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War as a spectacle[1]

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« Gaze, vision and visuality » : the object of the Freiburg conference indicates a major interest in visual perception in Greek literature. As none of these terms corresponds to a Greek proper word, at least in the archaic period I am concerned with, it seems difficult to deal with this very large perspective. For a general overview I will therefore use the notions developed by Alex Purves in his recent book, *Space and Time in Greek Literature*, and in the introduction by Michael Squire to the recent volume, *Sight and the Ancient Senses*. Since I felt some astonishment that none of these books deals with Greek language concerning sight, I'll try to lean on some lexical remarks, starting with the lexical entries regarding Homer's attempt to understand what « to see » means for the Archaic period.[2] I will thereafter follow the gazes of the characters and the narrator in the *Iliad*, intending to show how the dramatic tension increases through the development of the plot until the meeting between Priam and Achilles in book 24, where I analyze the reciprocity of the gaze through the ambiguity of a famous simile. The dramatic tension of the passage owes much to this mirror effect,[3] and shows that Homeric language on gaze does not reflect a merely physical process, but may also induce a high level of emotions.

The importance and central role of sight in Homer is well proven by the number of links between seing and living: as several Homeric formulas indicate, to see means to live, and conversely to lose sight means to die.[4] As shown by Purves, taking Aristotelian terminology as his point of departure (2010, 1-64), Homer, considered a "perfect surveyor",[5] aims for an "Eusynoptic *Iliad*". In our own course through the *Iliad* from Achilles' anger to Hector's *lusis*, we will try to adopt a « bird's-eye view », borrowing the expression from de Jong and Nünlist 2004b, which means we choose some episodes and fly over the rest.[6] We share Purves' nuanced position: «Throughout the *Iliad*, human vision is complicated by the fantasy of what or how these immortals see. There is a tendency […] for the audience of the poem to take their own visual cues from these divine superwitnesses. Homeric scholarship has also emphasized, however, that the *Iliad* is difficult to visualize as a single, coherent entity. Not only do we run into problems connected with sequence and simultaneity when attempting to "see" the plot as if it were a picture, but we are also given very few examples of clear-sighted human vision within the poem. Despite scholars' observations about the occasional panoramic standpoint of the Homeric narrator, we are rarely afforded a sustained bird's-eye view. […]

• It is a pleasant duty to thank the organizers and participants of the Freiburg Gaze Conference for all their remarks, and particularly Deborah Steiner for her help in the discussion. I am also deeply grateful to Stephen Rojcewicz for more than simply correcting my English, and to the anonymous reviewers whose remarks were very useful for revising and enhancing my text.

[2] I am ashamed that I had forgotten that Snell's *Entdeckung des Geistes*, read long ago, entails a study of the words for 'see' in its first chapter, see below.

[3] See in Squire's introduction the insistence on both the reciprocity of the gaze and the mirror effect, with the splendid epigram he quotes as an epigraph, where the mirror is speaking in the first person.

[4] Létoublon 2010, Michel in this volume. See for instance
Il. 5.10 οὐδέ μέ φησι / δηρὸν ἔτ' ὄψεσθαι λαμπρὸν φάος ἠελίοιο.
18.61 = 442 ὄφρα δέ μοι ζώει καὶ ὁρᾷ φάος ἠελίοιο
24.558 αὐτόν τε ζώειν καὶ ὁρᾶν φάος ἠελίοιο.
See also the formulas with δερκ- below n.17.

[5] The expression comes from George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie*, quoted as an epigraph (Purves 2010, 1).

[6] For instance, though knowing its importance in the question of text and image, we deliberately leave aside the famous description of Achilles' shield in book 18: to our appreciation this description occurs in an intense dramatic context (Létoublon 1999), but is not part of our vision of "war as a spectacle".

We are faced with the paradox of Aristotle's interpretation of a poem that adheres in form to the principles of what is *eusynoptic*, and that, even in the surface area of its plot, fills an area that could be of approximately the right size to be seen in one view, if one could attain the right vantage point. Yet within the poem itself, the account of the war takes place only frame by frame, moving from one point of view to the next. »[7]

Homeric language of sight and semantic features

There are actually very few nouns signifying « gaze » in Homer : we may cite in the *Iliad* two items of the accusative ὄψιν, one of the dative ὄψει; the first may mean "sight" as one of the senses, the others rather mean «appearance».[8] Therefore we can suppose that there was at this period no abstract notion such as "sight", at least linguistically speaking.[9] The verbal forms are numerous: ὁράω, εἶδον, ὄψομαι, ὄπωπα already form the same heteroclitic paradigm, as the phrases with the instrumental dative of the name of sight organ, ὀφθαλμός, show.[10] Homeric Greek also knows a more archaic term, formed on **ok^{w}*- like the future and perfect already mentioned, and most often used in the dual form ὄσσε, but ὀφθαλμός appears the living form in the language of Homer, as shown by its use when the eyes encounter an injury in course of fighting.[11] As shown by other cases of such verbal paradigms formed on several

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[7] Purves 2010, 34-5.

[8] *Il.* 6.468 … πατρὸς φίλου ὄψιν ἀτυχθείς,
24.632 εἰσορόων ὄψιν τ᾽ ἀγαθὴν καὶ μῦθον ἀκούων.
20.205 ὄψει δ᾽ οὔτ᾽ ἄρ πω σὺ ἐμοὺς ἴδες οὔτ᾽ ἄρ᾽ ἐγὼ σούς.

[9] We do not share Bruno Snell's opinion (Snell 2009) that if there is in Homer no word meaning, for instance, "mind", there was in the corresponding period no notion of mind and person. We think that several features like the deliberative monologues well show that Homeric characters do have a kind of self-consciousness, as the use of μερμηρίζειν proves.

[10] *Il.* 1.587 μή σε φίλην περ ἐοῦσαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωμαι
3.28 ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδών
3.169 καλὸν δ' οὕτω ἐγὼν οὔ πω ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
3.306 ἄψ, ἐπεὶ οὔ πω τλήσομ' ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι
5.212 εἰ δέ κε νοστήσω καὶ ἐσόψομαι ὀφθαλμοῖσι
10.275 τοὶ δ' οὐκ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι
13.99 = 15.286 = 20.344 = 21.54 ὦ πόποι ἦ μέγα θαῦμα τόδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῶμαι
(14.436 ἀνέδρακεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν later)
15.488 δὴ γὰρ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσιν
15.600 νηὸς καιομένης σέλας ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι.
16.182 (τῆς) ἠράσατ', ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδὼν μετὰ μελπομένῃσιν
17.466 ὀψὲ δὲ δή μιν ἑταῖρος ἀνὴρ ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν
17.646 δὸς δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδέσθαι·
18.190 πρίν γ' αὐτὴν ἐλθοῦσαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωμαι·
19.174 ἵνα πάντες ᾽Αχαιοὶ / ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδωσι,
20.342 ὃ δ' ἔπειτα μέγ' ἔξιδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
22.25 Τὸν δ' ὃ γέρων Πρίαμος πρῶτος ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσι
22.169 ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρῶμαι·
22.236 ἐπεὶ ἴδες ὀφθαλμοῖσι,
23.202 τοὶ δ' ὡς ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι
24.246 (πρὶν) ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδεῖν βαίην δόμον ᾽Αϊδος εἴσω.
24.392 ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὄπωπα,
24.555 λῦσον ἵν' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἴδω·
We quoted here all the instances in the *Iliad*, in order to show that the phrase occurs with all the tenses of the verb (ἴδ-, ὁρ-, are relatively frequent, but see also ὄψομαι and ὄπωπα). Furthermore, we see that the dative without a preposition occurs much more frequently than the dative with ἐν: the instrumental value of the dative is clear. Snell probably looked only at the four items with ἐν, emphasizing the locative value (Snell 2011, 23). There are numerous parallel expressions in several modern languages (French *voir de ses yeux*). In Greek, we noticed a parallel phrase with the organ used for moving in the dative, βαίνω with ποσί.

[11] For instance *Il.* 14.499 … ἔτι δ᾽ ὄβριμον ἔγχος / ἦεν ἐν ὀφθαλμῷ

lexical roots, this feature occurs for very frequent notions and is linked to fine semantic nuances[12]. We may perhaps lean on Indo-European etymology and on the meanings of some compounds like φρουρά, "watch, guard", for discerning in some occurrences that ὁράω, probably in connection with the durative aspect of the present, entails a notion of attention or intention in the sight that the aorist aspect does not show[13]. It could be interesting of course to relate these remarks on Greek usage to the theories of sight, and for instance to the «extramissionist» vs. «intromissionist» explanations.[14] Unfortunately this study would require a long time and a long text. It could be possible to speak of an objective vs. subjective meaning, with a grammatical meaning of object and subject rather than a psychological one.[15] As Snell remarked in the opening essay of *Die Entdeckung des Geistes* under the title "Die Auffassung des Menschen bei Homer", Homeric language actually knows other verbal roots for the notion of sight: he notes that λεύσσω keeps, from its etymological link with λευκός, a positive nuance, «etwas Helles schauen. Ausserdem heisst es: in die Weite schauen. [...] λεύσσειν bezeichnet offenbar bestimmte Gefühl mit, die man beim Sehen, vor allem beim Sehen bestimmter Gegenstände hat.[…] nie wird λεύσσειν beim kummervollem oder ängstlichem Sehen gebraucht.»[16] Δέρκομαι, with a complete paradigm in Homer, seems more complicated; for the first semantic approach, Snell is probably right in saying: «Dementsprechend bezeichnet bei Homer δέρκεσθαι nicht so sehr die Funktion des Auges, sondern das Strahlen des Auges, das ein anderer warnimmt.»[17] But this verb also shows uses with the instrumental dative ὀφθαλμοῖσι and as an equivalent of «to live», which seems to argue for a kind of synonymity with the suppletive paradigm.[18] Another question arises that we cannot answer here: why the I-E.. root *ok^w-, that could represent a fundamental verb for the notion of sight, does occur in Greek only in the future and perfect, both usages apparently archaic.[19]

Il 16.741 ... ὀφθαλμοὶ δὲ χάμαι πέσον έν κονίῃσι.

[12] Let us mention regarding "to say, to speak" λέγω (Hom. ἀγοράω), εἶπον, εἴρηκα : the aorist and perfect stem from ancient verbal roots with more or less the same meaning, but for the present, Homer uses ἀγοράω, a verb meaning "publicly speak", while λέγω means "to pick up, to choose". I personally studied the still more complicated case of the movement verbs ἔρχομαι, εἶμι, ἦλθον ... (Létoublon 1985). See also "to eat", ἔδω, ἐσθίω, ἔφαγον: even when we cannot recognize the specific semantic features of each stem, we may suppose that there are some. As an argument for justifying this feature, a German specialist once quoted this proverb : "Liebe Kinder haben viele Name".

[13] Chantraine 2009, 784-5, *s. v.* ὁράω: «ὁρά- signifie 'tenir les yeux sur' et se rapporte au sujet, non à l'objet et à la perception comme εἶδον.»

[14] See in Squire 2016 the articles on sight in Greek philosophy by Rudolph and Nightingale, and the introduction by Squire (2016, 16) : «As for the mechanics of sight, different Greek and Roman schools of thought championed divergent conceptual models. Crucial here are two generic theories about how vision operates, which modern scholars have labelled 'extramissionist' and 'intromissionist' respectively. According to the first 'extramissive' […] theory, the sense of sight was understood to emanate from fiery rays actively cast out from the eye, travelling to the thing seen. At the other extreme […] the atomists […] understood visible objects as emanating atom-thick replicas (*eidōla*) that moved through space and impacted upon the eye.»

[15] The subjective meaning seems also prevalent for the verbal family of σκεπτ–, σκοπ–. See L.S.J. σκέπτομαι, I "look about carefully,spy", σκοπέω "behold, contemplate […], examine, inspect".

[16] Snell (1975, 15). But see Chantraine (2009, 608): « "diriger son regard vers, voir" […]; ce verbe exprime l'idée d'un flux visuel rayonnant des yeux, non de l'objet, malgré Treu, *Von Homer zur Lyrik*, 64.»

[17] Snell (1975, 14).

[18] See with ὀφθαλμοῖσι *Il.* 14.436 ὃ δ' ἀμπνύνθη καὶ ἀνέδρακεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν,
Od. 19.446 πῦρ δ' ὀφθαλμοῖσι δεδορκώς;
for the equivalence with "live":
Il. 1.88 οὔ τις ἐμεῦ ζῶντος καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δερκομένοιο and
Od. 16.439 ζώοντός γ' ἐμέθεν καὶ ἐπὶ χθονὶ δερκομένοιο.

[19] About ὄψομαι and ὄπωπα, let us recall that Greek future tense stems from the I.-E. desiderative mood. This fact is here especially visible in the middle voice. As far as the perfect is concerned, ὄπωπα appears an archaic

Before we leave the language of sight, let us remark that βλέπω, not used in Homer but very frequent in classical Greek, seems to cover more or less the meanings of δέρκεσθαι and of ὁρῶ.

The theater of the Iliad

We propose to look at the *Iliad* as theater, a theater before the term was even coined.[20] The poet puts on stage, in a large scale spectacle, the struggle for power and the battles for Troy. He shows us a spectacle viewed by people who act as mediators for the epic audience. Our position is paradoxical since theater is generally defined by characters shown as both acting and speaking for themselves, whereas epic narrative describes them in the third person. Although Homer often utilizes direct discourse, the war does not mainly proceed through discourses, but rather through the fact that the narrative makes us "see" a spectacle with eyes other than our real physical ones. Laura Slatkin's analysis of "Tragic Visualizing in the *Iliad*" (Slatkin 2007) starts from the verbal form ἐνόησε, 'he noticed', showing how the narrative includes visual perception into a whole mental process. It is this process of seeing that draws the dynamics of battle and gives the *Iliad* a tragic tone.[21]

A recent book by Jenny S. Clay (2011) demonstrates this well, first on a general plane in a chapter called "The sighted Muse", and then more specifically in an analysis of "Envisioning Troy" from *Iliad* 12 to 17. In the third and last chapter, "Homer's Trojan Theater", the author studies *spatial forms and paths* and *memory* in a very interesting manner, showing the *hodological* nature, that is the specific pathways, of cognitive mapping in Homer.[22]

For our part, we shall develop an understanding of the main devices that the narrative of the *Iliad* uses for making us able to *see* this theater, from Achilles' anger in Book 1 to Achilles and Priam seeing each other in Book 24 and feeling an increasing tension close to the tragic one. We do not ignore the ongoing discussions on the unity of the *Iliad* and the stratification of the text,[23] however we deem it legitimate to study the Homeric text as it was transmitted through centuries, from a literary point of view.[24]

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form through vowel *o*, reduplication and lengthening. For Snell, the present tense ὄσσομαι seems frequent, whereas since it occurs only once, *Il.* 22.356 ἦ σ᾽εὖ γιγνώσκων προτιοσσομαι, that may seem rather negligible.

[20] On the link between the word θεάτρον, the verb θεάομαι and the noun θαῦμα, see Chantraine 2009, 408-9, *s. v.* θέα 'vue, spectacle, contemplation'. Θεάτρον does not actually appear in Greek before the Classical period (*LSJ*, refering to Hdt., Th., Lys.).

[21] Slatkin 2007, 19-20, see particularly 19 : "... I hope to suggest how the characters' lines of vision, in the various directions they take, may offer additional perspective on the *Iliad*'s stringent and subtle intimations of tragedy" ; and 20 : "An elaborated instance of this, decisive for the poem's plot, is Achilles' sighting –*enoëse*– of the wounded Machaon, which prompts him to send Patroclus to the ships of the Achaeans". See also Hesk 2013.

[22] Clay 2011, 96-119.

[23] See particularly West 2011 and the general problematics of Andersen & Haug 2012.

[24] See for instance de Jong 2004.

It is well known that in the *Republic* Plato rejects the dialogue between Chryses and Agamemnon in the beginning of the *Iliad* because of its quality of *mimesis*, which might let the audience believe they are in the presence of Chryses and Agamemnon themselves instead of being in the presence of a narrator.[25]

However we intend to show that the *enargeia*, "the process of bringing the subject matter vividly before the eyes" (Webb, 1997), does not, in the *Iliad*, rely on dialogue alone.[26] The Homeric narrator lets us *see* a spectacle, and especially war as a spectacle through means other than dialogue, beginning with Achilles' *mēnis*, which the proem states is the very subject of the epos.[27] The whole of the *Iliad* depicts through multiple means the different situations of conflict. The war between Achaeans and Trojans lies of course as the backdrop of this theater, but the internal conflict in the camp of the Achaeans between Achilles and Agamemnon is the actual departure point for the narrative,[28] and we will follow the thread of the various scenes the narrator allows us to 'see', referring to Purves 2010 and Allen-Hornblower 2016 for analysing more accurately the general notions of vision, watching and spectacular.

Achilles' anger

The word *mēnis*, used in the Prologue, expresses an unusual kind of anger, with a sacred and religious aspect, linking it to Apollo's anger of verses 9-12. It might also call attention to the fact that Apollo and Achilles are ritual antagonists.[29]

Let us note some visual details of the narrative: Achilles' anger is characterised by his gestures, his eyes, and the insults he hurls towards Agamemnon:

Il. 1.148 Τὸν δ' ἄρ' ὑπόδρα ἰδὼν προσέφη πόδας ὠκὺς ᾿Αχιλλεύς·
1.149 ὤ μοι ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένε κερδαλεόφρον
1.225 οἰνοβαρές, κυνὸς ὄμματ' ἔχων, κραδίην δ' ἐλάφοιο,
1.231 δημοβόρος βασιλεὺς ἐπεὶ οὐτιδανοῖσιν ἀνάσσεις·
1.194 ἕλκετο δ' ἐκ κολεοῖο μέγα ξίφος,
1.220 ἂψ δ' ἐς κουλεὸν ὦσε μέγα ξίφος,

As Erving Goffman defines it, referring to Georg Simmel's 'ideal sphere', insulting somebody aims to destroy his/her *face*, which means both his/her self-confidence and the

[25] Plat. *Rsp ;* 392e-393b. On Plato and *Mimesis*, see Halliwell 2002 who analyses in depth the evolution of Plato from Book 3 to 10 of the *Republic* on this question.

[26] On the concept of *enargeia* in Greek theoretical thought see mainly Webb 1997, 2009, Lévy & Pernot 1997, Dubel 1997, Plett 2012. On *enargeia* in Homer, see Clay 2011.

[27] Homeric Greek distinguishes several kinds of anger, the ordinary one is referred to most often with the words χόλος and κότος whereas the word μῆνις refers to a divine anger (see Muellner 1996). On anger among Greek expressions of emotions, see Cairns 2003, Most 2003, Konstan 2006. On anger and language, see Walsh 2005, with an analysis of χόλος and κότος.

[28] Allan and Cairns 2011 show the importance of the clash of individual interests with those of the community.

[29] See Nagy 1979, 289-95, and on the mirror-effect between Achilles and Apollo, Austin 1999.

image presented by that self to other people.[30] We deem it not exaggerated to apply this concept to Achilles trying to destroy, through his language, Agamemnon's *honor*, which we may find equivalent to the Homeric word αἰδώς: despite how far Goffman and Cairns may seem from each another, we think that the repetition of *honor* in Simmel's text quoted by Goffman is indicative of similarities.[31] In the short list of Achilles' insults in this passage, it may be noticed how often the insulted person is assimilated to an animal.[32] Other passages showing a male warrior assimilated to a female could lead one to conclude that the insults aim to diminish the human individual in an anthopological imaginary scale that ascends from animal at the bottom to male hero at the top. Language appears one of the ways used for fighting, as the narrator says in *Il.* 1.304 and as Diomedes states in *Il.* 9.32-3.[33]

Furthermore, we suggest that insulting the adversary (be it the enemy or a rival from the same side) might, in Homeric battle, be part of a ritual suite constituted by a challenge, an act of fighting, and a solemn proclamation of victory.[34] In the case of Achilles and Agamemnon, there will be no physical fighting, but the defeat of the adversary achieved with words is all the same as impressive as the effect of ritualised fighting among the Achaean camp.

In verse 245, Achilles violently throws away the scepter that he holds (ποτὶ δὲ σκῆπτρον βάλε γαίῃ), in strong contrast to his lengthy solemn oath in v. 232-9, where the symbolic value of the scepter implies, although this is not expressly stated in the text, that he must brandish it before taking an oath: the gesture of throwing it away receives even more power in the text from the fact that the verses do not mention his taking up and brandishing the scepter.[35]

1.232-239 ἀλλ' ἔκ τοι ἐρέω καὶ ἐπὶ μέγαν ὅρκον ὀμοῦμαι·
ναὶ μὰ τόδε σκῆπτρον, τὸ μὲν οὔ ποτε φύλλα καὶ ὄζους
φύσει, ἐπεὶ δὴ πρῶτα τομὴν ἐν ὄρεσσι λέλοιπεν,
οὐδ' ἀναθηλήσει· περὶ γάρ ῥά ἑ χαλκὸς ἔλεψε
φύλλά τε καὶ φλοιόν· νῦν αὖτέ μιν υἷες ᾽Αχαιῶν
ἐν παλάμῃς φορέουσι δικασπόλοι, οἵ τε θέμιστας
πρὸς Διὸς εἰρύαται· ὃ δέ τοι μέγας ἔσσεται ὅρκος·

This contrast strongly dramatizes the narrative. The tension induces old Nestor to enter the

[30] «… this sphere cannot be penetrated, unless the personality value of the individual is thereby destroyed. A sphere of this sort is placed around man by his honor. Language poignantly designates an insult to one's honor as 'coming too close;' the radius of this sphere marks, as it were, the distance whose trespassing by another person insults one's honor.» (Goffman 2005, 62-63).

[31] On αἰδώς in Homer and thereafter, see Cairns 1993. The reference to Scodel's *Epic Facework* (2008) in a recent paper by Cairns found online with the title "Honour and Shame in Homer" might hold as pointing to an indirect influence of Goffman on Cairns' thought.

[32] Here particularly dog and deer or fawn.

[33] Both passages quoted by Barker 2009, 61-2. The quasi-formula of 1.304 μαχεσσαμένω ἐπέεσσιν is particularly striking. Diomedes' maxim invoking θέμις gives Barker his subtitle: "It's the custom to fight with words".

[34] Létoublon 1983, 1986. On the importance of insult rituals in general anthropology, see the frequency of the word *insult* in Philipsen & Carbaugh's bibliography (1986). On "fighting words" in Homer, see Walsh 2005, Hesk 2006 with reference to some parallel rituals in Anglo-Saxon and Old Norse, known as *flyting*.

[35] We are thinking of Alan Boegehold's title 1999: "When a gesture was expected". On the scepter as a symbol of Zeus' *themis* and power, see Hammer 2008, 117-118, with references to previous bibliography.

agon, intervening with his famous "sweeter than honey" words (1.249).[36]

The narrator of the *Iliad* may be considered the first spectator of this "theater": he *sees* a spectacle as enacted before the eyes of his mind, and he transposes it as narrative. It is difficult for us now, in the time of *Literacy*, to realize this visual aspect of the narrative if we read the *Iliad* instead of hearing it, as the original form requires.[37]

It has often been remarked since Antiquity how artificial, sometimes even how unbelievable, this spectacle appears, if juxtaposed with the chronology of the war:[38] for instance, the Catalogue of ships in Book 2 would find its right place at the beginning of the war, but seems incongruous in the last year of the war, the chronological frame of the *Iliad*.[39] The same holds true for the episode of Book 3 called the *Teichoscopia*, where Helen *is seen* first through the critical eyes of Trojan old men, then depicted as describing for king Priam the main leaders of the Achaeans whom she herself sees at the bottom of the walls.[40] At the end of her discourse, Helen expresses astonishment not to see her brothers Castor and Polydeuces. The absence of the Dioscouroi might be explained as a clumsy attempt to make this episode more coherent with the chosen moment in the war. The Homeric *enargeia*, however, makes us often forget this artificial nature, holding the audience spellbound by the spectacle.

Even though Achilles' anger begins Book 1, the audience must wait a long time before seeing him, the Best of the Achaeans, fighting. After his captive Briseis is taken away from him, Achilles stays in isolation, so that we see him still locked up in his loneliness during the visit of the embassy (Book 9), and he will not take part in the fighting before Book 19: we may say that the first theater of war in the West puts on stage a hero who is rarely present or is concealed from sight, a hero for whom the audience waits for almost 18 books out of the 24. Achilles' anger provokes his absence from the scene, and thus generates frustration in the imaginary spectator whom the narrative creates.

For someone who is awaiting dramatic scenes of epic fighting, Books 2 and 3 of the *Iliad* appear very disappointing: in Book 2, we hear first of Agamemnon's torment and his nocturnal misleading dream, then of an assembly of the Achaeans, and the famous Catalogue of Achaean ships, followed by a shorter catalogue of Achaean horses which allows a brief

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[36] Kirk 1985, 78-79. On Nestor's mediation in this passage, on its failure and on Athena's intervention see Barker 2009, 47-50, esp. 48 : "The fact that the *skeptron* –the symbol of the right to speak in public– lies on the ground, moreover, suggests that Nestor's intervention comes too late. Divine intervention has already moved the conflict on and beyond."

[37] Létoublon 2014 (*EAGLL*), with bibliographical references

[38] For the chronology of the *Iliad* compared to that of the myth of Trojan war, see Létoublon 2011.

[39] See Kullmann 2012, with bibliographical references.

[40] Kirk 1985, 286-301. See further Tsagalis 2003, who emphasizes the process of seeing in the whole sequence.

remark on Achilles' sulking (763-779), and eventually by the catalogue of the Trojans and their allies.

In Book 3, the poet will offer the audience a fight between Paris-Alexander and Menelaus, but we are far from the violence which will afterwards rage in the *Iliad*. The theatrical effect, however, is very strong: the meeting between both fighters on the battlefield consists first of a verbal exchange which turns into a proposal for a pact.[41] Thereupon the gods draw Helen onto the walls and we have the already mentioned *Teichoscopia*, which could perhaps be seen as a diversion from the offensive. The link with the following sequence, the conclusion of the pact, intervenes in verse 245. Thereafter, we have a glance at a sacrifice with prayers. Individual action alternates with a collective one with the strong presence of juridico-religious vocabulary (3.245 φέρον ὅρκια πιστά, 252 ἵν᾽ ὅρκια πιστὰ τάμητε, 256 φιλότητα καὶ ὅρκια πιστὰ ταμόντες, 269 ὅρκια πιστὰ σύναγον, 286 τιμὴν δ᾽ ... ἀποτινέμεν ἥν τιν᾽ ἔοικεν, 288-9 τιμὴν ... τίνειν, 290 εἵνεκα ποινῆς) insisting on faithfulness to the oaths and on the proper payment to be returned.

Agamemnon's prayer is echoed by a collective prayer, simultaneously uttered by both armies sitting in circle around their leaders.[42] This passage shows an exceptional moment of balance in the war, when the warriors delegate their destiny to their representatives, under the sacred guarantee of the gods, and the collective speech, religiously sanctified by prayer and sacrifice, unites both camps, “building community” as Elmer’s title excellently says. This is the moment where the poet of the *Iliad* shows most clearly the deep political meaning of the epics: the balance between enemies, symbolized by common prayer and sacrifice, cannot resolve the war situation, but in a common and solemn decision, the issue is entrusted to single combat, provided that one warrior dies and the other is victorious.[43] However, this human solution established by human society is not an actual solution since it does not please the gods. One only verse implies that Zeus is not pleased hearing this prayer,[44] but it is Aphrodite who will take Paris away from the battlefield. Book 3 shows a kind of contradiction between a situation of balance – almost close to peace – in the human theater of war, and the invisible theater of the gods, where war and the fall of Troy are the inescapable agenda. The main feature for the present purpose is that the warriors and their leaders, sitting around in the fray like theater spectators, observe the single combat between Paris and Menelaus. The narrative thus establishes a mediation by "real" spectators between the actual

[41] Elmer 2012.
[42] For a closer study of this prayer, see Létoublon 2011 b, 293-4 and bibliographical references.
[43] Létoublon 1983, Wilson 2002, Elmer 2012.
[44] 3.302 Ὣς ἔφαν, οὐδ' ἄρα πώ σφιν ἐπεκραίαινε Κρονίων.

show and the imaginary spectators that we are.

Thus in Book 3 the narrator seems to get around the spectacle of war, first with the solemn pact, then with Aphrodite seizing Paris away from the scene. Subsequently, however, we actually meet with many of the fighting scenes that we were awaiting.[45] Though the superficial impression is felt by some readers, dullness is avoided by an alternation between contest and scramble on one side, with a great number of deaths[46] and aristeia scenes on the other side tangled up in typical scenes.[47] Thus some purple passages, consisting in *aristeiai* and single combats, stand out against the general backcloth of isolated fighting.[48] These clashes imply a very large number of deaths, and generally the narrator, far from leaving the dead in anonymity, gives their identity (name and patronym), and sometimes provides a short biography. In the case of Simeisios, Anthemion's son (*Il.* 5.478-489), one could almost speak of a funeral elegy.[49] Although there are some inconsistencies,[50] the catalogues of deaths involve a larger number of individuals than modern human memory could easily master, indicating that oral memory had mastered specific methods, nowadays forgotten.[51]

The conquest of the Gate and the space of the fighting

In the war episodes that occupy Books 5 to 15, apart from the Embassy in Book 9 and the spy mission called the *Doloneia* in Book 10,[52] it is very important to see that the battlefront is quickly moving from the Trojan plain to the inner lines of the Achaean camp at the wall they had built, until their ships are endangered, threatening their ability to return home. This symbolic move seems to me to be a good revelation of the dramatization of the terrain: as in modern games, for instance football, when one is playing primarily on the opponent's half of the field, one is very likely to win. In our case, the Trojans are about to penetrate the opposing camp. The conquest of their gate then takes on a huge strategic importance, which the narrative emphasizes in the following passage, chosen because of its visual interest, especially in both similes, although it is sometimes left aside by good commentators such as

[45] King Priam's departure after the sacrifice has a symbolic resonance : he does not want to *see* his son fighting agains Menelaus (3 :306-7 … ἐπεὶ οὔπω τλήσομ' ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὁρᾶσθαι / μαρνάμενον φίλον υἱὸν ...).

[46] Variety in this field of death scenes is obtained in particular by the different types of wounds (see Friedrich 2005 with the appendix by Saunders).

[47] See Arend 1933, Fenik 1968, Létoublon 1983 and 2003.

[48] Diomedes in Book 5 and 6, Hector in Book 11, Idomeneus in Book 13, Sarpedon and Patroclus in Book 16.

[49] Létoublon 1999, 2003.

[50] Wilson 2000.

[51] Yates 1966, Carruthers 1990, Clay 2011.

[52] The *Doloneia* occurs in the night, which is of course a highly *visual* element. Let us refer to Dué and Ebbott 2010, Danek 2012, Bierl 2012, Hesk 2013.

Hainsworth:[53]

> *Il.*12.443-465 οἳ δ' οὔασι πάντες ἄκουον,
> ἴθυσαν δ' ἐπὶ τεῖχος ἀολλέες· οἳ μὲν ἔπειτα
> κροσσάων ἐπέβαινον ἀκαχμένα δούρατ' ἔχοντες,
> Ἕκτωρ δ' ἁρπάξας λᾶαν φέρεν, ὅς ῥα πυλάων
> ἑστήκει πρόσθε πρυμνὸς παχύς, αὐτὰρ ὕπερθεν
> ὀξὺς ἔην· τὸν δ' οὔ κε δύ' ἀνέρε δήμου ἀρίστω
> ῥηϊδίως ἐπ' ἄμαξαν ἀπ' οὔδεος ὀχλίσσειαν,
> οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσ'· ὃ δέ μιν ῥέα πάλλε καὶ οἶος.
> ὣς Ἕκτωρ ἰθὺς σανίδων φέρε λαᾶν ἀείρας,
> αἵ ῥα πύλας εἴρυντο πύκα στιβαρῶς ἀραρυίας
> δικλίδας ὑψηλάς· […]
> ῥῆξε δ' ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρους θαιρούς· πέσε δὲ λίθος εἴσω
> βριθοσύνῃ, μέγα δ' ἀμφὶ πύλαι μύκον, οὐδ' ἄρ' ὀχῆες
> ἐσχεθέτην, σανίδες δὲ διέτμαγεν ἄλλυδις ἄλλη
> λᾶος ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς· ὃ δ' ἄρ' ἔσθορε φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ
> νυκτὶ θοῇ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια· λάμπε δὲ χαλκῷ
> σμερδαλέῳ, τὸν ἕεστο περὶ χροΐ, δοιὰ δὲ χερσὶ
> δοῦρ' ἔχεν· οὔ κέν τίς μιν ἐρύκακεν ἀντιβολήσας
> νόσφι θεῶν ὅτ' ἐσᾶλτο πύλας· πυρὶ δ' ὄσσε δεδήει.

The role of the Homeric similes in the passage is striking: far from moving the narrative away from us, they play a large part in its dramatization, while emphasizing the weight of the huge stone Hector lifts without trouble, since for him, it is as light to lift up as a fleece.[54] Thereafter, the short simile that assimilates Hector to the speed of night (νυκτὶ θοῇ ἀτάλαντος ὑπώπια· λάμπε δὲ χαλκῷ) shows him in a *chiaroscuro à la* Rembrandt which seems also very spectacular. The similes strongly contribute to making us spectators of this conquest of the Achaean camp by the best of the Trojans.

Figuring the spectators[55]

- "real" spectators

The narrator sometimes visually notes the interest of the audience for the spectacle through the eyes of "real" spectators, as we have seen above in Book 3; we may also quote a passage in Book 7 where the gods Athena and Apollo are depicted as such real spectators, under the appearence of birds observing the fight from a high oak tree:[56]

> *Il.*7.58-62 κὰδ δ' ἄρ' ᾽Αθηναίη τε καὶ ἀργυρότοξος ᾽Απόλλων
> ἑζέσθην ὄρνισιν ἐοικότες αἰγυπιοῖσι
> φηγῷ ἐφ' ὑψηλῇ πατρὸς Διὸς αἰγιόχοιο
> ἀνδράσι τερπόμενοι·

Not any kind of birds, indeed, but birds of prey (*aigupioi*) who rejoice (τερπόμενοι) seing men

[53] We disagree on this passage with Hainsworth, who thinks that «the thread of the narrative is not easily followed» (Hainsworth 1993, 363).

[54] On the large simile of the huge stone to a light fleece, see Scott 1974, 49 and 112.

[55] On spectators in the *Iliad*, see particularly Purves 2010, Myers 2011, 59-90 «Epic Experienced as Spectacle», Lovatt 2013, Allen-Hornblower 2016.

[56] «presumably that [oak tree] of 22 », says Kirk (1990, 239), who asks whether the gods are compared to vultures or have taken their form. He does not remark that Athene and Apollo do not appear friendly sitting together elsewhere in the *Iliad*, since they support enemy camps On Apollo and Athena as an “internal audience” in this passage, see Myers 2011, 95.

fighting. Let us note that Athena and Apollo are not usually on the same side in the war, but, exceptionally, they sit together here for the same pleasant spectacle.[57]

Of course the Games organized by Achilles in honour of Patroclus in book 23 are a lengthy example of real spectators put on stage.

- Imaginary spectators

The poet sometimes creates imaginary spectators by using such linguistic features as addressing them in the second person and using the optative mood with the particle κε:

> 15.697-8 φαίης κ' ἀκμῆτας καὶ ἀτειρέας ἀλλήλοισιν
> ἄντεσθ' ἐν πολέμῳ, ὡς ἐσσυμένως ἐμάχοντο.

As Jenny S. Clay noted, [Longinus] commented on this passage, stating that this linguistic use fuels the imagination of the audience and their implication in the spectacle.[58] She also noted that "most often the spectator's powers of careful observation, especially vision, are emphasized", quoting 16.638-40 and 4.539-44, concluding : "Indeed, like Athena here, the poet leads his hearers safely by the hand. Thus the passage reveals the intimate link between Muse, poet, and audience." (Clay 2011, 25)

A similar effect is found in *Il.* 13.343-4 μάλα κεν θρασυκάρδιος εἴη
> ὃς τότε γηθήσειεν ἰδὼν πόνον οὐδ᾽ ἀκάχοιτο.

Long before narratology dealt with Homer, Leaf's commentary invented for this situation the term *imaginary spectator*.[59]

- Zeus' scales

Zeus' scales, mentioned in two passages of the *Iliad*, may also symbolize the dramatization of a spectacle, as in Book 8, a passage less known than the weighing of Hector's fate in Book 22: the formula of the scale pan leaning on one side (ῥέπε δ' αἴσιμον ἦμαρ …) shows who is the loser:[60]

> 8.69-72 καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα·
> ἐν δ' ἐτίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο
> Τρώων θ' ἱπποδάμων καὶ ᾽Αχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων,
> ἕλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβών· ῥέπε δ' αἴσιμον ἦμαρ ᾽Αχαιῶν.

The spectacular aspect of the passage lies in these dynamics of the scale pan expressed by the verbal form ῥέπε, which clearly appears from the parallel formula found for Hector's fate in 22.212 :

> ἕλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβών· ῥέπε δ' Ἕκτορος αἴσιμον ἦμαρ .

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[57] Johansson 2012, 83-88 and 246.

[58] Ps. Longinus 26.1, see Clay 2011: 24 : "… the direct address "makes the hearer seem to find himself in the middle of dangers" (ἐν μέσσοις τοῖς κινδ΄θνοις ποιοῦσα τὸν ᾽ἀκροατὴν δοκεῖν στρέφεσθαι)".

[59] Allen-Hornblower 2016, 23.

[60] On the golden scales of Zeus, Kirk 1990, 303-4, Dietrich 1964.

Without entering into a technical linguistic analysis, we may underline the use of the imperfect here, for ἕλκε as well as ῥέπε, in both passages: Zeus' movement and the scale's leaning are described in reference to duration rather than as sudden moves (as they would be, if expressed by aorists).[61]

- The poet addressing the character

The poet sometimes uses the second person for directly addressing his character: the disruption in the usual pragmatic convention of a neutral narrative referring to the characters with the third person[62] is particularly striking in Book 16, when the address to Patroclus, introducing a list of his recent exploits, occurs when this character is about to be fatally injured:[63]

> 16.692-3 Ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἐξενάριξας
> Πατρόκλεις, ὅτε δή σε θεοὶ θάνατον δὲ κάλεσσαν;

In a recent paper, Emily Allen-Hornblower demonstrates that the series of addresses to the character by the poet correspond to "new heights in his destructive *aristeia* that seem at first glance to be incongruous, even at odds with the blatantly pathetic contexts in which the others occur. […] This apostrophe marks a juncture at which a significant step is taken by Patroclus away from the boundaries set by Achilles, and closer to his doom. Each new apostrophe contributes to generate a sense of apprehension in the audience and to gradually build up the tenson underlying the entire episode of Patroclus' glory on the battlefield that will culminate in his death." (Allen-Hornblower 2012, 3).

The third and last apostrophe to Patroclus intoduces his final words and leaves us with the tragic image of the vanquished dying hero and his triumphant victor, whose death we also know is imminent:

> 16.842-3 ὥς πού σε προσέφη, σοὶ δὲ φρένας ἄφρονι πεῖθε.
> Τὸν δ' ὀλιγοδρανέων προσέφης Πατρόκλεες ἱππεῦ·

Note that the use of the second person verb form προσέφης, remarked by Allen-Hornblower, is actually prepared by the accusative pronoun σε, σοὶ, in the former verse, emphasizing the tragic face-to-face dialogue.[64] In those passages, the poet's audience is strikingly confronted

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[61] The fact that the object does not exist except in our imagination, as is the case for many mythological objects, does not impel the imagination to play with it.

[62] See the articles republished together under the general title "L'homme dans la langue" ("Man in language") in Benveniste 1966, 225-257.

[63] This device was studied specifically by Yamagata 1989 and by Allen-Hornblower 2012, who recalls the discussion on the point of a pure metrical value defended by Milman Parry, opposed to an emotional qualification defended by his son, Adam Parry (Allen-Hornblower 2012, 3). The sub-set of the three apostrophes included with speech formulas (16.20, 16.744 and 16.843), and the comparison with the apostrophes addressed to Menelaus are specially interesting. Allen-Hornblower 2016 develops her former study, trying to show that Achilles is the hidden character who addresses Patroclus. De Jong 2009 links those apostrophes to the figure called *metalepsis.* See also the accurate studies by Dubel 2011 and Perceau 2011 in the wake of a collective study of the Poet's Voice.

[64] Let us note that the same formula occurs for Patroclus' and Hector's death –and never occurs anywhere else–

face-to-face with the character who is addressed in the second person, which is a powerful device for dramatizing the narrative. Once more this device is not strictly speaking visual, but it strongly contributes to the interest of the audience. It could perhaps be compared to the filming device through which a film character detaches himself from the screen to enter a place among the audience.[65]

Duel and challenge

The large scale composition of the *Iliad* [66] necessitates that the major heroes must be kept away from death in preparation for the major clashes in the last part. The single combats do not constantly lead to an actual victory, with a dead or dying enemy, prior to the combat between Hector and Patroclus in Book 16, which is itself followed by a series of enemies defeated by Achilles in revenge, and eventually by the great duel between Achilles and Hector in Book 22, the tragic node of the *Iliad*, as we'll see later. The dramatization of these single combats is characterized by several speeches, often very long, which seems unlikely in the situation, but the combats all illustrate typical scenes with common features. These typical scenes generally entail a genealogical report[67] which aims to justify a pretention to victory, and a challenge, sometimes with insults. In certain cases, instead of occurring in direct discourse, the challenge is expressed in indirect discourse, using the verb *prokalizeto*, *prokalissato.* In both cases, I show that this is a ritual of language, through which the fighters aim to ensure their supremacy.[68] The combat will thereafter prove the reality of the masculine value indicated in the oral challenge, and the narrative shows this succession of events and speeches as a dramatized spectacle:

Il. 5.297-307 Αἰνείας δ' ἀπόρουσε σὺν ἀσπίδι δουρί τε μακρῷ
δείσας μή πώς οἱ ἐρυσαίατο νεκρὸν ᾽Αχαιοί.
ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' αὐτῷ βαῖνε λέων ὣς ἀλκὶ πεποιθώς,
πρόσθε δέ οἱ δόρυ τ' ἔσχε καὶ ἀσπίδα πάντοσ' ἐΐσην,
τὸν κτάμεναι μεμαὼς ὅς τις τοῦ γ' ἀντίος ἔλθοι
σμερδαλέα ἰάχων· ὃ δὲ χερμάδιον λάβε χειρὶ
Τυδεΐδης μέγα ἔργον ὃ οὐ δύο γ' ἄνδρε φέροιεν,
οἷοι νῦν βροτοί εἰσ'· ὃ δέ μιν ῥέα πάλλε καὶ οἶος.
τῷ βάλεν Αἰνείαο κατ' ἰσχίον ἔνθά τε μηρὸς
ἰσχίῳ ἐνστρέφεται, κοτύλην δέ τέ μιν καλέουσι·
θλάσσε δέ οἱ κοτύλην, πρὸς δ' ἄμφω ῥῆξε τένοντε·

Note in this episode of the fight between Aeneas and Diomedes several visual details : the movements (ἀπόρουσε, βαῖνε etc.), the specifics concerning Aeneas' arms, shield and spear (σὺν ἀσπίδι δουρί τε μακρῷ), the lion simile of 298-301, and the noisy manifestations of anger (σμερδαλέα ἰάχων). The brutal rhythmic interruption in v. 301 may express the

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῾ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων πταμένη ῞Αϊδος δὲ βεβήκει
ὃν πότμον γοόωσα λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἥβην. (I6.856-7 = 22.362-3 : Létoublon 2001).

[65] See, for instance, *The Purple Rose of Cairo* by Woody Allen (1985). The comparison is explicitly developed in de Jong 2009.

[66] Sheppard 1922, Reinhardt 1961, Taplin 1992, Stanley 1993, Létoublon 2001.

[67] The longest genealogical report is given by Aeneas against Achilles (*Iliad* 20.213-241).

[68] Létoublon 1983, Camerotto 2010.

spectators' (and Aeneas') surprise at seeing Diomedes' gesture of taking a huge stone and throwing it against his adversary. Though Kirk, after others, remarks several similarities with Book 17,[69] this passage is original as well because of the weapon used by Diomedes and for the wounding it provokes,[70] with the narrator's comment on the anatomical word κοτύλη.

Let us also notice some visual details of the single fight between Ajax and Hector in Book 7: after the description of Ajax's extraordinary shield made by Tychios (220-223) and the usual exchange of speeches (225-243), we eventually watch the fight itself (244-272):[71] Hector throws his spear and pierces six of Ajax's seven shield layers,[72] without wounding him. Ajax then throws his spear and touches Hector's shield and breastplate. Hector bends aside, avoiding a mortal blow. Each of them recovers his spear and runs against the other. Using a simile, the narrative depicts them as two lions or two boars. Hector's spear touches Ajax's shield, but its bronze peak twists, so that Ajax uses his own spear to touch Hector's *aspis* and wound him at the neck. Hector steps backwards, picks up a stone and throws it against the other's *sakos*. Ajax throws a still larger stone, which causes Hector to tumble. Apollo lifts him up and the heralds Talthybios and Idaios come to interrupt the fight because night is falling: which seems a way of proclaiming that they are fighters of equal value, instead of one combatant making the usual victorious discourse already mentioned.[73]

Achilles' spear as a character

The terms of our theme, 'theater of war,' suggest that individual characters stand out, be they heroes or not, whether depicted on an ongoing basis or not. In the last part of the *Iliad*, however, in addition to the strongly dramatized presence of the heroes, a remarkable object intervenes with the status of a quasi-character; I mean Achilles' spear, called by the common name ἔγχος (*egkhos*) but also, several times, by the derived adjective *Pēlias*, which then becomes a kind of proper name through the fact that it is used only for this object.[74] In the four verses about Patroclus (who does not take the spear) in Book 16, and again in Book 19 when Achilles does take it, we note a word play on the stem *pel-* which may be interpreted as

[69] Kirk 1990, 91.

[70] The formula ἀμφὶ δὲ ὄσσε κελαινὴ νὺξ ἐκάλυψε in v. 310 implies that death is imminent for Aeneas, but the fatal outcome is prevented by his mother, the goddess Aphrodite, who takes him away from the location of the combat.

[71] However, the narrative does not allow us to make sure if Hector is fighting from a chariot or on foot (Kirk 1990, 267-8).

[72] There we understand the usefulness of the former shield description.

[73] See however Kirk 1990, 271: "The surprise is the greater since Ajax is apparently winning, having suffered no real damage from his opponent".

[74] Wathelet 1969, Létoublon 2007, 224. For a proper name applied to a weapon, recall several well-known cases in the mythological tradition (Gungnir, Excalibur, Durandal, *etc*.)

an allusion to the name of Peleus, Achilles' father, who could be etymologically "the man of mood",[75] which could refer in myth to a first human being.[76] In a paper published for a conference on Arms in Antiquity, we tried to follow the route taken by this spear:[77] We show its supernatural, if not magical, nature and its personalized status. Thus Achilles and his spear form a terrifying pair, which may explain why the end of the *Iliad* does not require dragons and monsters, such as Apollonios of Rhodes uses in the *Argonautica*, to draw a kind of fascination over the audience.

In *Iliad* 21, Achilles' spear receives a dramatic rôle in Lycaon's episode, remaining thrust into the ground and "eager to satiate with human flesh", an astonishingly anthropomorphical expression.[78] Several words here appear as hapaxes or near hapaxes in Homer: the present infinitive ἄμεναι occurs only in this passage, the adjective ἀνδρομέος four times in the *Iliad*, twice in the *Odyssey*, and the association χροὸς ... ἀνδρομέοιο in these lines also occurs only once elsewhere (χροὸς ἀνδρομέοιο Il. 17.571). If this phrase is a formula meaning 'human flesh', let us remark that it absolutely never occurs elsewhere with a verb meaning 'to eat', even less with this rare verb ἄμεναι, ἆσαι. (resp., present and aorist infinitive), meaning more or less 'to eat one's fill of something', much stronger than the usual verbs for eating.[79] From this analysis, it appears that the words used for the spear appear as quasi-formulas, as demonstrated in my paper in *EAGLL* on formulaic language.[80]

The Chariot race

After the climax of Hector's death in Book 22, one might be surprised to meet in Book 23 a new kind of spectacle, described with great meticulousness, that of the Games offered by Achilles in honor of Patroclus after the relatively short narration of his funeral.[81] The important point is once more that this episode deals with the verbal representation of a dramatized spectacle, with a sequence of various events intended to fascinate the audience,

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[75] *Il.* 19.387-91 ἐκ δ' ἄρα σύριγγος πατρώϊον ἐσπάσατ' ἔγχος
βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρόν· τὸ μὲν οὐ δύνατ' ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν
πάλλειν, ἀλλά μιν οἶος ἐπίστατο πῆλαι Ἀχιλλεύς·
Πηλιάδα μελίην, τὴν πατρὶ φίλῳ πόρε Χείρων
Πηλίου ἐκ κορυφῆς φόνον ἔμμεναι ἡρώεσσιν·
(the same set of four verses occurs in Book 16 in Patroclus' arming-scene, but with a negative verb : 16.140 ἔγχος δ' οὐχ ἕλετ' οἷον ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο (thereafter, 141 to 144 are word-for-word identical to 19.388-91).

[76] In the *Bible* and in the *Koran*, God creates man out of clay. See Canteins 1986.

[77] Létoublon 2007.

[78] *Il.* 21.69-70 .... ἐγχείη δ' ἄρ' ὑπὲρ νώτου ἐνὶ γαίῃ
ἔστη ἱεμένη χροὸς ἄμεναι ἀνδρομέοιο. Compare to 21.167-8
…Ἡ δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτοῦ
γαίῃ ἐνεστήρικτο λιλαιομένη χροὸς ἆσαι (where Asteropaios' spear is eager for flesh, in his fight against Achilleus).

[79] Chantraine 2009, 116-7 (s. v. ἆσαι) and *CEG*, 1274. See Létoublon 2015.

[80] Létoublon 2014b.

[81] On the Chariot Race, see Clay 2007, and for a more general account on Greek athletics, Kyle 2007. On this episode of the race as a spectacle, see Myers 2011, 138-141.

especially in the case of the chariot race (23.352-523), including the accident Apollo causes to befall Diomedes, the compensation granted by Athena, the loss of a chariot wheel by Eumelos and his fall, and especially the treachery which allows Antilochos to get ahead of Menelaus by causing Menelaus' chariot to suffer a collision at the very critical turning post. Once more, 'real' spectators play a role of mediators between narrative and the audience:

> 23.448-9 'Αργεῖοι δ' ἐν ἀγῶνι καθήμενοι εἰσορόωντο
> ἵππους· τοὶ δὲ πέτοντο κονίοντες πεδίοιο.

Though such changes of tone in the epics may be surprising for our modern minds, they perhaps correspond to a principle of alternation: if we stand within a unitarian interpretation of the *Iliad*, a kind of relaxation is now offered before the gravity of Book 24, for the characters as well as the audience.

Hector's Lusis

To evoke the last book of the *Iliad*, we shall speak of a *dénouement* as if we were in a tragedy: the Greek word *lusis* used by Aristotle actually is used in the *Iliad* in its proper meaning of "release, freeing", when the Trojan king comes into Achilles' hut for the purpose of ransoming his son's corpse. The same word has already occured in Book 1, when the priest Chryses asks for the release of his daughter Chryseis. When Aristotle chose this word to denote the solution of the crisis at the end of tragedy, opposing it to *desis*, "tie, knot", he may well have thought of the situation of the *Iliad*.[82] This implies that the *Iliad* is built like a tragedy on a large scale, and that tragic theater imitated this construction for aesthetic reasons. Dramatic authors are compelled to show characters doing things and uttering words, before a more or less realistic decor, whereas the Homeric *aoidos* puts on stage not only diverse settings, from the Achaean camp to the city of Troy with the plain in between, but also the space of the gods, on Mount Olympus and sometimes on Mount Ida. He lets us see invisible and even impossible things such as Achilles' shield made by Hephaistos during the night.[83] He is able to suggest that after Achilles has lent his arms and horses to his friend, the Trojans believe it is Achilles himself who has come back to fight. Further, when Hector is wearing the arms he had removed from Patroclus' corpse, the suggested dramatic effect is that Achilles, with his new arms, faces an image of himself: the spectacle of another wearing his own arms increases his fury.[84] This is the first instance of the mirror we will meet again in the last part of our study.

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[82] Halliwell 1998, 2002.

[83] Vergil will say more explicitely that such a shield made by a god is impossible to describe, *inenarrabile dictu.* Létoublon 1999. More on Achilles' shield in the perspective of the *Eusynoptic Iliad* in Purves 2010, 46-55.

[84] Whitman 1965, 200-2 (Patroclus plays Achilles' rôle whereas Hector, wearing the same armor, does not).

Seeing each other in a mirror

An exceptional simile in Book 24 lets the audience see how the elderly Priam is viewed by Achilles,[85] who is struck by a mix of admiration and stupor (θάμβος): [86]

> 24.477-484 τοὺς δ' ἔλαθ' εἰσελθὼν Πρίαμος μέγας, ἄγχι δ' ἄρα στὰς
> χερσὶν ᾽Αχιλλῆος λάβε γούνατα καὶ κύσε χεῖρας
> δεινὰς ἀνδροφόνους, αἵ οἱ πολέας κτάνον υἷας.
> ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἄνδρ' ἄτη πυκινὴ λάβῃ, ὅς τ' ἐνὶ πάτρῃ
> φῶτα κατακτείνας ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον
> ἀνδρὸς ἐς ἀφνειοῦ, θάμβος δ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντας,
> ὣς ᾽Αχιλεὺς θάμβησεν ἰδὼν Πρίαμον θεοειδέα·
> θάμβησαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι, ἐς ἀλλήλους δὲ ἴδοντο.

Let us use Fränkel's method of simile analysis, remarking that the notion of θάμβος appears to be the center of the simile: first met in v. 480 in the image of the "fugitive homicide" (using Heiden's terms),[87] it is found again, twice, in the following verses (θάμβησεν, 481, θάμβησαν 482) concerning the real world : the very strong emotion of θάμβος is thus the element that links the image and the real. In addition, forms of a verb of seeing also connect the image and the real, although in a less visible way because of the suppletive verbal system of Greek (εἰσορόωντας 481 / ἰδὼν 482, ἴδοντο 483).

After this formal remark, we'll depend on Heiden's (1998) brilliant and deep synthesis of the different treatments of this simile,[88] an analysis explicating the simile's different aspects as "Analogy, foiling, and allusion". Noting some former critics who see «dissimilarity as a functional element of the simile», he reproaches them because «they do not explore the effects, or potential effects, of an emotional intensification achieved through the particular contrast presented by this simile alone».[89] A first analogy between Priam and the fugitive

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[85] This simile was studied by Fränkel 1921, 95-96, who probably did not find it very interesting and put it aside as late («Zu den seltsamen, und wie der Inhalt des Gedichts von allem Gewöhnlichen abweichenden Gleichnisse, die für die jüngere Epik bezeichnend sind, gehört auch das von Ω 480. Das plötzliche Auftreten des Priamos im Unterstands Achills wirkt auf die behaglich an abgegessener Tafel Sitzenden ganz gewaltig –Achilleus staunt, es staunen auch die anderen : so ist es, wenn ein rätselhafter Fremder in eines reichen Mannes Haus erscheint, ein Fremder den ἄτη πυκινὴ ergrifft. Was heisst das ?» Then, to answer the question of ἄτη, Fränkel recurs to another passage (16.805) without further explanation.

[86] On θάμβος, linked to the aorist participle ταφών and the perfect τέθηπα, see Chantraine 2009: 405-6. -μβ- seems to have an "expressive" origin (cf. θρόμβος, στρόμβος). With these expressive sounds, the aspirated consonant and the group -μβ-, it is remarkable that the word occurs three times in three successive verses, each time linked to the idea of seeing:

> θάμβος … εἰσορόωντας, θάμβησεν ἰδὼν, θάμβησαν … ἴδοντο.

[87] Heiden 1998 has seen the significance of Fränkel's analysis and complains that he did not apply it constantly: «Fränkel perceived that "an interplay of polar (absolute or extreme) opposites is a basic constituent of early Greek (especially archaic) thought and feeling… as a consequence thought constantly operated with contrasting foils. But he scarcely applied this insight to Homeric similes, despite his extensive study of them.» See also the «Despised Migrant» in Alden 2012.

[88] See his note 1 and his rich bibliography. I'll mention especially the beginning of Richardson's comment (1993, 323): «This must be the most dramatic moment of the *Iliad*, and its character is marked by a simile which is extremely individual.»

[89] Heiden 1998, 2.

"could suggest that Priam's relative innocence makes him equally deserving of the sanctuary that a murderer might expect to receive, or even more so."[90] But there is also an implicit «analogy between the fugitive murderer and the "murderous hands of Achilles"» (*ibid.*): «Here the abjection of a person who has killed only one man, and that in error (ἄτη πυκινὴ, 480), serves as a foil for the power and pride of Achilles.» (*ibid.*). Heiden then mentions the rôle of the allusions to "heroic mythology" under two aspects. First, there is a reference to Peleus as a kindly host of exiles,[91] since Priam portrays himself in the image of Achilles' father, and reminds Achilles of the instructions Peleus provided Achilles at his departure. Secondly, Peleus was also known in mythology as a murderer himself.[92] Although this story is not told in Homer, Heiden seems right to remark that the simile in the Homeric text may allude to this mythological episode and to other murders attributed to Peleus in [Apollodorus'] narrative.[93] Furthermore, Heiden refers to Stanley's proposal that the simile "be viewed in the context of Priam's symbolic *katabasis*",[94] which seems to me less important than the analogies, foils and allusions mentioned above.

Among the characters on stage when Priam enters Achilles' dwelling, the murderer, of course, is Achilles, not the weak old man who suddenly appears before him. However, in the simile it is Priam who is seen (v. 482) as a murderer, so that the actual scene strongly contrasts with the imaginary one.[95] How could it be said in a more concise manner than that Achilles sees himself in a mirror, that this is a fantastical vision, which Laura Slatkin calls "Tragic Visualization"? Let us however note that other persons around Achilles seem to have the same vision since they feel the same stupor (θάμβησαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι). This mirroring effect is perhaps the origin of the passage's "sublimity":[96] Priam sees Achilles both as a murderer and as an image of himself, a poor old man grieving for his son and seeking assistance, and Achilles views Priam both as a fugitive homicide and as an image of himself in reference to

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[90] Heiden 1998, 4.

[91] In the *Iliad* for Phoinix, Epeigeus and Patroclus, the latter two being homicides.

[92] Heiden 1998, 5-6 with bibliographical references: the lost epic *Alkmaionis* told how Peleus and his brother Telamon killed their half-brother Phocos and were sent into exile by their father Aiakos.

[93] Heiden 1998, 6, with reference to Slatkin 1991 for the notion of allusion.

[94] Heiden 1998, 7.

[95] As Heiden also notes, this contrast recalls the similes studied by Porter 1972, with more complexity.

[96] Ps. Longinus quotes another Homeric simile, describing a tempest, rather than this one:
And far as a man with his eyes through the sea-line haze may discern,
On a cliff as he sitteth and gazeth away o'er the wine-dark deep,
So far at a bound do the loud-neighing steeds of the Deathless leap. (*Iliad* 5. 770, trans. A. S. Way) and comments on the quality of a spectacle seen only in the imagination : «He makes the vastness of the world the measure of their leap. The sublimity is so overpowering as naturally to prompt the exclamation that if the divine steeds were to leap thus twice in succession they would pass beyond the confines of the world.» See the thematic markers of the sublime in Porter 2016, 51-54, and the great ocean, *ibid.*,360.

his own father.[97] The density and multiple meanings of the simile, as Heiden remarks,[98] is possible only through a detour by the way of a multi-layered image. A somewhat similar effect of the simile is met in the pursuit and flight simile of *Iliad* 22, which unwinds in two successsive shutters, first as an animal comparison showing a fawn flying before a dog (22.189-193), then as a nightmare where the flyer cannot escape the pursuer, but this one cannot either reach the former : 22.199-201[99]

> ὡς δ' ἐν ὀνείρῳ οὐ δύναται φεύγοντα διώκειν·
> οὔτ' ἄρ' ὃ τὸν δύναται ὑποφεύγειν οὔθ' ὃ διώκειν·
> ὣς ὃ τὸν οὐ δύνατο μάρψαι ποσίν, οὐδ' ὃς ἀλύξαι.

Both of the similes seek to describe complex psychological phenomena. The comparison of the flight arises from Hector being unable to distance himself from Achilles, but at the same time it also says that Achilles similarly is not able to reach Hector. So that if it is a dream (ἐν ὀνείρῳ), one cannot know if the poet means the dream as occurring in Hector's head alone or in those of both warriors, which highly dramatizes the situation, making the pursuit indefinite.[100]

To return to book 24, the major points are that Homer depicts the process of actual seing each other with a kind of terrified surprise by using the imaginary sight of a fugitive homicide, and that Achilles' vision of Priam finds a strong echo in Priam's vision of Achilles. The common point between both comparisons is precisely that through the device of the simile, the poet may describe a mental process without defining the individual whom it specifically concerns. Both of the similes stand at the highest point of the Iliadic dramatized narrative. Each of them makes us visualize a spectacle that arises in the poet's mind. He lets us see the world his characters are living in as a general backdrop of the theater, and in some purple passages, especially with the means of the simile, he gives us an access to another kind of reality, the

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[97] Alden 2012 studies this passage as an example of the theme of the "Despised Migrant".

[98] «It is hardly to be imagined that these associations could have been accurately recognized, much less interpreted, on a single hearing. Indeed, less acute listeners might not even have been troubled by the simile, while the more acute would have registered different disturbing subtleties and pondered them differently. Discussion here, therefore, does not aim at reproducing a single ideal reading of the passage, or at imputing to the poet techniques for eliciting such a reading. Instead it exposes a range of provocations which the simile offers to its audiences and suggests a range of interpretive responses.» (Heiden 1998, 2)

[99] On the whole passage, see the excellent commentary by Richardson 1993, 127. In his famous *The Greeks and the Irrational*, Dodds quotes this passage as an example of anxiety-dream : «The poet does not ascribe such nightmares to his heroes, but he knows well what they are like, and makes brilliant use of the experience to express frustration» (Dodds 1951, 2004, 106).

[100] See on this simile the excellent analysis by Purves 2010, 55-59, esp. 57 : «In such a context, the speed of the racers becomes irrelevant, for the two never change their place in relation to one another. The runners, like the scene, are stuck in time. The movement of one cancels out the movement of the other, an effect that is also played out in the structure of the lines through the doubling and redoubling of negatives. As with the ekphrastic scene, the synoptic view of the two warriors circling the walls of Troy, especially when it is telescoped out into the vision of figures whirling around in a circle, is marked by the idea of stillness and the deferment of an endpoint.»

very mind, or, if Fränkel's ideas do not allow us to use this word, the interiority of the characters, their mental world. We actually do not enter Achilles', Hector's and Priam minds, but the similes give us an analogic image of them.