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"In the Fury of the Battle": A Literary Appreciation of Book 16 of the *Iliad*

By

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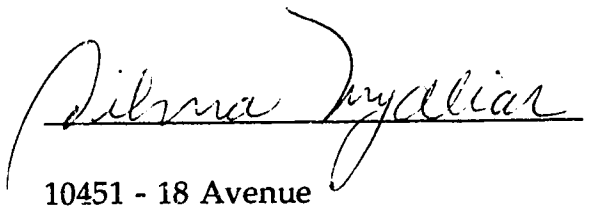

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γέρων δ' ἰθὺς κίεν οἴκου.
τῇι ῥ' Ἀχιλεὺς ἵζεσκε διίφιλος. ἐν δέ μιν αὐτὸν
εὗρ', ἕταροι δ' ἀπάνευθε καθείατο· τὼ δὲ δύ' οἴω,
ἥρως Αὐτομέδων τε καὶ Ἄλκιμος ὄζος Ἄρηος,
ποίπνυον παρέοντε· νέον δ' ἀπέληγεν ἐδωδῆς
ἔσθων καὶ πίνων· ἔτι καὶ παρέκειτο τράπεζα.
τοὺς δ' ἔλαθ' εἰσελθὼν Πρίαμος μέγας, ἄγχι δ' ἄρα στὰς
χερσὶν Ἀχιλλῆος λάβε γούνατα καὶ κύσε χεῖρας
δεινὰς ἀνδροφόνους, αἵ οἱ πολέας κτάνον υἷας.
(24.471-479)

And the old man went straight into the house,
here Achilleus the beloved of Zeus was sitting. He found him
inside, and his companions were sitting apart, the two only,
hero Automedon and Alkimos, scion of Ares,
were busy there. He just recently finished eating his meal
and drinking, and the table was still set up.
The legendary Priam came in unnoticed by them, and standing
close by he grabbed the knees of Achilleus in his hands and kissed
the powerful man-slaying hands that had killed his many sons.

University of Alberta

Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommended to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled *"In the Fury of the Battle": A Literary Appreciation of Book 16 of the "Iliad"* submitted by Vilma Mydliar in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Classical Literature.

Dr. Michael Lynn-George

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ABSTRACT

This thesis, a literary appreciation, provides a textual analysis of book 16 of the *Iliad*. Such a work represents a departure from the conventional interpretations that deal primarily with a historical and comparative study of the Greek language in sacrifice of the aesthetic. This paper treats the text as its primary source of interpretation where the beauty of Homer's poetry comes to life.

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INTRODUCTION

The Homeric poems have proved to be intractable for literary approaches. One has only to consider, for example, the difficulties involved in oral theory. Nevertheless I hope to make at least a modest contribution to the very valuable literary appreciation of an outstanding work. Given the vast scale of literature written on the *Iliad*, the literary aspects of Homer's poetry seem to have been overlooked. The research tends to focus on the historical and comparative study of the Greek language in sacrifice of the aesthetic. For the purpose of an MA thesis I have decided to concentrate on the literary aspects which allow the beauty of Homer's poetry to come alive.

I have chosen book 16 of the *Iliad* for two reasons: first, for its subject matter - with the death of Patroklos, book 16 serves as a pivotal point in the plot of the epic poem; second, for its stylistic features - book 16 provides a good example of the important generic features of the narrative such as similes, catalogues, speeches, apostrophes. I have focused my reading on three important phases in book 16: lines 1-305, Patroklos first enters the scene to make his request to join in the battle and drive the fire away from the Danaan ships until the time he successfully puts out the fire; lines 306-631, the battle takes place resulting in Sarpedon's death; lines 632-867, Apollo enters the scene as Patroklos' destroyer along with Hektor. For the actual fighting episodes between the Achaians and the Trojans, I have focused mainly on the achievements of Patroklos since he is the key figure here. I have also omitted a detailed discussion of the catalogues of the assembled Myrmidon leaders and of the fallen Trojan heroes, since I found them of little relevance to my analysis of book 16.

I was struck by the beauty of the imagery involved in the similes describing the heroes as they fight and fall to their deaths either like trees cut down to make timber, or like lions destroyed by their own courage. I was touched by the boastful speeches of the victors, and, particularly, by the insightful words of the vanquished. But especially, I was moved by the figure of Patroklos caught between the fury of a battle and the fury of the gods. In the apostrophes Homer has addressed to the hero, I heard my own voice calling out to Patroklos in fear for his safety and in grief over his loss. It is not surprising that centuries later, after the composition of the *Iliad*, I am still able to be affected by the wretched human condition.

I hope that in my discussion I have shown my appreciation of the spirit that is Homer.

COMMENTARY

Book 16 of the *Iliad* begins with a brief reference to the fighting that has begun in book 15 over Protesilaos' ship ("and so they fought over the well-oared ship", ὣς οἱ μὲν περὶ νηὸς ἐυσσέλμοιο μάχοντο 16.1).[1] Achaian fighters have a difficult time withstanding the Trojan assault led by Hektor. As he rushes upon the Greek encampment with the intention of setting the ships on fire (15.592f., 718f.), Ajax is beaten back, unable to hold out against the powerful attack designed by Zeus (15.727; 16.101f.). When Hektor finally does succeed in setting the vessel on fire he brings about the fulfilment of the will of Zeus: that Hektor sets the Achaian ships on fire "so that he [Zeus] might fulfil the prayer of Thetis beyond what he initially promised" (Θέτιδος δ' *ἐξαίσιον*[2] ἀρὴν / πᾶσαν ἐπικρήνειε 15.598-599). The word ἐξαίσιος meaning "beyond what is right" suggests that in order to accomplish the prayer Thetis had requested in honour of her son, Achilleus, the plan of Zeus will transgress the boundary of what is right, referring in this case to the death of Patroklos, an event not a part of the prayer Thetis had made (1.503f.). According to the will of Zeus,[3] the Achaians will continue to suffer greatly for the dishonour they publicly displayed toward Achilleus, but in the process Achilleus himself will pay a price - the loss of his companion, Patroklos - a price which Zeus himself devised in order to bring about his promise to Thetis. Patroklos, fated to die at the hands of Hektor, becomes the necessary link through which the will of Zeus is achieved and through whose death the entry of Achilleus

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1 I am using Walter Leaf's edition, *The Iliad*, 2 vol. 2nd. ed. (London: Macmillan, 1900-2; reprint Amsterdam: A.M. Hakkert, 1971). The translations are mine.

2 I have used italics here for emphasis.

3 Already in book 8 (470f.) Zeus states his plan for the death of Patroklos. Cp. 15.65.

into the battle is then finalized. Therefore, book 16 marks a crucial step in the epic: the death of Patroklos and the fulfilment of the plan set by Zeus.

When Patroklos comes onto the scene in book 16, the Achaians can no longer sustain the Trojan assault as the will of Zeus commands; the fire threatens their ships, the means through which they hope to return home safely (81-82), while all their brave heroes lie in the camp injured, unable to avert the destruction from these vessels. In addition, Achilleus himself has not made any effort to join in the fighting and to help his comrades as he had promised to do in the embassy scene in book 9 (650-655). The situation then calls for a drastic course of action. Something must be done to protect the ships, the Danaan homecoming, and also to fulfil Achilleus' promise. At this critical moment in the narrative the entrance of Patroklos heralds him as a protector of these ships who soon finds himself entangled in a plot that relates his own death. We watch helplessly as he in his innocence chooses a course of action which brings him to his fated doom, and which even results in the entry of Achilleus into the battle in book 20.

Patroklos enters the scene from a tent of an injured soldier whose identity in book 11 he was sent out to discover. During his mission he has seen the devastating conditions the Greek division is experiencing, the state of its troops, the state of the troops' morale, whereas Achilleus, since his absence from the battle in book 1, has been removed from the gloomy conditions the Achaians had suffered on the battlefield. Ignorant, thus, he needs another man to inform him of the grief that has befallen the others - as he will need another man to carry out the promise he had made to the embassy. In both instances Patroklos takes on the responsibility to be and to act as Achilleus. He has seen the great Danaan heroes in the camp all

lying wounded by an arrow or spear, unable to fight (16.22-27), while the best of them all, Achilleus, fails to take action. Distressed over the situation, Patroklos approaches Achilleus with tears in his eyes, while a simile compares his tears to an ominous image of a spring dripping dark waters: "and Patroklos came to Achilleus, the shepherd of the people, / shedding warm tears like a dark spring / which down a steep rock drips dark waters", (Πάτροκλος δ' Ἀχιλῆϊ παρίστατο ποιμένι λαῶν, / δάκρυα θερμὰ χέων ὥς τε κρήνη μελάνυδρος, / ἥ τε κατ' αἰγίλιπος πέτρης δνοφερὸν χέει ὕδωρ 2-4). This foreboding simile both describes the vulnerable state of Patroklos, expressed in his tears, and underlines the pathos of the scene, presented in the imagery of its dark waters. The image of a dark-running spring was used once before in book 9 (14-15) when Agamemnon in sorrow wept having realized the folly (ἄτη 9.18f.) of his behaviour toward Achilleus. Following that simile in book 9, an embassy was dispatched to Achilleus with an offer of countless gifts and with a request that he put aside his anger and help the Achaians who are being killed by the fast ships (9.120f.). Although Achilleus had turned down the offer of the embassy, he does promise to return to the battle when Hektor comes to the ships of the Myrmidons and threatens their vessels with the ravaging fire (9.650-653). Now in book 16 the Achaians fare no better than in book 9; yet, Achilleus does nothing to help his comrades. Furthermore, instead of the anticipated embassy of Achaians, as had happened in book 9, Patroklos comes alone without any offer of Achaian compensation only with the request to help the Danaans fight.[4] The time has come for another man to weep having realized not his own folly, but the folly of

[4] My reading here is indebted to the thoughtful discussion of this passage by Michael Lynn-George in *Epos: Word, Narrative and the "Iliad"* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan, 1988) 167-168.

someone else, someone close to him. Whereas Agamemnon's tears depict him at the moment of realizing the folly he had committed, Patroklos' tears portray him as a victim about to be sacrificed for the folly of another. These tears hold in them a grave sign: there is suffering now, and more is to come. That a warrior should freely express his emotions rather than suppress them for the possibility of winning great glory on the battlefield, is unheard of in the Greek warrior code.[5] A warrior should fight rather than vent his feelings. Yet, tears fall down the face of this warrior; tears of warmth and compassion make their way down the face that has been brought up to withstand pity on the battlefield. The image of warmth and affection emphasized with these tears contrasts significantly with the cold and inhuman image of the dark-running spring and of the rock through which the dark water drips. It is a pitiless, cold, rock that represents so well the unresponsive nature of Achilleus as if his behaviour were born out of the harsh elements of the grey sea and the steep rocks to which Patroklos alludes: "Pitiless! never then was the rider of horses, Peleus, your father / nor Thetis your mother, but the grey sea raised you / and the towering rocks because you have a harsh heart" (νηλεές, οὐκ ἄρα σοί γε πατὴρ ἦν ἱππότα Πηλεὺς / οὐδὲ Θέτις μήτηρ· γλαυκὴ δέ σε τίκτε θάλασσα / πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι ὅτι τοι νόος ἐστὶν ἀπηνής 33-35). The towering rock, unable to withstand the wear of time, however, lets water drip similarly as the face of a warrior lets itself become overwhelmed with the wear of emotions. Even Achilleus will become affected by his own emotions, will break down and cry, so proleptic is the image. In its dark waters lies an inconceivable pathos for the past, the present, and the future. Patroklos'

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5 Cp. 12.310-328. For a thorough discussion of the paradox of the warrior ethic see James M. Redfield in *Nature and Culture in the Iliad: the Tragedy of Hektor* (Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 1994) 101-104.

tears here interlock the past, the tears of Agamemnon (9.14-15); the present, the situation the Achaians are suffering; and the future, the tears Achilleus will shed at the news of his companion's death. Thus, in this one instance, through the means of a simile, Homer holds our attention and expectation for the upcoming suffering.

At the sight of Patroklos' tears even Achilleus, unrelenting in his anger, shows compassion by taking pity (ὠίκτειρε 5), and by inquiring into the nature of those tears (7-19). Commenting on the vulnerable nature of his friend, he compares Patroklos to a little girl crying for her mother to pick her up (7-11).[6] The little girl, speechless, pleads not with words, but with tears. In a similar manner Patroklos comes to Achilleus as if entreating his own parental figure.[7] Saddened by the condition of the injured comrades, Patroklos makes his appeal "begging with tears and lamentation" (ὀλοφύρεαι 17) before he is given a chance to speak. The tears of compassion, something Achilleus lacks on account of his own anger (μένος), give emphasis to the request about to be made: "soft tears" (τέρεν δάκρυον 11), after all, have a way of melting a cold heart.

Furthermore, the image of a crying little girl begging to be picked up by her mother brings out the image of Achilleus in book 1 begging his own mother, in a sense, to pick him up and to comfort the pain inflicted upon him by Agamemnon (1.352f.). Thetis does everything any caring mother

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6 Similes of children are used when the narrative describes a character acting in an unusual manner cp. 2.289, 337, 872; 13.470; 15.362; 21.282. Or when the narrative depicts the protection of one character by another cp. 4.130; 8.271. For a thorough discussion of children similes see William C. Scott, *The Oral Nature of the Homeric Simile* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974) 72-73.

7 For a discussion of Achilleus in a parental role see Paolo Vivante, *The Heroic Imagination: A Study of Homer's Poetic Perception of Reality* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1970) 56-57. Carroll Moulton, *Similes in the Homeric Poems*, Hypomnemata, no. 49 (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1977) 100-104. Seth L. Schein, *The Mortal Hero: An Introduction to Homer's "Iliad"* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1984) 107.

might do: she sits by him stroking his hair, comforting him, and then she agrees to beseech Zeus on her son's behalf. Similarly Achilleus comforts his crying companion by agreeing to send him into the battle, thus, putting himself into a "mother" role.[8]

The reason for Patroklos' tears, Achilleus suggests, must be some terrible news from home. Not surprisingly his first concern turns to both of their fathers, to Menoitios and Peleus (16.13, 16). Although a warrior faces the possibility of dying in a strange country "far away from his fatherland" (τηλόθι πάτρης), a theme constantly stressed throughout the epic, he also faces the possibility that his own father might also die in his fatherland far away from him. Thus, even for Achilleus, the death of anyone else except his father remains far from his mind. However, quickly disregarding the two possible motives for his companion's tears, he arrives at a conclusion that Patroklos must in fact be distressed over the Argives as they perish by the ships (17-18). At the mention of the Argives, Achilleus' anger emerges: it is on account of their wanton arrogance (ὑπερβασίης 18), alluding to the treatment he had received, that their lives keep perishing from this earth. The gentle words he had used to address Patroklos have now, with the mention of the Greeks and with the possibility that his friend might be grieving for them, turned into the anger and resentment he has been nourishing since book 1.

Before Patroklos has a chance to answer, Homer interrupts the narrative with an apostrophe: "and crying out you, Patroklos, rider of horses, answered him with a heavy heart", (τὸν δὲ βαρὺ στενάχων προσέφης, Πατρόκλεις ἱππεῦ 20). In book 16 when Homer addresses

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8 In 9.323 Achilleus puts himself into a mother role by comparing the protection he provides for the Greeks to the protection a mother bird provides for her young ones.

Patroklos (16.20, 584-585, 692-693, 744, 787, 811-815), the warrior each time is at his most vulnerable state[9] and in need of protection; however, the only support he can be given is the poet's compassion conveyed through the apostrophes such as in the quote above where Patroklos is emotionally distraught over the Argive suffering, or at the other points in book 16, where Patroklos comes closer to his own death. The apostrophes reveal Homer's own sympathy and affection for the hero, thus, making him a sympathetic and memorable character. It is through this narrative interruption that we also come to feel the pity and compassion Homer himself feels for Patroklos.[10]

Patroklos, sensing Achilleus' anger, begins his reply by pleading with him not to be angry (μὴ νεμέσα 23). A simple request, but, given the course of the events, a serious one. The anger of Achilleus has become the driving force of the *Iliad*, the central theme, the first word uttered in the epic (1.1) out of which the entire poem comes into existence. Not surprisingly then Patroklos takes precautions in fear of this anger: first he addresses the hero with an epithet, with a reminder of who he is, his origin, his nature: "son of Peleus, the best of the Achaians" (ὦ Ἀχιλεῦ Πηλῆος υἱέ, μέγα φέρτατ' Ἀχαιῶν 21), and only after such an address does Patroklos make his appeal "Don't be angry". By entreating Achilleus in this manner, Patroklos requests protection for himself, a protection from the consequences of his companion's anger. A similar appeal for protection occurs in book 1, when Kalchas, afraid of Agamemnon's anger,

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9 My reading here is indebted to the thoughtful discussion of apostrophes by Elizabeth Block in "The Homeric Narrator Speaks: Apostrophe in Homer and Vergil", *TAPA* 112 (1982) 7-22.

10 My reading here is indebted to both Block 16 and Scott Richardson, *The Homeric Narrator* (Nashville, Tenn.: Vanderbilt Univ. Press, 1990) 173-174.

refuses to reveal the reason for the plague that has descended upon the Danaan encampment until Achilleus promises him protection;[11] otherwise, Kalchas observes ironically, anger lingers on until its fulfilment is realized (1.174-182). With such an appeal Patroklos too draws attention to the difficult request he is about to make, almost as if to say: "Stop your anger for a while and listen to what I have to say".

Achaian forces are in a desperate situation: all the brave heroes who can help lie injured (22-27). The physicians, using the skills they know, try with all their efforts to heal the heroes' wounds, while Achilleus remains "helpless" (ἀμήχανος 29)[12] because he is not fighting, although he can, he chooses not to use his skills of a warrior to help. Seeing his indifference, it is Patroklos' turn to be angry: "May then such an anger as you keep never take a hold of me", (μὴ ἔμεγ' οὖν οὗτός γε λάβοι χόλος ὃν σὺ φύλασσεις 30). He rebukes Patroklos further by appealing to the prosperity of the future generations if Achilleus fails to ward off the destruction from the Achaians as is his duty: "What will the other generations profit / if you do not ward off the destruction from the Argives?" (τί σευ ἄλλος ὀνήσεται ὀψίγονός περ, / αἴ κε μὴ Ἀργείοισιν ἀεικέα λοιγὸν ἀμύνῃς; 31-32). The protection a warrior offers to his society from the enemy forces resembles the protection a house offers to its inhabitants from the natural forces (210-217); the survival of both, the society and the household, depends on this protection. Hence, a warrior who neglects his duty lacks compassion.

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11 For a linguistic analysis of the words for "protection" used in the *Iliad*, see Michael Lynn-George, "Aspects of the Epic Vocabulary of Vulnerability", *Colby Quarterly* 29 (1993) 197-221.

12 There is an engaging discussion on the association of the word ἀμήχανος with the role of healing, a role into which Patroklos will put himself, by Richard P. Martin in *Healing, Sacrifice and Battle: "Amechania" and Related Concepts in Early Greek Poetry* (Innsbruck: Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Sprachwissenschaft, 1983) 11-26.

Pitiless (νηλεές 33), he is the progeny not of any human beings, but of the harsh elements, the grey sea and the steep rocks (34-35); otherwise, he would relent his heart to pity and pay his dues.

Yet, despite these harsh words, Patroklos does not believe his friend to be without compassion. He begins to suggest that perhaps Achilleus is holding back on account of some prophesy he had heard or, quite ironically, that perhaps his mother has told him something from Zeus,[13] ("if you avoid from some prophecy you know in your heart / or your revered mother has told you something from Zeus", εἰ δέ τινα φρεσὶ σῇσι θεοπροπίην ἀλεείνεις / καί τινά τοι πὰρ Ζηνὸς ἐπέφραδε πότνια μήτηρ 36-37). If that is the case, then Patroklos offers his help: he will put on the armour of Achilleus in order to lead the Myrmidons into the battle; he will become a "light" (φόως 39), a salvation the Danaans need; he will become the means through which they, worn out from the fighting (τειρόμενοι 43), can replenish their strengths in order to push the Trojans back to their city (44-45). Given the devastating condition of the fighters, Patroklos wants to show the Danaans the way so that, encouraged, they can fight better and achieve their desired goal: to force the Trojans away from the ships. For, a Trojan retreat is certain to take place once the Danaan forces show their renewed courage and, especially, once they appear on the battlefield led by a man dressed in the armour of Achilleus. With such a figure leading the way, the Trojan forces will give way and run back to the walls of Troy to protect themselves in fear that Achilleus has returned to the battle. Thus Patroklos' request for his companion's

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13 His presumption that a god is orchestrating the events seems very much in accord with the Greek view of divine intervention. Often an unusual event or behaviour is explained as a god's doing.

armour so he can lead the Myrmidons into battle, seems to offer the best, even though a temporary, solution to their predicament.

With this proposal to become the leader of the Myrmidons in place of Achilleus, in the hero's armour, Patroklos appoints himself as Achilleus' double. Aware of this role he has chosen to play, he even expresses it: "so that the Trojans might think that I am you, and keep away from the fight" (αἴ κέ με σοὶ ἴσκοντες ἀπόσχωνται πολέμοιο / Τρῶες 41-42). He places a great deal of faith in the power the presence of Achilleus might have on the battlefield, even if it can provide only a temporary relief from the fighting, still "the warlike sons of the Achaians might breathe again" (ἀναπνεύσωσι δ' ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν 42). As Achilleus' double, Patroklos has a chance to win great honour and glory on the battlefield for the absent hero who, on account of his anger with Agamemnon and the Achaians, has rejected physical combat. Yet, at the same time as he wins great glory, Patroklos also runs the risk of being killed in place of Achilleus. Homer foresees this tragedy when he comments on the request Patroklos has made: "So he spoke beseeching foolishly, for / he was entreating his own evil death and destruction" (ὣς φάτο λισσόμενος μέγα νήπιος· ἦ γὰρ ἔμελλεν / οἱ αὐτῷ θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα λιτέσθαι 46-47). Similarly the poet remarks on the hero's fate in book 11 when Achilleus dispatches him to learn the identity of the injured warrior carried back from the battlefield: "it was the beginning of evil for him" (κακοῦ δ' ἄρα οἱ πέλεν ἀρχή 11.604).

In reply to Patroklos' appeal, Achilleus begins first by refuting the comments raised about a prophecy (36-37). His reluctance to rejoin the fighting, he claims, stems neither from a prophecy nor from his mother's message (50-51), but from the treatment he had received. He still bears a

grudge at the humiliation to which he was subjected. With a great deal of bitterness he recounts the terrible pain weighing on his heart and the injustice troubling him: that a man would treat his equal the way the son of Atreus had; that he would deliberately wish to deprive him, a man of equal entitlement, of his proper share (53); that he would take away his prize of honour (γέρας 54) he won for himself; the girl Briseis he took when he had sacked the city of Lyrnessos. This prize (γέρας) is a privilege the Achaians chose for him and bestowed on him as a symbol of his position among them, an honour of which he was stripped when Agamemnon took it away. Although Agamemnon has the authority to take away the prize of any one of his warriors, this is not the way to treat the best of the Achaians. Nothing, neither a prophecy, nor what his mother might have told him, could have caused Achilleus a greater suffering than the humiliation he had suffered before the rest of the Danaans (55) as if he were "some sort of dishonoured vagabond"[14] (ὡς εἴ τιν' ἀτίμητον μετανάστην 59), a man without any honour (ἀ-τίμητος)[15] because his prize of honour was taken away from him. Achilleus is an outsider among the Argives, isolated and alone for having rejected the code of appropriate behaviour and for having given way to his emotions. Just as if he were a dishonoured vagabond, he enjoys neither a place among the rest of the Achaians, nor the privileges (γέρας) that come to a warrior; therefore, he needs another man to restore his honour (τιμή) and his place in the society.

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14 For this translation I am indebted to Malcolm M. Willcock, ed., *The Iliad, Books 13-24* (London: St. Martin's Press, 1984) 245.

15 Achilleus uses the same words in 9.648. For a thorough linguistic analysis of ἀτίμητος see Lynn-George (1988) 147-148.

Despite his call to put aside his anger (60-61), Achilleus still bears resentment toward the Achaians. Moreover, the anticipated embassy to restore Achilleus with favours and prizes and to entreat him to fight again, as had occurred in book 9, has not appeared; yet, now more than ever, since the fire threatens the ships, there is a need for Achilleus. Recalling the promise he had made to the embassy that he will not fight until Hektor threatens the Myrmidon ships with fire ("surely I said / I would not put aside my anger until / the battle cry and the war come to my ships", ἦτοι ἔφην γε / οὐ πρὶν μηνιθμὸν καταπαυσέμεν, ἀλλ' ὁποτ' ἂν δὴ / νῆας ἐμὰς ἀφίκηται ἀυτή τε πτόλεμός τε 61-63), he finds himself unable to fulfil it on account of his anger. Now Patroklos has entered, alone, offering neither gifts nor compensation, but only an appeal for permission to help the Danaans. With this proposal he offers to be a "light" also to Achilleus who, by sending Patroklos into the battle as his double, is indirectly fulfiling his promise to enter the battle once the fire threatens the ships. Reiterating the words already spoken, Achilleus sends Patroklos to fight. When the Trojans see his helmet shining on the battlefield (70-71), since their success can be attributed to the fact that they have not yet beheld the gleaming head piece, they will forget their confidence and flee leaving behind only corpses (71-72), as they would have done already "if lord Agamemnon / had kinder words for me" (εἴ μοι κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων / ἤπια εἰδείη 72-73). Eagerly he commands Patroklos to put on the famed armour and beat the blazing destruction away from the ships "so that you can win great honour and glory for me" (ὡς ἄν μοι τιμὴν μεγάλην καὶ κῦδος ἄρηαι 84). Then Agamemnon will see that he should have paid greater honour to the best of the Achaians, and the Danaans will not only give back his prize of honour (γέρας) but

will even add many more gifts (85-86). Such will be his retribution. As a double for Achilleus, Patroklos will win glory both for himself, and, more importantly, also for Achilleus, while he carries out his companion's promise to the Argives. Thus this loyal friend has been chosen in the place of Achilleus to ward off the destruction that is threatening the Danaans (80).

There is, of course, the possibility that Patroklos might be too successful and take Troy without the leader Achilleus; therefore, Achilleus warns him to come back when he successfully puts out the fire (87). He urges him to return even if Zeus grants him great success on the battlefield, and to resist the temptation of fighting the Trojans alone without Achilleus; otherwise, Achilleus fears, Patroklos would bring further dishonour upon him: "do not without me long to fight / the war loving Trojans; you will dishonour me", (μὴ σύ γ ' ἄνευθεν ἐμεῖο λιλαίεσθαι πολεμίζειν / Τρωσὶ φιλοπτολέμοισιν· ἀτιμότερον δέ με θήσεις 89-90). Achilleus is a renowned fighter, indeed, should Patroklos take Troy by himself, without the best of the Achaians, he would greatly dishonour the Achaian hero. Furthermore, Achilleus warns his faithful friend to heed "lest someone of the everlasting Olympian gods / might come upon you", (μή τις ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεῶν αἰεγενετάων / ἐμβήῃι 93-94), surely that god would destroy him. As if to foreshadow future events, Achilleus draws attention to Apollo, the Olympian god who is an ardent enemy of the Achaians, but loves the Trojans dearly (94). His love for them is evident already at the outset of the epic in book 1 when he sends a plague against the Greek camp for dishonouring his priest, Chryses. Undoubtedly, then, he is the one god whom Patroklos should fear.

The brief allusion to Apollo together with the poet's allusion to Patroklos' death in lines 46-47 results in a great pathos for the hero who foolishly has just asked for his own death and evil destruction. Suddenly Apollo has been suggested as a major player in bringing the life of this unsuspecting hero to an end. With Apollo's help the plan of Zeus will make the doom of Patroklos come to its fulfilment. Not surprisingly then, the prayer Achilleus makes at the end of his speech, to Athena and, ironically, to both Zeus and Apollo that he and Patroklos escape destruction and take Troy alone (97-100), is never to be realized.

Meanwhile the narrative turns to the battle where the "black cloud of the Trojans" (κυάνεον Τρώων νέφος) has descended upon the Achaians (66-67). This black cloud requires a light to break up its heavy burden so that the Danaans can breathe again, and the situation on the battlefield can lessen in intensity. Then even Ajax, assaulted with the missiles from the Trojan on one side and the will of Zeus on the other (102-104), can take a break from the fighting. His shining helmet, unable to stand as a replacement for the helmet of Achilleus, is constantly being hit with arrows because the helmet belonging to Achilleus does not yet make its shining appearance (70-71). Instead the Trojans in their overconfidence fling their arrows at the helmet of Ajax, causing the metal to resound under the hits (104-106). Ajax, tired from holding up the shield with which he deflects the flying arrows, with difficulty gasps for a breath of air, while sweat pours down his body (107-110). Although he would like to, he cannot take rest from the fighting, for evil is set all around him (110-111). The tired hero desperately needs a rest or someone who can deliver him from this heavy toil.

A feeling of sympathy for Ajax and for the other Danaans overcomes the poet as he begins to invoke the assistance from the Muses to help him recount the events that led to the fire (112-113). When faced with difficult episodes in the narrative, Homer often solicits the aid of these goddesses to help him to tell the story.[16] In a sense he calls out for their intervention similarly as on the battlefield a hero calls out to Zeus, or any other Olympian god, for courage. With the divine inspiration he has the strength to continue his story like the fighter who, having obtained courage, bravely faces his opponent. In what seems as a narrative "flashback"[17], the poet begins first by recounting how Hektor had struck down Ajax' spear (114-118), an action that has now resulted in Ajax' withdrawal from fear of knowing that this is the work of the gods, and that Zeus is scheming to help the Trojans win (119-122). After this Achaian set-back, the Trojans have little difficulty in setting the vessels on fire. The will of Zeus is finally being accomplished:[18] the fire, "untiring" (ἀκάματος) and "inexhaustible in its flame" (ἀσβέστη φλόξ) has poured over the ships (122-123). It is now in need of a saviour who will put out its destructive flames. Patroklos, who poured down his tears (2-4), the symbolic waters, becomes the saviour the Achaians so desperately need.[19] Aroused by the fire Achilleus implores Patroklos to put on the armour

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16 My reading here is supported by Richardson 178. A similar effect is created at the beginning of the poem in book 1 when Homer asks the Muse's inspiration in writing this epic. Cp. ἔσπετε νῦν μοι, μοῦσαι Ὀλύμπια δώματ' ἔχουσαι, / ὅππως δὴ πρῶτον πῦρ ἔμπεσε νηυσὶν Ἀχαιῶν, "tell me now, Muses, who keep a house on Olympos, / how the fire fell first on the Achaian ships (16.112-113), and Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, "Sing wrath, goddess" (1.1).

17 My reading here is supported by Richardson 178.

18 Cp. 1.503-530; 8.476; 15.64-65.

19 Although in the crying girl simile Patroklos is compared to someone needing protection, throughout book 16 he himself becomes a protector figure for the Achaians. This point is considered by Moulton 104.

and save the ships from the ravening flames so that there may be a way to return home to their fathers (126-129).

As if preparing himself for a sacrifice, Patroklos begins to arm in Achilleus' armour. The narrative pauses to describe his elaborate arming scene.[20] Throughout the *Iliad* when a hero prepares for an important battle scene or a duel the narrative describes this scene in detail, thus emphasizing the hero's importance in the plot. The more detailed a description the hero has, the greater his *aristeia,* his deeds on the battlefield.[21] First, along his legs, Patroklos fastens a leg armour (κνημίς) studded with silver buckles (131-132); then, around his chest, he wraps the (θώρηξ) Achilleus' glittering breastplate (133-134); next, across his shoulders, he straps a bronze silver-studded sword (ξίφος ἀργυρόηλον) and a shield (σάκος 135-136). Finally, on his head, he places a well wrought helmet (κυνέη) with plumes that rocked when he moved his head (137-138). It is this helmet, a symbol of Achilleus, that will shine on the battlefield and will put fear into all the Trojans. Armed thus in the armour of Achilleus, Patroklos picks up two powerful spears which feel right and "fit well in his hands" (τά οἱ παλάμηφιν ἀρήρει 139), but fails to take the spear that belongs to Achilleus, the weapon that signals "death to heroes" (φόνον ἔμμεναι ἡρώεσσιν 144). This is a special spear for no one except Achilleus has the ability to lift it or make a spear cast against the enemy (141-142). No other spear has that special attribute; nor for that matter does any other hero have the expertise of Achilleus. Failing to pick

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20 Other arming scenes include: 3.328-338., 11.15-55f., 19.364-424f. All are discussed in detail by J. I. Armstrong in "The Arming Motif of the *Iliad*", *AJP* 79 (1958) 337-354; and by Bernard Fenik in *Typical Battle Scenes in the "Iliad": Studies in the Narrative Techniques of Homeric Battle Descriptions* (Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner Verlag GmbH, 1968) 191.

21 This point is considered in detail by Jasper Griffin in *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983) 36.

up the spear Patroklos demonstrates that he is a lesser warrior than Achilleus;[22] his inability to take the weapon shows him as lacking in the quality necessary to play the role of Achilleus. The narrative anticipates the hero's destruction; for there can be no confusion about the doom of Patroklos, a mortal whose death the gods are plotting, in the armour of the greatest hero whom the gods honour. The death of Patroklos is symbolized by one other action in this arming scene - by the harnessing of Pedasos, his mortal horse, to the two immortal horses, Xanthos and Balios, which belong to Achilleus (152-153).[23] The juxtaposition of a mortal with the immortal further reinforces Patroklos' inadequacy as a double of Achilleus who is after all the son of a goddess. When Pedasos dies, he becomes the symbol of his master's own mortality and destruction.[24] The futility of a mortal horse running alongside the two immortal horses, who usually run with the wind, fills the scene with sorrow for the doomed creature since he has come to play a role he is incapable of fulfilling. Pedasos is unable to run with these horses, any more than Patroklos is able to fit the role of Achilleus.

The picture of pathos is even further intensified by a simile following Patroklos' arming scene. Achilleus has just marshalled his men in front of their encampment to give them words of encouragement since he will not be able to do so there on the battlefield. The assembled Myrmidons standing before their leader are compared to a fearless pack of flesh-eating[25] wolves who had killed a deer. With their blood gore still

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22 Patroklos' inadequacy is pointed out by both Armstrong 347 and Fenik 191.

23 According to Fenik 191 and Armstrong 347 the harnessing of Pedasos marks Patrokios' arming scene as unusual from the other arming scenes in the *Iliad*.

24 My reading here is supported by Armstrong 347.

25 The word meaning ὠμοφάγος "eating raw flesh" is used only in comparison of warriors. For this observation I am indebted to Griffin 19.

dripping from their mouths (159), they come to a dark-running spring in order to satisfy their thirst after a kill (160-161). At a first glance this simile seems out of place in the narrative because the Myrmidons have not yet made their kill, but a second look reveals the simile to be indeed appropriate for the situation.[26] The Myrmidons as a pack of wolves,[27] "in whose heart is an unspeakable valour" (τοῖσίν τε περὶ φρεσὶν ἄσπετος ἀλκή 157), act as a single unit eager to enter into the battle so that they can make their kill. The simile stresses not the kill itself, but what the wolves do after the kill: they drink from "a spring with dark-running water" (ἀπὸ κρήνης μελανύδρου 160). Here we are reminded of the picture of Patroklos in the earlier simile as he sheds his tears "like a spring with dark-running water" (ὥς τε κρήνη μελάνυδρος 2-4). When these wolves drink from the dark-running spring, "lapping with their lean tongues the black surface of the water / and spewing out the gore of blood" (λάψοντες γλώσσῃισιν ἀραιῇισιν μέλαν ὕδωρ / ἄκρον, ἐρευγόμενοι φόνον αἵματος 161-162), they use the water to quench their thirst after a kill in the same way the Myrmidons use Patroklos to quench their "thirst" for battle. The Myrmidons hunger for battle; they have been forced to withdraw from

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26 Mark W. Edwards in *Homer: Poet of the "Iliad"* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1987) 106, offers a view that this simile does not follow the developments in the plot up to this time. I disagree for the following reasons: Edwards' reading focuses on the actual kill, and since the Myrmidons have not yet taken a part in the killings, he concludes the comparison is out of place. But the kill itself is not the action stressed in this simile. On the contrary, the simile places a great amount of emphasis on the wolves' drinking from the dark spring, an image associated with Patroklos. Therefore, it is necessary to approach this simile from the point of view of the dark water, not of the kill. Annie Schnapp-Gourbeillon in *Lions, héros, masques: Les Représentations animales chez Homère* (Paris: Maspero, 1981) 51-52, points out in her discussion of this wolf simile that the wolves are described with the traditional heroic qualities, but she also believes that the comparison is strange.

27 Wolf similes are often used to describe groups of men inspired with battle fury. Cp. 4.471, 11.72. 16.156 and 352.

fighting, but their hunger has not been satiated, in their hearts still lies an unspeakable valour (ἀλκή 157) that has not yet had an opportunity to be used. Now these warriors, who have come to Troy with the purpose to fight, will finally, under the leadership of Patroklos, satiate their appetites. Patroklos becomes the vehicle that quenches the Myrmidons' hunger in the same manner that the water quenches the wolves' thirst. He is the dark-running spring that refreshes them. Satiated in this manner, the Myrmidons set out to battle.

Since a major new force has entered the battle, a catalogue introduces the new divisions with their individual leaders.[28] These Myrmidon fighters have not yet had the honour of being presented along with the Achaian forces in book 2. Now they have their brush with glory as each one of their five leaders has a brief mention of both the division he is leading and his own genealogy (168-197).[29] Gathered with all their forces, the Myrmidons listen to the heated words from their main leader Achilleus who will not be joining them in the battle. His words at first reveal a resentment at the treatment he has received since his withdrawal: "all the time of my anger, each one of you even blamed me" (πάνθ' ὑπὸ μηνιθμόν, καί μ' ἠτιάασθε ἕκαστος 202). Then he proceeds to rebuke them for their behaviour towards him: the threats uttered against him at the time of his anger (200-201), the blame he received for keeping his men by the ships away from the battle (203-204), the desire that they should

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28 Such an introduction of the forces happens throughout the *Iliad*, as book 2 illustrates.

29 I have omitted this catalogue and others from my discussion of book 16. Although catalogues serves as an example of the epic narrative techniques, often the information contained in them has little bearing on the central development in the plot. The heroes introduced in these catalogues are either Achaian leaders who are not mentioned again, or Trojan heroes who fall to their deaths. The major focus of book 16 centers around Patroklos, therefore, I have also tried to limit my own discussion to the scenes that concern the Myrmidon hero.

leave so that his anger would no longer keep them from the fight against their will (205-206). But they will be no longer kept while there is a great need for them. Now has come the time for a great battle, something they have longed for in their hearts all this time; therefore, he sends them to the battlefield where they can behave more bravely. Achilleus shows a great deal of initiative as a leader first, by expressing, without any apology, his disapproval, and then by sending the Myrmidons to the battle under a different leader so that they can fight and win glory, and, at the same time, help those who had treated him wrongly.

As these fighters listen to their leader's words of encouragement, their anger (μένος) and their spirit (θυμός) surging, a sense of comradeship overcomes them all. Armed with a purpose, with the same goal, and moved by Achilleus' words, they draw close to one another, for they are one in the spirit of Ares. A simile compares such a closeness to the firmly packed stones which form a wall of a house, a shelter from the winds (212-217).[30] So close together the Myrmidons stood that "shield leaned on shield, helmet on helmet, man against man" (ἀσπὶς ἄρ' ἀσπίδ' ἔρειδε, κόρυς κόρυν, ἀνέρα δ' ἀνήρ 215). The wall a man builds represents a foundation of a house, a place of warmth, love and nurturing where the hearth is never allowed to die out. In the world of the *Iliad,* the warrior, the foundation of the society erected to ensure its safety and protection, guards against any danger by making sure the hearth is always burning for future generations whom he protects (31-32). When these soldiers stand close together leaning against each other, they offer a shield of closely set

30 Similar imagery occurs in line 224 where Achilleus' tunics and mantles are described as, ἀνεμοσκεπέος, "sheltering from the winds".

stones, a shelter, a foundation of a house.[31] The protection they offer is invaluable, the honour they are given, inexhaustible, the destruction they bring on, indescribable. As these men stand, listening to Achilleus' words, they represent this house, the foundation of their society, and its survival. Yet, in contrast, they also represent the same wolves who only a few lines above have killed a stag, who bring a destruction along with the protection, who uphold a foundation formed out of the very destruction they create.

Among these men two fighters, Patroklos and his henchman, Automedon (219), stand out in the place that usually belongs to Achilleus and his own henchman, Patroklos. These two set out along with the rest of the Myrmidons to ward off the destruction so that the survival of their ships, their home away from home, is ensured. They are the wall, the foundation that will guard the Danaans against the force of the Trojan assault and will secure their safety. Together they will destroy in order to protect. As they set out "in high spirits" (μέγα φρονέοντες 258) eager to fight for their ships, they resemble the wasps in the simile in lines 257-267 who rush out "with stout hearts" (οἱ δ' ἄλκιμον ἦτορ ἔχοντες 264) to protect their own homes and their young ones from the aggression provoked by young boys. The wasps also have their house, their foundation, disturbed; therefore, they must fight, to ward off the destruction threatening their existence, similarly as the Achaians need to defend their own homes, their ships. The Achaians, provoked by the Trojan assault, rush against their perpetrators, while the wasps provoked

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31 The word used for "close together", πυκινός, itself has other meanings: "affording good shelter, protection or security, warm, cosy", as R. C. Cunliffe in *A Lexicon of the Homeric Dialect* new ed. (Norman, Okla.: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 1963) has observed. For a thorough linguistic analysis of this word see Lynn-George (1988) 145.

by the little boys' teasing attack anyone who passes by their homes at the roadside (263-265). As if playing a game, the little boys and the warriors alike take pleasure, even satisfaction, in their destructive actions without a thought to the harm they are inflicting. The playfulness they use to tease the wasps has caused a great deal of harm for which the boys are directly responsible as the narrative suggests: "Silly boys; they bring a common evil to many" (νηπίαχοι· ξυνὸν δὲ κακὸν πολέεσσι τιθεῖσι 262). These boys provoke, take part in, and even get pleasure from the teasing, while amidst the helpless buzzing many innocent people suffer; yet, they also remain detached from any sense of responsibility. In this detachment, their role corresponds to the role the Olympian gods play in the *Iliad*: detached, yet, at the same time, directly involved in the conflict of the mortals, they cause a common evil to all, but stand without blame. One god especially deserves to be signalled out, father Zeus, who despite his remoteness, for he "lives afar" (τηλόθι ναίων 233), remains far from uninvolved in mortal affairs. Even now he is orchestrating Patroklos' death.

Ironically to this Olympian Zeus, Achilleus makes his prayer for Patroklos' protection (233-248). After the words of encouragement and a call for bravery (209), Achilleus turns toward his tent, his shelter, in order to make a prayer to Zeus, the father of gods and mortals. Preceding his prayer, a lengthy description lays stress on his actions in preparation for the libation, thus, emphasizing the dramatic irony not only of the prayer but also of the response that follows. In a chest filled with tunics and mantles and tapestries lies also a special cup from which no one is allowed to drink except for Achilleus when he pours out a libation to Zeus alone (225-227). The young hero takes this cup out of its safe place; he washes it

first with sulphur in order to purify it, then before pouring out the wine, he washes his hands to ensure that the libation he is about to make is a good one (228-230). Having performed everything with special care, he stands in the middle of the enclosure, takes the wine, and looking up to the sky prays to Zeus.[32] Achilleus has two requests from the father of all, but, unlike his immortal mother Thetis, he is incapable of speaking to the god directly at Olympos; therefore, he resorts to a prayer. He begins by addressing the Olympian god as Zeus "who lives far away" (τηλόθι ναίων 233), again highlighting the theme of the god's remoteness, while at the same time appealing for his involvement. Such an address creates a strong contrast between the young warriors who are dying far away from their fathers and the father of all mortals who lives far away from his children, removed, yet ever present in his will. Once again Achilleus takes the role of a parent: he, like the many fathers who remain in Greece, stays at home, helpless, while the hero departs for battle. The only comfort any father has is a prayer he makes on behalf of his son to ensure a safe homecoming for him. Calling on the god as "far-seeing Zeus" (εὐρύοπα Ζεῦ 241), for the god has the ability not only to see far into the future, but also to change the destiny if he so chooses, Achilleus recalls the prayer the Olympian god had granted him before. Now the young hero hopes father Zeus will grant him the same honour also (236-238). First, he explains the reason for his prayer: "I for my part remain here among the company of the ships, / but I am sending my companion along with many Myrmidons to do battle" (αὐτὸς

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32 Already in Homer a fixed formula can be found. The libation is associated with wine, followed by an invocation of the appropriate deity, and then the prayer itself, "If ever ...." Walter Burkert in *Greek Religion* tr. by John Raffan (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1968) 70-75, offers a detailed discussion of the importance of prayer in Greek libation and sacrifice.

μὲν γὰρ ἐγὼ μενέω νηῶν ἐν ἀγῶνι, / ἀλλ' ἕταρον πέμπω πολέσιν μετὰ Μυρμιδόνεσσι / μάρνασθαι 239-241). Then he make the request of his prayer known: "Give him glory at once" (τῶι κῦδος ἅμα πρόες 241) and courage so that he can put out the fire. But, more importantly, he implores the god to let Patroklos come back "unharmed" (ἀσκηθής) and with both his armour and the soldiers when the fire is driven away (246-248). The prayer for Patroklos' safety, however, seems to be a vain attempt as the narrative suggests: the god of the counsels heard him praying, and grants him one wish, but denies the other (250). His will stands unbent, for Patroklos will drive the fire away from the Danaan ship, but will not come back alive (251-252). The hero's fortune, as the fortune of any man in the *Iliad*, comes in mixed portions from two urns that stand before the entrance to Zeus' dwelling.[33] Although the father of all the gods and mortals chooses to give Patroklos glory, thus giving him good fortune from the urn of happiness, he nevertheless mixes it with the misfortune from the urn of bad luck. For his success, he will pay a price with his life.

Patroklos, leading the Myrmidons into the "dreadful war cry" (φύλιπον αἰνήν 256) with the fury of buzzing wasps, departs while Achilleus remains behind watching and longing for such an opportunity for battle (255-256). Yet, we can almost picture Zeus also keeping his eye on Patroklos so that he can minister to the fulfilment of his plan. Once on the battlefield the brave hero offers his own words of encouragement to the Myrmidons, urging them to fight with valour in order that they bring honour not to himself, as would be common since he is leading, but to Achilleus (271-272). Only such an honour, he believes, will make Agamemnon realize the folly (ἄτη) he had committed toward the best of

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[33] Cp. 24.527f.

the Achaians (270-274). Agamemnon, however, has already realized this folly before when in book 9 he dispatched the embassy (17f.) with many wonderful gifts for Achilleus in compensation, and again he will come to repeat the same realization to Achilleus and to the Danaans in book 19 (86f.). Yet, despite his awareness, Agamemnon's view of his responsibility, much like the view of the gods, is that he stands without blame: "Zeus, the great son of Kronos, had bound me in serious folly" (Ζεύς με μέγας Κρονίδης ἄτηι ἐνέδησε βαρείηι 9.18). In his mind his folly is the fault of the gods while he stands blameless, not sharing in the responsibility for his actions.

Encouraged once more after such powerful words from Patroklos, the Myrmidons rush out, their anger and courage stirred once more against the Trojans. On the battlefield, it is this valour and courage they display that will protect not only the Achaian ships, but at the same time, also Achilleus' honour. Ready at last, they raise an echoing war cry by the ships, creating a great commotion among the Trojan ranks, a noisy confusion which allows them to take control of the fighting (277). As anticipated by both Patroklos (41-42) and then Achilleus (71-72), upon seeing the gleaming helmet that Achilleus used to wear, the Trojan ranks were shaken, for "they believed that there by the ships the swift-footed son of Peleus / has renounced his anger, and chose friendship" (ἐλπόμενοι παρὰ ναῦφι ποδώκεα Πηλείωνα / μηνιθμὸν μὲν ἀπορρῖψαι, φιλότητα δ' ἑλέσθαι 281-282). Given the effect the helmet has upon them, indeed Achilleus had boasted correctly, the Trojans would never have had such confidence in battle had he remained active on the battlefield (70-72). Now fearing the worse, each one of the Trojan fighters begins to look around him for a way to escape the utter destruction (283). To add further to the

confusion and fear, Patroklos casts his first throw straight into a crowd of the enemy fighters, killing their Paionian leader, and producing a deep sense of fear among them all (287-292).

With the Trojan ranks giving way, in no time at all Patroklos accomplishes what he had set out to do: he drives the Trojans away and puts out the ravening fire from the ships (293). With the flames extinguished at last, the hard pressed Achaians can enjoy a brief relief which the narrative proceeds to compare to the relief felt after a storm (297-300). This little break after the storm of missiles feels like a breath of fresh air released from the sky when Zeus pushed back a thick cloud to make the whole land come to light (297-300). The light from the sky, the appearance of brightness, provides a respite from the storm that weighed down upon the land. For the Achaians the rest also comes from a light - from Patroklos who has become their source of light, their salvation. Patroklos has risen to the challenge and has proved himself a hero worthy of his word as he hoped he would when in the beginning of book 16 he begged Achilleus to let him fight in the battle "so that I might be a light given to the Danaans" (αἴ κέν τι φόως Δαναοῖσι γένωμαι 39). In the simile above, he has just appeared as the very light he has chosen to become; he in fact is the "unspeakable air" (ἄσπετος αἰθήρ) that makes all the "mountain peaks and the tops of the headlands / and the glens come to light" (ἔκ τ' ἔφανεν πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καὶ πρώονες ἄκροι / καὶ νάπαι 299-300). The relief, resembling the heavenly air felt when Patroklos puts out the fire provides a temporary break, just what the Achaians need (302). Yet, the force responsible for stirring the cloud and for bringing the light happens to be Zeus, a superior force, orchestrating the affairs of the mortals. His will is forever present so that no matter how hard men try,

they find themselves helplessly caught in the whirlwind of this divine force.

Despite the fulfilment of his orders, Patroklos fails to turn back to the camp, instead he and the other Achaian leaders proceed to make their kill. A list of the fallen Trojans indicates victories for the Myrmidon fighters, as well as changes in the battle. In honour of the vanquished, the narrative names the victims, thus giving them a brief account of glory as they fall to their deaths (306-350).[34] The Danaan conquerors pick their victims randomly like wolves who cause havoc among defenceless flocks because they are out of the protection of their shepherd (352-357). Once again a simile links the Achaian actions to the ravenous wolves making an attack upon some vulnerable animals.[35] The Trojan fighters, confused for they are taken by surprise at the fierce Achaian assault, become afraid just as the defenceless flocks "who have no heart for fighting" (ἀνάλκιδα θυμὸν ἐχούσας 355), and who at the sound of terror forget "their impetuous courage" (λάθοντο δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς 357). Unlike the simile at 155f. where the wolves are depicted as a pack of wolves attacking a single stag, in the simile at 352f. the wolves sneak upon an entire flock catching the animals unprotected, out of the watchful eye of their shepherd. Similarly the Danaan leaders, seeing this opportune situation, with the fury of ravenous wolves, make their surprise assault on the Trojans. As long as Achilleus remained by the ships the Trojans had the upper hand, but, under the leadership of his double, the Achaians have an advantage of the Myrmidon reinforcements to initiate an unexpected

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34 I have omitted the list of the fallen heroes from my discussion since I have found it of little relevance for this paper.

35 Cp. 16.156f.

attack against the Trojans, catching them off guard and unprotected. Scattered, vulnerable, caught off guard, the Trojans, like the young flocks, lack the courage and the spirit to fight. Now the tide of the fighting has turned in favour of the Greeks. As Ajax before (cp.101-111), so Hektor now tries to avoid the storm of the spears and arrows, but is, nevertheless, forced back knowing that the battle has shifted against him (362). He flees with his horses (367-369), leaving the rest of the Trojans behind unprotected like the careless shepherd in the wolf simile above who leaves his flocks vulnerable to an attack (351f.).

The fierceness with which the Achaians continue their assault becomes further developed with a storm simile to point out the tumult taking place on the battlefield. The cloud, in the simile at 297f., stirred by Zeus, briefly brings a relief from the storm, but as it moves through the sky from Olympos, it develops into a hurricane (364-365; 384-393).[36] Afraid for their lives, the Trojans try to escape in no particular order, only to create along the way a violent commotion which advances into an imagery of the most violent storm: the currents swell, the torrents rip the hillsides and noisily rush down to the sea, and all the earth is burdened (389-392). The reason for such a violent storm becomes evident, for Zeus, enraged by the mortals because they pass crooked decrees without a thought to righteousness, without a care to what the gods think, brings these destructive waters as a punishment for their disobedience (386-388). His position as an avenger of justice corresponds to the role Patroklos has appointed himself to play: by forcing the Trojans away from the Achaian

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36 The motion of the Achaian army is as swift as a wind. Homer often uses cloud/wind simile to describe the movement or the state of the fighters. This point is discussed in detail by Scott 62-66.

ships, Patroklos is in fact exacting punishment for a transgression the Trojans had directed against the Greeks.

While the Greeks continue to increase the number of their slayings, the Trojans take to flight. Individual encounters become the main focus of the narrative with a foremost concentration on the *aristeia* of Patroklos. Overcome by the battle fury, Patroklos begins to cause havoc among the Trojans leaving behind him a trail of dead bodies, which start to draw attention to him (394f.). As both the list of those slain and the flight of those living increases, the Trojans are in a shameful position: even their leader, Hektor, has fled to avoid an encounter with the Myrmidons. Nevertheless, one Lykian ally can no longer bear the cowardly conduct of his comrades in arms. Rebuking them for their shameful flight, Sarpedon appeals for courage with an offer that he alone will face the mystery man in armour who has caused such fright among all of them (422- 425).[37] With this readiness to ward off the danger from the Trojans, Sarpedon assumes a similar position of a protector as Patroklos. Defenceless and unprotected when their leader Hektor fled, the Trojan forces are in a need of a protector. Sarpedon has just offered to act as such a figure as Patroklos had done earlier. When both heroes, in their respective roles as protectors, confront each other, they foreshadow the fight between Hektor and Patroklos in the latter part of book 16, and, more importantly, the climactic duel between Achilleus and Hektor in book 22. Patroklos and Sarpedon rush against each other as two vultures who fight high above a high cliff (428-430). Linked thus to mighty birds of equal strength with equal weapons like the "hooks and claws" (γαμψώνυχες ἀγκυλοχεῖλαι) of the

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37 Cp. 16.721f. Often appeals and rebukes are employed to keep the soldiers fighting. For a discussion on the importance of rebukes and exhortations in the *Iliad* see Griffin 92.

birds of prey, they both fight high above the rest, like warriors with a divine quality.[38] The clash created from their weapons striking against each other and from their battle cry, echoes all around the battlefield, whence it is carried up to the sky to the attention of Zeus.

At this point the narrative turns to Mt. Olympos to Zeus of the "crooked counsel" (ἀγκυλομήτεω 431)[39] as he keeps his eye constantly fixed upon this encounter between his son, Sarpedon, and Patroklos. The epithet used for Zeus befits the image of the god who is pondering in his mind whether he should save his son, a mortal long ago destined to die (441).[40] Divine intervention[41] has become a commonplace occurrence in the *Iliad* where the gods have a vested interest in the actions of the mortals, but still have respect for that which is destined. However, should Zeus tamper with the destiny, he would create an utter chaos - what will stop the other gods from doing the same (443-447).[42] Indeed, such an interference would be greatly opposed by the Olympian gods. In answer to Zeus' deliberation, Hera instead proposes a compromise: when Sarpedon dies his body can safely be taken to Lykia, his home, where a proper burial

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38 Richard Janko in *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. 4: books 13-16 (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1992) 374 makes a similar observation of the superhuman imagery associated with the two fighters.

39 The root ἀγκυλο- in the epithet used of Zeus, ἀγκυλομήτεω, meaning of "crooked counsel", can be seen above in the description of the vultures' claws ἀγκυλοχεῖλαι in the lines above.

40 In book 22 the narrative also pauses to a scene on Olympos as Zeus contemplates the fate of Hektor who is about to die at the hands of Achilleus in revenge for Patroklos' death, but meets with an opposition from Athena who reminds her father of Hektor's destined fate. Zeus in both instances changes his mind.

41 Two examples of other intervention scenes include: book 1 Athena checks Achilleus from drawing his sword against Agamemnon; book 16 Apollo stops Patroklos at the walls of Troy.

42 It is interesting to note that Hera does not question whether Zeus has the ability to save Sarpedon, only the consequences if he does so. His power does seem omnipotent, a point considered in detail by Hugh Lloyd-Jones in *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1983) 4-5.

will be given in his honour (453-457). For, as the tradition dictates, a burial is the honoured privilege (γέρας) given to the memory of the dead.[43] While alive the hero gains his prize from destroying the enemy, but when dead his prize becomes a grave and a tombstone to signify that he himself has been destroyed. Despite the proper burial Sarpedon's kinsmen can give him, he, as many who have died in this battle, remains buried far away from his father. The Danaans who perish in this battle far away from their own fathers, even Achilleus himself, hold a hope that their comrades in arms will gain the possession of their bodies in order to perform a proper burial for them, and so honour their memory. Therefore, Hera's suggestion of a burial to be given in Sarpedon's honour by his kinsmen, undoubtedly appeals to the father of gods and mortals as an honourable compromise. To show his consent Zeus weeps "tears covered with blood" (αἱματοέσσας δὲ ψιάδας)[44] in mourning[45] for his beloved son's doom which cannot be averted (459-461).

This brief encounter on Olympos gives importance to the duel between Patroklos and Sarpedon by not only foreshadowing Sarpedon's death, but also by showing him as a worthy adversary for Patroklos. Unlike the other brief killings so far in book 16, the confrontation between these two heroes reveals a more detailed description. On the first throw both Patroklos and Sarpedon miss each other, but manage to kill someone

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43 To deprive the dead of a proper grave would mean the end, the abolition of his existence at one time, but when buried, the dead continue to live in the memories of those left behind. My reading here is indebted to the discussion of death in the *Iliad* by Griffin 46.

44 Zeus also drops tears covered with blood at the beginning of the battle in book 11 (52-55) in honour for those who are about to perish.

45 Not having someone mourn the dead, is a fate even worse than death itself. For a thorough discussion of the importance of funerals in Greek society see Emily Vermeule, *Aspects of Death in Early Greek Art and Poetry* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1979) 12.

else, making this a unique scene in the entire epic.[46] First Patroklos casts his spear at Thrasymelos, Sarpedon's henchman, hitting him with a deadly blow. As a henchman himself, by killing Sarpedon's charioteer, Patroklos signals the forthcoming death of Hektor's own charioteer, Kebriones (736f.), and even his own destruction.[47] Next Sarpedon, with his spear cast, hits Pedasos, Patroklos' own mortal horse, whose tragic death has already been foretold (152-154). By killing Pedasos, Sarpedon shows himself as a ruined man, a fighter of lesser importance than the man in Achilleus' armour: while Patroklos had killed a man, he killed only a horse.[48] Patroklos and Pedasos bravely follow in the foot steps of their superiors, Achilleus and the immortal horses respectively, but in the end they both find themselves unable to fit completely into their assumed roles which lead them to their deaths. Pedasos, fatally wounded, dies the death of a courageous warrior: "and he [Pedasos] roared as a breath of life escaped him / and crying out he fell into the dust, and the spirit of life flew out from him" (ὁ δ᾽ ἔβραχε θυμὸν ἀΐσθων / καδ δ᾽ ἔπεσ᾽ ἐν κονίηισι μακών, ἀπὸ δ᾽ ἔπτατο θυμός 468-469).[49] A corpse lying in the dust Pedasos is soon to be joined by yet another body, that of Sarpedon. On the second throw, first Sarpedon misses his intended target, a further indication of his weaker warrior quality, whereas, the hero Patroklos makes a direct hit fatally wounding the Lykian hero (479-481). Sarpedon's fall to his death is described by a simile that draws parallels with the fall of

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46 This is the only instance where both fighter miss, but kill someone else. Fighters often miss their intended targets cp. 11.232f.; 13.601f.; 21.161f.; 22.273f., but in a duel usually only one misses. For this observation I am indebted to Fenik 204.

47 The charioteer's death is common in the *Iliad*. This point is considered in detail by Fenik 204.

48 My reading here is supported by Fenik 204.

49 This is a standard, formulaic description of a hero's fall to death in book 16, and in the rest of the *Iliad*.

a tree cut from its roots, its source of life (482-484).[50] At the prime of his life, like the "high growing pine tree" (πίτους βλωθρή 483),[51] the hero falls to his death prematurely, but not unheroically, for another simile describes his struggle with death (487-491). Lying there in the dust before his horses, Sarpedon dies at the hands of Patroklos like a high spirited bull dying "under the claws of a lion" (ὑπὸ γαμφηλῆισι λέοντος 489). While both he and Patroklos were well matched initially, as the vulture simile at 428f. had indicated, now one of the two has gained the prominence of a lion, and the other of a bull. Although a bull might lack the epic fame of a lion, nevertheless, having fought bravely, he is still distinguished with the heroic qualities of fierceness and high spiritedness (488). The description of Sarpedon lying in the dust wrestling with this inevitable doom gives rise to an utter pathos for the hero as he fights against the fate from which he cannot escape: death, the one opponent even a mighty warrior is unable to conquer. Homer paints a picture of pure anguish of this hero's tragic end. His helpless struggle with death, his rage, as he grasps "a handful of dust covered with blood" (βεβρυχὼς κόνιος δεδραγμένος αἱματοέσσης 486), sends shivers through the narrative. Seeing his blood, Sarpedon struggles with the realization of his defeat, a reality he has difficulty accepting, for no doubt the dust which he is grasping with his hand is covered with the blood gushing from his own deadly wound. At this very moment of reaching out, Sarpedon tries to grasp for life, but instead faces his own mortality. Both grief and pity overcome this picture of Sarpedon's death, for we, having witnessed his

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50 The simile of a falling tree is a common way to describe the fall of a warrior. Cp. 4.482; 5.560; 13.178, 389.

51 Cp. 13.389-391 the same simile is used of the fall of Asios.

courage, are also affected by his death and mourn him, as Zeus had when he let fall tears covered with blood (459), the tears that now unite with his son's blood. Grasping with his hand the dust around him Sarpedon calls out for help not from the gods, nor from his own immortal father, but from his companion, Glaukos. Aware in his heart that his death cannot be avoided, but his corpse can still be saved from the enemy clutches, he begs Glaukos to save him from the worst fate imaginable, from the humiliation of having his armour stripped by the Achaian foe: "for I shall be a thing of shame and reproach / every day forever, if the Achaians strip / the armour from me" (κατηφείη καὶ ὄνειδος / ἔσσομαι ἤματα πάντα διαμπερές, εἴ κέ μ' Ἀχαιοὶ / τεύχεα συλήσωσι 498-500). Not only would Sarpedon fall into a great dishonour for losing his armour, but he would also be without a proper burial. With this cry for protection, Sarpedon sets off the fight over the possession of his body, a battle that foreshadows the fight over Patroklos' body later in book 17. Having pronounced his last words, Sarpedon dies while death pours over his eyes and life escapes his limbs, and Patroklos pulls out his spear, the instrument of death, from the hero's body.[52]

Meanwhile the fight for Sarpedon's body begins on one side with the Trojans trying to protect the body in honour of the Lykian leader, and on the other with the Achaians attempting to gain the body in order to strip it off the armour (563-631).[53] The battlefield resembles a tug of war to decide the contest of the two armies.[54] Even Hektor, who previously fled

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52 The deaths of Sarpedon, Patroklos and Hektor share common characteristics: first, the dying hero speaks his last words and then the victor pulls out his spear from the victim. For this observation I am indebted to Fenik 205.

53 I have omitted a close reading of this fight between the two armies because I have found it to contain little information relevant to my discussion.

54 Similar fight occurs at 16.751f. over Kebriones, and 17.389f. over Patroklos.

the Achaian assault (367-368), with a renewed courage leads the fight for Sarpedon (552-553). As the two sides clash together, a new wave of fighting arises with so great a force that Zeus, afraid lest more harm should come to his son, covers the body with a deadly night in hopes of protecting it (567-568). Ironically, the deadly darkness covering Sarpedon's eyes can never be lifted; this darkness is eternal. The clashing of the two sides, as they try to hit each other with their weapons, resounds all around the battlefield setting the stage yet for another simile. The battlefield acquires an appearance of a mountain glen where wood cutters chop timber to make ships (633-637). Once again, as in the fall of Sarpedon (428f.), a simile of men cutting down trees describes the violence taking place on the battlefield. The narrative has turned to the scene of the slaughter - the mountain glens - where the killings continues and many men fall to their deaths. The tumult from their fighting echoes far with the swords and spears being hit against the shields to recall the striking of axes against the trunks of the trees. Warriors are compared to "men who fell timber" (δρυτόμων ἀνδρῶν 634), as well as to the fallen timber itself, "he fell like an oak" (ἤριπε δ', ὡς ὅτε τις δρῦς 482). The comparison of a battlefield to a forest creates a moving picture of the destruction taking place on the battlefield. What should be a picture of tranquillity and beauty of nature, turns into an image of devastation and destruction, where the young heroes meet their grim fate to be cut down like trees. Sarpedon lies, amidst this ruin, covered under a pile of arrows, blood, and dust, his body hardly recognizable even to someone who knows him well (638-640). The ironic juxtaposition of the dead warrior buried not under a pile of dirt, but a pile of arms which he himself used to fight and kill others, who now lies dead covered with his own blood, evokes sadness and compassion for his tragic

end. He deserves a proper burial with a gravestone and a tomb, covered with a pile of dirt, not a pile of arms; he needs a place where his body is protected from the possibility of further violence. Although temporarily he is covered by a darkness that hides him from further harm, nevertheless, he needs a place where he can rest in peace, away from all this violent commotion. In protection of Sarpedon's body, the Trojans try to shield the hero by swarming around him like flies over milk pails (641-644). While the buzzing of the flies creates a great deal of noise and commotion reminiscent of the buzzing of the wasps who, disturbed, swarm around a passer by in protection of their children and their homes (259-265), their presence, however, implies decay that so often accompanies the dead.[55] Sarpedon requires a burial to avoid an even worse fate by which he becomes food for insects, dogs, and birds.

While they fight over Sarpedon, Zeus keeps his ever watchful eye constantly upon the contest of these mortals: "nor once did Zeus / turn his bright eyes away from the strong encounter" (οὐδέ ποτε Ζεὺς / τρέψεν ἀπὸ κρατερῆς ὑσμίνης ὅσσε φαεινώ 644-645). In his anger at his son's death, Zeus carefully deliberates the fate of Patroklos: should Hektor kill him right there over the body of Sarpedon and strip the armour off him, or should he let the fighting continue a little longer (646-651).[56] Unlike the deliberation held over the fate of Sarpedon (431-438), Zeus here does not intend to save Patroklos from his impending doom, but instead deliberates how much longer should he prolong the hero's death. In due time, the Myrmidon leader will die at the hands of Hektor, his armour

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55 For this observation I am indebted to Janko 391.

56 Zeus similarly ponders the fate of Hektor, but, as here, he decides to give the hero another chance of victory 17.198-208.

will be stripped off his shoulders (650) after the brave hero's last attempt to assault the walls of Troy (653-655). Thus pondering in his heart, it seems best that Patroklos should have one last time of glory on the battlefield before meeting with his death. Zeus makes up his mind that Patroklos should force the Trojans back to their city, kill many of them along the way, and win great glory for himself. As for Hektor, the all-mighty god decides that the hero should flee the battlefield once more (655-656) before he meets the Achaian hero for the last time. Giving Patroklos such an inspiration to charge against Troy, Zeus acts as an instrument in the breaking of Patroklos' promise that he should not go against the city without Achilleus: "do not give orders to fight in the battle and war, / killing the Trojans, nor lead the way against Troy, / lest someone of the everlasting Olympian gods / should come against you" (μηδ ' ἐπαγαλλόμενος πολέμωι καὶ δηϊοτῆτι, / Τρῶας ἐναιρόμενος, προτὶ Ἴλιον ἡγεμονεύειν, / μή τις ἀπ' Οὐλύμποιο θεῶν αἰειγενετάων / ἐμβήηι 91-94).[57] The choice is no longer his, for a greater force directs the affairs of the mortals. Meanwhile Hektor, aware that the will of Zeus is against him, flees the battlefield carried by his horses (658). With the Trojan hero in flight and the rest of the Trojans scattered from fear (659-661), the Achaians gain an advantage in the fight for Sarpedon and take possession of his body (663-665). Once in Achaian clutches, the body falls into precisely the disgrace which Sarpedon had prayed against (498-501): dishonoured by the stripping off the armour, he is left unprotected, exposed, and vulnerable on the battlefield, a food for the dogs.

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57 Although Patroklos has already fought the Trojans, he has not yet given the orders to charge against Troy.

Afraid for his son's fate if he is left unprotected on the battlefield, Zeus intervenes to save the body. The Olympian god has not once let his eyes off the battle over his dead son (644f.). In fact during the early stages of the fight, in protection of his son's body, he has sent a deadly night to cover him (567-568). Now, however, the greatly dishonoured body is in a need of a proper burial. Taking the suggestion of his wife, Hera (440f.), the father of all the gods and mortals sends Apollo to the battlefield with the orders to retrieve the corpse, to wash it, anoint it, and dress it (669-670), as is commonly done during the preparatory stages of a funeral.[58] Afterwards Sleep and Death will carry Sarpedon's body to Lykia where his kinsmen perform the final stages of the funeral and bury him, thus, giving him a tomb and a gravestone in his memory as is the γέρας of all those who perish (674-675).[59]

Patroklos' doom quickly approaches, too. From line 684 until the end of book 16, the narrative intensifies as Patroklos, foolishly misled, charges against Troy. He is innocent in his foolishness (νήπιος), a term used before in this book to describe him when he takes actions leading closer to his death.[60] Misled by Zeus, Patroklos in a blind fury gives

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58 For a more detailed discussion of funeral ritual see Vermeule 13.

59 My reading here is indebted to a thoughtful discussion of the importance of a burial in Greek society by Vermeule 12.

60 Patroklos is addressed as νήπιος at other instances in book 16, each time the insinuation of word creates a different emotive effect. Achilleus calls Patroklos νήπιος in the simile of a little girl begging to be picked up: "poor little girl" (ἠύτε κούρη / νηπίη 7-8); Homer calls Patroklos νήπιος when he proleptically comments on Patroklos' speech requesting of Achilleus to let him join the battle: "Thus he spoke beseeching very foolishly, for he was destined to / ask for his own death and evil destruction" (ὣς φάτο λισσόμενος μέγα νήπιος· ἦ γὰρ ἔμελλεν / οἱ αὐτῷι θάνατόν τε κακὸν καὶ κῆρα λιτέσθαι 46-47); Homer again calls Patroklos νήπιος when the doomed hero gives orders to charge against Troy: "foolishly misled, if he had observed the command of the son of Peleus, / he might have escaped the evil destruction of the black death" (νήπιος· εἰ δὲ ἔπος Πηληϊάδαο φύλαξεν, / ἦ τ᾽ ἂν ὑπέκφυγε κῆρα κακὴν μέλανος θανάτοιο 686-687); and finally, Hektor calls Patroklos νήπιος in his speech of triumph over the dying Achaian:

Automedon the orders to charge against Troy (684-685). Homer comments on the hero's action reproaching him for not keeping Achilleus' orders: "had he observed the command of the son of Peleus, / he might have escaped the evil destruction of the black death" (εἰ δὲ ἔπος Πηληϊάδαο φύλαξεν, / ἦ τ' ἂν ὑπέκφυγε κῆρα κακὴν μέλανος θανάτοιο 686-687). Such pathos fills the narrative that Homer reveals a great deal of compassion for Patroklos and begins to address the hero directly with the familiar "you" each time he comes closer to his imminent death. For example, before a brief catalogue of those slain by his blind fury, Homer asks: "There whom first, whom second did you slaughter, / Patroklos, when the gods called you to your death?" (ἔνθα τίνα πρῶτον, τίνα δ' ὕστατον ἐξενάριξας / Πατρόκλεις, ὅτε δή σε θεοὶ θάνατόνδε κάλεσσαν; 692-693); when Patroklos boasts words of triumph over the corpse of Kebriones: "so upon Kebriones you, Patroklos, leapt with such intentions" (ὣς ἐπὶ Κεβριόνῃ, Πατρόκλεις, ἅλσο μεμαώς 754); when he charges against Troy for the fourth time: "there Patroklos the end of your life became clear / for the dreadful Phoibos came against you in the strong encounter" (ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι, Πάτροκλε, φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή· / ἤντετο γάρ τοι Φοῖβος ἐνὶ κρατερῇι ὑσμίνηι / δεινός 787-789); when he is hit with the fatal blow: "he first sent his spear against you, Patroklos rider of horses" (ὅς τοι πρῶτος ἐφῆκε βέλος, Πατρόκλεις ἱππεῦ 812); and when dying he replies to Hektor's boast: "powerless you, Patroklos rider of horses, spoke to him" (τὸν δ' ὀλιγοδρανέων προσέφης, Πατρόκλεις ἱππεῦ 843). When Patroklos gives the orders to charge against Troy, directly disobeying

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"Patroklos, you thought that you could destroy the city indeed, / and take the day of freedom away from the Trojan women and in your ships take them to your beloved fatherland, fool." (Πάτροκλ', ἦ που ἔφησθα πόλιν κεραϊξέμεν ἁμήν, / Τρωϊάδας δὲ γυναῖκας ἐλεύθερον ἦμαρ ἀπούρας / ἄξειν ἐν νήεσσι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν, / νήπιε 830-833).

Achilleus' warning, he is no longer able to avert his own destined doom. With his actions he proceeds to play an active part in his own destruction which, nevertheless, has been already directed by the will of Zeus. Even if he tried to make an attempt to turn back to his camp, his effort, we are told, would be futile, for "always the will of Zeus is stronger than man's" (αἰεί τε Διὸς κρείσσων νόος ἠέ περ ἀνδρός 688). The Olympian god bears the responsibility of putting fear even into a brave man, like Patroklos, and for taking victory away as easily as he gives it, only to make the mortals into helpless fools of their fates (688-691). Even a brave man like Patroklos cannot escape the god's will.

Charging against Troy with the fury of the battle, Patroklos continues to kill many, as Zeus had planned (653-655), and as the list of his victims indicates (694-697). The fierceness with which he makes his attack against Troy is so great that under his leadership Achaians would certainly have taken the Trojan city if some god had not stopped the Achaian hero (698-700). The god Apollo has come to the aid of his people whom he holds dear in his heart and who are presently in need of his protection from this dreadful assault. Standing before the walls of Troy, he joins Zeus in actively executing the destruction of Patroklos. Three times Patroklos makes his assault[61] on the city's walls, but each time he is resisted by the very god about whom Achilleus had prophetically forewarned (91-94). Apollo, with thoughts of death for Patroklos stands before the walls of Troy ruthlessly protecting the people dear to him (701). Three times Patroklos collects all his force to attack Troy, but each time Apollo brushes him away with the stroke of his immortal hands, as if he were waving off

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61 Patroklos will again make an assault on Troy, three times in succession slaying nine Trojans 16.784f., but is again stopped by Apollo. Also in book 20.445f. Achilleus three times attempts to attack Hektor, but is stopped by Apollo.

a fly ("striking his shining shield with his immortal hands", χείρεσσ᾽ ἀθανάτῃσι φαεινὴν ἀσπίδα νύσσων 704). In such a struggle against the immortal god, a man, no matter how determined, inevitably arrives at his own downfall. Yet, in spite of his impending ruin, Patroklos pushes forth to dramatize this struggle between a god and a mortal, the tragic play, where the hero's death takes the central stage to present the futile attempt when opposing the gods who, after all, are stronger than men. With the stroke of his hand, as easily as Zeus takes away victory from a man, Apollo brushes Patroklos away from the walls of Troy in demonstration of his fantastic power. Patroklos, persistent still, is checked on his fourth attempt at mounting the walls as a "divine force" (δαίμονι ἶσος 705) draws near him, and addresses him with words of warning: "Give way, godlike Patroklos! It is not fated for / the city of the lordly Trojans to be destroyed by your sword, / nor by Achilleus, who is far better than you." (χάζεο, διογενὲς Πατρόκλεις· οὔ νύ τοι αἶσα / σῶι ὑπὸ δουρὶ πόλιν πέρθαι Τρώων ἀγερώχων, / οὐδ᾽ ὑπ᾽ Ἀχιλλῆος, ὅς περ σέο πολλὸν ἀμείνων 707-709).[62] Powerful words spoken by a powerful god. Patroklos quickly learns of his inability to act without help in this matter; even if he had obeyed the words of Achilleus not to go against Troy without him, it is not fated that either one will destroy the city. The fate of Troy lies not in the hands of the mortals, although they may wish it,[63] but rather in the hands of destiny and the gods who, although they cannot avert the fate without some consequences,[64] nevertheless, can still take vengeful actions as a consolation prize. Patroklos seems just such a prize for Apollo: if Troy

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62 Similarly Apollo addresses Diomedes in book 5 (440-542) as he attempts three times to cut down Aineias.

63 Cp. 97-100, the wish Achilleus makes that he and Patroklos alone take Troy.

64 As Zeus has been shown regarding the fate of his son, Sarpedon (431f.).

must fall, it will not do so without the fall of the main heroes, Patroklos, Hektor, and Achilleus, whose doom has been foretold throughout the epic. Neither Patroklos nor Achilleus will destroy the Trojan city, nor will Hektor be able to protect it. Despite their constant attempt, they, like Patroklos, are stopped by a "force equal to a god". At the sound of Apollo, Patroklos in fear draws back from his attack trying to avoid the god's anger (710-711).

Apollo, in protection of his people and in anger at Patroklos, now begins to instigate the final stages of the hero's death. Assuming the form of Asios, Hektor's uncle, Apollo approaches Hektor rebuking him for failing to fight Patroklos.[65] So far in book 16 Hektor has not yet played a major part, having already withdrawn once of his own accord (367), and once at the instigation of Zeus (656-657); therefore, he needs to be reminded of his duties.[66] In his absence Patroklos has collected a number of victories, and has even attempted to mount the walls of Troy. Yet, Hektor has still not decided whether he should return to the battlefield and fight (713-714), or whether he should stay by the Skaian Gates; he, therefore, needs some encouragement, some divine inspiration. In disguise, then, Apollo stands beside him rebuking him for his inaction. Appealing to Hektor's sense of shame, in the form of a young man, Apollo rebukes the Trojan hero for having withdrawn so miserably from the battle: "would that I were as strong like you, as I am weak, / you might then too withdraw so miserably from the battle" (αἴθ' ὅσσον ἥσσων εἰμί, τόσον σέο φέρτερ' εἶην / τῶ κε τάχα στυγερῶς πολέμου ἀπερωήσειας

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65 In book 17.583-585 Apollo again assumes a form of a mortal and rebukes Hektor for not fighting so fiercely in order to gain possession of Patroklos' body. In both instances the god makes the decision for the hero.

66 Such a reminder often comes from fellow fighters. Cp. 16.422f.

722-723).[67] As an incentive, Apollo indicates the possibility that Hektor might kill Patroklos: "you might kill him, Apollo might give you the praise" (αἴ κέν πώς μιν ἕλῃις, δώῃι δέ τοι εὖχος Ἀπόλλων 725). Apollo chooses his words very carefully: shame is commonly used throughout the *Iliad* in a bid to make a hero stop a certain unfavourable action, while the promise of glory becomes a very powerful tool to make the hero act in a certain way, in other words, to fight. With such high hopes of killing Patroklos, then, Hektor orders his charioteer, Kebriones, to harness their horses for a fight (727-728).

Meanwhile, Apollo, still harbouring ill designs, returns once again to the battlefield, to the "drudgery of men" (πόνον ἀνδρῶν 726), where he causes a deadly confusion among the Achaians (729). The following commotion creates an utter chaos among the Achaian ranks, but gives glory (κῦδος) to the Trojans (729-730). While the god Apollo is preoccupied on the battlefield giving his beloved people some relief from the Achaian assault, acting as their light, Hektor arrives on the battlefield in pursuit of no one else but Patroklos (731-732). With his anger and courage stirred, he rushes out without a thought of killing any other Danaan except Patroklos. At the same time Patroklos, aware of being pursued, sets out with a spear in his left hand and a rock in his right to confront his opponent. At last, the long overdue meeting of the two heroes takes place. First, the Achaian hero throws his rock aiming right at Hektor, but misses his intended target, hitting instead Hektor's charioteer, Kebriones, in what resembles the early stage of the duel between Patroklos and Sarpedon (462-465). The gleaming rock hits the charioteer in the forehead, smashing his

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67 Similarly Glaukos rebukes Hektor at 538f. and also Sarpedon rebukes the Trojans for running from Patroklos at 422f.

brows together as if a gleaming bronze sword cut through the flesh. The force of the blow causes the man to fall from his chariot tumbling to his death like a "diver" (ἀρνευτῆρι ἐοικώς) diving into the sea (742-743).[68] The plunge into his death caused from the blow he had received, recalls the fall of Thestor who in the simile at 406f. falls into the hands of death while being dragged by Patroklos out of the chariot like a fish pulled out of the sea. Diving, an activity done for the nourishment of the body as well as the soul, becomes distorted into an image where the purpose of fishing is not sustenance, but slaughter. Patroklos, triumphant and mocking[69] over Kebriones' body, addresses the doomed man, expanding on this diver simile (745-750). His speech consists of ironic overtones revealing how the hero's character has undergone a transformation from the time when he first made his appearance in book 16: "Ah! indeed he is a very light man, how easily he tumbles", (ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλ᾽ ἐλαφρὸς ἀνήρ, ὡς ῥεῖα κυβιστᾷι 745). Aware of the damage the rock has caused, he mockingly expresses surprise at the ease with which the charioteer falls to his death, adding a note of sarcastic remorse that instead of falling to the ground he should be diving into the sea for oysters so that he could feed the hunger of many people (746-747). Ironically, Kebriones appears like such a light diver, jumping so effortlessly, because the blow has knocked the life right out of him. The force of the rock, rather than the need for nourishment, has made a diver out of him. Hence, putting Kebriones into a position of a diver diving for oysters so that he can feed many people contains double meaning since his body in this case serves not to provide people with food

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68 At 12.385 the fall of Epikles, a Trojan killed by Ajax, is compared to the fall of a diver jumping from a battlement.

69 Achilleus similarly mocks Lykaon 21.122f.

but to provide fish with the food that is his own body. He completes the speech by mocking all the Trojan people: "Indeed in Troy, they certainly have their acrobats" (ἦ ῥα καὶ ἐν Τρώεσσι κυβιστητῆρες ἔασιν 750), hungry for them all to perish by tumbling to their deaths.

The harsh tone of this speech shows a change in Patrokos as if the killings he performed have also slowly robbed him of his innocence. He is guilty of one of the most common faults found in Greek literature - of overconfidence, or ὕβρις. His vaunting words to Kebriones indicate the gruesome nature his victims have experienced. To describe a man falling to his death as a diver diving for oysters in order to satiate the hunger of other men, is to distort the act of fishing into the act of killing, where the purpose of fishing satisfies a hunger for slaughter.[70] For Patroklos the Trojans do become acrobats tumbling to their deaths.

After his speech, Patroklos rushes towards the body "with the spring of a lion, who ravaging the stables / has been hit in his chest and his own courage destroys him" (οἷμα λέοντος ἔχων, ὅς τε σταθμοὺς κεραΐζων / ἔβλητο πρὸς στῆθος, ἑή τέ μιν ὤλεσεν ἀλκή 752-753). These two lines recall the lion who in the previous simile (487f.) killed a bull, a description of the death of Sarpedon at the hands of Patroklos. In that simile the lion comes upon a herd of oxen in their stables and makes his kill, while in the lines above, the same lion who had ravaged the stables is hit in the chest, destroyed by his own courage, the confidence that has led him to those stables. Like the lion, a hero must show courage and valour so that he can fight on the battlefield, yet the more courage and valour he displays, the more he runs the risk of exposing himself to the danger of being killed. By

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70 The same distortion occurs in 16.401-410 where Patroklos, compared to a fisherman, kills Thestor.

having what it takes to fight - courage and valour - he, therefore, not only destroys others who exhibit the same qualities, but is himself destroyed.[71] Such a fate awaits Patroklos, and even Hektor. As if sensing this danger awaiting the hero, for like the lion, Patroklos is about to be destroyed by his own courage, Homer again addresses him with grievous words: "So you, Patroklos, leaped eagerly upon Kebriones" (ὣς ἐπὶ Κεβριόνῃ, Πατρόκλεις, ἆλσο μεμαώς 754).

With Patroklos on the one side rushing toward Kebriones and Hektor on the other, the fight for the charioteer's body is set in motion. The narrative recalls the fight that has taken place over the body of Sarpedon, and at the same time, foreshadows the fight that will take place for the body of Patroklos. The two heroes fight over the charioteer's body like two hungry, yet, confident lions who fight on top of a mountain over a killed deer (756-761). As they strike at each other with "the pitiless bronze" (νηλέϊ χαλκῷι 761), intending to cut the each other's flesh, they resemble the lions who hunger for the flesh of the deer. Patroklos has at last found his match in Hektor who is his first adversary to deserve the comparison to a lion. The two of them, like the two vultures before (428-430), fight as equals, both heroically like two lions.[72] Up to this moment the heroes who have come against Patroklos have been described in less prominent terms since they were all killed by him. Now, however, the hero has met the man whom he will not be able to destroy. When "two leaders of the battle cry" (δύω μήστωρες ἀυτῆς 759) finally meet each other in a place beyond the battlefield, an almost divine place where gods dwell,

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71 My reading here is indebted to the thoughtful discussion of valour by Lynn-George (1993) 200-201.

72 For a thorough discussion of the lion as a heroic symbol see Schnapp-Gourbeillon 39-48.

but not mortals, they represent divine figures high above the rest. The hunger driving these two heroes to gain the possession of Kebriones resembles the hunger that drives the two lions to fight over the dead deer (761). As courageous fighters as they are, for they both desire to cut the other down, only one of them will be victorious, while the other will be destroyed by his own courage (752-753).

On the one end Hektor takes a hold of Kebriones' head, on the other Patroklos takes a hold of his feet and the rest of the Danaans and Trojans join in this tug of war pulling at the opposite ends acting out the quarrel between the East and South winds (765-771).[73] In this contest of the winds the forest with all its oaks and ash and cornel trees becomes shaken so greatly that the sound of the branches striking against each other shrieks, spreading all around. The forest once more becomes a suitable picture to depict the din taking place on the battlefield where men fall to their deaths like trees.[74] Attacking each other with swords which resemble the long-pointed tree branches, the Achaians and the Trojans produce in the process an "inhuman noise" (ἠχῇ θεσπεσίῃ 769), that resounds all around the battlefield, a noise similar to the striking of the tree branches that resounds all around the deep forest. Struggling for control neither side gives a thought to the danger, they become so focused on their killings (770-771). They all fight bravely even the Trojan division which had fled in the previous encounters from fear of the Achaian attack ("so the Danaans attacked the Trojans, and they remembered / the bitter sound of terror, and forgot their furious valour" ὣς Δαναοὶ Τρώεσσιν

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73 For a thorough discussion of weather similes used to describe the movement of the army see Scott 62-66.

74 Cp. 16.428f., 633f.

ἐπέχραον οἱ δὲ φόβοιο / δυσκελάδου μνήσαντο, λάθοντο δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς 356-357). While they remain thus engaged, the clamour arising from the battle joins in with the earlier storm similes to echo the dreadful slaughter arising from the battlefield.[75] Around Kebriones' body many missiles fly: sharp spears, arrows released from their bowstrings, stones, they all pound against the shields to cause destruction (772-775). As some of the released missiles miss their intended human targets, they become embedded in the ground around Kebriones producing a picture that resembles a grave yard of protruding tombstones. An image of pathos fills this scene of the charioteer's burial as he lies surrounded by weapons, instead of tombstones, his horsemanship all forgotten. Buried "in a whirl of dust" (ἐν στροφάλιγγι κονίης 775), a corpse just like the one of Sarpedon, another of Patroklos' victims (638f.), Kebriones' body must be recovered so that a proper burial can be given him, and his memory can live on.

The fight for Kebriones still continues with both sides trying to gain the possession of the body. Suddenly the narrative pauses briefly from the fighting to the passing of time with a description of the sun making its way across the sky. While the sun is high above, the fight continues, for the Trojans can withstand the Danaan assault, but when the sun begins its Eastward descent, the Achaians become stronger "beyond destiny" (ὑπὲρ αἶσαν), obtain Kebriones' body and strip it of its armour (777-782). Not one of the gods interferes on behalf of Kebriones; he is all forgotten. The Trojans have had their success while Achilleus remained by his ship not fighting, but slowly like a day, their success expires. The narrative reminds us that the Trojan victory will not last very long, for after the death of

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[75] Cp. 297f., 364f., and 384f.

Patroklos, Achilleus, the best of the Achaians will rejoin the battle to avenge his companion's death. The passage of the sun here heralds first the end for Patroklos, and then the inevitable ruin awaiting Hektor:[76] for Patroklos the end approaches in the form of Apollo, as for Hektor, the will of Zeus manifests his forthcoming doom.[77] The allotted measure of time each one is given in the *Iliad* eventually comes to a fulfilment. Who ever knows how much time he is given? - one minute there is victory, while the next defeat. With the description of the sun, Homer remarks on the irony of the time's passage and on the changes that take place: in the early hours of the evening the Achaians become stronger and take Kebriones' body (781-782), but lose Patroklos once the evening sets over the battlefield.

With Kebriones in Achaian possession, Patroklos makes violent attacks on the Trojans, seemingly forgetting Apollo's earlier warning that it is not destined for him to take Troy (707-708). Nevertheless, "with ill intentions" (κακὰ φρονέων 783), similarly as when Apollo attacked the overzealous hero (703-704), Patroklos rushes upon the Trojans with a rage "equal to the war god Ares" (ἀτάλαντος Ἄρηϊ 784). Three times he charges upon the walls, screaming the war cry, and cutting down nine men each time (784-785), thus, obtaining great glory for himself as Zeus had intended (652-655). Indeed Patroklos seems to have a great deal of luck on his side, but his luck is about to run out: on his fourth attack once again "a force equal to a god" (δαίμονι ἶσος 786), the same force that resisted his previous

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76 My reading here is indebted to the thoughtful discussion of this passage by Fenik 216.

77 In book 11 (191-194) Zeus dispatches Iris with a message for Hektor giving him a guarantee of a power to make his assault on the Danaan ships "until the sun makes its way around and the sacred darkness comes over" (δύηι τ' ἠέλιος καὶ ἐπὶ κνέφας ἱερὸν ἔλθηι). With the death of Patroklos, the reentrance of Achilleus into the battle is imminent, therefore, Zeus, according to the promise he had made to Thetis in book 1, is no longer under any obligation to help the Trojans.

attacks on the Trojan wall (705), falls upon him to mark his end. In that instance the life's end made its call, forcing Homer to mourn Patroklos as if the hero were already dead: "there the end of your life, Patroklos, was shown to you / for the dreadful Phoibos came face to face with you in this contest of strength" (ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι, Πάτροκλε, φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή· / ἤντετο γάρ τοι Φοῖβος ἐνὶ κρατερῇι ὑσμίνηι / δεινός 787-789). Phoibos Apollo, in his terrible powers, enters this strong struggle between the two leaders, Patroklos and Hektor, making himself an ally of destiny and of Zeus' will. Covered in a deep mist so as to be unnoticed by his chosen victim, Apollo comes against Patroklos in what is one of the most moving, yet hair-raising scenes in the *Iliad*.[78]

The stage, set for a tragedy, unfolds before our eyes. No one, neither Homer, nor Patroklos himself, is able to avert the disaster when Apollo, without notice, surrounded "with a thick mist" (ἠέρι πολλῆι 790), comes upon the doomed hero. His shield of mist symbolizes death, for Sleep and Death descend upon the dead to cover their eyes with a mist of darkness: "and darkness spread over his eyes" (κατὰ δ' ὀφθαλμῶν κέχυτ' ἀχλύς 344).[79] Like Death, Apollo is about to spread his misty veil over Patroklos. Taking his place behind Patroklos, the Olympian god stands protected by such an ominous shield that we come to feel sympathy for the powerlessness of this mortal when faced with the immortal force. With a stroke from "the flat of his hand" (χειρὶ καταπρηνεῖ), a gesture that recalls Apollo's previous assault on Patroklos at the walls of Troy (704), the god delivers a blow to the hero's "back and his broad shoulders" (πλῆξεν δὲ μετάφρενον εὐρέε τ' ὤμω 791). Without addressing the mortal with words

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78 My reading of this passage is supported by Fenik 216.

79 Cp. 16.316, 325, 502, 855.

of warning, as he had done previously (707-709), Apollo makes a direct hit on the unsuspecting hero. A horrific picture describes the effect the blow has on Patroklos: the hero's strong shoulders are unable to withstand the blow from the immortal hand, dum[illegible]unded, his eyes spin around, as if he were a cartoon like drawing (792). This effortless gesture from Apollo's immortal hand has a devastating effect on Patroklos who, although strong enough to cut down the enemy forces, is nevertheless powerless at the hands of the divine force.[80] As seen already in book 16, and throughout the *Iliad*, the juxtaposition of the mortals involved in the plans of the immortal gods produces a great pathos for the futile human effort: men try to appease the gods by prayers and by sacrifices, yet all in vain, the will of the immortals remains unbending to the desires of the mortals. After the confusing blow, Apollo proceeds to strip Patroklos off his armour as if the hero were already dead.[81] First he knocks down the helmet from his head in a gesture that almost suggests a gruesome decapitation (793).[82] The helmet rolls onto the ground, resonating with a clang (καναχήν ἔχε),[83] as if to herald the hero's inevitable death. When the metal head piece finally comes to a stop under the horses' hooves (794-795), there it lies in the dust like a dead warrior before his horses. Once this helmet protected the head of Achilleus (798-799), and then the head of Patroklos, but now its plumes defiled with blood and dust (αἵματι καὶ κονίῃσι 796), as never before, it foreshadows the fate of both of those men who wore it.

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80 My reading here is indebted to the thoughtful discussion of this passage by Griffin 152-153.

81 Cp. the stripping off the armour of Sarpedon and of Kebriones 16.663-664 and 781-782.

82 In 17.125-127 Hektor tries to obtain Patroklos' body in order to decapitate it. For further reading see Charles Segal, *The Theme of Mutilation of the Corpse in the "Iliad"* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1974) 20-21.

83 For a thorough linguistic analysis of words in this passage see Lynn-George 211.

Before this time it was not the custom (θέμις 796-797) to defile its sacred plumes, but, as the end approaches for both heroes, the defilement signifies their doom. Never again will the helmet cover the head of the men who wore it, nor will it protect them ever again. Although the death of Achilleus does not take place in the *Iliad*, nevertheless, through this scene where the helmet is defiled and through the anticipated death of Patroklos, we come to witness the death of Achilleus also. Yet, the helmet, a symbol of doom, heralds the death of another hero: Hektor. When Zeus gives Hektor the defiled helmet to wear on his own head, he indicates with this gesture that the life of the Trojan hero is soon coming to an end ("and his ruin was near", σχεδόθεν δέ οἱ ἦεν ὄλεθρος 800).

After removing the helmet, Apollo proceeds to strip Patroklos of his entire armour.[84] First the far-shooter shatters into pieces the long pointed spear of Patroklos, the one of his own which he took, not the one that belonged to Achilleus and meant death to many heroes (139-144). The doomed hero was unable to lift the Pelian ash spear with which the best of the Achaians usually fights, thus, demonstrating that he is an inferior fighter bound to be destroyed. With the breaking of this spear Patroklos' own fortune symbolically shatters into pieces and his entire armour falls apart: the shield, the barrier that protects him from the attack of spears and swords, falls from his shoulders (802-803) leaving him unprotected and unarmed, while the breastplate around his chest comes loose (803) leaving him naked and vulnerable. With his heart overcome by folly because he thought that he could have taken Troy alone, and with his limbs

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84 This seems to take place in a reverse order to Patroklos' arming scene 16.131-139.

loosening underneath him (805), he already resembles a corpse.[85] Thus blinded, he had tried to act courageously, but in the end his own courage destroyed him. The picture of Patroklos, standing there in the middle of the battlefield, stripped of his defences by Apollo, and dumbfounded by the act of violence done to him, evokes sorrow and compassion for this doomed hero. He, who at the beginning of book 16 felt pity for the Achaians and offered to help them without considering his own safety, now stands exposed, himself unprotected, a figure of utter ruin, destroyed by a vindictive god, and by his own act of courage.

To suffer further humiliation, Patroklos is struck in the back by Euphorbos, a Dardanian, an unknown hero up to this time, who on this fated day has gained for himself a distinction (γέρας) among his fellow fighters (806-809). The narrative proceeds to give some information on this anonymous player in Patroklos' fate by offering a brief mention of his lineage in honour of the glory he has now won for himself. The young hero, a skilled warrior in the prime of his life, has distinguished himself on the battlefield having already killed twenty men (810-811). Yet, despite his war successes, he fails to measure up to Patroklos' victories. His lack of experience, and perhaps even his lack of courage, comes through when he, unable to face Patroklos in a duel, takes this opportune moment of the hero's most vulnerable state, stabs him in the back and then runs away into the crowd, once more into a place of anonymity. A great sense of pathos for Patroklos overcomes this scene: bare, stripped of his protective shield, vulnerable, confused, he stands defenceless when the blow is delivered. Even Homer breaks into a lament as if delivering a grieving

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85 Cp. 16.400, 465, 743 "and his limbs loosened" (λῦσε δὲ γυῖα) in description of fallen warriors.

speech one similar in part to the type of laments usually offered at funerals ("he first send his spear against you, Patrokos, rider of horses", ὅς τοι πρῶτος ἐφῆκε βέλος, Πατρόκλεις ἱππεῦ 812).[86] Euphorbos appears not only cowardly by failing to face the unarmed Patroklos and by running away without even an exultant sp .n for his deed, but also afraid, for he has struck down the man who should have been killed by the renown Hektor. Euphorbos himself not a great fighter, has struck a great man, an action for which the honour should go to another man more deserving to bear the recognition, a man such as Hektor who wears the helmet of Achilleus.

Beaten by a god and injured by a sword, Patroklos proceeds to retreat back so that he can disappear in the crowd of his own companions and avoid utter destruction (816-817). Unfortunately, as foretold by Apollo when he swayed Hektor with a promise of killing Patroklos (725), the wounded Myrmidon leader does not escape the notice of Hektor (818-819). The Trojan hero makes his way through the ranks in pursuit of the man who is about to withdraw, but before the latter has a chance to escape, Hektor thrusts his bronze spear right through the man's belly to fulfil the ruin of Patroklos as is the will of Zeus (820-821).[87] To the horror and agony of the Achaian people Patroklos falls with a thud like a boar overpowered by a lion (822-828).[88] As once before when Hektor and Patroklos fought like two lions (756-761), even now both fighters fight

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86 Cp. 16.812-813, words addressed to Hektor with the three lament speeches in book 24 (725-745; 748-759; 762-775).

87 For the stabbing of warriors as they are withdrawing see 11.446; 13.566,648.

88 This lion and boar simile "sets the mood for the fight over Patroklos' body in Book 17". See Steven H. Lonsdale, *Creatures of Speech: Lion, Herding, and Hunting Similes in the "Iliad"*, Stuttgart: B. G.. Teubner, 1990. Lonsdale suggests that the fight in book 17 calls to mind the fight over the spoils from the Kalydonian boar.

with the great spirits of powerful animals, but one, as already foreshadowed (752-753), is destroyed by his own reckless courage. In the simile at 823f., Patroklos, compared to a boar overpowered by a lion, dies the death of a true hero.[89] The boar, a warlike hunter who himself is being hunted, lives as an equally strong predator as a lion, but lacks the epic prominence equal to the king of the jungle. The lion and the boar, both desiring to take a drink of water, fight each other "over a little spring" (πίδακος ἀμφ' ὀλίγης 825). With a great force, however, the lion kills the boar as he gasps for a breath of air as if panting to take a drink of water from the spring he has been denied (826). In this the last simile in book 16, the little spring makes its symbolic appearance. Recalling Patroklos and his innocence that was used to quench the thirst of flesh eating wolves (155-167) hungry for battle, the spring now satisfies the thirst of one "hungry" lion. Unrelenting in his strength (ἀκάμαντα 823), the boar resembles the fire that has poured over the Achaian ships (ἀκάμαντον πῦρ 122). Like the fire, the boar's life is now extinguished, as is the life of Patroklos. The saviour appointed to drive the fire away from the ships has symbolically poured down the water, his blood, for his beloved people.

In this final simile the developments in the imagery concerning Patroklos are brought together from the time he first enters book 16 like a little girl (7f.) to the time when he embarks upon a journey which transforms him into a reputable fighter and a heroic figure. From the moment he puts on the armour of Achilleus he undergoes drastic changes expressed in the similes describing him - a wolf, a lion, a boar - so that he can be presented as a great warrior. Through this metamorphosis he is able

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89 Schnapp-Gourbeillon claims that comparing the dying Patroklos to a vanquished boar, still renders the hero with warlike qualities without dishonouring him. p.46.

to transgress the distinct line between a mortal and the almost divine. Even in this last simile fighting on top of a mountain, far above the rest in an unearthly place, falling to his death, he bears heroic characteristics, that have made him an unrelenting fighter to the end (823-824). He, the sacrificial spring of water which once satisfied Myrmidon hunger for battle, now dies at the hands of Hektor, a sacrifice to the will of Zeus.

Triumphant Hektor stands over the dying body of Patroklos addressing him with mocking (830-842) words as is typical of a conqueror.[90] He rebukes the hero calling him a "fool" (νήπιε) for trying to destroy Troy and take its women into slavery.[91] Laughing at his inability to take the city of Troy, Hektor boasts of his distinction among the Trojans for being able to ward off the day of destruction from them: "but with my sword I alone / am distinguished among the war-loving Trojans since I have protected them / from the day of necessity" (ἔγχεϊ δ' αὐτὸς / Τρωσὶ φιλοπτολέμοισι μεταπρέπω, ὅ σφιν ἀμύνω / ἦμαρ ἀναγκαῖον 834-836). While Patroklos, near his death, never to see Troy destroyed, never to return to his country with his prizes of honour, suffers at the hands of Hektor, who proclaims victory for himself and vultures for Patroklos (836). In his state of victorious excitement Hektor fails to recognize the consequences of Patroklos' death by undermining the relationship that exists between Patroklos and Achilleus. Although Achilleus cannot help Patroklos now (837), as Hektor points out, his entry into the battle to avenge his companion's death seems inevitable; therefore, fear rather than ὕβρις should be on Hektor's mind. The Trojan hero deludes himself

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90 Cp. Patroklos' speech over the body of Kebriones 745-750; as well as Achilleus' words to the dying Hektor in book 22 (331-336).

91 This serious concern for the Trojan women is probably best expressed by Andromache at Hektor's funeral 24.725-745.

even further when he tries to guess what orders Achilleus had given Patroklos upon his entry into the battle. Hektor absolutely misjudges the entire situation by suspecting that Achilleus would have instructed his companion to fight until he brought about Hektor's death (839-841).[92] He fails to see the dishonour that would befall Achilleus if Patroklos should succeed in slaying Hektor. Hektor gives an impression of a tragic hero by believing that Patroklos is nothing more than an instrument of Achilleus ("thus he spoke to you and foolishly persuaded your heart", σοὶ δὲ φρένας ἄφρονι πεῖθε 842).

In his answer to Hektor's boast, however, Patroklos for his part shows a great deal of wisdom and perception. First he points out that Zeus and Apollo were responsible for his death, since they stripped the armour from his shoulders, and for Hektor's victory (844-845), implying that they can easily take it away: "Zeus, the son of Kronos, and Apollo gave you the victory, they killed me easily, / for they took the armour from my shoulders" (σοὶ γὰρ ἔδωκε / νίκην Ζεὺς Κρονίδης καὶ Ἀπόλλων, οἵ με δάμασσαν / ῥηϊδίως· αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀπ' ὤμων τεύχε' ἕλοντο 844-846). Patroklos himself boasts briefly that he could have easily taken as many as twenty men had the gods not stopped him (847-848). Nevertheless, the gods and "the destructive fate" (μοῖρ' ὀλοή) intervened giving one mortal, Euphorbos, the opportunity to hit him before Hektor delivered his blow; therefore, he stands third in line to claim such a victory (849-850). Furthermore, so near his death Patroklos shows a great insight into the divine affairs by offering Hektor a warning about the short life awaiting him ("and surely neither you will live long, but already / death and

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92 Achilleus instructed Patroklos to drive the fire away from the Danaan ships and then come back. He specifically warned his companion not to try to take Troy alone 83f.

powerful destiny are standing near you / to die by the hand of Aiakos' grandson, Achilleus", οὔ θην οὐδ' αὐτὸς δηρὸν βέηι, ἀλλά τοι ἤδη / ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή, / χερσὶ δαμέντ ' 'Αχιλῆος ἀμύμονος Αἰακίδαο 852-854).[93] With these prophetic words death covers his eyes and his life descends into Hades there to mourn the man it had left behind (855-857), while in the world above Achilleus remains to mourn the man and to avenge his death.

The folly (ἄτη) that takes possession of a victorious hero does not fail to blind Hektor's vision of reality either. Offering a reply to the last words Patroklos had uttered, Hektor betrays more of his delusion. First he rejects the possibility that he might die at the hands of Achilleus, suggesting that instead he might even kill Achilleus himself: "who knows if Achilleus, the son of the lovely haired Thetis / might be beforehand destroyed by my sword", τίς δ' οἶδ' εἴ κ' 'Αχιλεὺς Θέτιδος πάϊς ἠυκόμοιο / φθήηι ἐμῶνι ὑπὸ δουρὶ τυπεὶς ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὀλέσσαι 860-861). He seems to forget Zeus' promise in book 11 (191-194), that guarantees him a power until the end of the day. Then in a gesture reminiscent of Patroklos (503-504), Hektor comes forward stepping with his heel on the hero's body to pull out his spear so that he can aim it at Automedon, the new henchman of Achilleus who is carried away by the immortal horses, Xanthos and Banthios (862-863).

Book 16 ends with a transfer of positions: one trusted attendant dead, and another taking his place. Patroklos' death becomes the major advancing force of the plot. After a lengthy withdrawal, Achilleus will rejoin the battle to seek vengeance for his companion's death. Choosing

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93 When his end approaches, Hektor warns Achilleus of his own death 22.356-360, but unlike Hektor who rejects the warning of his death, Achilleus willingly accepts his inevitable doom.

then a short lived life of glory, he brings about the death of Hektor with whose destruction Troy itself will cease to exist.

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