

Diachrony

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Preface

The theme of this book, the diachronic study of ancient Greek literature and culture, was the focus of a conference held in North Carolina in October 23–24, 2009, and hosted by the Department of Classical Studies at Duke University. Most of the articles collected here are peer-reviewed, reworked versions of the papers delivered at the conference. A few were written expressly for this volume. The importance of its subject can hardly be doubted. For the student of Greek antiquity, an understanding of its literature and cultural institutions in all the richness of their systemically evolving dynamics is of the essence. I have long believed that not a few of the more prominent, persistent controversies among classical scholars about approaches and methods can be traced back to a misappreciation of the requisite temporal depth and the fundamental role of time in structuring the interpretation of Greek culture. I convened the conference at Duke with ‘diachrony’ as its focus precisely to elucidate the methodological issues involved and illustrate a range of satisfactory approaches to this problem. It is my hope that close attention to ‘diachrony’ will move stalled debates beyond their current impasse and, if not resolve their controversies, will at least refocus them more fruitfully.

I would like to thank the Department of Classical Studies and the Franklin Humanities Institute at Duke University for sponsoring the original gathering. I am grateful to the twenty participants in all (including the keynote speakers, Anton Bierl and Gregory Nagy) who came to North Carolina from so far as Switzerland, Greece, and Australia to join the discussion and contribute their stimulating insights. Many thanks also to the graduate students, whose help made the conference run smoothly; and to my colleagues at Duke and UNC, Chapel Hill, for their generous participation. Finally, I wish to acknowledge the invaluable assistance of my wife, Lauren González, who cheerfully shouldered with me the planning for the conference.

Table of Contents

Preface — v

José M. González

1 Introduction

Diachrony in Synchrony — 1

Part I

Diachronic Aspects of Greek Literature

Joel Christensen

2 Diomedes' Foot Wound and Homeric Reception of Myth — 17

Anton Bierl

3 Diachronic Shifts between the Epic Past and Future at the Phaeacians

Binding, Chorality, and Fluidity in Demodokos' Song of Ares and Aphrodite
in Homer's *Odyssey* (8.266–366) — 43

José M. González

4 A Diachronic Metapoetics of Reception

Homeric *kleos* (κλέος) and Biblical *zera'* (זֶרַע) — 79

Kristina Mendicino

5 The Professional Mourner and Singer of Spells

A Diachronic Approach to Euripides' *Bacchae* — 181

Ralph M. Rosen

6 Aristophanic Satire and the Pretense of Synchrony — 213

Gregory Nagy

7 Diachrony and the Case of Aesop — 233

Tom Hawkins

8 Splitting the Inheritance of Spite

Dio and Babrius on Iambic Poetics — 291

Part II
Diachronic Aspects of Greek Culture

Carolyn Higbie

9 Cultural Change and the Greek Perception of It

Exegi monumentum aere perennius (Horace, *Odes* 3.30.1) — **327**

Anthony Snodgrass

10 Diachrony in Greek Agriculture — 347

Thomas K. Hubbard

11 Diachronic Parameters of Athenian Pederasty — 363

Contributors — 390

Index Fontium — 391

José M. González

1 Introduction

Diachrony in Synchrony

It is a mark of Saussure's genius and clear proof of his pervasive influence as a linguist that the *Oxford English Dictionary* traces back the history of 'diachronic' in the English language to the reception of his *Cours de linguistique générale*.¹ Although the earliest relevant citation in the *OED* comes from a 1927 article by Bloomfield (1927, 218), pride of chronological priority actually goes to a one-paragraph summary of an article by Saussure's disciple A. Sechehaye written in 1917 and published the following year in the "Journals and New Books" section of *The Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods* (vol. 15, 55). But with Saussure's characteristic imprint on the term *diachronique*, the world also inherited his antinomic contrast with 'synchronic' as the proper approach to the study of language as a system. A helpful and succinct survey of this approach was offered by Gray in his review of Hjelmslev's 1928 *Principes de grammaire générale*, which the reviewer claimed "adher[es] in general to the principles so brilliantly enunciated by the Franco-Swiss school of de Saussure and his followers" and "summarise[s] everything of importance that had previously appeared upon his theme":²

Synchronic and diachronic grammar conflict except where they intersect, the former important for 'signs' (forms, words, syntagmes), the latter solely for sounds (46–52). All morphology is syntactic, and grammar is only synchronic; no true historical grammar can exist (52–55). Though fundamentally there is but one grammar, equally synchronic and diachronic, the terminology of the two has different values; and synchronic grammar alone is

1 The *OED* lists an earlier source, but one that does not illustrate 'diachronic' in its characteristic linguistic sense. The acceptance exemplified by this earlier citation—"[]lasting through time, or during the existing period"—while flowing naturally from the etymology (e.g. διὰ παντός τοῦ χρόνου in Hdt. 2.25) lacks further support from contemporaneous or later usage. It comes from Gosse 1857, a speculative work that tried to fit the archaeological evidence of an old-age earth with the traditional Christian view of a relatively recent, more or less instantaneous act of divine creation: "... I divide the past developments of organic life, which are necessarily, or at least legitimately, inferrible from present phenomena, into two categories, separated by the violent act of creation. Those unreal developments whose apparent results are seen in the organism at the moment of its creation, I will call *prochronic*, because time was not an element in them; while those which have subsisted since creation, and which have had actual existence, I will distinguish as *diachronic*, as occurring during time" (124–125, his emphasis).

2 Gray 1931, 77. Gray's page numbers refer to the book reviewed.

true since diachrony gives solely a series of events (59–61). Synchronic systems are to be explained by themselves, not diachronically, and grammatical categories can be transposed into diachrony only at the cost of their content (67).

One can readily appreciate from this compressed summary how starkly the antinomy had been drawn by Saussure and was felt by the school of linguists who traced to him their genealogy. Saussure's own statements were no less definitive:³

Therefore a diachronic fact is an event whose cause is in itself; the particular synchronic consequences that may ensue from it are wholly foreign to it. These diachronic facts do not even seek to change the system. No one has wanted to pass from one system of relations to another. (*Cours* 121)

Because changes are never made on the system as a whole but on one or another of its elements, they can only be studied apart from it. (*Cours* 124)

In language, changes apply only to isolated elements. (*Cours* 126)

The chess player *intends* to effect the move and to exert an action on the system, while language does not premeditate anything; its elements move (or, rather, change) spontaneously and by chance. (*Cours* 127)

Despite certain appearances to the contrary, diachronic events are always accidental and particular in character. (*Cours* 131)

If the science of language must be ranged under psychology, Hjelmslev boldly staked the central claim that must be disputed by the scientific study of diachrony: while diachronic grammar is only a hypothetical abstraction, subject to the gravest uncertainty,⁴ synchrony is a psychological reality;⁵ and whereas for

3 “Donc un fait diachronique est un événement qui a sa raison d’être en lui-même; les conséquences synchroniques particulières qui peuvent en découler lui sont complètement étrangères. Ces faits diachroniques ne tendent pas même à changer le système. On n’a pas voulu passer d’un système de rapports à un autre” (*Cours* 121). “Les altérations ne se faisant jamais sur le bloc du système, mais sur l’un ou l’autre de ses éléments, ne peuvent être étudiées qu’en dehors de celui-ci” (*Cours* 124). “[D]ans la langue les changements ne portent que sur des éléments isolés” (*Cours* 126). “[L]e joueur d’échecs a l’intention d’opérer le déplacement et d’exercer une action sur le système; tandis que la langue ne prémédite rien; c’est spontanément et fortuitement que ses pièces à elle se déplacent—ou plutôt se modifient” (*Cours* 127, emphasis original). “[M]algré certaines apparences contraires, les événements diachroniques ont toujours un caractère accidentel et particulier” (*Cours* 131).

4 “La grammaire diachronique n’existe pas; elle n’existe qu’en tant que juxtaposition de plusieurs états synchroniques” (Hjelmslev 1928, 292–293).

5 “La réalité psychologique est la seule réalité qui concerne la linguistique. Avant tout, cette réalité psychologique, qui est au fond même de tout système grammatical, est indépendante de toute réflexion consciente et ignore complètement la diachronie” (Hjelmslev 1928, 179–180).

every synchronic fact one must assume the existence of a synchronic reason, diachrony merely “conditions,” but does not “cause,” changes.⁶

If there is a long pedigree for the Swiss school’s insistence upon the inherent systematicity of diachrony and its fundamental incompatibility with the synchronic study of language as a system, so also did its intellectual opponents rise up very soon to contest the claim. The “Thèses” of the Linguistic Circle of Prague, published in the first volume of its *Travaux*, offered one of the clearest counter-statements.⁷ Under “Tasks of the synchronic method [and] its relationship to the diachronic method” it affirmed:

The concept of ‘language’ as a functional system must also be considered in the study of past states of language, whether one seeks to reconstruct them or to note their evolution. One should not, like the Genevan School, place impassable barriers between the synchronic and diachronic methods. If in synchronic linguistics one regards the elements of language as a system from the point of view of their functions, one could no longer evaluate the changes suffered by the language without taking into account the system affected by said changes. It would not be logical to suppose that linguistic changes are only destructive breaches that take place randomly and that are heterogeneous from the standpoint of the system. Linguistic changes often aim at the system, its stabilization, its reconstruction, etc. *Thus, diachronic study not only does not exclude the notions of system and function but, very much to the contrary, it is incomplete if it does not take these into account.* Reciprocally, synchronic description can no longer exclude absolutely the notion of evolution, because even in a sector considered synchronically *there is awareness of the state that is on its way out, of the present state, and of the emerging state.* Stylistic elements felt as archaisms, then the distinction between productive and unproductive forms, are diachronic facts that cannot be excluded from synchronic linguistics.⁸

6 “La création du système nouveau était le *prius*, l’abandon de l’ancien système le *posterius*. Le système en tant que tel était donc assuré à chaque moment donné. Ce fait est fort intéressant. Il montre que le système synchronique est un fait de tous les temps et qui est essentiellement indépendant de l’évolution diachronique. C’est une illustration de la thèse de de Saussure: l’évolution diachronique conditionne les faits synchroniques, mais elle n’en est pas la cause” (Hjelmslev 1928, 236–237).

7 *Travaux du Cercle linguistique de Prague* 1, 5–29 (Prague 1929).

8 *Thèse* 1.b, pages 7–8 (my emphasis): “La conception de la langue comme système fonctionnel est à envisager également dans l’étude des états de langue passés, qu’il s’agisse de les reconstruire ou d’en constater l’évolution. On ne saurait poser de barrières infranchissables entre les méthodes synchronique et diachronique comme le fait l’école de Genève. Si l’on envisage en linguistique synchronique les éléments du système de la langue du point de vue de leurs fonctions, on ne saurait juger non plus les changements subis par la langue sans tenir compte du système qui se trouve affecté par lesdits changements. Il ne serait pas logique de supposer que les changements linguistiques ne sont que des atteintes destructives s’opérant au hasard et hétérogènes du point de vue du système. Les changements linguistiques visent souvent le système, sa stabilisation, sa reconstruction, etc. Ainsi l’étude diachronique, non seulement n’exclut pas les notions de système et de fonction, mais, tout au contraire, à ne pas tenir compte de ces no-

Remarkable in this statement is its insistence (i) that diachrony regard systemic relations no less than synchrony, and (ii) that synchronic studies include a certain diachronic awareness (what I call ‘diachrony in synchrony’ and Jakobson has labeled “dynamic synchrony”), without which speakers’ use of their own language cannot be understood. And it is not merely the case that the rationale of *parole* remains opaque to the outsider who overlooks such ‘diachrony in synchrony’, but that speakers themselves resort to this diachronic awareness as they make use of the resources of their language. Resort to ‘diachrony in synchrony’ belongs to the speaker’s linguistic competence. Not only are his uses of it systematic (rather than random or fortuitous) but they also embody, and aim at, the systemic structural relations of language.

Roman Jakobson, himself a leading member of the Prague Circle, sustained a life-long engagement with the complementary notions of diachrony and synchrony. In his 1933 piece on the ‘Scuola Linguistica di Praga’ he noted that the Czech philosopher Masaryk had been the first to elucidate with precision the distinction between ‘static’ and ‘historical’ linguistics. His 1885 *Základové konkrétné logiky* (published in 1887 in German translation as *Versuch einer concreten Logik*, from which I quote) already called for the joint study of the static and historical dimensions: “Wir verlangen von der Sociologie und von der Geschichte..., dass sie ihren Gegenstand nicht nur historisch, sondern auch statisch studire. Dasselbe verlangen wir von der abstracten Sprachlehre und von der concreten Sprachgeschichte. Daher hat sowohl die abstracte Sprachlehre, als auch die concrete Sprachgeschichte zwei Hauptaufgaben, die der socialen Dynamik und Statik entsprechen: nicht nur das Entstehen und die Entwicklung, sondern auch das Wesen der Sprache darzulegen” (191); “[Wir betonen] nochmals, dass das Studium der Entwicklung eines Dinges mit dem Studium des Dinges selbst verbunden werden müsse” (193). As Jakobson (1933, 637) emphasized, the structuralist conception of the relationship between the nature of a thing and its development is closely related to the teleological view of history as a process, and a far cry from Saussure’s casual and senseless changes. Coseriu too, in his *Sincronía, diacronía e historia*, remarks on the essential character of language as a deliberate instrument of expression, which makes its development subject to the teleologi-

tions, elle est incomplète. D’un autre côté, la description synchronique ne peut pas non plus exclure absolument la notion d’évolution, car même dans un secteur envisagé synchroniquement existe la conscience du stade en voie de disparition, du stade présent et du stade en formation; les éléments stylistiques sentis comme archaïsmes, en second lieu la distinction de formes productives et non productives sont des faits de diachronie, que l’on ne saurait éliminer de la linguistique synchronique.”

cal use that speakers make of it. For Coseriu, linguistic change is not a problem to be explained but an inherent property of language as instrumentally expressive.

This essential quality of language is *a fortiori* true of poetics and, more generally, of culture as a semiotic system. One often finds in this connection that students of diachronic cultural processes⁹ still face today the same challenges and limitations that hampered Saussure's treatment. The Swiss linguist explicitly set an "*espace de temps*" (*Cours* 142) as the proper compass for the systematic study of language, by which he denoted a span that may be as long as ten years, a generation, a century, or even longer. Saussure's notion of "*espace de temps*" exhibits a shortcoming familiar to anyone who has ever constructed the frequency chart of a continuous variable: by apportioning the data points to the necessarily discrete ranges one artificially erases the points' variance within each range. Language never experiences true stasis and a strictly synchronic approach to periodization obscures, if it does not disregard, the diachronic trajectories an *espace* encompasses. Proper recognition of diachronic variation even within a predominantly synchronic cultural matrix is often categorically prerequisite to the correct interpretation of cultural artifacts.

Another limitation Saussure's methodology shares with many contemporary studies of culture regards his privileging for analysis a subset of the data within each period. Critics have often remarked that in practice Saussure's *espaces de temps* coincide with those points of literary history that produced eminent literature. This literature in turn provides the linguist's primary or sole analytical focus. The resulting grammars are hardly representative of linguistic communities in all of their variety. They are instead narrow records of high cultural waters, studies of those few exceptional speakers whose output history has bequeathed to us. One cannot claim to know the ancient Greek language of the 'classical period' (even within the limitations imposed by the standard periodization) without some access to the vernacular that none of the highly educated writers extant (especially the poets) are likely to preserve. Fortunately for the scholar whose task is precisely to study the output of these writers, Greek literary history was remarkably traditional in its engagement with a relatively narrow, canonical selection of its past. Therefore, the difficulty here is less the danger of a potentially distorting narrowing—which typically inheres in the source material and is hermeneutically

⁹ In referring to 'diachronic processes' I make a fundamental distinction between 'historical', which qualifies 'what actually happened or happens in history', and 'diachronic', which regards 'systemic developments in time'. Diachronic changes come about in accordance with internal dynamics that are, at least in principle, intelligible and susceptible of motivated scientific description. The historical is therefore a superset that consists of the diachronic and the merely accidental.

relevant—than the failure to identify correctly the structure of a work's temporal depth, i.e. its specific diachronic texture.

Those who seek to point the way out of Saussure's cramping analytic dichotomies must set their focus on historical processes, rather than states, and on the intersubjective character of all communication. Saussure's famous analogy of the chess game is only valid if its rules are themselves fixed and it is a particular match alone that the observer wishes to understand. Then, it is true, the match at any stage is adequately described by the identity of the remaining pieces and their positions on the board. The illustration breaks down, however, if the rules themselves are subject to change: one needs then a full account of a sufficient number of successive moves from which to infer and extrapolate valid steps. Knowledge of the internal dynamics with their rate of change would make the progress of a match intelligible. Cultural artifacts and institutions, as the expressive constructs of free interacting human agents, are too complex, and their particular realizations *a priori* too underdetermined, for the scholar ever to hope that he might unravel their inner logic with predictive force.¹⁰ But this hardly need consign his analysis to despair. He can still broadly consider the evidence for, and the systemic causes of, cultural evolution and how they help to elucidate the situated meaning and significance of these artifacts and institutions.

There are doubtless important distinctions to be drawn between the diachronic study of language and the more encompassing diachronic study of culture. The prime time for linguistic evolution are the early years of language acquisition and learning, when the speaker infers and adopts his speech rules from the practice of peers and seniors. Although particular speakers may experience longer-lasting (literary) influences by immersing themselves in written sources from which they acquire linguistic habits, for the greater mass there is no language but what can be abstracted from ordinary social intercourse. This means that normally two, at the most three, generations are relevant to language change. The 'practice of literature', on the other hand, whether it involves strictly oral performance or writing (or both), develops chiefly in the context of conventionalized acts of cultural communication (a performer before an audience or a writer who composes with an ideal or actual audience in view). The rules of such exchanges are partly determined by the expressive will of the agent, partly constrained by established generic norms whose modification, while possible, must at a minimum be intelligible to succeed. These norms may be conditioned by very old cultural artifacts, much older than the span of two or three generations. Such

¹⁰ One must always reckon with contingent factors, and, as Aristotle long ago noted, there can be no science of the particular. Cf. Coseriu 1978, 240–241 n. 10.

artifacts cast rather long shadows whose peculiar outlines themselves are susceptible of rule-bound analysis.

If the need to attend to the expressive will of the agent is taken as a matter of course with individual authors like Euripides or Vergil, a different approach has dominated the study of oral traditional literature like the Homeric epics. In their case, to argue for a corresponding focus on the agent should not be thought necessarily to presuppose the view of a *maximus poeta*. This focus must shine instead a bright light on the performers of the tradition, the rhapsodes, and on the hand they had in shaping their material in performance. By considering the epic rhapsode and his craft one can investigate the systemic dynamics of the process through which oral traditional epic poetry developed (including the evolution of the performance craft itself). In this context, the fundamental nature of cultural production as intersubjective communication translates into a performative poetics of recomposition and reception. Saussure repeatedly drew attention to the importance of studying synchrony from the perspective of the speaker: “Synchrony knows one perspective only, that of the speaking subjects, and its whole method consists in gathering their testimony. In order to know to what extent something is real, it will be necessary and sufficient to inquire to what extent it exists in the awareness of the subjects.”¹¹ This statement is true, but one should not conclude from it (with Saussure and his followers) that diachronic change cannot be just as psychologically real: it may appear as ‘diachrony in synchrony,’ embodied by synchronic variation and alternatives whose structural functions depend in part on their peculiar temporal valences. Competent speakers are fully aware of these valences and can make outcome-oriented expressive use them.¹²

Modern linguists remind us that the coexistence of old and innovative forms renders linguistic change a synchronic reality. Appearing as synchronic variation, diachronic developments can open language rules to reinterpretation. It was precisely an unrealistic requirement of linguistic homogeneity among speak-

11 “La synchronie ne connaît qu’une perspective, celle des sujets parlants, et toute sa méthode consiste à recueillir leur témoignage; pour savoir dans quelle mesure une chose est une réalité, il faudra et il suffira de rechercher dans quelle mesure elle existe pour la conscience des sujets” (*Cours* 128).

12 I do not mean to imply, however, that in the more restricted domain of speech (as opposed to the wider compass of symbolic cultural expression that subsumes the practice of literature) conscious perception of phonemic categories is the overriding concern of speaking subjects: “[P]erception is indeed controlled by linguistic structure; but it is a structure which includes not only units defined by contrastive function but also units defined by their stylistic role, and their power to identify the speaker’s membership in a specific subgroup of the community” (Weinreich/Labov/Herzog 1968, 132). This means that not everything that is analytically relevant must also *eo ipso* be historically discrete and psychologically conscious (*ibid.* 131).

ers that allowed Saussure's formulation of *langue*: "Synchronic study does not have as its object all that is simultaneous, only the totality of facts that correspond to each language; where necessary, separation will go as far as dialects and subdialects."¹³ Thus, Saussure's *langue* allows for no social registers, no consideration of dialectal geography, it cannot cope with the dynamic interface of languages in contact. As Ramat *et al.* observe, "[w]ithout synchronic variation no change would be possible, and, in turn, without a diachronic perspective on variation, synchronic innovation and variability would not be understandable" (Ramat/Mauri/Molinelli 2013, 5).¹⁴ Translated into the spheres of literature and other cultural practices, variations may take the form of competing reappropriations of older models; or they may appear as traditional multiforms of diction and thematic subject. To illustrate this point with my own contribution to this volume: the apparent superficial diversity of acceptations of the word *kleos* and its derivatives in the Homeric poems draws attention to the diachrony of the epic medium and cries for elucidation in terms of the medium's own internal significative dynamics.

A diachronic dynamic of special relevance to the study of ancient Greek literature regards the phenomenon of 'pragmatic inference' (Hopper/Traugott 2003): "[M]eaning changes are initially pragmatic and associative, arising in the context of the flow of speech. At later stages, as grammaticalization continues and forms become routinized, meaning loss or 'bleaching' typically occurs, but even so, older meanings may still continue to constrain newer, 'emptier' ones" (76). This statement needs qualification in the case of complex cultural artifacts whose lower frequency of use by a select group of agents does not lead to their thorough routinization. In their case, the meanings of their component parts (which articulate their overall significance) often suffer pragmatic accretion rather than loss; and they become conventionalized in their consequent, richer symbolic capaci-

13 "L'étude synchronique n'a pas pour objet tout ce qui est simultanément, mais seulement l'ensemble des faits correspondant à chaque langue; dans la mesure où cela sera nécessaire, la séparation ira jusqu'aux dialectes et aux sous-dialectes" (*Cours* 128). Cf. also *Cours* 31–32: "[La langue] est la partie sociale du langage, extérieure à l'individu, qui à lui seul ne peut ni la créer ni la modifier; Tandis que le langage est hétérogène, la langue ainsi délimitée est de nature homogène."

14 "[T]he diachronic emergence of a construction may result from patterns of distribution among speakers at the synchronic level and in terms of regional, social or contextual variations" (Ramat/Mauri/Molinelli 2013, 7). Among the more clearly identified manifestations of the diachrony-synchrony interface, Ramat *et al.* list "gradience, gradualness, multifunctionality, analogy, [and] contact-induced phenomena" (*ibid.* 5). Andersen 2001 in turn considers the change scenarios of coinage, remedial change, borrowing, extension, and transference and interference (229–231).

ties and are not only constrained by the older meanings but may also constrain them in turn.¹⁵ The analysis and classification of the various senses of a given form provide a good example of what is involved: one may approach these senses by underlining difference and concluding that they constitute homonymy, hence unfolding them into as many lexical lemmas; one may emphasize their similarity and conclude monosemy, minimizing their contextual variety in the interest of an alleged semantic common-denominator; or one may emphasize their relatedness, concluding polysemy. Only this last option allows for the associative analysis that the diachronic study of systemic cultural evolution calls for. But resorting to ‘polysemy’ does not in and of itself elucidate the complexities of semantic development, for ordinarily networks of polysemy display cognitively privileged nodes that structure the interpretation of culture through semiotic hierarchies. To describe such networks and elucidate their workings is the burden of the scholar of diachrony.

Diachronic processes of change are conditioned by the circumstances of their cultural agents. These agents necessarily operate at the synchronic level but rarely without an awareness of the expressive potential of the past. In the study of ancient Greece, a civilization that regularly demonstrated exceptional self-reflexive engagement with its history and traditions (whether to reaffirm, reappropriate, or contest them), consideration of diachrony within synchrony is not an enriching option: it is a necessity. If ever true of another culture, so much the more was the Greek ultimately a product of its agents’ deliberate involvement with their past—a past, in the first instance, not of senseless and casual gyrations,

15 Hopper and Traugott devote a section of their monograph to the topic of “pragmatic enrichment versus ‘bleaching’” (Hopper/Traugott 2003, 94–98). They observe that whereas “over time, meanings tend to become weakened during the process of grammaticalization... all the evidence for early stages is that initially there is a redistribution or shift, not a loss, of meaning” (94). This justifies their use of “pragmatic enrichment” or “strengthening” in regard to the early stages. They even acknowledge “evidence that later constraints on structure or meaning can only be understood in the light of earlier meanings”—this is the so-called phenomenon of “persistence”—and they regard this fact “perhaps the most damaging evidence against the automatic association of bleaching... with grammaticalization” (96). In the broader realm of cultural semiotics it is possible for a conventionalized artifact to experience some ‘bleaching’ in the use—one need only think of so-called ‘dead metaphors’. But precisely because persistence can never be precluded (and often is demonstrably present), no metaphor is ever truly ‘dead’ and cultural artifacts must be interpreted with sensitivity to their maximal expressive potential. Ultimately, only a careful analysis of the entire process of communication (one that regards emitter, audience, code, etc.) may plausibly determine the degree of persistence that obtains in a given context. Hopper and Traugott display the tentativeness that surrounds claims of ‘bleaching’ when, at the end of their section on the topic, they pronounce “what exactly constitutes bleaching” “an important question for future research” (98).

but of trends and processes that followed discernible dynamics. These dynamics were the expression of institutional arrangements in their complex mutual interactions and developments. As often in the study of ancient cultures, most of the time we only observe the end results of these elaborate processes: not mere endpoints without structure, but outcomes that exhibit rich internal grammars of meaning, and whose very synchronic articulations encode their diachronic histories. Without a proper apprehension and account of the latter—without a distinct appreciation of the relevant diachrony within synchrony—we shall remain at sea in our interpretation of cultural artifacts shaped over the *longue durée* or produced in dialogue with the past. This is the methodological challenge that the contributors to this volume seek to illuminate.

By design, the following chapters comprise a wide range of topics and illustrate a variety of approaches to diachronic analysis. Part I regards Greek literature, Part II Greek culture. The former I have arranged broadly in chronological order, with the *Iliad* before the *Odyssey*, tragedy leading comedy, and Aesop and late reappropriations of *iambos* in their train.

Joel Christensen (Chapter 2) explores Paris' wounding of Diomedes in the foot in *Iliad* 11. He reviews the symbolic associations of foot wounds in the ancient world and considers how these help our appreciation of the Iliadic incident and of its reception by ancient audiences. That he should call these symbolic associations 'diachronic' and the *Iliad*'s use of the wounded-foot motif 'synchronic' points up the difficulties he faces, for Homeric poetry can only be called 'synchronic' in a very qualified sense. Christensen's resort to structural analysis presents a further challenge: characteristically ahistorical as it is ordinarily applied, a diachronic use of structuralism would seem to require the scholar's rehistoricization of its method. Christensen believes that the poem's treatment of the foot wound exhibits the *Iliad*'s reworking of inherited myth and motifs and elucidates fundamental facets of Homeric poetry.

Anton Bierl (Chapter 3) identifies in the *Odyssey*'s Phaiakian episode a bold metanarrative poetics that articulates the diachronic development of its own epic medium. He emphasizes the diachronic constructedness of epic and argues that the Homeric poems incorporate previous phases of their evolution. *Odyssey* 8, in particular Demodokos' central performance of the *Song of Ares and Aphrodite*, gives signal expression to this diachronic poetics. From Bierl's analysis *khoreia* emerges as a fundamental compositional device that both frames and informs the inner logic of the song. Adultery and fettering stand for the polar ends of fluidity and fixity, which Homeric poetry spans in its diachronic development, from the proto-epic choral *hymnos* of Demodokos to the rhapsodic performance of Odysseus' own storytelling.

Rhapsodes recomposed Homeric poetry anew at each performance. Because they did so without the use of writing, their poetry was *oral*; because they recomposed its language and narrative sequence following carefully calibrated and diachronically evolving traditional canons of repetition and innovation, their poetry was also *traditional*. The defining fact of all traditional poetry is its reception: without a widespread and eager embrace of its audiences, no poem can claim the authority of tradition. In Chapter 4, I argue that an adequate reception theory of Homeric poetry must count the rhapsodes as privileged members of the audience. Not only do they hear and respond with their critical approval, as ordinary festivalgoers would, to the performances of other rhapsodes (and their own), but their reception of past performances is also reflected by their subsequent oral recomposition. This rhapsodic reception constitutes a diachronic process that reaches beyond the mere chronological span of Homeric performance practices to their evolving systemic dynamics. Thus, I argue that traditional rhapsodic recomposition embodies a reception poetics that becomes metapoetic in its self-reflective use of rhapsodic *termes d'art*. My paper explores this metapoetics of reception in connection with the key term *kleos*. To clarify my diachronic reception model of Homeric composition I compare it to Brevard Child's canonical model of biblical hermeneutics, whose diachronic dynamics are simpler and which I apply to the key Hebrew term *zera'*. An approach to the Homeric poems that does not account for their oral-traditional (meta)poetics of reception is bound to fail the scholar at key interpretive points.

Kristina Mendicino (Chapter 5) reads Euripides' *Bakkhai* as a dramatic conflation of diachrony and synchrony. She demonstrates that the etymology of *epaoidos* resonates within the ritual language of the tragedy, especially in connection with its use of choral *ephymnion*. For Mendicino, when diachronic change is taken in its Saussurean sense, i.e. to mark systemic rupture, diachrony may denote the 'alterity' that ruptures the model of presence underlying dramatic representation. She concludes that bearing Euripides' etymological play in mind the diachronic complexity of the *Bakkhai* may be read as a radical gesture of synchronization appropriate to the god of presence, Dionysos. This gesture involves the chorus's mediation, in performance, of the divine power of their leader as *goēs* and *epōidos*.

Old Comedy was notorious for mocking current events and prominent members of its Athenian audience. For this reason, its satire is closely bound to its original performance setting, and its enduring relevance is problematic. But Ralph M. Rosen (Chapter 6) draws our attention to factors that countervail this occasionality: the mimetic character of comic aggression, comedy's generic roots in archaic iambic traditions, and its engagement with other genres. How does comedy successfully negotiate the tension between its rhetoric of synchrony

(what Rosen calls its “synchronic pretense”) and its complex diachronic history as a genre? From Rosen’s analysis this tension emerges less a problem than the very mechanism that makes ‘the serious’ and ‘the comic’ fundamentally incompatible in Aristophanic comedy, evoking the laughter of its audience.

The Aesopic tradition that comprises Aesop’s fables and the ‘Life of Aesop’ offers Gregory Nagy (Chapter 7) a setting in which to explore the proper construction and application of diachronic models to ancient Greek literature. Nagy underlines the complementarity of diachronic and synchronic perspectives and the fundamental distinction between historical contingences and diachronic developments. His wide-ranging investigation, methodologically pellucid, makes a significant contribution to the study of diachrony in matters as seemingly diverse (but in fact closely related) as the diachronic complementarity of low and high discourse, the relationship of fable to *mythos* and *ainos*, and the origins of literary prose. From it we learn, among other things, to reject the notion that diachronic models are ‘static’ and cannot survive or account for the dynamism of historical contestation. We also learn that diachronic analysis is not to be thought of as a tool to deal with anomalies unaccounted for by a given synchronic model; rather, such analysis must start with a proper synchronic grasp of a system, and genuine anomalies are the material of historical, not diachronic, analysis. Nagy stresses that diachronic models are not monolithic absolutes but are to be tested by synchronic analysis and the corrective of historical evidence.

Tom Hawkins (Chapter 8) makes an unusual and informative juxtaposition of two late antique authors, Dio Chrysostom and Babrius, and studies their engagement with, and appropriation of, the archaic iambic tradition. His contribution makes clear the necessary complementarity of diachrony and synchrony. The distinctive emphases of Dio and Babrius, and the similarities in the manner in which they adopt and modify elements of the iambic tradition, grow clear only with a diachronic examination of this iambic inheritance. Hawkins draws a picture of the outlines exhibited by ‘iambic diachrony’ within the synchronic practices peculiar to these roughly contemporaneous authors.

In the first of three contributions devoted to the diachronic study of ancient Greek culture, Carolyn Higbie (Chapter 9) surveys the diverse manner in which cultural change was perceived in Greek antiquity. Her paper explores ancient diachronic frameworks for constructing the past, the range of strategies that served to order past events (real or imagined). Higbie discerns a gradually intensifying desire for chronological specificity and a widening of horizons to include the larger Mediterranean context. Cultural practices, artistic techniques, and particular crafts joined ‘events’ as categories subject to a diachronically informed structuring. It is in this setting that resort to ‘first inventors’ (*prōtoi heuretai*) finds its place. The interdependence of diachrony and synchrony emerges clearly in the

influence that the Greeks' synchronic conceptualization of their culture exerted on the diachronic models used to articulate their awareness of the past.

The contribution by Anthony Snodgrass (Chapter 10) reminds us that the diachronic study of culture must often start by removing the presumption of synchronic staticity. His critical assessment of the study of ancient Greek agriculture shows the temptation and danger of extrapolating from modern ethnographic evidence to compensate for surviving ancient sources of inadequate scope for analysis. Diachrony, it needs to be emphasized, could only in the rarest of circumstances result in unvarying practice throughout time. In a magisterial review of the current debate about the significance of the archaeological remains of small rural sites that dot the Greek landscape, Snodgrass builds on the results of the Boeotia Survey to conclude that in most cases these correspond to isolated farmsteads that served as living quarters for a substantial part of the year. These isolated farmsteads, neglected by the documentary sources traditionally consulted by scholars for patterns of settlement, peaked in density during the classical period, when population pressure brought the fields around major Greek cities close to their carrying capacity. Settlement on the land alleviated overcrowding and enhanced agricultural productivity, yet it saw the simultaneous growth of the urban centers. Snodgrass argues that the intensive farming regime then practiced was absent from most earlier and later periods. In this case, an archaeologically informed model for diachronic change uncovers and explains an important chapter in the dynamic history of the Greek rural economy.

The last contribution in this volume offers a thought-provoking attempt to recover a sense of the historical development in the Athenian practice of pederasty. Thomas K. Hubbard (Chapter 11) bases his diachronic analysis on several independent, chronologically continuous lines of evidence that show shifts in attitudes or practice over the period of interest. With this multi-perspectival approach, Hubbard avoids giving undue emphasis to data whose prominence is merely an accident of preservation. Vase painting, tragedy, the tyrannicides Harmodios and Aristogeiton, comedy, oratory, Xenophon, and Plato all join in Hubbard's investigation. From them he concludes that there was a significant diachronic movement in the Athenian visual and discursive representation of pederasty (not necessarily in practice) sometime in the middle of the fifth century BC. Hubbard convincingly explains this shift in attitudes with reference to anxieties among native-born Athenians about Athenian identity and the loyalty of the population of Athens in the face of a large influx of immigrants after the Persian Wars, during the ascendancy of the Athenian empire. The same social pressures responsible for Perikles' citizenship law encouraged marrying earlier with a view to maximizing family size and a numerous native-born citizenry. To this, pederasty was perceived as an obstacle.

The contributions in this volume illustrate both the difficulty and the promise that diachronic analysis offers the student of ancient Greece. Because we shall never possess an exhaustive account of any one facet of Greek antiquity throughout time, and because the Greeks themselves were so preoccupied with their past in the construction of their present, resort to diachronic explanatory models calibrated against synchronic analysis and tested by historical evidence must remain at the heart of our task as students of ancient Greek literature and culture.

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Part I

Diachronic Aspects of Greek Literature

Joel Christensen

2 Diomedes' Foot Wound and Homeric Reception of Myth

Earlier evaluations of Paris' wounding of Diomedes in the foot in *Iliad* 11 have emphasized its relationship with lost literary material rather than examining its operation in the *Iliad*. This paper explores Diomedes' wounding from both a diachronic perspective—the symbolic associations of foot wounds—and from the synchronic deployment of feet and mortality in the *Iliad*. The resulting analysis suggests that the wound and the speeches around it produce a complex engagement with the *Iliad*'s mythical inheritance that helps to illustrate the character of Homeric poetry. This scene provides unique insight into the complex and co-evolving relationship between the *Iliad* and the 'tradition' wherein both poet and audience participate in a dynamic interrogation of received motifs.

In *Iliad* 11, after his arrow pierces Diomedes' right foot, Paris boasts and is answered by his target's harsh rebuke. This scene has served as a basis for a negative interpretation of Paris' valor¹ and as either a parallel for, or a scene modeled on, the death of Achilles in the *Aithiopsis*² (based on Paris' agency, the wound location, and the substitution of Diomedes for Achilles elsewhere in the *Iliad*).³ Indeed, there is justification for connecting Achilles' death and Diomedes' wound: foot wounds are rare in the *Iliad* and no one else suffers one with such consequences for the plot.⁴ Responses to Diomedes' plight, however, rather than considering its implications for our *Iliad*, have primarily addressed questions of allusion or intertextuality—how and to what extent Paris' Iliadic action signals engagement with the poems of the epic cycle.⁵ While the cycle itself is an impor-

1 On the cowardice of a man who fights from afar, see Hainsworth 1993, 268–269. The resonance of fighting from afar may be more complex; see the discussion on the poetics of ambush in Dué and Ebbot 2009.

2 For a recent bibliography on this scene see Nickel 2002, 224. Heubeck (1974, 46) sees Diomedes' wounding as a "Motivparallele" zu der Tötung Achills"; cf. Kakridis 1949, 85–88; Kakridis 1961, 293 n. 1; and Burgess 2009, 74–75. Fenik (1968, 234–237) views the parallel as a feature of typical wounding motifs.

3 For Diomedes' replacement of Achilles, see von der Mühl 1952, 195–196; Lohmann 1970, 251; Nagy 1979, 30–31; Griffin 1980, 74; and Schofield 1999, 29 for a recent bibliography. For Diomedes as a Homeric innovation, see Erbse 1961, 104; Heubeck 1974, 45; and Andersen 1978, *passim*; and, recently, Cook 2009.

4 There are lower leg wounds worthy of note (*contra* Nickel 2002, 224) that I discuss below. For a table and analysis of all wounds in the *Iliad*, see Saunders 2004.

5 Since this essay focuses on mythical inheritance and on how this scene functions in its context, neoanalysis will be largely underemphasized. On neoanalysis generally, see the summary

tant topic, its fragmentary status and unrecoverable relationship to our *Iliad* presents considerable interpretive difficulty.⁶ It is essential to isolate the importance of the scene of Diomedes' wounding for its local context; such consideration reveals a complex dynamic between synchronic and diachronic features both in this scene's relationship to the epic's plot and how the wound communicates the way the *Iliad* is constructed in and against its own inheritance. From addressing the scene in this order, it becomes clear that Achilles' death by foot wound is a motif at play in the *Iliad*; such play, in turn, is evidence both of the potential mystery surrounding mythical motifs and of critical examinations of received traditions on the part of poet and audience. The issues that attend this scene, then, furnish an opportunity for considering the relationship between the *Iliad* as a synchronic narrative—the tale an audience witnessed and the narrative we experience—and the diachronic tradition upon which it (and its audience) may depend for developing its meaning.

The argument falls into three parts. First, I comment on the symbolic importance of feet from a diachronic perspective, emphasizing in part a structuralist interpretation. At first glance, the combination of structuralism, which looks at the reception of a symbol or feature and gives precedence to it rather than to its development, seems an uneasy fit for the diachronic aspect of the mythical tradition. However, here I use the structuralist frame as an interpretive tool, a diagnostic to weigh the development and continued relevance of motifs whose synchronic character and potency derives from historical use.⁷ In the second part of the paper, I argue that a hero's death by foot wound was a popular motif during the long development of our *Iliad* and a part of the early details of Achilles' death. Then, I turn to examine the manner in which the synchronic experience

in Willcock 1997, but also see Kakridis 1949, Willcock 1977, Danek 1998, and Currie 2005. Marks (2008, 9–11) criticizes the diachronic approach of neoanalysts for their emphasis on a “source and recipient model” (10) that is insensitive to the oral nature of the Homeric poems. The death of Achilles, especially as it is prefigured by that of Patroklos, is a favorite topic of neoanalysis. See, for example, Kakridis 1949, 83–84. Other common topics include the funeral games, the new robe placed in the temple of Athena in *Iliad* 6, and Thersites. See Edwards 1990, 321–322. One need not subscribe to all neoanalytical assumptions to admit that the funeral games anticipate the deaths of both Antilochus and Achilles (see Dunkle 1997, 231).

⁶ For an extended analysis of the ‘construct’ of the epic cycle and its problematic status, see Burgess 2001, *passim*. Cf. the more critical discussion in Barker 2009, 46–47. For the appearance of tales from the epic cycle in early art, see Lowenstam 1997, 25–30. For the treatment of another parallel scene from the *Iliad* and the oral tradition of the *Aithiopsis*, see Cook 2009.

⁷ This apparent paradox is central to the character of oral and oral-derived traditions where meaning understood in the moment of performance is in great part generated from experiences of past performances. On the interplay of variation and stability in oral traditions, see Jensen 2011, 108–144.

of the *Iliad* for a classical audience may have been conditioned by the diachronic layers of this motif. Significantly, the audience's awareness of both Achilles' traumatic foot death and the convention of a mortal foot wound is implied by the adaptation and integration of the motif into our *Iliad* and its symbolic range in the poem as it appropriates and manipulates the mythical inheritance. I end by briefly locating the Homeric tradition of the *Iliad* in a different diachrony—that of the reception of myth in the ancient world where legendary foot wounds become objects of increasing mystery.

As prelude to these steps, what may this scene tell us about our *Iliad*? The primary Achaian combatant at this point in the plot is wounded by an assailant acknowledged by the epic as Achilles' killer.⁸ Rather than inspiring dread or leaving Diomedes dead, the attack results in a dressing down of a pivotal figure from the tradition of the Trojan War. Diomedes emasculates Paris and dismisses his wound as an annoyance.⁹ For the *Iliad*'s plot, though, the wound is instrumental in depriving the Achaians of the warrior who rallied the troops after Achilles rejected the embassy (9.693–711) and in supplementing the tableaux that persuades Patroklos to make his fateful decision (11.660). With Diomedes marginalized, Hektor leads the Trojans to breach the Achaian fortifications in the following book.

While Achilles' death as represented by the *Aithiopsis* is possibly echoed in this scene, the meaning of this wound relies on a rather wide set of mythical paradigms, which I will discuss shortly. The distribution of foot wounds in myth or the availability of traditional precedents would affect the meaning of this scene for its early audiences beyond the mere plot and single—potential—intertext. I suggest that Homeric epic uses this scene in part to prompt a reconsideration of the tradition itself, perhaps of Achilles' death, but generally of the mortal peril of a foot wound. Even as the *Iliad* flirts with mimicking or recalling Achilles' death, it invites the audience to recall and re-evaluate the details of such a death by afflicting Diome-

8 On the *Iliad*'s awareness of Achilles' death, see Erbse 1961, 173–176. His death is specifically mentioned as connected to Hektor's fate by Thetis (18.94–95), as the result of both a god and a man by Xanthus (19.416–417), and credited to Apollo and Paris at the Skaian gates by Hektor (22.358–360).

9 Similarly, Hektor taunts Paris to goad him to war in books 3 (38–57) and 13 (769–775). Cf. 6.325–331 and 6.520–529. On the interaction between brothers, see Mackie 1996, 111–113. Paris, James Redfield argues, is largely unaffected by others' opinions (1994, 114). For his "grace" and superficiality, see Schein 1984, 21–22. For his connection with women, see Whitman 1958, 223. For the renewed characterization of the figure as implied by the formulaic differences between the name *Paris* and the putatively older *Alexandros*, see Suter 1991. Suter argues from the formulaic diction that the epithets for Paris (in contrast with those for *Alexandros*) "describe either physical appearance, personal relationships, or behavior of uncertain moral value" (1991, 16).

des.¹⁰ Such play with mythopoetic convention is pointedly characteristic of Homeric poetry. In this tradition, where the symbolic power of a death by foot wound is set aside for Achilles alone, the moment of Diomedes' wounding underscores both the persistence of this symbolism and, by the symbol's exceptionality (especially in connection with Achilles), its slow fade into obsolescence.

1 Why Do Heroes Die from Foot Wounds?

The symbolic import of feet, which metonymically and linguistically includes lower leg wounds, is part of an ancient inheritance that is operative in the *Iliad*.¹¹ To establish the antiquity, pervasiveness, and meaning of this inheritance, I will first summarize some of the symbolic associations of the foot. Then, I will survey foot wounds from myth and present a brief analysis of the use of this motif to illustrate how the foot may function as a metonym for life and as a location for the development of significant oppositional meanings.

But, first, a pragmatic perspective. Prior to modern transportation and footwear, a foot wound must have been harrowing.¹² Even now we recognize a causal link between ambulatory limitation and precipitous declines in health. Trauma from violence, even in the extremities, would have been an almost certain ticket to long-term convalescence and death before modern hygiene and antibiotics.¹³ For health, and especially for military performance, feet must have been objects of great concern in the ancient world. Indeed, recent studies have shown that concern for feet may possess great antiquity—the hominid foot may have evolved *for running*; prior to the wide use of weapons, man may have run down his game (Lieberman and Bramble 2007). This importance remains in the modern military where all ranks are expected to run and foot-speed defines a soldier.¹⁴

The foot as a symbol bears a wide array of meanings. Feet are cross-culturally objects of positive and negative signification: from fetishes to targets of washing

10 On the death of Achilles as an “untold” subject of the *Iliad*, see Pache 2009, 91–97.

11 Indeed, in the iconography and the language of Greek myth there is a general fluidity between the ankle, lower shin, and foot. See Burgess 2009, 11; and Gantz 1993, 628.

12 Composed of 26 bones, 33 joints, and 100 muscles, a foot can meet many minor and major disasters (see Irby-Massie 2009, 13). Cf. her fine survey of ancient evaluations of foot ailments and treatments. For wounds in the Greco-Roman world, see Salazar 2000.

13 For a rumination on potential medical etiologies for a death by foot wound, see Lee and Jacobs 2002.

14 All ages and ranks in the US Army are expected to be able to run *at least* two miles (pace is dictated by age and gender). For the importance of running and speed from the Vietnam War era, see Palaima 2000.

rituals and binding, feet possess a surplus of meaning traced by Freudians to their status as phallic symbols.¹⁵ In this association resides a connection between the foot and creation, between feet and life, perhaps reflected in the etymological relationship between *pous* and *pedion*.¹⁶ Such links may be understood in various ways. Lévi-Strauss, for example, sees feet and foot wounds as emphasizing man's connection with the earth (Lévi-Strauss 1963, 215), a connection in which others locate sexuality and sexual reproduction (Carroll 1978 and Zerbe 1985). This grouping points to an affiliation of the foot, earth, and growth.¹⁷ By tethering man to the ground, feet become an indispensable symbol of the life cycle.¹⁸

In the language of myth, then, as a confirmation of the life cycle, the foot can function as a locus of mortality, a space where a figure's position between oppositions of human/divine or intelligence/force may be signaled through the evocation of special quality, narrative development, or physical exception. While foot deformity is a putative universal in myth,¹⁹ the traumatic foot-death of a hero has special meaning in the Indo-European tradition. Like Achilles, Krishna dies of a wound to the foot.²⁰ The range of figures who suffer foot trauma in the Greek tradition is impressive. Zeus' power is sapped when Typhoeus excises his tendons.²¹

15 For the foot as a phallic symbol and as a symbol for female genitals, see Ellis 2002, 52 and 58; and Zerbe 1985, 303–308. Foot fetishism, for modern psychologists, is a type of paraphilia, a “partialism” in which an individual is fixated on one body part to the exclusion of all others (see Levine/Risen/Althof 2003, 341). Of significance for the connection between the symbolism discussed in this paper and modern fetishism is the clinical claim that “fetishistic objects tend to have an ‘earthy’ odor, touch, or both” (*ibid.* 340).

16 Chantraine 1984, 932–933. *Pedion* is from *pous*: “ce sur quoi on pose le pied” (867), similar to Hittite *pedan* “place” and Sanskrit *padā* “step, footprint”. In many cultures the association of the foot's ‘infernal’ character leads to moral implications; such systemizations often lead to feet representing “baseness.” See Zerbe 1985, 302–310.

17 For the names of Melampous and Oidipous and their associations with chthonic powers hailing from early plant names and symbolizing growth, see Edmunds 1981.

18 This symbolism has been reified in Hindu belief systems where contact with the earth enables a flow of energy to the body and mind through the heel.

19 See Lévi-Strauss 1963, 215 on tales of foot wounds among the Pueblo. Cf. Carroll 1978 for a critique.

20 *Mahabharata* 16. See Suhr 1966, 211. In the later Greek tradition, Achilles dies of gout (Luc. *Pod.* 253). Other heroes who die similarly include Bellerophon, Oidipous, and Odysseus (252–264). For Achilles, Lucian may be playing on the close similarity of *podarkēs* and *podargos*. Such wordplay may have been operative in the mythopoetic tradition: several horses are named *Podargos* (Hektor's, 8.185; Menelaos', 23.295) and Achilles' own horse Balias is the child of the Harpy *Podargē*.

21 See Strabo (12.8, 13.4.6, and 16.2.7) and Apollod. 1.42. The symbolism of Zeus' tendons may be simpler: his hands are wounded as well (thus the figure loses both strength and mobility). For the echo of the battle between the water deity and the chief god in Achilles' battle with Skamandros (mediated through Herakles' battle with Hydra) see the discussion in Lovell 2011.

Herakles' foot is the target of a monstrous crab (Apollod. 2.79). Philoktetes' foot wound, although downplayed in Homer, is probably ancient;²² Eurydice also perishes from a snakebite on the foot (Ovid *Met.* 10.1–10). Telephos is sidelined by a leg wound from Achilles;²³ Acrisios dies from an errant discus thrown by Perseus which, according to Apollodorus, strikes his foot;²⁴ Cheiron the centaur is terribly wounded in the foot;²⁵ Talos dies when his *ichor* bleeds out of his ankle (Apollod. 1.140–141); Hephaistos is famously lame; and the names of both Melampous and Oidipous indicate the continuing relevance of feet in myth.²⁶ Feet seem to have a common symbolic significance as well for figures in myth such as Perseus, Jason,

22 Philoktetes' snake-bite disease is mentioned in the *Iliad* but its location is unclear (*Il.* 2.271–273). In the *Odyssey*, only his excellence with the bow is mentioned (*Od.* 8.219–220) but there may be a symbolic transference in that the hero of the foot wound is *also* an exemplary archer. Philoktetes' wound is attested in tragedy: apart from Soph. *Phil.*, his wound appears to be specified in Aeschylus' version; see Arist. *Poet.* 1458b21–23 and Plut. *Non Posse* 1087d2–1088a2. For Philoktetes' tale, see Apollod. *E.* 3.27 and Hyg. *Fab.* 102 where Juno's rage leads to his wound. This etiology, moreover, may be seen as part and parcel of the symbolic resonance of foot wounds: Hera, a goddess of marriage, marginalizes a hero by striking at his foot with a phallic symbol (the snake); Dumézil 1929, 188–189 connects the odor of Philoktetes' foot wound, the malodorous Lemnian women, and Hera in the “*rituelle annuelle*” which unites men, initiation, marriage, and death. Of some significance as well may be Philoktetes' killing of Paris as recorded by Proclus (*Chrest.* 106.23–28).

23 Achilles wounds Telephos, and, as with Philoktetes, the injury will not heal. See Apollod. *E.* 3.17; Hyg. *Fab.* 101; and Obbink 2006 for the Telephos myth in the new Archilochus fragment. There may be symbolic transference in the fact that Achilles, who ends up perishing because of a foot wound, deals out so grievous an injury. Apollonius of Rhodes' Mopsus suffers a similar plight (4.1518–1525.)

24 See Apollod. 2.47. The *Scholia D* (*ad Il.* 14.314–315) record only Acrisios' assumption of the throne. While Hyginus (*Fab.* 63) insists Acrisios was hit in the head—perhaps because the foot wound seems absurd—Apollodorus maintains the motif (2.47.7–8).

25 See Apollod. 2.85. Ginzburg (1991, 231) notes that heroes who develop symbolic complexes having to do with feet—Jason and Achilles—were tutored by Cheiron. According to Xen. *Cyn.* 1.2 Odysseus, Diomedes, Aeneas, and Achilles (among others) were all pupils. Dumézil (1929, 195–197) sees time spent with Cheiron as part of an initiation ritual into manhood. Walcot (1979, 340) notes that a wide array of heroes were taught by the centaur, among other things, hunting and archery.

26 Walcot (1979) connects Melampous' name, ‘Black-foot’, to marriage and rebirth into manhood. For Melampous' myths, see Walcot 1979, 33–42, scholia to *Od.* 11.287 and 11.290.1–17, as well as Apollod. 1.96–97 and 99–103. Cf. A.R. 1.121. On Oidipous' name and both figures' connection to the earth, see Edmunds 1981, 233–235. Ginzburg (1991, 227–229) notes that both figures are soothsayers with foot maladies from exposure. For Oidipous' myth, its antiquity, and the poetic evidence, see Wehrli 1957; cf. Edmunds 1981 for the independence of Oidipous' cults and myths and for his foot mutilation as a secondary addition to explain his name (233). Leinieks (1975) shows to what extent Sophokles plays with the language of feet in characterizing Oidipous.

and even Hermes, who are marked out for aberrant or exceptional footwear.²⁷ There are also records from Greek history of single-sandaled warriors.²⁸

This catalogue—which represents a series of precedents potentially available for the audience of the *Iliad*—is more than a mere accumulation of detail: the polysemy of the foot can be distilled further if we isolate some common strains. First, as a metonym for life and mortality, healthiness of foot (as in Achilles' swift-footedness) communicates youthful (martial) vitality. Such a homology between a hero and his feet may also emphasize the affiliation of certain heroes with chthonic cults and deities.²⁹ The mythical figure's ancient task, moreover, in killing chthonic beasts represents a symbolic, albeit ultimately futile, attempt to circumvent death by severing the connection between man and the earth. The paradox of the symbol is that by representing man's mortality it signals both his vitality and that vitality's inevitable end.³⁰ Any compromise of this symbol (such as an uncured foot wound) attenuates a hero's connection to 'normal' life (and to all that life entails—eating, socialization, sex, and death) as in the marginalization of figures such as Philoktetes, Telephos, and Cheiron.

A healthy foot indicates a man filled with life; a sick foot dislocates life from person. Structuralist approaches to myth teach us that a symbol never means one thing—a given motif is a locus for oppositional meaning. Hence, foot symbolism quickly grows more complex. Remaining figures may be split into two oppositional groups:

27 For Perseus' winged sandals, see Apollod. 2.39; and as part of folktale motifs, see Croon 1955, 10–13. For Jason's single sandal, see Pind. *P.* 4.94–96 and the scholia to Pind. *P.* 4.133b1–133c7. Cf. Apollod. 1.107–109; and A.R. 1.8–114. Ginzburg (1991, 231–233) finds in the single sandal a ritual connection with the ground: Jason's "monosandalism" echoes an initiation into adulthood; anxiety about his barefoot may be connected to a ritual of claiming inheritance by placing a single foot on a grave. Special attention is paid to Hermes' footwear in H. *Merc.* 79–84 and 138–141. For Hermes' *Hymn* as an initiation ritual, see Walcot 1979, 244–248.

28 For a bibliography on monosandalism, see Ginzburg 1991, 272–273. According to the scholia to Pind. *P.* 4.133c5–6, Aetolians wore one sandal in battle, an act paralleled by the Plataeans against the Spartans at Thuc. 3.22.

29 Lévi-Strauss connects foot problems and autochthony (1963, 214–216) when he argues that Laius, Labdacus and Oidipous all have lameness in their names; their triumphs over monsters represent a denial of autochthony. Carroll (1978) criticizes this etymology and interpretation. Edmunds (1981) emphasizes the connection between Oidipous and chthonic deities such as Demeter and the Erinyes.

30 See Carroll 1978, 807.

–	The Foot (Normal)	+
<i>The Lamé</i>	<hr/>	<i>The Swift</i>
Melampous		Achilles
Oidipous		[Oidipous]
Hephaistos		Jason
Odysseus		Perseus
		Hermes

For those associated with swiftness, value accrued to the foot by birth or by narrative tradition—as when a hero receives magical sandals—communicates the larger than life nature of the figure, typically martial or heroic force. Accordingly, any damage done to the life-symbol has proportionally damaging consequences for physical ability.³¹ Of course, the polarization is not so simple. Both categories include figures who are set apart by *otherness* of foot. Heroes who walk on one shoe or warriors who fight single-sandaled or barefoot emphasize their liminality, both their exceptionality and their limited connection to the normal cycle of life.³² Achilles is in this group as is Perseus and, perhaps, an older version of Oidipous.³³

Where adding value to the foot increases *martial* prowess, lameness bestows upon its possessor compensatory qualities—typically association with *mêtis*—thus instantiating a classic mythopoetic contrast between strength (*biê*) and intelligence.³⁴ The lameness of Hephaistos is balanced by his *tekhnê* at the forge;³⁵ lame Melampous and Oidipous receive interpretive powers. Indeed, the compensatory aspect of impaired feet may be an object of play in Homer. Odysseus’ weakness of legs in *Od.* 8, which strengthens his association with Hephaistos whose intelligence features so prominently in Demodokos’ song (266–366), is compensated by increased wit, both in the types of athletic competitions he engages in and in the general arc of the *Odyssey* where his bow accrues a more positive valence

31 In their symbolic connection with sexuality, diminished or swollen feet can represent limited or surplus sexual ability. Harpocrates from the Osiris myth has weak feet and limited reproductive power. See Zerbe 1984, 305. Oidipous’ sexual deviance, from this perspective, is anticipated by his swollen feet.

32 Ginzburg (1991, 231–240) argues that deformities or imbalances in walking suspend figures between the world of the dead and the world of the living. Cf. Vernant 1982, 20–21.

33 See Edmunds 1981 and Werhli 1957.

34 For lameness bestowing upon a figure “the privilege of an uncommon man, of an exceptional qualification” see Vernant 1982, 21. For the contrast between *biê* and *mêtis*, see Nagy 1979, *passim*. For the operation of the *mêtis* motif in the *Odyssey*, see Cook 1995.

35 For the contrast between Ares’ swiftness and Hephaistos’ slowness, see *Od.* 8.306–312 and 329–332.

than that given to archery in the *Iliad*.³⁶ Greek culture may have ritualized much of this symbolism—swiftness of feet is prized in ritualized dance as indicated by *Odyssey* 8, where the swiftness of the Phaiakians' feet in their choral dance is cited repeatedly (despite the fact that the eponymous hero's weakness of feet is indicated clearly at 8.230–233).³⁷

Foot wounds, then, as affirmations of a notional connection to the earth and indications of life's tenuous hold, negate a hero's physical force and marginalize him from his comrades and their martial pursuits. Swiftness, in contrast, creates super-heroes, indicating a positive alterity that is utilized by our *Iliad*. Achilles' foot-speed, thus, is the determinative metonym for his conventional exceptional-ity.³⁸ Indeed, his speed is a motif manipulated in the *Iliad* where he is physically *still* but *quick* to anger; his swiftness of feet (πόδας ὠκὺς 1.58; ποδαρκής 1.121) may lead to his Iliadic swiftness of fate (ὠκύμορος 18.95).³⁹

If Achilles' special status is marked out by his swiftness of foot, being slow or lame does not necessarily mark out a hero from myth or epic as *unheroic*. Instead, lameness indicates an alternative and at times complementary status. (Both the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* make clear that swiftness and strength are not the only qualities that define a man.) In myth the meanings of the polarities can overlap. Thus, Oidipous' feet point diversely to his heroic past, wherein his *swollen* foot communicates both superlative ability *and* his marginal character. He, like Achilles, is and is not a man: their 'heroic' status, i.e. their existence apart from the rest of humanity, is symbolized by exceptional feet. But, for a figure who is all *biê* and whose martial identity is bound up with his foot, a foot injury amounts to total devastation. In this symbolic system separation from the earth signals the obviation of both the exceptional and the martial. To the extent, then, that a character

36 See Hainsworth's comments on Diomedes' boast in book 11 (1993, 268–269). In Aesop's fables, feigned lameness is a characteristic of clever, devious animals, see *Aes. Fab.* 198 and 214. Indeed, Aesop's own cleverness is poised in contradistinction to his *lameness* and grotesque appearance (see *Vita Aesopi* G 1).

37 *Od.* 8.253 and 264. See also Bierl 2000, 83 and, for the importance of feet in ritual dance, 122 n. 31, and 125 n. 38. Cultic dance and initiation rites may in turn be reflected in some associated myths. See the specific mention of a sandal in conjunction with Eros (Anacr. 13.1–4) or the golden sandaled step at Eur. *Or.* 1462–1473. For chorality in *Od.* 8 see Bierl in this volume.

38 See Dunkle 1997, 227. Achilles' foot speed does not feature prominently in our *Iliad*. Achilles' foot speed is applied primarily in his pursuit of Hektor (where he fails to overtake his adversary) and commemorated by the performances of his surrogates Diomedes, Antilochus, and Odysseus in the funeral games. His swiftness—his exceptionality—must be sublimated for the health and safety of the Achaian coalition; see Dunkle 1997, 233–234.

39 For the formulaic system for his feet, see Nagy 1979, 326. On the resonance of his Iliadic inactivity with his brief life, see Slatkin 1991, 36–37 and Barker and Christensen 2008, 8–9.

like Achilles is defined by qualities that are simply bound up in his feet, to harm his foot even in part is to sap his vitality in its entirety.

2 The Hero's Death

Thus far, I have argued that the symbolic framework of ancient myth—a framework generated over time and present in the diachronic development of the epic tradition—makes the foot a determinative location for expressions of human mortality and for the individuation of heroic characteristics. This argument alone certainly does not make a persuasive case for such symbolism in the archaic Greek tradition or in Homeric epic. The pervasiveness of foot wounds, however, makes it likely that an audience during the late formative stages of the epic was largely aware of stories about death by foot wound and sensitive to its symbolism (the formula for 'swift of feet' and the relevant myths seem to be of sufficient antiquity to predate this suggested late formative period).⁴⁰ I have already noted that Paris' killing of Achilles is explicitly revealed in the *Iliad*.⁴¹ Less clear is the extent to which the *Iliad* and its audience were aware of his death's details. Given the symbolic inheritance from myth, the distribution of images of Achilles' death in the Archaic period, and the information provided by the poem itself, it is highly probable that the wounding of Diomedes resonated both with the Greek mythical tradition at large and the specific instance of Achilles' death.

The relative lateness of some of the motifs surrounding Achilles' death has been well-established,⁴² but several early vase images show a figure, tentatively identified as Achilles, being shot at or hit in the ankle/foot by a kneeling archer.⁴³

⁴⁰ I consider it likely that the performance of oral epic (which seems to have told the stories of many of the heroes mentioned above) played with foot symbolism. But since we have no evidence of such performances apart from our extant epics and a few fragments, the audience I refer to here is that of the late formative stages of the epics. Whether we imagine this coming about in the eighth or the fifth century BCE, based on the internal evidence of the epics I am positing an audience with a certain degree of competence based on regular experience with the performance of epic. For a recent review of the debate about the dating of the epics, see Jensen 2011, 295–296 and n. 45 below. While Jensen imagines that the epics as we have them only existed after they were recorded (according to her, in 522 BCE), their contents assume an audience conversant with the mythopoetic tradition. For additional reflections on the varied competence of Homer's implied audience, see Scodel 2002, 7–33.

⁴¹ See above, note 8.

⁴² For the general 'fabula' of Achilles' tale, see Burgess 2009, 72–78 and 87–98.

⁴³ A Protocorinthian Lekythos (*LIMC* Achilleus 848; c. 670 BCE) without names—a kneeling figure shoots an arrow through an ankle (cf. Gantz 1993, 626; and Burgess 2009, 9–12). Most agree

One amphora from Chalcidice (c. 550 BCE) presents a similar scene with all of the major figures named (Achilles, Paris, Apollo).⁴⁴ The distribution and number of these images, especially when coupled with evidence from myth, suggest that Achilles' death by foot wound was a motif known as early as the seventh century BCE which has important consequences depending on how we date our *Iliad*.⁴⁵ The first literary attestations are somewhat later.⁴⁶ It is not until after the Hellenistic era that his death by such a wound is explained by his mother's prophylactic protection of the rest of his body.⁴⁷

It is possible, then, that foot wound symbolism was part of the epic's diachronic inheritance and, furthermore, that the *Iliad's* audience was aware of the role of a foot wound in Achilles' death. The evidence within the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* increases the probability. First, the symbolic apparatus that locates indications of intelligence and strength in foot-health is present in both epics. For example, Hephaistos' lameness, a result of Zeus' rage (*Il.* 1.590–594), is symbolically connected to his ability as a craftsman and may condition his desire to avoid conflict (1.571–601). In the *Odyssey*, his handicap is opposed to Ares' physical prowess—his tortoise beats Ares' hare in Demodokos' song, and the language of lameness, while still pejorative, privileges wit over strength, both of which are located metonymically in strength and weakness of foot in a poetic system that at

that this represents Paris and Achilles (see Lorimer 1947, 93–96). Other vases from the 6th and 5th centuries BCE have an arrow flying towards Achilles' lower leg (an Attic Red Figure Pelike by the Niobid painter; *LIMC* Achilleus 851 = Alexandros 92) or Paris shooting at Achilles (*LIMC* Achilleus 852 = Alexandros 91). Cf. *LIMC* Achilleus 849 (=Alexandros 94). An Etruscan gem from the 3rd century BCE presents Achilles on one knee with an arrow through his left ankle (*LIMC* Achilleus 853a). The trope may also be transferred: a vase in the Vatican Museum shows Hektor bleeding from the left knee. See Pinney 1983, 140. Pache (2009, 95) suggests that vase painters are reluctant to depict Achilles' actual death.

44 *LIMC* Achilleus 850. Problematic is the absence of any notable foot wound in the more popular image of Ajax rescuing Achilles' body which appears on a seal impression on a vase from Pithekoussai; see Snodgrass 1971, 431; cf. *LIMC* Achilleus 860, 873, 875, and 876.

45 Burgess (2009, 23–28) supports that the death of Achilles was probably pre-Homeric because of its association with Memnon and that character's prevalence by the sixth century BCE. He also adds that his death at the hands of Apollo and Paris is "rooted in deeply traditional myth" (38). West (2001, 2–4) believes that the *Iliad* was composed after the 8th century BCE. Gentili (1988, 4–19) argues for a later date for the formation of the epics (c. 5th century BCE). Cf. Nagy 1996, 62–112. For the dating of Homeric epics from vase painting, see Lowenstam 1997, 58–65.

46 Gantz 1993, 625 notes that Pind. *Pa.* 6.75–86 may be the earliest literary reference to the *shooting* of Achilles by Paris, who is also credited by Euripides (*Hek.* 387–388 and 655). Cf. Burgess 2009, 9–12.

47 See the conclusion below.

times affiliates Achilles with Ares.⁴⁸ Lameness, however, is not treated uniformly. Thersites, notably, is lame in one foot (2.217), which emphasizes both his unsuitability for war and sinister nature. Note, however, that a lame foot is but a part of the deformity ascribed to Thersites—in the *Iliad* a single deformed leg does not seem to be a sufficient physiognomic marker of baseness.

More interesting for the symbolic status of foot wounds in the *Iliad*, however, are a battle scene and Achilles' treatment of Hektor's corpse. Homeric battle wounds are generally realistic, although many are problematic and stylized in representation.⁴⁹ While Diomedes is the only character who receives a foot wound in the *Iliad*, a lower leg wound has significant implications for the *Iliad*'s reception of this symbolism.⁵⁰ In book 4, Diore, the son of Amarugkeus and a captain of the Epeians, is struck by Peiroos the son of Imbrasios in the ankle (4.517–526):

Ἐνθ' Ἀμαρυγκείδην Διώρεα μοῖρα πέδησε·
 χερμαδίῳ γὰρ βλήτο παρὰ σφυρὸν ὀκριόνετι
 κνήμην δεξιτερήν· βάλε δὲ Θρηκῶν ἀγὸς ἀνδρῶν
 520 Πείρωσ Ἴμβρασίδης ὃς ἄρ' Αἰνόθεν εἰληλούθει.
 ἄμφοτέρῳ δὲ τένοντε καὶ ὄστέα λᾶσ ἀναιδῆς
 ἄχρῖς ἀπηλοΐησεν· ὃ δ' ὕπτιος ἐν κονίησι
 κάππεσεν ἄμφω χεῖρε φίλοις ἐτάροισι πετάσασα
 θυμὸν ἀποπνείων· ὃ δ' ἐπέδραμεν ὃς ῥ' ἔβαλέν περ
 525 Πείροος, οὗτα δὲ δουρὶ παρ' ὀμφαλόν· ἐκ δ' ἄρα πᾶσαι
 χύντο χαμαὶ χολάδες, τὸν δὲ σκότος ὅσσε κάλυψε.

There fate bound Diore the son of Amarugkeus:
 For he was hit near the ankle on his right shin

⁴⁸ Zeus' criticism of Ares, that he is the most hateful of the gods because "war, strife and battle are always dear to you" (5.889–890), directly recalls Agamemnon's similar dismissal of Achilles in book 1 (1.176–177). Cf. Nagy 1979, 131, who notes the parallelism but does not expand upon it. Indeed, the repetition of this line (5.890=1.177) draws a direct parallel between the hierarchical relationships of Ares/Zeus and Achilles/Agamemnon. Muellner (1996, 5–13) identifies in Ares' behavior the threat of inspiring Zeus' *mēnis* which will destabilize the divine hierarchy and the cosmos at large.

⁴⁹ For a close analysis of Homeric wounds from the perspective of modern anatomical knowledge, see Saunders 1999. While wounds that appear to be problematic are shown to be "realistic" from this perspective, others are more problematic and stylized through language and the description of action (345). The system of wounding (weapons used, location struck etc.) appears to be precise and regular (346). For the description and treatment of wounds in the Greco-Roman world, see Salazar 2000.

⁵⁰ According to the table in Saunders 2004, of 139 wounds in the *Iliad*, nine fall somewhere on the leg and three of these are fatal (14). In contrast, all head wounds (15) and all wounds struck by swords are fatal (16).

by a sharp stone, the leader of the Thracian men struck him
 520 Peiroos, the son of Imbrasios who had come from Ainos.
 Both tendons and bones were snapped by the shameless
 stone and he fell down fast into the dust
 as he spread both of his hands out to his dear companions
 while gasping out his breath. Peiroos, who hit him, ran up to him
 525 and struck him with his spear near his belly-button: all his
 intestines poured out on the ground and darkness covered his eyes.⁵¹

While the stone breaks the tendons and bones in his ankle, this wound is only a prelude to death. As he reaches to his comrades for aid, Dioreos' stomach is pierced. Note the vivid violence of death: Dioreos is not only *not* killed by a foot wound, his clinically complex breaking of tendon and bone is followed by a pierced abdomen through which his intestines pour to the ground. This violence is viscerally emphatic and, from a modern perspective, nearly clinical in its depiction of mortal suffering.⁵² Such a scene, which may constitute a variation on typical battle scenes, illustrates well the dramatic bent of Homeric poetry.⁵³ Where another tale might record (1) the simple fact of a wound and (2) its (unrealistic) location, Homer integrates a similar wound into his scene before the actual deathblow. A combatant may be hit in the leg, but it is the gut wound that kills him.

Whereas this take on the foot wound illustrates a departure from the grammar of mythical violence that has the hero die from a struck foot—a departure that informs both Homeric aesthetics and Homeric reception of myth—the treatment of Hektor's corpse confirms the persistence of foot symbolism in the *Iliad*. While the scene is brief, the *Iliad*'s depiction of the piercing and binding of Hektor's ankles (22.395–400) amounts to a ritual desecration that is both a symbolic destruction of Hektor's physical prowess and a confirmation of feet as symbols of vitality and power. The mutilation is a metonym both for the death of Hektor as a whole and for Achilles' subhuman state—he remains a harbinger of death whose liminal position between the worlds of the living and the dead has been well-documented.⁵⁴ The mutilation of the corpse also constitutes an attempt to deprive Hektor of a “beautiful death,” to estrange him from the cycle of life and death and to deny him burial honors that are shortly to be translated into epic fame.⁵⁵

51 All translations are my own.

52 On the vividness of Homeric violence and death, see Pache 2009, 92. For a clinical analysis of Homeric violence see Saunders 1999, who calls Homer's violence “cinematic” (363).

53 Cf. *Il.* 17.288–292 where a tangling of a foot leads to death.

54 See, for example, Schein 1984, 128–142; cf. Burgess 2009, 84–85 for additional bibliography.

55 For these implications, see Vernant 2001, 336–340; and González, pp. 145–147 in this volume.

3 Diomedes (Un)impeded

Not only was the motif of a hero's death by foot wound known to the Homeric audience as were stories of Achilles' death, but the symbolic matrix positing feet as metonyms for mortality and loci for oppositional types of exceptionality was operative in Homeric poetry. Adducing the potential knowledge of these motifs along with the mythical apparatus of foot wounds provides a new perspective for addressing Paris' wounding of Diomedes. Attention to the audience's sense of both the symbolism of foot wounds and the fact of Achilles' death enriches our understanding of the relationship between the broader epic tradition and the *Iliad's* telling of its tale (together with the audience's synchronic experience of it in performance). As such, the epic relies on previous tales and competence in epic language and motifs to deploy a complex scene. Thus, the synchronic moment is only possible because of a (lost) putative diachronic development.

The Iliadic scene is fraught with ambiguity over the action itself from both Paris and Diomedes as they posture on the battlefield; it is also suffused with much of the symbolism intrinsic to feet discussed so far. First, the narrative describes the action itself, followed by Paris' boast (11.369–383):

- αὐτὰρ Ἀλέξανδρος Ἑλένης πόσις ἠΰκόμοιο
 370 Τυδείδῃ ἔπι τόξα τιταίνεται ποιμένι λαῶν,
 στήλῃ κεκλιμένος ἀνδροκμήτῳ ἐπὶ τύμβῳ
 Ἴλου Δαρδανίδαο, παλαιοῦ δημογέροντος.
 ἦτοι ὁ μὲν θώρηκα Ἀγαστρόφου ἰφθίμοιο
 αἴνυτ' ἀπὸ στήθεσφι παναίολον ἀσπίδα τ' ὤμων
 375 καὶ κόρυθα βριαρῆν· ὁ δὲ τόξου πῆχυν ἀνελκε
 καὶ βάλεν, οὐδ' ἄρα μιν ἄλιον βέλος ἔκφυγε χειρός,
 ταρσὸν δεξιτεροῖο ποδός· διὰ δ' ἀμπερὲς ἰὸς
 ἐν γαίῃ κατέπηκτο· ὁ δὲ μάλα ἠδὺ γελάσσας
 ἐκ λόχου ἀμπήδησε καὶ εὐχόμενος ἔπος ἠΰδα·
 380 βέβληαι οὐδ' ἄλιον βέλος ἔκφυγεν· ὡς ὄφελόν τοι
 νείατον ἐς κενεῶνα βαλὼν ἐκ θυμὸν ἐλέσθαι.
 οὕτω κεν καὶ Τρῶες ἀνέπνευσαν κακότητος,
 οἷ τέ σε πεφρίκασι λέονθ' ὡς μηκάδες αἴγες.

- Then Alexander, the husband of pretty-haired Helen,
 370 stretched his bow at Tydeus' son, the shepherd of the host,
 as he leaned on the stone on the man-made mound
 of Ilus the son of Dardanos, the ancient ruler of the people.
 While [Diomedes] took the shining breastplate of strong Agastrophes

from his chest and the shield from his shoulders
 375 along with the strong helmet, Paris drew back the handle of his bow
 and struck him—an ineffective shaft did not leave his hand—
 on the flat of his right foot and the arrow stuck straight through
 into the earth. Paris laughed so very sweetly
 as he sprang from his hiding place and spoke in boast:
 380 “You’re hit! The shaft did not fly in vain! I wish
 I had hit you deep in the guts and killed you:
 that way the Trojans would have had respite from their woe,
 those men who tremble at you like bleating she-goats at a lion!”

The arrow flies and sticks straight through Diomedes' foot into the ground⁵⁶ (διὰ δ' ἀμπερὲς ἰὸς / ἐν γαίῃ κατέπηκτο). This literalizes the symbolic connection between the foot and the earth and activates the association between the foot and heroic vitality: Diomedes is subsequently marginalized from war. Indeed, the language of the attempt, that “an ineffective shaft did not leave his hand” (οὐδ' ἄρα μιν ἄλιον βέλος ἔκφυγε χειρός) may create suspense for the audience insofar as the formula used elsewhere frequently depicts the death of a hero.⁵⁷ The vivid image of the wound and the mortal danger anticipated by its description is countered by Paris' strange laughter.⁵⁸ As Leonard Muellner has shown, the narrative line of introduction (ἐκ λόχου ἀμπήδησε καί εὐχόμενος ἔπος ἠὔδα) anticipates the perverse character of Paris' exultation.⁵⁹ The content of Paris' boast is bizarre

56 Hainsworth (1993, 268) notes a “striking lack of a cross-reference to Diomedes' previous injury from an arrow.” In book 5 (95–100) he is wounded by Pandaros in the shoulder and healed by Athena (111–132) after Sthenelos pulls out the arrow. For the parallelism between the Pandaros and Paris archery scenes and its characterization of Trojan boasting, see Mackie 1996, 60–63. For other arrow wounds, see Hainsworth *ibid.*

57 Cf. *Il.* 5.18, 13.140, 13.505, 15. 575, and 16.480. The line also appears in boasts (e.g., *Il.* 14.455). On the formulaic nature of this line, see Kirk 1990, 55.

58 Paris' laughter is exceptional in battle narratives. In other places where Homeric characters laugh sweetly, the action may be infused with irony, as in laughter at Odysseus' beating of Thersites (2.270), contempt (Odysseus' laughing at Dolon, 10.400), bemusement (Zeus' laughter at Leto's wound, 21.508), or genuine humor (the Achaian laughter at Oilean Ajax's misfortune during the foot-race). In the *Odyssey*, the laughter of the suitors is more sinister (20.358 and 21.376). The *Scholia T* to *Il.* 11.378b connects this phrase to grinning and smiling. For an overview of Homeric laughter as indicating superiority, confidence, and derision, see Levine 1982, 97–100. For Odysseus' laughter and “disconcerting smile,” see Pache 2000, 17–20.

59 See Muellner 1976, 89–92 for the perverse nature of this scene. He notes that Paris' speech “constitutes a *formal* perversion of the heroic code which parallels his *actual* perversion of it” (90). On the boast in Homer see Nagy 1979, 45–46; and see Martin 1989, 68–75 for the boast as a type of authoritative speech.

indeed: he delights in the action but wishes aloud that Diomedes were actually killed so that the Trojans would get some respite. This is far from a standard battlefield taunt; even as Paris celebrates a mythically mortal wound he asserts that it is not so. When set against the heroic code, his laughter and admission of Trojan fear highlight the awkwardness of this scene and point to the implausibility of his hope—that a foot wound would kill Diomedes. The sequence, then, sets up an expectation with the latent symbolism of the foot wound only to undermine it as the *Iliad* deploys its own paradigm.

Alone, the wound and Paris' empty boast would be enough to indicate that the narrative is providing a problematic, if not completely pejorative, recreation of the foot wound. The fact that it is Paris who shoots from a sheltered place at the best of the Achaians—as Diomedes is described at *Il.* 5.103, a description that marks him as a replacement for Achilles—weakens the narrative effect and perpetuates an (Iliadic) characterization of Paris as a somewhat ordinary, if not completely inadequate, warrior, leaving one to wonder what kind of tale would have *this* man kill Achilles.⁶⁰ The tension (or frustration) of this scene relies on the audience both knowing what Paris will do (or has always done) with his bow and understanding Diomedes as a stand-in for Achilles.

Diomedes' response serves to heighten the tension and develop the implied critique (11.384–400):

- Τὸν δ' οὐ ταρβήσας προσέφη κρατερὸς Διομήδης·
 385 τοξότα λωβητῆρ κέρα ἀγλαέ παρθενοπίπα
 εἰ μὲν δὴ ἀντίβιον σὺν τεύχεσι πειρηθεῖης,
 οὐκ ἄν τοι χραίσμησι βιὸς καὶ ταρφέες ἰοί-
 νῦν δέ μ' ἐπιγράψας ταρσὸν ποδὸς εὐχεται αὐτως.
 οὐκ ἀλέγω, ὡς εἴ με γυνὴ βάλοι ἢ παῖς ἄφρων·
 390 κωφὸν γὰρ βέλος ἀνδρὸς ἀνάγκιδος οὐτιδανοῖο.
 ἦ τ' ἄλλως ὑπ' ἐμεῖο, καὶ εἴ κ' ὀλίγον περ ἐπαύρη,
 ὄξυ βέλος πέλεται, καὶ ἀκήριον αἶψα τίθησι.
 τοῦ δὲ γυναικὸς μὲν τ' ἀμφίδρυφοί εἰσι παρειαί,
 παῖδες δ' ὄρφανικοί· ὃ δέ θ' αἵματι γαῖαν ἐρεύθων
 395 πύθεται, οἰωνοὶ δὲ περὶ πλέες ἠὲ γυναῖκες.
 Ὡς φάτο, τοῦ δ' Ὀδυσσεὺς δουρικλυτὸς ἐγγύθεν ἐλθὼν
 ἔσθη πρόσθ'· ὃ δ' ὄπισθε καθεζόμενος βέλος ὤκῳ

⁶⁰ According to Whitman (1958, 223), Paris only achieves success in war through archery. Suter (1991, 21) notes, however, that the abuse Paris receives as a coward is inconsistent with what he actually achieves on the battlefield, where he does “fight with sword and spear.” Kakridis (1949, 86) harbors the hope that Paris was a reputable warrior at some point in the tradition.

ἐκ πόδος ἔλκ', ὀδύνη δὲ διὰ χροὸς ἦλθ' ἀλεγεινή.
 ἐς δίφρον δ' ἀνόρουσε, καὶ ἠνιόχῳ ἐπέτελλε
 400 νηυσὶν ἔπι γλαφυρῆσιν ἐλαυνέμεν· ἦχθετο γὰρ κῆρ.

Unafraid, strong Diomedes answered him:
 385 “Bowman, slanderer, shining with your horn, girl-watcher—
 if you were to make trial of me face to face with weapons,
 your bow and your numerous arrows would be useless.
 But now you boast in vain, having scratched the flat of my foot.
 I don't care, as if a woman or witless child had struck me—
 390 for the shaft of a cowardly man of no repute is blunt.
 Altogether different is a sharp shaft when I wield it:
 even if it barely grazes a man, it makes him dead fast;
 then the cheeks of his wife are torn
 and his children, orphans. Dyeing the earth red with blood
 395 he rots, and there are more birds around him than women.”
 So he spoke, and spear-famed Odysseus came near him
 and stood in front of him. As Diomedes sat behind him, he drew out the
 sharp shaft
 from his foot and a grievous pain went through his flesh.
 He sprang onto the chariot car and ordered the charioteer
 400 to drive to the hollow ships, since he was vexed in his heart.

Diomedes' response channels his now compromised physical violence into retaliatory words. In short order, he maligns Paris as a mere slanderer and a seducer (λωβητήρ... παρθενοπίπτα),⁶¹ he mocks his mode of warfare altogether (τοξότα)⁶² and disparages the wound. Although the narrative describes the arrow as piercing Diomedes' foot through to the earth, he attempts to minimize it as a scratch (ἐπιγράψας 388) he does not care about and a blunt shaft (κωφὸν βέλος) from a coward of no account (ἀνδρὸς ἀνάλκιδος οὔτιδαοῖο),⁶³ effectively contesting

61 The diction may be especially strong. Suter 1991 (18–19) analyzes Paris' epithets. Λωβητήρ, which only appears again in Odysseus' upbraiding of Thersites (2.275) and Priam's verbal abuse of his remaining sons (24.239), indicates something “offensive to the rules of heroic society” (18). Παρθενοπίπτα is a *hapax* that the *Scholia AT* to *Il.* 11.385g suggests is stronger than the more common γυναικομανές.

62 The epithet τοξότα may be intended to insult Paris as a coward. See Suter 1991, 18.

63 This insult may be charged in the *Iliad*. Achilles denigrates Agamemnon as a man who rules over men of no account (1.231) and declares that he will leave because he does not wish to be an οὔτιδαός (1.293). In the *Odyssey* Odysseus uses the word to criticize men who would mistreat a guest (8.209), and Polyphemos twice uses it of him (9.460 and 575).