importance of this is that in appearing as Nestor, Dream makes available to Nestor the character the means whereby he will successfully persuade the other scepter-holding kings in the *boulê*—by way of contrast with the broader *agora* of the Achaean host to be assembled anon—of the credibility of Agamemnon's dream vision, along with the personal incentive to do so to uphold thereby his own mythos authority.[11] Thus finally, after Zeus-'Zeus'/ Dream/ 'Nestor'/ Agamemnon/ Nestor 'succeed' in persuading and gaining the sanction of the other scepter-holding kings in the boulê, Agamemnon steps out into the public agora (2.95) to convey otherwise what was, back at the putative origin of the chain, **conveyed**, ***ἀγορευέμεν***, that is, he conveys otherwise, as in effect a quite literal act of allegoresis, an act of delivering *his* false message differently, indeed diametrically so, specifically *to the agora*, his message as he purports that (his) "Zeus" bid him return to Argos.

So, on the far end of the chain we find Agamemnon's audience duped into believing Agamemnon has determined that it is advisable to leave for Argos—and frankly it is quite evident that they at least care little for the credibility of the messenger or the actual source of his message, as they are quite prepared to 'believe' what they want to believe, even as Rumor, ὅσσα (2.93),[12] *another* of Zeus' messengers, goes among them. Indeed, Agamemnon's very notion that he should test his troops by proposing in the agora the opposite of what he is proposing in the boulê depends upon a fundamentally *secular, if not perhaps even cynical, notion*, that the troops will argue that the counsel that is being putatively represented as having been communicated to Agamemnon by Zeus should be rejected, rejected *as if* it were not a divine edict but rather *Agamemnon's proposal*, open to interpretation on the basis of human agency, *which he should be persuaded to reject.* At this point the understanding of the message held by Agamemnon's

‘audience’ in the agora, as they demonstrate their ready willingness to accede (as if they needed any persuading, be it on the basis of putatively divine authority or not), amounts to a reflection of essentially the same understanding as Homer’s audience in the historical public ‘agora’ of readings in perpetuity, namely that it would indeed have been advisable *not* to heed the perverse message Zeus-‘Zeus’ contrived for Agamemnon. And they came to this understanding (or perhaps we should describe this as merely their opportunistic reaction) by dint of what we may thus describe as Agamemnon’s ‘allegoresis,’ that is, his telling of the original message in the agora otherwise than in the boulê. Moreover, this allegoresis can only be reversed through the reinstitution of the (un)truth of the original message under the brunt of the scepter now debased in being wielded merely as cudgel.

So although Zeus-‘Zeus’ ‘original’ message[13] is never reported out of the boulê, and Agamemnon’s audience ends up with essentially the same (~~mis~~)understanding as do we as Homer’s audience of the Achaeans’ immediate prospects, and although the success of Agamemnon’s ~~false~~ message must be reversed by the mere brute assertion of the symbol of authoritative speech now fully secularized, having been passed down the chain of the transmission of power from scepter-holding (skêptouchos) hand to scepter-holding hand, what was originally the divine provenance of Zeus’ message is effaced along with any vestige of its putative divinity from the allegorized perspective on the other end of the chain of transmission. But once we see the definitive evidence of Agamemnon’s allegoresis in his bald intention to report what he took to be the divine message from Zeus out otherwise than he understood it to be, that is, to reverse its significance in his bald, indeed cynical, lie (which, incidentally, exploits and exposes the distinction in class between those in the boulê and those of the agora), and once we see that the deleterious outcome for Agamemnon’s audience *finally serves to institute the cynical intention of Zeus*-‘*Zeus*,’ well, at some point can we really any longer restrain ourselves from wondering what might be the

intention of *Homer* at work in all of this? Yes, I am deliberately talking here in the ostensible terms of authorial intention and, yes, I, in the same breath, deliberately *just* say "Homer" without any qualification or equivocation on the name, assuming, as I take pleasure in doing so with a full sense of the irony that simply, indeed in an artificially naïve way, identifying him thus by name entails.

For as we, as members of the world historical agora of Homer's readers, assess the brunt of Agamemnon's cynical ploy, and work our way in reverse back up the chain of transmission from the agora of Agamemnon's audience back to that to which they would not have been privy in the proceedings of the boulê, we come back to Agamemnon reporting the 'divine' (false) message of 'Dream' to the scepter-holding kings. But in working back this way, against the grain as it were of the thrall of the narration, we come to a crucial threshold at which the credibility of divinely transmitted messages—be they from such messengers as 'Dream,' or be they from the messenger-poet, servant of 'the Muses'—is in question, a threshold we are ourselves not able to cross without a *decision* on the credibility of *Homer*. For as we work back from the events that can be certainly accounted for according to the banal actions of the human, all too human, Agamemnon, work our way back from the consequences that play out in the agora stemming from *his* ruse, back to the deliberations in the boulê, impressed by the consistency with which he reports *exactly* what we had been told on our first audition was the content of the message as reported by Dream, we nonetheless arrive again at the question of how, and now we can also ask *why*, Dream took on the aspect of Nestor.

As we experience the course of narrated events on a first, let's call it naïve, audition as reflected in as much as I had to say on the question so far above, it would seem we are presented with two alternatives: first, the choice of Nestor's image comes at the beginning of the chain of transmission of Zeus' message, going, however, unrecounted by Homer; second, the choice is Dream's, also unrecounted

by Homer. But we will do better to read *back* to this moment, to reflect on the events, the specifically secular, banal events, figured at the threshold of the boulê and agora, that follow Agamemnon's reporting of the (divine) dream as it reports what Dream reports, as thus we are also presented with the prospect that perhaps the dream never actually was Dream as messenger sent by Zeus at all, but rather merely a manifestation of Agamemnon's psychology, his simple, all too simple, human psychology.

And it does seem that this distinction is in evidence in the way Dream/dream is figured by Homer. For as Dream is introduced, it is as Zeus (assuming for the moment the naïve, unquestioning acceptance of the narrative as if a divine transmission from the Muses) addresses Dream as a divine personage in the vocative: βάσκ᾽ ἴθι οὖλε Ὄνειρε, "Go on then, on your way, *you*, evil[14] *D*ream…" (8). Yet even before going on to address how Agamemnon speaks of his dream, we should now back up just one step, specifically to that moment in which Homer is setting up the quote he is presenting, again as if verbatim as transmitted indirectly and implicitly by the Muses, in the line just preceding the quoted words of Zeus. To Zeus it appeared the best, or most aristocratic, ἀρίστη, counsel, that is, boulê, βουλή, to send, πέμψαι… and here is where the question arises… πέμψαι… οὖλον ὄνειρον (2.6-8). The question is how to think of οὖλον ὄνειρον here. Is *Homer* here referring to Dream as unto the divine personage Zeus addresses in the vocative? Or, is Homer referring *paraphrastically* by referring rather merely to *a* dream, *an* evil dream, just prior to himself adopting the exact verbatim recitation to which he is empowered by the Muses when he turns in the next line to quote Zeus addressing ὄνειρον *as* the divine personage Ὄνειρε? Is Homer, in introducing the *direct* quotation of Zeus, referring *himself directly* to evil Dream, or is he, in speaking paraphrastically for the sake of explaining to his mortal audience what they cannot themselves know in not being possessed themselves of the divine power of the Muses, referring descriptively, as opposed to denominatively, to *an evil dream*? And what relationship would this

equivocation that articulates the relationship of the putatively Muse-inspired Homer to his mortal audience in the agora of auditors/readers in perpetuity have to the relationship between Agamemnon and the Achaean host in the agora as he reports out the/his message from the boulê? I opt merely to pose this very important question here only to return again to answer it below. For first, I double down yet again on the transmission of the message.

So, now to Agamemnon's report of the message conveyed to him. First, it should be noted that we might be given some pause by the fact that Agamemnon's speech is introduced as a πυκινὴν… βουλήν (2.55), "a crafted (or crafty) counsel." He begins by explaining how he received the message from Zeus: θεῖός μοι… ἦλθεν ὄνειρος (2.56). Now the question here is how to take the ὄνειρος. Is this the divine personage Dream that Zeus dispatched as his messenger? I contend that we cannot read Agamemnon's words this way because ὄνειρος is being expressly specified as *a divine* dream, *an* ὄνειρος *θεῖός* ; it is *not* being denominatively identified as *the* divine dream that is Dream, ῎Ονειρος, that would be necessarily understood as divine by dint of being *the* deity ῎Ονειρος (albeit a distinctly off-brand 'deity' at best anyway) as opposed to merely *a* dream, be it *a* divine dream, *or*, merely a *human* dream.

Unlike Zeus who can summon the divinity Dream and address him as he will, and, similarly, unlike *Homer*, who, by dint of the thrall of the Muses, can, or can at least purport to, report that it is "Dream" that "Zeus" summons and dispatches, Agamemnon, as a mortal—and, specifically, not a Muse-inspired mortal—can only claim that the dream that visited him and him alone, is *a* divine dream. Moreover, he must report, or at least claim, that the dream that appeared to him was not just his dream, and as such merely a false dream, but rather that it is a divine dream and that the kings should accept the message conveyed by this dream as being the message, being a true message, from Zeus. That the veracity of the message conveyed by this dream is open to question is confirmed first in the fact that the

dream, or Dream, if we are going to take Homer's message on its face, appears, or itself perhaps opts to appear, specifically as Nestor, that is, as the paragon of persuasion,[15] and second in the fact that Nestor does expressly call into question the credibility of the message thus conveyed to the boulê by Agamemnon/ 'Nestor:' εἰ μέν τις τὸν ὄνειρον Ἀχαιῶν ἄλλος ἔνισπε ψεῦδός κεν φαῖμεν… (2.80-81), "were it anyone else of the Achaeans who reported the dream we would call it false."

Of course the irony, indeed even arguably comedic irony, of Nestor raising the possibility that the content of the message could not be trusted had it been conveyed by some other messenger than Agamemnon plays on the way that Nestor's persuasive mythos capital is exploited by Dream (however the decision was made to adopt Nestor's image coming down the chain) is plainly evident. What is not as immediately evident is what the necessity of Nestor's testimonial imputes regarding the credibility of the *chain of transmission* when read back up the chain against the grain. For if we would allow ourselves for just a moment to question, however heretical this might seem, the notion that the message as conveyed was indeed anchored at the outset of its transmission by the divine authority of Zeus—and at once the Muses—and rather imagine ourselves as a skeptical member of the scepter-holding basileis standing by, we can see why Nestor's testimonial is a necessary adjunct to Agamemnon's report. The fact that Agamemnon cannot reliably report that his dream was an immediate experience of Dream again means that there can be, in fact, no assurance that it was not just his dream. It is for this reason that the *arbitrary* (and erroneous as it turns out) act of corroboration falls to a merely formal guarantor of its bona fides, for Nestor's proclamation is also not represented as sanctioned by any divinely sanctioned authority—say, for example, the Muse—or anything beyond merely his reputation among mortals.[16] So the fact that Nestor feels the need to address the fact that the dream-message cannot simply, or, let's call it *immediately*, be taken on Agamemnon's say so only serves all the more ironically to underpin his suggestion that we

should take the message from 'Nestor,' that is, the message *mediated* through Nestor's image, on Nestor's mediated say so.

Thus having worked backwards through the chain I may now return to what I had pointed out at that point when Homer launched the chain at the outset. For now that I may assert that in Agamemnon's allegorical (again in Laird's casual and broad sense) reporting out to the agora of his (false) message (as is of course plainly known as his ~~false~~ message) from his "Zeus"—where "Zeus" now indicates a simply banal spurious "Zeus" quoting here the words spoken by him as such—he reports the message as having been communicated to him by "Zeus" directly otherwise than as he reports it "truthfully" (albeit delusionally) as having been transmitted to him by "*a* divine dream," as opposed to Dream as deity… now that I may assert that, well, so I can draw the parallel to how we may question how in Homer having purported at the head of the chain, albeit only implicitly, to be directly communicating the message of the Muses in introducing Dream as deity paraphrastically as "evil Dream," οὖλον ὄνειρον (2.6), now *Homer* may have been leaving open the possibility here that we might think of this paraphrastic reference as a *rhetorical* analog to the question that arises in considering the possibility on the other end of the chain that this dream will be susceptible to being—to having always having been over the course of all these centuries—read as the *psychological* analog that is merely Agamemnon's dream; Homer's introduction of "evil Dream" may thus have always been susceptible to being—may have always all along been susceptible to having been over the course of all these centuries—read as just as ~~false~~ a reporting out of the "mythos-boulê" of the oral tradition otherwise to the world-historical agora of readers in perpetuity of the putatively unmediated Muse-enthralled message of what is merely a *rhetorical* pretension of an *ironic* paraphrase of what can thus just as well be taken as not "evil Dream," but merely "*an* evil dream," that is, merely *a* contrived, poetically contrived, rhetorical 'Deity.' What proves out to be merely *a* psychological dream in that it can be simply falsified in being reported out otherwise to the agora of

Achaeans may thus be seen to have always been nothing more than *a* rhetorical 'Dream' reported out just as baselessly to us in the world-historical agora.

Of course the notion of the dream as merely Agamemnon's dream would raise all manner of questions of Homeric psychology… For to say that we could think of "Dream" as merely Agamemnon's dream would be to say also that the message that "Dream" is putatively reporting would also be a manifestation of Agamemnon's psychology (I am very carefully not saying "psyche" here), and that the source too of the message, "Zeus," would also be a manifestation of Agamemnon's dream, and, as we work now backwards out through the other end of the chain of 'transmission' to the beginning again to arrive at the metapoetical, or as I would rather say, poetical *qua* poetical, analogy for which Laird argues and with which I concur, all of this would be tantamount to saying that "the Muse" is Homer's and not the other way around. In other words, the collapse of the retroactively allegorizing extension into the register of the mythos of 'Zeus' and 'Dream' of Agamemnon's merely human, banal, ephemeral and only imminently consequential, that is, *not* transcendentally consequential, dream, the banality of which is made evident (by *Homer qua* author) by the extension beyond the bounds of the boulê in Agamemnon's cynical, manipulative, and utterly banal ruse in the agora, serves as an allegorical figure for Homer's allegorizing at the beginning of the chain where he feigned, without even making it explicit, to quote verbatim, ἀτρεκέως ἀγορευέμεν, 'Zeus' *as if* he were in the thrall of the Muses, *as if* it were the Muses who were playing him. I contend that in fact it is the other way around: Homer plays the Muse. And so, Homer plays, or at least has played, us. Yet just as we could see that were Agamemnon inclined to persuade himself in a wishful dream, he might conjure 'Nestor' to assure himself of Zeus' allegiance, so can we see how Nestor would be inclined to being persuaded by 'Nestor' and therefore present his bona fides for Agamemnon and thereby assure us that what has ostensibly been reported from 'Zeus' through 'Nestor' would not be credible were Agamemnon not the dreamer.

The extent to which we would accept Homer's introduction of the dream as literally "evil Dream," as opposed to a merely rhetorical, or merely poetic, contrivance of "*an* evil dream," would be the extent to which our *faith* that he is transmitting his poetry as unmediated in the genuine thrall of the Muses is not undermined by his demonstration of the faithlessness of Agamemnon's reporting out otherwise from the boulê to the agora what "Dream," or rather just *his* dream, purportedly told him, such faithlessness as is answered in the cynical response of his audience and those scepter-holding thugs who brutishly bar their onrush to the ships. The measure to which this question is provoked, moreover, is a function of the measure to which this narrative would have been consciously contrived by Homer, that is, contrived by the artifice of *our author*.

While I tip my hat to Laird and concur with him as far as he has worked into the problem, I must also say that we must double down just that much more insistently on the allegorical play that he has quite rightly diagnosed as necessarily having always been in play in Homer by reading back from the Latin authors. I must, however, as I verge right out along the edge of intentionalism, challenge, or at least question, his contention that "hidden understandings are really *constructed from* [Laird's emphasis] the sense of the letter—or listeners—and *not implanted by authors* [emphasis mine]—or speakers" (2003 176). I ask whether the limit of Laird's reading and the limit I understand him as suggesting thereby for the agency of the author of epic may in its own way recast the notion of the naïve poet in terms of what is an otherwise valid rejection of intentionalism, such that he may thus be seen as acquiescing at the very threshold of all that is at issue with the naïve conception of Homer's 'epic' (again with all the charge on using the name just as simply as that) as putatively Muse-inspired *and* thus *not* governed by the intentionality of an 'Homer' as author to whatever extent that intentionality may be shown to extend.

Laird's contention regarding the messenger scene that the divine message sent by Zeus through his messenger Dream and communicated to the mortal Agamemnon serves as an analog, metapoetically, for the transmission of the divine message sent by the Muses through their messenger Homer to us as mortal auditors, or readers, is, however, not adequately worked out. If this explanation were adequate, we would retain a basic conception of all that the epic means, the full scope of the value of the epic poetically, in the ultimate ineffability of the Muses' higher "divine" wisdom as it transcends the mere mortal ken of their messenger Homer. I use "divine" here not so much religiously as epistemologically in that the scope of the Muses, however we would rationalize it, say as the legacy and breadth of the tradition, in this case merely the legacy of the oral tradition, would transcend the ken of the poet/author along with what meaning could be understood as subsumable to his authorial intention. So, as Laird goes so far as to suggest, the ultimate impossibility of the poet to do anything other than to allegorize in that whatever he will ever present will always be something less than, not what he intends, but rather what he communicates allegorically, is thus figured in the inauspicious, if I would thus be fairly paraphrasing him, falsity of the substance of the message in the messenger scene that opens book two.

The shortfall of Laird's treatment in my estimation here lies in his apparently not seeing that the key to fully fathoming the allegorical force of the messenger scene, and, as we will see, continuing further, the rest of the epic, depends upon recognizing what Homer is doing with the extra step *purely within the secular human register* of the transmission of the message out of the boulê and into the agora, the transmission of the 'divine' message *otherwise* into the agora, allegorically. Broadly, yes, we see the analogy of the transmission of Zeus' message to that of the Muses' transmission of the poem: Zeus bids his messenger, Dream, convey his message exactly, ἀτρεκέως ἀγορευέμεν, to the mortal recipient Agamemnon; and, in parallel, the Muses bid their messenger, Homer to sing their song more or less

exactly overall, and definitely exactly verbatim in the specific case of the catalogue (to which I will be turning in the next section), to us, their mortal recipients. And this does hold up, or at least appears to, right up until the message is reported in the boulê by Agamemnon. But, and this is the most important part, the transmission of the message *does not end here*. In response to the message he received in his dream—I call it "his" deliberately—Agamemnon sets about allegorizing the message from Zeus-'Zeus' as he reports out the original message otherwise to the agora, reporting it, or rather representing it, however, as if Zeus himself had directly and simply conveyed to him the message that *he* will now serve as messenger to report to the host of the Achaeans in the agora (those same Achaean forces, of course, who are to be catalogued in the second half of the book). Now in this case we see that Agamemnon is adopting a new role, no longer the recipient of the message, but rather the messenger of "the" message to be reported, that is, represented, otherwise. So now in this analogy Agamemnon has assumed for himself the role of 'messenger' so as to report his *false message*, the gist of which, however, is truer than Zeus' original false message, thus to dupe his audience in the agora in a fashion that is now analogous to Homer having *assumed for himself* the role of 'messenger' to report his *falsified* version of what 'the Muses' would be, indeed have been all these many years, presumed to be conveying directly, transparently, through Homer of the 'truth' of the same Achaean forces arrayed on the shore of Troy. And so I now turn to examining how faithful Homer has been in his transmission of the 'tradition' in considering whether there is any evidence that anything as been 'falsified' in his 'recitation' of the catalogue.

II The Message

In my forthcoming book length study *XXXXXXXXX* I argue that Homer's *Iliad* is a mid-sixth century ironic critique of the aristocratic heroic ethos as it was propagated by the Muse-inspired tradition of what

I term the mênis epic. I contend that subtending and ultimately subverting the apparent triumphant return of Achilles to battle and supposed trajectory to kleos, Homer has construed a counter narrative, the narrative of pothê launched in Achilles' curse of pothê, the great curse, μέγας ὅρκος (1.239), cast against Agamemnon and more broadly the Achaeans: ἦ ποτ᾽ Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ ἵξεται υἱας Ἀχαιῶν (1.240), "at some time longing Achilles will come upon the Achaeans." I note briefly here the key metrical features and poetic symmetry of the first half of the line, constituted as an exact hemistich, producing, by the rare occurrence of a principal diaresis, a certain hermetic integrity unto itself, and, added to the diaresis, correption, lending further emphasis to that term, pothê, that names what I argue to be *The Iliad's* privileged topos: ἦ ποτ᾽ Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ > ἵξεται. I note, again only briefly here, the phonetic symmetry of the curse, ἦ - ποτ᾽ < > ποθ - ὴ, hinged on, and *framing now most intensively*, the name of the hero: ἦ - ποτ᾽ > Ἀχιλλῆος < ποθ - ὴ. The virtually asemic particle ἦ, intoned with its circumflex, clears the semantic register, opening the way for the curse, and is followed by the marker of temporal indeterminacy and abstraction, ποτέ. This indeterminate temporal reference of the curse qualifies concomitantly the tenure of the abiding force of both the curse *and* mênis, "rancor," with which the curse is linked. The virtually asemic force of the phrase is to be directly measured against the vexing semantic value of its phonetically symmetrical counterpart, the object of central concern, pothê. Pothê may be characterized as participating, in some measure, in this asemic abstraction, in a fashion best described as somehow escaping, or being irreducible to, a simply determinable semantic value—that is to say, that something of the order of the indeterminacy of ποτέ is entailed in the force of ποθὴ, *if not*, however, its *abstract* indeterminacy. For the curse of ποθὴ will pass over into the sphere of the progressive concretization of arriving, ἵξεται, beyond the threshold of abstraction and into the sphere in which its *force*, if not exactly reducible to any simply determinable *meaning*, is nonetheless realized.

Sensing the threat to the order of mythos, Nestor, the 'clear spoken rhetor,' λιγὺς ἀγορητής (1.247)—the epithet that is mocked by Homer by attributing it ironically, in the second of only three occurrences, to *Thersites* of all people[17]—steps in to attempt to both persuade Achilles to desist and to redress the disruptive rhetoric of the curse with his own attempt at cancelling the incantational brunt of the curse with his own rhetoric as I treat in full in *XXXXXX*. Despite Nestor's failed bid at persuasion here in book one, when we arrive at the end of the book we are expressly reminded not only that the curse still stands, but also that its baleful force will unwind through the course of events to follow up to and including the pothê for *Patroclus*, *Achilles*' pothê for Patroclus that is, as the curse redounds upon he who cast it in the first instance. What will prove to be the iterative impact of the curse is figured toward the end of book one in the *iterative* form of ποθέεσκε* (1.493), which appears only here in the Homeric epics.

The point of this brief introduction to the stakes of the curse is that the next iterations of what I contend is the novel, the invented, narrative of pothê arise in that passage that should by definition preclude any such creative content, namely the catalogue of ships. Thus we return to the subject at hand, returning now to that seeming supplication to the Muses that heads the catalogue.

What are the broader implications of what I may now openly characterize as the disingenuous supplication of the Muse? What is at stake? As noted above, the catalogue of ships would, in its fully formal, traditional guise, represent the most fixed of traditional elements, conserved by rote recitation in the Iliadic tradition to be transmitted with the least alteration. The accurate conservation and transmission of such rote information requires the force of memory as is expressly identified by Homer at 2.492, μνησαίαθ᾽ ὅσοι ὑπὸ Ἴλιον ἦλθον. Given then the specifically conservative nature of the *traditional* catalogue, as well as the author's explicit identification of his awareness of its conservative requirements,

any 'error,' such as those metrical bunglings of the invocation itself, or more importantly any *alteration, especially if intentional,* let me put it this way, *any artful manipulation*, of the catalogue would have to be considered a most serious *transgression* of the order of the tradition upheld by the Muses and the sacred dispensation of the bard. Moreover, if his invocation were as naïve as it artfully purports to be, we would have to read "Homer" himself as *consciously attesting* to the critical importance of neither *erring* in, nor altering *in any way*, the recitation of the catalogue. In short, if it were discovered that the author was in some way *mocking* the bard's sacred role of upholding the traditional Muse-transmitted recollection of the past, including the integral transmission of the kleos of warriors, as well as the rote lore, the entire edifice of the genius of tradition, to hearken to Gregory Nagy's formulation,[18] upon which the oral school relies to account for *The Iliad* as a work, would be in serious jeopardy, as would any number of variously inflected presuppositions of our Iliad as naïve epic.

I will presently demonstrate that the catalogue such as we have it in *The Iliad* cannot be an example of what would have been handed down by rote for two reasons: first, because it will be used to introduce important elements in the unfolding narrative of pothê, which could, however, perhaps be argued to have been part of the tradition too, except for the fact that; second, these elements will be incorporated into the form of what ought to be prima facie a purely conservative recitation in a way that reveals that the author is himself *appropriating* the form to unfold his original narrative of pothê, and this in a fashion whereby he deliberately and unequivocally *discloses* what he is doing as he intentionally undermines the integrity of the traditional form through the specific means of his own misappropriation of it. The author deliberately crafts his manipulation of the catalogue so that we may explicitly identify it *as* deliberate manipulation, and, moreover, so that we may ascertain that he at once expressly provides the means to *argue conclusively that he has fully consciously manipulated it.*

The catalogue of Achaean forces begins at 2.484 with the invocation of the Muses examined above, and spans some three hundred lines to 2.785, before turning to a briefer survey of the Trojan forces. While the first reference to Achilles is marked by a relatively impersonal tone, one befitting the form of the traditional recitation, his particular importance, which of course itself would not be inconsistent with the Iliadic tradition, is established by the fact that he and his forces are listed at the end of the catalogue. Yet beyond the emphasis that his position in the catalogue imparts, the central theme of the mênis epic appears again in a passing reference. But it is the resurfacing of the narrative of pothê, once again in its specific connection with the mênis theme, that will be of particular importance as a distinguishing telltale feature of the intervention of "Homer," whom I will for this purpose thus dub the pothê author, into, and reinvention of, the traditional catalogue. In fact, as we shall see, the basic structure of the inception of Achilles' mênis as developed in book one will again be evident, though from the greater remove noted above. So, first, we witness a reference to Achilles' anger, χωόμενος at 2.689; followed by the resurfacing of the narrative of pothê, though in a fashion not at first apparent in its connection with Achilles; and, finally, the recurrence of mênis.

Moreover, the section dealing with Achilles, beginning with that first reference to him in the catalogue noted above at 681ff., is a formal structure unto itself. This is evident in the subtle emphasis it receives by being introduced with the word "now," νῦν αὖ (2.681), recalling as it does that invocation of the Muses[19] just analyzed, ἔσπετε νῦν μοι Μοῦσαι (2.484). This echo of the invocation serves neither solely to reestablish putatively the force of the Muses, nor solely to suggest that the naming of Achilles to follow is of particular importance, but also to recall the irony of the *disingenuous* invocation and the author's own *disingenuous* self-reflective reference to his own putative limitations that opens the catalogue. For it is in the section that follows that we find the author's misappropriation, his allegorizing misappropriation, of the traditional form.

The manipulation of the traditional form of Muse-inspired recitation occurs precisely at the point in which the narrative of pothê resurfaces. Indeed, through the passages presently to be addressed, Achilles' curse of pothê properly begins its narrative course, anticipated at the close of book one in the iterative form of pothê, ποθέεσκε (1.492). The resurfacing of the narrative of pothê is not immediately obvious, however, for it is *artfully* woven into the formal structure of the catalogue.[20] The first of what will be a three-stage series of references to pothê does not refer directly to Achilles, but is associated instead with another hero, Protesilaos, who appears otherwise to be little more than an incidental, traditional entry having no relationship (for he is already dead before the action commences) to the central narrative, be it defined by pothê or mênis. The specific way in which the pothê narrative resurfaces simultaneously with mênis will be seen to support both the specific argument for the author's undermining of the muse-inspired tradition of recitation, as well as the issue of *global* significance to his revision of the tradition: *namely, the ultimate ascendancy of the narrative of pothê over the traditional narrative of mênis*. For the elements artificially incorporated into the ostensibly traditional form *are critical only to the narrative of pothê* and play no role in what would otherwise have been the unfolding solely of the traditional narrative of mênis.[21] It is no coincidence that the author chooses to resume his direct challenge to the content of the Iliadic tradition through his narrative of pothê at the same time that he chooses to challenge the traditional form through the artifice of his manipulation of traditional recitation, for each departure from tradition reinforces the other, providing critical evidence for the primacy of the narrative of pothê.

A brief overview of the structuring of the closing section of the catalogue into three CASES, numbered here I-III, will facilitate our understanding of how the author returns to his privileged narrative in what I will refer to as a synoptic narrative of pothê, a narrative in miniature:

681: Echo of initial invocation of the Muse at 484 [νῦν αὖ], leading directly to the first apparently traditional catalogue reference to:

685-694: Achilles, and a passing reminder of his lying back by the ships, angered [χωόμενος] over Briseis.[22] The name "Achilles" appears twice, the second with the epithet ποδάρκης the significance of which will be seen presently.

695-710: CASE I: An ostensibly traditional catalogue reference to Protesilaos, et al. At 703 the narrative of pothê resurfaces with the death of Protesilaos and the resultant bereavement of his band. Protesilaos is replaced by Podarcês, with a second occurrence of pothê at 709.

716: CASE II: An ostensibly traditional catalogue reference to Philoctetes, et al., where 726 is a repetition of the formulaic instance of pothê at 703 referring to the death of Philoctetes and substitution.

761: Reinvocation of the Muse [σύ μοι ἔννεπε Μοῦσα], preparing an indirect return to:

769-780: CASE III: Achilles' and the Myrmidon's detailed treatment in the catalogue forming a ring composition with the briefer catalogue reference (lacking references to either pothê or mênis narratives) at 685-694 above. The return to the case of Achilles, which concludes the catalogue of Greek forces, is initiated through an *indirect, seemingly incidental* reference to his mênis [ὄφρ᾽ Ἀχιλεὺς μήνιεν] and ends with the concluding entry in the synoptic narrative of pothê that began at 703.[23]

I begin the exegesis of the synoptic narrative of pothê by noting again that the first reference to Achilles in the catalogue has indeed all the appearance of being strictly traditional, in that there is reference to his cholos, "anger," but none to either pothê or mênis. The author will, however, return *first* to the narrative of pothê, but only through a pointedly artificial means that initially reintroduces the topos

in connection with the at first seemingly unrelated figure of Protesilaos, whose inclusion appears to depend merely on the traditional requirement for the completeness of the catalogue.

Protesilaos, who is the first to be listed in the continuation of the catalogue after the echo of the original invocation of the Muse, has fallen in battle, but although he is missed by his troops, he will be *replaced*:

> οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδ᾽ οἳ ἄναρχοι ἔσαν, **πόθεόν** γε μὲν ἀρχόν:
> ἀλλά σφεας κόσμησε Ποδάρκης ὄζος Ἄρηος (703-04)
> but they would not be leaderless [anarchoi], though **bereft** [potheon] of their leader, for Podarcês, scion of Ares, ordered [kosmêse] their ranks…

The threat of *anarchy* posed by the absence, pothê, resulting from the death of Protesilaos is stemmed by Podarcês, who puts the troops in order, kosmêse. In the face of the threat of *disorder*, of what would be akosmos (recalling, incidentally, the description of Thersites' garbled speech at 2.213), a scion of Ares will fill the absence, pothê, left by the fallen leader. Just as one warrior falls, there will always be another to spring up and fill his place; a shoot of Ares, ὄζος Ἄρηος, will always rise up again no matter how many times what the earth gives forth might be mown down.

Agamemnon's (ill-fated) deceptive speech, addressed to the laos as therapôntes Arêos, recalls his characterization (along with Menelaus) as κοσμήτορε λαῶν (1.16 ≡ 375) in the first of book two's nine κοσμη- terms[24] at 126. Agamemnon, in an underhanded attempt to shame the host, reduces the ranks of men to bands ordered, διακοσμηθεῖμεν, ten to one against the Trojans. And, despite the threat to order posed by Thersites in the second and third occurrences (2.213; 214), they will once again be properly ordered, διεκόσμεον.[25]

So, returning to the narrative of pothê, it makes sense that Protesilaos' band would be introduced with allusions to vegetation and Demeter, earth-goddess of the dead, and that Podarcês would be both the scion of Ares. So even though Protesilaos was the more warlike, ἀρήϊος (2.708),

> …τι λαοὶ │ δεύονθ᾽ ἡγεμόνος, **πόθεόν** γε μὲν ἐσθλὸν ἐόντα: (708-09)
>
> …the laos │ were not lacking a leader, although **bereft** (potheon) of the superior man.

Yet although the resurfacing of pothê appears to have no relevance to the pothê of Achilles' curse, there is one subtle detail that belies this superficial appearance. For the name of the hero that substitutes for the fallen Protesilaos, and puts his band in order, kosmêse, is "Podarcês," the '*name*' that echoes that *word* that served as Achilles' epithet[26] just nineteen lines earlier in that first 'traditional' reference to the Myrmidon leader in the catalogue (688).[27] And this correspondence is no mere coincidence, even though there is absolutely no substantive, thematic connection between Podarcês qua 'character' and Achilles. Indeed, it is the very fact that there is no substantive connection that makes what is thus a purely artificial, poetic contrivance on the pothê author's part so significant![28] For the author here reveals, although this fact will not be confirmed until the *coup de grâce* of his poetic artifice with the concluding reference to the absent Achilles in CASE III at the end of the Greek catalogue at 780, that he is artificially, willfully, and expressly manipulating what ought to be the traditional catalogue in order to advance his own original narrative of pothê. Let me stress the importance of carefully isolating the following question: what better opportunity could there be to highlight the critical originality of his own recreation of the epic than in contrasting it against what should be the *most* conservative, the *most* traditional, the *most* formulaic, the *most* pointedly Muse-dependent contexts that is the catalogue?

Now we are in a position to take the exacting measure of the pothê author's individual *genius* in his deliberate exposition of his own *invention*. For it is no accident that he chooses here—in the

catalogue that he introduced with his fictional narrator's explicit and ironic indication of his, i.e., the 'poet's' (in fact, merely the instrumental narrator's), own inability to impart the mythos or ***name*** the multitude without the assistance of the Muse, πληθὺν δ᾽ οὐκ ἂν ἐγὼ μυθήσομαι οὐδ᾽ **ὀνομήνω** (2.488)—to blatantly *invent* what is thus deliberately exposed to be nothing other than a *purely fictional character* with an *invented fictional name* added into the catalogue: Podarcês. Once it is recognized that "Podarkês" is serving the express artistic purpose of linking the figure for whom "Podarkês" serves as therapôn, or second-in-command, i.e., Protesilaos, to the one who, as shall soon be seen, is to be negatively compared to him, i.e., podarkês Akhilleus—indeed with all (bogus) *appearances*, or *resonances*, of a traditional line end formulaic match, ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεὺς (2.688) ≈ Ποδάρκης ὄζος Ἄρηος (2.704)—then we must also recognize that the author is obliging us to question whether or not there was in fact any such "Podarcês" in some traditional catalogue; that is, whether this 'name' was one the poet (narrator) would not have been able to recite, οὐδ᾽ ὀνομήνω, in the absence of the Muse; that is, to question whether there ever 'was'[29] a Podarcês at Troy.[30]

The author might have left it at that; might have left us only with *suspicions* of a more or less conscious allegorical manipulation of legend; might have left us within the range of the wiggle room of arguments over the possible range of traditional artistic interpretation of oral tradition. But instead he goes a step further in providing the means for an unequivocal demonstration, not only of his deliberate manipulation of the inherited mythos of yore in the creation of a fictional name, but as well of his awareness of the *arbitrariness of this mere sign* "Podarcês," along with the ensuing secularizing implications. For the question just raised can, indeed, be answered conclusively and unequivocally precisely on the basis of the status of the signification of names. Just when we are led, first, to suspect that the author is fully aware of the arbitrariness of the name(/sign) "Podarcês," that is, led to question whether there is any descriptive significance of the *name* in the case of the 'character' thus named—such

as attaches to the *word*(/sign) used as adjectival epithet of the swift-footed hero who will finally run Hector down around the walls of Troy—that somehow goes beyond the use of the name/sign as a contrivance to forge the comparative link, it is just as we are led to this point that we notice that this name/sign is placed in direct proximity to that other name/sign of "Protesilaos" that is *unequivocally explicated by the author* as a figura etymologica. For we must recall that at 2.702 he was the "first of the Achaeans" to leap from his ship—emphatically established *as the very first*, πολὺ πρώτιστον, in the superlative that also serves to ring out phonetically the 'etymology' of Proto-*si*-laos' name—at the head of his fighting band of laos, and die, νηὸς ἀποθρῴσκοντα πολὺ πρώτιστον Ἀχαιῶν, the first *hero*, that is, whose death occasions pothê among his laos:

> ἥρως Πρωτεσίλαος ἀρήϊος: οὐδέ τι λαοὶ
> δεύονθ᾽ ἡγεμόνος, πόθεόν γε μὲν ἐσθλὸν ἐόντα: (2.708)

So, just at the point when we are seeking to determine whether the name "Podarcês" is mere poetic contrivance and the "character" it would designate an instance of naked and expedient invention, and just as we are obliged to determine whether the sign "Podarcês" as applied here has any such meaning as when it is used as a meaningful descriptor of Achilles, we find that the arbitrary name of this mere subordinate therapôn is to be measured against the "meaningful," allegorically meaningful that is, name of his principal. And given that there is no basis whatsoever upon which to conclude that Podarcês actually "was" podarcês, i.e., swift-footed, to match the confirmation that Protesilaos "was" indeed the first of his laos, we are left to conclude that the comparison confirms *unequivocally* our suspicions regarding the arbitrariness and meaninglessness of the name/sign "Podarcês," that is, that it is not only merely an arbitrary name/sign, but also, what is worse, a name/sign *with no signified*.

But are we not now also obliged to suspect that the comparison redounds back upon the putative touchstone of meaning? For just as the 'meaning' of the name "Protesilaos" serves to highlight the meaninglessness and arbitrariness of "Podarcês" in its comparative lack of any such etymologico-allegorical significance, so also does the arbitrariness of the *use* of this name/signifier "Podarcês," as a naked and expedient instance of poetic invention, serve to raise extended suspicions that the 'meaning' of "Protesilaos" may *also* be serving some expedient poetic purpose, one that is now *merely* allegorical. And what would this mean for the tradition? What questions would this raise regarding the status of the *hero* that should 'be' the signified of this name? What would this import regarding the ontology of the immortal kleos that supposedly preserves the hero's name in perpetuity, safeguarded by the memory of the Muses? Moreover, may we not also now surmise that the author is well aware of the way in which a warrior who may actually have once served as the first of his laos, and thus gained the descriptor "protesilaos" as an epithet, comes, through generations of transmission of his tale, to bear solely the epithet in the place of his name, i.e., "Protesilaos," as the original arbitrary signifier of the proper name is separated from the once meaningful epithet? Only once meaningful, however, because the very process of traditional transmission of the single character trait named by the epithet supplants the original name itself, paring away any reliable remembrance of the *idiosyncratic* biography of the *actual* man, the original signified, leaving only the eviscerated husk of a mythologized type-hero and the resultantly merely allegorical epithet as name/sign behind. We may, moreover, consider how the relationship of this process to the value of kleos is brought to an aporetic thematization in the figure/figura etymologica of that very name incorporating the problem of kleos itself, that is, the name of Patroclus, i.e., Patr-kleos, as the question of invention may again be posed by asking: if Protesilaos' therapôn is an unequivocal case of invention, what about Achilles'?[31]

And, indeed, the pothê author is *exploiting* the name "Protesilaos" for some *merely* allegorical purpose that is, as well, to be distinguished, in being entirely deliberate and conscious, from whatever figuræ etymologicæ may have been passed down *naïvely* as unconscious mythos in the tradition. However, the full significance of the Podarcês linkage in CASE I that will set Achilles off to be negatively compared to Protesilaos in CASE III is only evident at the end of the Greek catalogue. For the logic of the synoptic narrative of pothê will still not yet be obvious even in the next formulaic reiteration, that is, in CASE II, in connection with an equally insignificant leader, Philoctetes, who is also ostensibly just another entry among many in the catalogue, particularly given the seemingly traditional *formulaic repetition* of 703, οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδ᾽ οἳ ἄναρχοι ἔσαν, πόθεόν γε μὲν ἀρχόν (726 ≡ 703), "but they would not be leaderless [anarchoi], though bereft [potheon] of their leader."

Although these lines are identical, employing an ostensibly traditional formulaic repetition, the two cases do, in fact, differ. For in the case of Protesilaos (CASE I), the author establishes the conventional process of the substitution of the therapôn to redress the exposure to pothê that results from the death of the leader, the principal. "Protesilaos" acts as a leader should in serving as *a* protesilaos, that is, as *a* leader who steps out first, leading his laos bravely into battle. His death at the head of his laos is righteous, as is the appropriate substitution for him by his therapôn, who, though a lesser (and, in this peculiar case, an entirely fabricated) man, fills the place of the superior man, thus redressing the exposure to the threat of disorder, the threat of the akosmos, that comes with anarchy. Such is the conventional process of substitution, the paradigm.

CASE II, the case of Philoctetes, diverges from the paradigm in one important regard: Medôn is called upon to substitute for Philoctetes while his leader is, however, *still living*. Incapacitated, Philoctetes sits out the opening of the war on an island while his therapôn, Medôn, fills in him for him. CASE II, therefore, represents an exception to the convention established in CASE I. Moreover, it should

be noted that the connection between CASES I & II established in the collocation of 2.726 ≡ 2.703 is confirmed in its significance beyond the mere reiteration of a putatively traditional formula in that the otherwise seemingly unconnected figures of Podarcês and Medôn are brought together deliberately, but in an otherwise apparently arbitrarily fashion in one other place at 13.693ff. when Medôn joins with Podarcês to lead a tribe named the Phthians, Φθίων.[32]

It is when we turn to CASE III, that of Achilles and Patroclus (although here in book two the therapôn Patroclus is not expressly mentioned), that we can make sense of the Philoctetes' exception. For whereas Philoctetes had a *legitimate* excuse for allowing his therapôn to substitute for him, that is, whereas Philoctetes was willing to fight and thus his absence and the threat of pothê that arises from it represent a legitimate exception to the convention established in CASE I, Achilles has no such excuse. Achilles' absence is an *illegitimate* exception to the rule; there is no excuse for him to subject his men, his laos, to the threat of pothê *while he is still living* and able.

The linkage between CASES II and III is, moreover, confirmed in an important observation offered by G.S. Kirk, who notes the echo of the earlier reference to Achilles' achos at 694 in Philoctetes' achos at 724: τῆς ὅ γε κεῖτ᾽ ἀχέων, τάχα δ᾽ ἀνστήσεσθαι ἔμελλεν (2.694) vis-à-vis: ἔνθ᾽ ὅ γε κεῖτ᾽ ἀχέων: τάχα δὲ μνήσεσθαι ἔμελλον Ἀργεῖοι (2.724-5). Kirk seems to have some sense of the unfavorable implications for Achilles when, noting the way each passage repeats κεῖτο in parallel (688[33] ~ 694[34]; 721 ~ 724[35]): "the meaning of the verb is metaphorical in Akhilleus' case, literal in Philoktetes'—the former was just sitting around, the latter is lying in agony" (233).[36] While Kirk fails to recognize how this linkage is part of the more complex schema of the synoptic narrative of pothê, he does hit upon the fact that the author here is thus establishing the *illegitimacy*, not only of Achilles' "just sitting around," but also of *his very eponymous achos*: Philoctetes' achos is worthy; Achilles' is not.

The importance of the fact that Achilles will, in book sixteen, allow his therapôn to substitute for him while he is still living, that is, while still just sitting around, is brought out in the comparison between CASES I and III, specifically in the Podarcês linkage. For the author expressly indicates that Protesilaos served as the warlike leader of his laos **while he still lived**, τῶν αὖ Πρωτεσίλαος ἀρήϊος ἡγεμόνευε | **ζωὸς ἐών** (2.698-99), a phrase that thus carries more meaning than is at first evident, the point being that a leader should *always* serve as a protesilaos *as long as* he is still living. Indeed, such is the very definition of a hero, as is explicitly established in the following lines that collocate **ἥρως** with **ζωὸς**:

> **ἥρως** Πρωτεσίλαος ἀρήϊος: οὐδέ τι λαοὶ
> δεύονθ᾽ ἡγεμόνος, πόθεόν γε μὲν ἐσθλὸν ἐόντα: (2.708-09)
> …Warlike **hero** Protesilaos: but in no way did the laos
> lack a leader, although they longed for the genuine man.

And are not Phoenix' exhortations to Achilles in book nine a call to just "this sort of heroic action of past heroes worthy of kleos we have learned of," οὕτω καὶ τῶν πρόσθεν ἐπευθόμεθα κλέα ἀνδρῶν | ἡρώων (9.524-25), a call, that is, to be just the sort of "genuine," ἐσθλὸν, hero we find here paradigmatically figured in Protesilaos? Is not Phoenix reminding Achilles that he risks falling short of this measure of kleos should he fail to heed the call? And would not the attribution of kleos to one who falls short of this measure be spurious? Would not such a kleos be reduced to nothing more than *an unattested rumor*? The "sort of kleos," κλέος οἷον, that is, that could only be taken on faith—on faith in what is heard from the Muses, faith in what is upheld *only* by tradition—as opposed to being attested by any first hand witness: ἀκούομεν οὐδέ τι ἴδμεν (2.486)? And what if the author of *our Iliad* simply decided *not* to take the story of Achilles' on faith, opting instead simply to reinvent it? Should not a hero be one who is *worthy* of the kleos of tradition, of the ancestors, one who rightly deserve his own figura

etymologica, even if *merely* a therapôn, in being called a Patr-kleos, precisely by acting in the capacity, recalling that other figura etymologica, of a worthy protesilaos? One who acts, to point prognostically to the example implied in CASE III, just as Patroclus does when he enters the battle in Achilles' place while he, the principal, is still living—worthy yes, even if, as therapôn, as *surrogate*, not himself the "genuine," ἐσθλὸν, item Achilles ought to be? That "gilt counterfeit," as Shakespeare's Thersites knowingly calls him? That "fool," νήπιος, who enters the battle as the acting protesilaos, by the prow of none other than Protesilaos' ship (16.286), even if, like Podarcês, he does not really quite measure up to the one for whom he is substituting? But also, in allowing his therapôn to enter the battle in his place as he does, is not Achilles himself *reduced* to something oddly akin to *Patroclus*' therapôn, the therapôn who will have to step in to attempt to redress the immitigable pothê that ensues when this ad hoc protesilaos falls valorously in battle? Is not podarcês Akhilleus thus reduced to what Podarcês represented vis-à-vis Protesilaos, a "Podarcês" to protesilaos Patr-kleos, running, if swiftly, nonetheless late, into the fray?

But this is not yet all that is to be made of the merely allegorical role of Protesilaos. For just as the reversal of the comparison of "Podarcês" to "Protesilaos," whereby the allegorical meaning of Protesilaos' name exposed the arbitrariness of Podarcês', resulted in Podarcês' 'name' reducing Protesilaos' to a *mere* allegory (and implied epithet of Achilles' therapôn), so does the CASE I-CASE III comparison between Protesilaos and Achilles effected by the Podarcês linkage threaten to reduce Achilles—whose name ought to have been the *substance* of his immortal kleos—through the allegorical 'meaning' of *his* name to something less than a hero, perhaps even arguably *less than a man*. For the author's affirmation of "Protesilaos" as a figura etymologica meaning "he who is the first of his laos" in the exegetical phrase whereby the specific laos in question is named, πρώτιστον Ἀχαιῶν (2.702), "first of the Achaeans," when viewed in light of the Podarcês linkage, confirms the implied allegorical figura etymologica of "Achilles" meaning "he who is the bane of his laos."[37] The comparison between Achilles

and Protesilaos is confirmed in the phonetic echo[38] of this reference to the Achaeans in the reference only eight lines earlier to what is, however, at this early stage in the epic, so far only Achilles' own achos for Briseis, τῆς ὅ γε κεῖτ᾽ ἀχέων (2.694). The limitation of this etymologico-allegorical identification to Achilles' own achos at this point is directly analogous to the limitation of what is only left implied of Patroclus' role as Achilles' protesilaos-therapôn; just as the full import of the synoptic narrative of pothê is not realized until book sixteen, such is also the case with the way in which what starts out as Achilles' own achos is ultimately transmuted into the pan-*ach*aean achos resulting from Achilles' curse.[39] And so it is appropriate as well to recall the way in which the curse most intimately links pothê with Achilles' name, prefiguring the ultimate undermining of the kleos whose very substance should be the name as just suggested above, as well as linking Achilles' name with those he intends to be the victims of his curse, i.e., the sons of the Achaeans, ἦ ποτ᾽ Ἀχιλλῆος ποθὴ ἵξεται υἱας Ἀχαιῶν (1.240). One day, ἦ ποτ᾽, even Achilles will be forced, *despite himself,* to accept that he, too, is an Achaean.

Finally, it will not be until the author reminds us of the relevance of these narrative links to his attack on the institutions of authoritative speech as once again he invokes the Muse, τίς τὰρ τῶν ὄχ᾽ ἄριστος[40] ἔην σύ μοι[41] ἔννεπε Μοῦσα (2.761), "who of these was the best, oh Muse, you, tell me," that the true significance of these otherwise seemingly inconsequential references of CASES I and II to pothê—which now may be defined as involving specifically the absence of a leader fallen in battle—will be determinable in their connection with Achilles. For now, these occurrences of pothê rejoin, in the case of Achilles, CASE III, the *traditional* Iliadic theme of mênis:

> And best by far of the men was Telamonian Ajax
> While Achilles **raged on** [**μήνιεν**]; he who was by far the strongest,
> And his horses that bore the noble Peleus.

But off in his beaked sea-crossing ships

Lay Achilles, **raging apart** [**ἀπομηνίσας**] at Agamemnon, shepherd of the laos,

Atrides; while his men distracted themselves by the surf

With the discus and throwing spears and drawing

Bows; and the horses stood by the chariots

Grazing on clover and parsley from the marshes.

And the chariots lay well-covered

Under tents; and they were **bereft of** [**ποθέοντες**] their war-loving leader

Wandering here and there in the camp apart from the battle. (768-80)

Yet it is further proof of the subtlety of the author's poetic manipulation of the traditional form of the catalogue that the reemergence of the mênis narrative occurs in a fashion that seems a merely incidental aside, ὅφρ᾽ Ἀχιλεὺς μήνιεν (769), "while Achilles 'happened to be' raging on…." This then provides what is only a seemingly incidental occasion, in *passing over* a reminder of his mênis, to bring book two's synoptic narrative of pothê—the privileged topos—to a conclusion, a conclusion that by implication places Achilles in functionally the same position as those other *inconsequential heroes whose deaths gave rise to pothê*. The author's manipulation of the muse-inspired form of rote recitation both *plays up* the pothê narrative, while also playing down the traditional mênis narrative, presented here as little more than an aside; for the very invocation of the Muse at the outset of the catalogue, and the reinvocation at the head of this passage in miniature that closes the catalogue, serves as *an ironic expansion of the initial invocation* in the first line of the epic, putatively announcing the 'central theme' by invoking the Muse to "sing the mênis" of Achilles.

[1] Translations are my own. I opt to translate μῆνις as rancor, as opposed to the classical "wrath," to emphasize the tenure of Achilles' wrath spanning over the course of his quarrel with Agamemnon.

[2] Margalit Finkelberg reminds us: "It has never been seriously challenged that, to the extent that he derived poetry from divine inspiration, Homer must have seen himself as a mouthpiece of the Muses" (68).

[3] Marcel Detienne's study of the Muse-inspired poets as masters of truth remains a classic. More recently Louise Pratt, aligned with Detienne in this regard, describes the conception of the epic poets' relationship to truth as follows: "these passages construct our most important evidence for the notion that the archaic poets were fundamentally committed to truth (*aletheia*) in narrative. These passages construct a model of truth and narrative reference that is essentially nonfiction, insofar as it leaves the individual poet *no room to invent, no room to fictionalize* [my emphasis added]. The poet becomes a passive mouthpiece of the Muses, changing nothing they tell him, *adding nothing of his own* [added]. The Muses themselves are assumed to be reliable eyewitnesses, who not only know everything, but desire to reveal it fully to the poet and the mortal audience" (7).

[4] Again, Pratt: "There is scarcely any other part of the poem in which the audience would have been more likely to have a vested interest in the information preserved... The potential for dispute among his contemporaries about their presence at this memorable event may compel the poet to look for authority for the catalog elsewhere. Indeed, the imaginable pressure of such a situation is enough to explain the unusually elaborate invocation with its simultaneous confession of human weakness and boast of divine authority. The poet would not want to be accused of manufacturing information or of excluding it, nor would he want responsibility for the list at all" (41).

[5] "What does one hear in Thersites' speech? If performed aloud, the speech strikes us as containing massive correption, the reduction of long vowels and diphthongs from their usual value forming a 'heavy' syllable in the hexameter, to a 'light,' short value. In addition, synizesis (the combining of normally separate vowel sounds to produce one) produces the same auditory effect: Thersites slurs his words" (112).

[6] Thus Laird would no doubt be inclined to go beyond G. S. Kirk's characterization, as will I, of Thersites that he is "not exactly minor" (vol. 1, 138). I question Kirk's choice between "boldness" and "rashness," in favor of the latter, glossing the etymology of Thersites' name from θάρσος. Arthur Adkin's position is also subject to reconsideration, namely his rejection of the notion that "the (lower class) Thersites [might be], per impossible, brave and handsome" (173). I am surprised to note Thalmann's flat rejection of the possibility of "courage" (14) given his sensitivity to the ideological implications in play. Neither does Carolyn Higbie countenance any such notion (32 n33).

[7] This would be perhaps a particularly telling instance in which to consider, turning again to Finkelberg, the, "problem … that the implications of [taking Homer as a mouthpiece of the Muses] are not always taken into account, mainly because of a tendency to credit oral poets, and especially one as great as Homer, with a considerable degree of creative freedom. But the extent of the *conscious* creative freedom at the traditional poet's disposal is open to serious question" (68). The question—however seriously I may be taking it—that I have in mind here is in what measure would Homer's self-reflection be self-*conscious*. For even were we to credit Finkelberg's assessment of such as Homer's creative freedom in arguing that it "must have commenced at the very point where the material predetermined by tradition ended," as she goes on to assert that, "here indeed, the poet seems to be free to elaborate the traditional material handed down to him with new details, digressions, and so on" (69), I would like to consider

how we would be disposed to assessing the creative freedom in this moment not in terms of where the traditional material *ended*, for the ostensibly most quintessentially and most ossified traditional material of the catalogue has actually not yet got going, but rather in thinking of *it having yet to begin*, particularly in that what is to follow this moment in which the poet, let's even say "Homer" here, *at least purports* to be exposing himself as, or *at least figuring himself as*, as yet *not* in the thrall of the Muses and as pointedly experiencing himself self-consciously as queueing up what would traditionally need to be such traditional content as should *not* be subject to 'creative license' to elaborate *any* manner of details, or digressions, or whatever other sorts of molestations.

[8] It perhaps warrants noting that this is only the second instance of the ubiquitous formula. The first shares with this instance the characteristic that it is used by the narrator to report the words of Achilles to Athena (1.201) that no other mortal could hear nor know, the fact being plainly established with the explicit indication that Athena "appeared to [and no doubt spoke with] him only" (1.198), report, that is, what he could only report by dint of the Muses and thus subject to no other corroboration than such as vouchsafed by the mythos-authority thereby vested.

[9] I use this symbol here to indicate that these words are **exactly** identical, indeed even just that bit more identical than was Dream's recitation to Agamemnon, requiring, as it did, the adjustment the pronouns.

[10] Of course I am deferring for the moment consideration of the import of the question of whether the 'decision' is to be attributed to *our author*.

[11] No one is more impressed with Nestor's powers of persuasion than Richard Martin who goes so far as to advance, I'm sorry to put it this way, the flatly untenable claim that Nestor, as "ideal speaker… always gains consent" (110). The fact that Nestor *does* gain consent here, with the deleterious outcome that ensues from Zeus' ruse—or, again, we may ask whether it is precisely Dream's conceit in this particular regard of drawing Nestor in as co-executor of the ruse—comes ironically in direct contrast to Nestor's pointed *failure* to persuade either of the quarreling kings in book one.

[12] The term, incidentally, used of the voice of the Muses by Hesiod.

[13] Even though I am anticipating what is to follow and getting ahead of myself in the argument, I cannot even go so far myself to refrain any longer, even if it would be only for tactical reasons for the passing moment, from marking the necessary critical equivocation on the notion of the divine origin the message. I am, of course, at this point assuming that many of my readers will be getting a pretty good sense of where this is all going…

[14] Although some may chafe at my translation of οὖλον "evil," my intention is not to convey, or decide upon, the ethical status of Dream, but rather to capture Dream's personified manipulative agency.

[15] Or rather as the merely putative paragon of persuasion as opposed to Martin's "preternatural Pylian" (101).

[16] This, incidentally, is the most important reason that Nestor should *not* be adequated to Homer, however mellifluous his speech may be, pace Martin.

[17] I present my reading of the author's ironic contrast of Thersites to Nestor at the latter's expense in my study as well.

[18] "If we do indeed discern the reality of an artistically unified *Iliad*, then we must also be ready to say that the unity of our *Iliad* is itself traditional. This is not to detract from a work of genius… Rather, I would say simply that the genius behind our Iliad's artistic unity is in large part the Greek epic tradition itself" (79).

[19] I do not concur with Keith Stanley's argument against this phrase as a purely formalistic reinvocation of the Muse (20), although his suggestion that the phrase is drawing attention to Achilles' unusual status is not inconsistent with the general thrust of my reading. I will, just below, make reference to a significant point of agreement between my findings and Stanley's.

[20] Here I note that Stanley's structural reading of the catalogue results in a compatible conclusion: "[Homer] has created texts that ironize themselves: and in the Catalogue, through *formal manipulation* [emphasis added], the revered historical 'record' is subjected to [and subverted by - added] interpretation and evaluation consistent with what will emerge as the poet's view of the drama of *The Iliad* as a whole" (24).

[21] Here I turn again to Stanley's findings, this time to his astute conclusions regarding Homer's relationship to the tradition whence his Iliad stems. While I am not addressing the same details, and while I will go further in this direction than he, I note the compatibility of his conclusion: "In view of his handling of the Catalogue in general, this pointed, if otherwise anachronistic, juxtaposition of the quasi-rhapsodic Thamyris to Nestor—figures whose status is represented as peculiarly dependent on their memory—suggests that our poet is engaging in a *polemic* [emphasis added] not simply with a rival tradition but with an earlier stage of his own" (24).

[22] With the exception of the "feelings of Menelaus," T. W. Allen's list of Homer's added anecdotes (322) comprises three of the key moments in my synoptic narrative of pothê: this first reference to Achilles; my Case I, which he refers to solely as "the death of Protesilaus;" and my Case II, "the illness and absence of Philoctetes." These instances are important points of evidence for his compatible assertion that the catalogue has not "passed verbatim et literatim into *The Iliad*."

[23] Although he didn't see that it is pothê and substitution that defines the linkage between these cases, Kirk does note that: "the elaborations of Akhilleus, Protesilaos, and Philoktetes have much in common stylistically, and many points of contact with the rest of the poem; they are in all probability by the monumental composer, Homer himself" (vol. 1, 233).

[24] Second place is taken by books twelve and fourteen each with three occurrences.

[25] The fifth and sixth occurrences are examples of well-ordered bands listed in the catalogue; first, those of the Athenian Menestheus, who was rivaled only by Nestor, in the ordering, κοσμῆσαι (2.554), of horses and men. For my treatment of what I argue is the novel invention of the Athenian leader, again, see my study, "XXXXX"

[26] Richard Janko notes this without offering any interpretation (in Kirk, vol. IV, 133).

[27] And only the second instance (the first coming at 1.121) of what is, however, the patently traditional epithet of the hero that the author must presumably have inherited and whose commonplace occurrences later in the epic might otherwise obscure the author's precise manipulation of it here.

[28] Here Steve Scully's criticism (73-74) of Paolo Vivante's position regarding the irrelevance of Homeric epithets to poetic context is useful in setting up the significative value of the epithet that will I argue, however, be

raised to another degree of precisely de-contextualized remove (with which Scully reports to me he does not concur) through the artificiality of the pothê author's use of Achilles' common epithet. Yet, coming full circle, we may go so far as to ask ourselves whether the author was not himself addressing this very question suggested in Vivante's characterizations that epithets are "irrelevant to the narrative occasion" and "without any pointed connection of meaning with the context" (Vivante 13, cited in Scully).

[29] I mark this equivocation here, as the surfacing of this fictional awareness threatens to extend to a challenge to the authority of *all* mythoi as accounts of putatively once existing warriors.

[30] Thus I challenge Combellack's claim that "no one can prove that any particular name, even any particular peculiarly appropriate name, is [Homer's own invention]" (1950 351), although it would be more accurate to describe this arbitrarily contrived name as peculiarly inappropriate, or misappropriated. The notion that our author has invented the name, the 'character,' if it were the case, would thus suggest that the Podarcês of identical pedigree in *The Catalogue of Women*, attributed in antiquity to Hesiod, would postdate and follow this epic in this regard. The dating on the *Catalogue* is an open question, but I would refer here to M. L. West's date of 540-520 (1985 pgs. 130ff.; 1999 pgs. 380).

[31] And by this novel means we surface in the territory explored by the neo-analytical school.

[32] For my in-depth treatment see both *XXXXX* and "XXXXXXX."

[33] The line in which the pothê author establishes the ποδάρκης epithet.

[34] The brief introduction of Achilles at the head of this section that comprises the synoptic narrative of pothê closes with this line which also thus immediately precedes the transition to Protesilaos Case I.

[35] The author is also here effecting a deft reference to what may be presumed to be Philoctetes' critical role in killing Paris (as reflected in Proclus' summary of *The Little Iliad*) at the close of the war, after the death of Achilles, especially since this reference serves as a closing bookend—in this CASE I/CASE II logic—to the reference to the Cyprian Protesilaos' role in the opening of the war with Achilles trailing behind.

[36] He also states: "What shows [verses 2.724-25] to be authentic is precisely their ingenious overlap with the Akhilleus passage, which would be beyond the capacity, or intentions, of any rhapsodic or *later* [my emphasis added to point out my disagreement with this particular point] developer" (233).

[37] I am tweaking the etymology originally proposed by Palmer (79) slightly to emphasize what I am arguing to be the pothê author's deprecation of Achilles. Nagy labors to validate this etymology (69-83) as well for the name of the Achaeans (83-93). However, given my findings here, namely that the CASE I-CASE III comparison establishes the author's fully deliberate, i.e., conscious, manipulation of this 'etymology,' and the author's challenge to the very notion of such an 'etymology' as a bearer of naïve mythical, or traditional, 'truth' through the reduction of such etymological meaning to the status of the merely allegorical, the linguistic etymology of the term is of little more than antiquarian interest, irrelevant one way or the other to a self-contained reading of the achos terms in this epic.

[38] While I am in agreement with what details Bruce Louden (33-34) presents in his dictional analyses of his self-admittedly incomplete selection of achos passages, I see nothing in these sorts of phonetic resonances in such

instances that particularly supports the notion of *The Iliad* as an oral text. I am, by way of contrast, more impressed by the fact that the intricacies of this synoptic narrative of pothê, and even more so that the intensive poetics on the syllabic level presented in my abbreviated analysis of the curse above, have gone unappreciated by generations of careful readers of the written text.

[39] Although Nagy (80) correctly outlines the process whereby what is originally Achilles' achos is transmuted into the pan-Achaean achos and then back again into Achilles' achos over the death of Patroclus, he overlooks this instance of Achilles' achos in book two. It is simple enough to deduce why, for although this instance is serving to link Achilles' achos to the achos that will descend upon the Greeks in the form of the pothê of Achilles' curse, it does so only through the displaced reference to the laos (in question in both the names of Achilles and Protesilaus) in the linkage of CASE III to CASE I in which the Achaeans are first protected by the model hero. Thus although Nagy identifies the "*common Homeric* [emphasis added] collocation of laós/laón with Akhaiôn" (83) he fails to recognize how the pothê author employs this collocation in the case of Protesilaos (whom Nagy passes over). Moreover, in overlooking that this protesilaean collocation establishes the negative comparison whereby Achilles is exposed in his failing to lead the Achaean laos, Nagy fails to recognize that Achilles' separation from the laos is what is being stressed. Thus I point to this as an early piece of evidence that challenges Nagy's (and Dale Sinos') contention that Patroclus' death will serve to "reintegrate [Achilles] with the laós" (83), at least in the sort of essentially non-problematic fashion that presumably served to secure Achilles' heroic kleos in the traditional mênis epic that may be supposed to have been passed down through the generations preceding our Iliad. While the broader tradition is in mind, we might also stop to ponder how the author of *The Iliad* is manipulating what we find in the Cyprian treatment of Achilles' entrance into battle after Protesilaos at the opening of the war balanced against the other reference outside the frame of Achilles' epic in Philoctetes' role in concluding the war.

[40] We should not now fail to note the ironic ring of this term.

[41] The juxtaposition of the pronouns σύ/μοι here encapsulates the disingenuous irony of the portrayal of the 'intimate relationship' of "me," i.e., 'Homer' the 'poet', to "you," i.e., 'his' Muse. What is more, the pronouns, in prefiguring similar emphatic juxtapositions between the first and second person pronouns in the case of Patroclus and Achilles coming later, indicate—again disingenuously—his own relationship as poet to the Muses as being analogous to the relationship of the therapôn to his first in command. This conception of the relationship is confirmed by Hesiod at *Th*. 99-100: αὐτὰρ ἀοιδὸς Μουσάων θεράπων. Thus, the challenge to tradition operates on both the level of the ironic critique of the relationship of poet/Muse as a reflection on the workings of the form of the poem and on the thematic level of the challenge to the heroic code in the relationship of therapôn Patroclus/and would-be hero Achilles. That Achilles is reduced to only a would-be hero is, again, established by the implication of explicitly naming Protesilaos as what Achilles is not, ἥρως. On the poet as therapôn of the Muses see Nagy 291-297 and 301-306, Steven Lowenstam 142-43, and Leslie Collins 242 and passim.

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