

Homer, or Another Poet of the Same Name:  
Four Translations of the *Iliad*

by

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I owe thanks for this thesis and to my graduation to my mother and father, who made me into the person I am through a loving dedication to the numerous thousands of things I have decided are my 'true calling.' I would not just be a different person without them, I genuinely do not think I would have survived myself. To my sister, whom I trust with everything important. I don't think I'll ever have a friend quite like her. To my advisor, Professor Andy, who has lived through many poorly written drafts, week in and week out. I owe him a debt of gratitude for trusting in me to bring it all together here, at the end of all things.

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I was the shadow of the waxwing slain  
By the false azure in the windowpane;  
I was the smudge of ashen fluff—and I  
Lived on, flew on, in the reflected sky.

**–Vladimir Nabokov**

Τυφλὸς ἀνὴρ, οἰεῖ δὲ Χίω ἔνι παιπαλοέσση.  
Τοῦ πάσαι μετόπισθεν ἀριστεύουσιν ἀοιδαί.

**–Homeric Hymn to Apollo**

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## Introduction

This thesis is interested in three separate, but interrelated questions: how do different translators approach the *Iliad*, what is the methodology by which translations replicate the *Iliad*, and how do translations reflect their own time period in showing an ancient poem? My first question is a constant concern, and from answering that question throughout Chapter 2-5, I gather the evidence with which I answer the second and third question.

I primarily study 4 translations, though there are references to other outside translations: Richmond Lattimore's *Iliad* (2011), Peter Green's *The Iliad*, Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare's *An Iliad* (2014), and Christopher Logue's *War Music* (2016). The first two translations, line-by-line and nearly word-for-word translations by classicists, need little introduction, as I am sure my readers will take them to be legitimate sources for analysis a priori. *An Iliad* and *War Music*, however, require some discussion.

The former is a play which is largely based off of Robert Fagles' translation; Peterson & O'Hare indicate, by a change in indentation in the script, where they do not use Fagles' text. Most of the lines which I have quoted are from those areas not from Fagles' text. The play itself is a one-man play, where the only speaker is the Poet who tells the story of the *Iliad*, occasionally acting out characters himself. Secondly, Logue is well known for not speaking any Ancient Greek—he bases his translation off of other translations of the *Iliad*. In such a way, both of these works may not, strictly speaking, be called “translations,” like the first two. But there are

still substantive reasons why they are worthy of study in this translation based thesis. First, I am not convinced that knowledge of Ancient Greek is necessary to make a translation of a work which was in Ancient Greece—a belief like that strike me as indicative of a haughtiness which imperfect, dictionary-bound classicists enjoy giving themselves. Moreover, even though both works may not be the same kind of strict translation like Green and Lattimore has, they both contain elements which the study of translation would shed light on. Ultimately, I would ask my readers to give me the patience to demonstrate, through my study of Logue and Peterson & O'Hare, the worth of studying them with translation theory.

Before I begin my thesis, there are a few minor points to make. In general, I do not use Greek text without accompanying translations, but, when supplying such translations would become tedious and redundant, I use Latinized Greek. When a translation of Greek is written out without a citation to an author, the translation is my own. This will normally be indicated by footnote. Finally, I have chosen to use the most Latinized, commonly used version of most names: Achilles, Patroclus, Ajax, rather than Achilleus or Akhilleus, etc. I use these names simply out of convenience and their general acceptance.

## Homer Speaks

Our teachers weren't fluent in Latin and Greek and could not make us fluent. The ancient languages were not real the way French was; we were like holiday makers with phrase-book Spanish trying to read Lorca or Neruda aloud; but no one told us how silly we sounded.

—Frederick Ahl

Translation is stipulated to be, in this thesis, the creation of an equivalent form in one language from another language.<sup>1</sup> If one wishes to translate the *Iliad*, or even worse, if one wishes to discuss translations of the *Iliad*, one must first discover the text of the *Iliad*. Initially, this task seems simple. Any translation requires a Source Text ("ST") and a Target Text ("TT").<sup>2</sup> The source text is the original, composed work, whereas the target text is generated from the source text. So what differentiates a translated work from a composed work at the most basic level? To state the question with examples, what differentiates *L'Etranger*, written by Albert Camus, from *The Stranger*, translated by Matthew Ward, beyond the fact that one is in French and the other is in English? The most obvious difference is the compositional limitations placed on the creators of both works. *L'Etranger* was created in the mind of Albert Camus and could have been about anything, or as Michel Foucault writes, the original work has the freedom to generate its own "unfolded exteriority....[I]t is...a question of creating a space."<sup>3</sup> Camus, within this space, has unquestionable and complete authority as the author. Camus does not

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<sup>1</sup> See Jakobson 2000

2. Munday *Translation*

3. Foucault "What is an Author?"

have to contend with shades of possible narratives or possible characters. His novel is defined in positivist terms by what is present, rather than what could have been present. When Meursault shoots a man on the beach, the reader may wonder why Meursault does not simply walk away but it would be nonsensical for the reader to ask the question to doubt Camus' authorial power to decide that Meursault shoots someone. Ultimately Meursault shot a man on the beach because Camus wanted him to do so. The translator of *L'Étranger*, however, cannot make that decision so freely.

*The Stranger*, a translation of *L'Étranger*, is defined by *L'Étranger*. This relationship permeates the text at every level; all structures in the translated text are defined by their relationship to structures within the source text, from the largest plot elements to the smallest grammatical questions. For example, a translator might decide to remove the conversation with the chaplain, but to make such a decision constitutes a "removal," and a reader familiar with the original would mark this change as deviating from *L'Étranger*. If Camus had decided to remove the chaplain scene from the novel before publishing it, no one would mark the text as missing a chaplain scene. If the translator of *L'Étranger* were to write a version of *L'Étranger* in which Meursault lives in apartheid South Africa, rather than in Algeria, the story would be marked as different; every action which Meursault takes would be re-evaluated in this new context. Even if a translator does not seek to make any noticeable changes, the translator is still be forced to make decisions which would mark the translated text as different from the source text. From the very first word, 'l'étranger,' the translator would be forced to mark

their translation. Should "l'etranger" be translated as "the stranger" (as Matthew Ward translates the title) or "the foreigner"? In French, it means both at the same time. For a translator to choose one of these translations, however, says something about the novel; is Meursault merely a 'stranger,' or is the fact that he is Algerian so notable that the novel must be called *The Foreigner*? Which translation the translator chooses introduces a new specificity of meaning which 'l'etranger' does not give the original title. The authority of the translated work, therefore, is not self-contained, like Camus' authority in *L'Etranger*. The translated work exists instead at the behest of its source text.

Therefore, one cannot merely look at translations of the *Iliad* without looking at the source text: the Greek *Iliad*. When one discusses the *Iliad*, one is inextricably discussing the oral poetic tradition which surrounded the text. Rhapsodes, travelling bards, maintained the tradition by giving performances of the *Iliad*, where they extemporaneously composed the *Iliad* while performing it. The tradition consists of formulas: words, phrases, epithets, lines, and even speeches, all of which a bard had memorized and at his disposal at any given time.<sup>4</sup> The bard used the traditional formula according the strict meter of Homeric poetry. These formulas, however, were not just metrical fillers, but, rather, had distinct, large, and powerful traditional meanings. These traditional meanings were, in the vocabulary of John Miles Foley, "metonymically engaged."

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<sup>4</sup> For more on Homeric composition and Homeric Transcription, see Nagy 1998, 2004, 2008, 2009; West *Homerus Ilias* 1998, *Studies in the Text and Transmission* 2001; Edwards, *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* 1990; *FINISH THIS FOOTNOTE TOMORROW*.

## Metonymic Signifiers

I suggest that the *Iliad* utilizes a metonymic signification system, as in *pars pro toto*. John Miles Foley has expounded this theory throughout his career, but most especially in *Immanent Art* and *the Oral Theory*. He begins with a basic, fuzzy dichotomy: written texts *confer* meaning, while oral traditional texts *inherit* meaning.<sup>5</sup> *Conferred* meaning is a method in which the highest priority is placed upon "a writer's personal manipulation of original or inherited materials, rewarding the work that strikes out boldly in a new direction by providing a perspective uniquely its own, memorable because it is new, fresh, or best of all, inimitable."<sup>6</sup> *Inherited* meaning, on the other hand, "depends primarily on elements and strategies that were in place long before the execution of the present version or text."<sup>7</sup> The difference between these two terms is hazy; written works also have inherent meaning while oral poets clearly also innovate parts of their tales. On the whole, however, the "traditional work will lean much more heavily on encoding and expression through inherently meaningful forms."<sup>8</sup> These inherently meaningful forms are certain word structures which have "fields of reference much larger than the single line, passage, or even text in which they occur. This idiom is liberating

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5. Foley 1991, 8.

6. *Ibid*, 8.

7. *Ibid*, 8.

8. *Ibid*, 8.

rather than imprisoning, centrifugal rather than centripetal, explosively connotative rather than claustrophobically clichéd."<sup>9</sup> Traditional words with inherent meaning in an oral tradition, therefore, do not refer to their nominal idea but rather to an entire outside tradition which "crucially includes an extra-textual dimension uniquely the domain of oral traditional art."<sup>10</sup>

Foley refers to this process as *metonymy*, wherein a single part of something stands for the whole.<sup>11</sup> Formula in the *Iliad* is one of these types of metonymic signifiers. The actual literal meaning of a given formula is far less important than the secondary inherited meaning which it stands for *metonymically*. The formula then is not stating a fact, such as Achilles is *swift-footed*, but is rather introducing an entire tradition, *pars pro toto*. Instead of a wooden formula, Foley sees a dynamic and responsive plethora of meanings at the poet's fingertips: "Noun-epithet phrases like 'grey-eyed Athena' or 'purple-cheeked ships' refer not just—or even principally—to the goddess's eyes or the ships' hue, but rather the phrases use those characteristic yet nominal details to project holistic traditional concepts. Such synecdoche extend the fundamental arbitrariness of language at the same that it extends its significative 'reach'."<sup>12</sup>

It is difficult to discuss this theory in the abstract, and so an example is necessary. One of Achilles' main epithets appears in Book 1.57:

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9. *Ibid*, 7.

10. *Ibid*.

<sup>11</sup> Technically, I believe a *pars pro toto* is actually referred to as 'synecdoche,' but Foley prefers 'metonymy.'

12. Foley 1997, 64-5

οἱ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν ἤγηρθεν ὀμηγερέες τε γένοντο,  
τοῖσι δ' ἀνιστάμενος μετέφη **πόδας ὠκὺς** Ἀχιλλεύς  
When they had assembled and gathered together,  
Swift-footed Achilles, rising among them, spoke:

In this scene, Achilles is about to speak in front of the troops to ask for a soothsayer, who will detail Agamemnon's insult against Apollo, which will spur him to take Briseis from Achilles, which will bring out the rage of Achilles, etc. At this moment, Achilles is beginning the narrative arc that will define his role in the *Iliad*. Rather than being irrelevant, *podas okus Akhilleus* brings to mind Achilles' famous swift feet. This epithet, in my view, would bring up two clear images to the listener's mind: first, the race around Ilion when Achilles chased Hector and eventually slew him, and secondly, Paris slaying Achilles in revenge by shooting him with a poisoned arrow near his foot. Therefore, in using this epithet here, the poet is linking the moment Achilles begins his narrative arc with the end of that narrative arc. This epithet is used 29 more times throughout the *Iliad*, and in each instance, it corresponds to a major location of the plot of Achilles; there are, in fact, only 4 usages of *podas okus Akhilleus* outside of Books 1, 9, 18, and 21-24, all of which feature the major plot points of Achilles: the initial quarrel with Agamemnon, rejecting Agamemnon's offer, Patroclus' death, the fight with Hector, and the return of Hector's body to Priam. In each case, the poet is reminding his listeners of what Achilles will do and how this conflict will end. The poet does this, however, with just the power of metonymic signification.

I hope to have laid three theoretical foundations in this chapter: translations are marked based on their relationship with their source material, the *Iliad* is constantly recalling an oral tradition, and the *Iliad* recalls its oral tradition by metonymic signification, whereby formulaic phrases bring to mind far more than just their literal meaning. In the next chapter, I will begin analyzing translations, starting with the word *mēniō*.

## Rage

While seeking revenge, dig two graves.

—Douglas Horton

My object in this chapter is to see how much, if any, of the oral tradition is conveyed in translations of the *Iliad*. I will begin with the beginning of the poem, both for the sake of analyzing the first word in the poem, *mēnis*, and as a functional example of my methodology.

μη̄νιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος  
Sing goddess of the wrath/rage/anger of son of Peleus Achilles<sup>13</sup>

Before moving on to the English translations and showing how they manage the traditional meanings in this passage, it would be useful to discuss the line itself. The Greek line covers three concepts: rage, singing to a goddess, and Achilles' parentage. I will be focusing on the first concept: rage. *Mēnis* is used in the *Iliad* 18 times and is formulaically used 5 times as the first word of a sentence in the accusative *mēnin*.<sup>14</sup> *Mēnis*, outside the *Iliad*, is used by Pindar, Aeschylus, and Hesiod, as the equivalent of the English words "rage" or "anger."<sup>15</sup> In the *Iliad*,

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<sup>13</sup> Translated by me

<sup>14</sup> 1.75, 5.444, 16.711, 19.35, and 19.75.

<sup>15</sup> *Olympian Odes* 6.20ff, *Agamemnon* 140ff, *Shield of Heracles* 21. There are many examples (Euripides, Herodotus, some Pindar, some Aeschylus, etc.) where *mēnis* refers to *godly* rage, just as I argue the *Iliad* does. Many of the usages of later authors do so in connection with the *Iliad*, however, so it is difficult to tell if these

*mēnīs* is mainly used to describe *divine* anger, not human anger; *menīs* is primarily possessed by the gods.<sup>16</sup> The 5 times *mēnīs* is not used to describe the rage of a god are the five times the word is used to describe the rage of Achilles. Therefore, by using the word *mēnīs* in connection with Achilles, the poet indicates to his audience how godlike the rage of Achilles is – a grand, unstoppable rage. The word *mēnīs*, like *ποδας ὄκως Αἰχίλλεως*, accomplishes its extended meaning by metonymic signification. By utilizing such an extended meaning, the poet demonstrates to his audience with a single word, “*mēnīs*,” that the rage of Achilles is unique among the rage of men, and thus, Achilles, who possesses such a divine and godly rage, must be different from other men. The grandeur of such a signification prepares the listener, setting the tone and theme of the poem. The beauty and complexity of Homer’s traditional metonymic signification is that the poet does this using just one word – *mēnīs*.

### Translating Rage

<b>Lattimore</b>	Sing goddess, the anger of Peleus’ son Achilleus <sup>17</sup>
<b>Green</b>	Wrath, goddess, sing of Achilles Pēleus’ son’s calamitous wrath... <sup>18</sup>
<b>Peterson &amp; O’Hare</b>	This is the story of the Trojan War. And two great fighters – Achilles and Hector – ( <i>Imploring.</i> ) Ohhhhh.....Muses.... RAGE!

later usages are just references to Homeric *mēnīs* or independent meanings on their own.

<sup>16</sup> Cf. 1.75, 5.34, 5.178, 5.444, etc. This metonymic meaning has been noted by Kirk 1985, Pulleyn 2000, Jones 2003, among others.

<sup>17</sup> Lattimore 2011, 1.1

<sup>18</sup> Green 2015, 1.1

	Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles <sup>19</sup>
<b>Logue</b>	Picture the east Aegean Sea by night... A naked man... Kneel[s] among those panes, beggar his arms, and say[s] "Source, hear my voice. That Shepherd of the Clouds has seen me trashed Surely as if He sent a hand to shoo The army into one, and then, before its eyes, Painted my body with fresh Trojan excrement..." <sup>20</sup>

Richmond Lattimore brings in no equivalent of metonymic signification and instead presents the formula on its own. *Mēnis* is translated as "anger," and in every other case where *mēnis* appears, Lattimore translates it the same way, whether the rage belongs to Achilles or to a god.<sup>21</sup> Moreover, other words which describe the rage of other characters like Agamemnon, Diomedes, or Ajax, such as *menos* in 1.103, are all also translated by Lattimore as "anger." Unlike in Homer, Lattimore's goddess sings of an "anger" which is undifferentiated from any other kind of "anger," since all sorts of other "anger" words are translated the same way. By translating every word the same way each time it appears, Lattimore replicates Homer's formulaic repetition but, paradoxically, does not achieve the same diversity in meaning that Homer accomplishes. It would take an impossibly talented reader to notice, having read Lattimore's *Iliad*, that certain terms are used

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<sup>19</sup> Peterson and O'Hare 2014, 25

<sup>20</sup> Logue 2003, 5ff

<sup>21</sup> *Lattimore* 5.31-4: "Ares...shall we not leave the Trojans and Chains to struggle...while we two give ground together and avoid Zeus' anger?" and *Lattimore* 1.74: "You have bidden me, Achilleus beloved of Zeus, to explain to you this anger of Apollo the lord who strikes from afar," among others." For gods, 5.113: "Among the men far the best was Telamonian Aias while Achilleus stayed angry" and *Lattimore* 12.10: "So long as Hektor was still alive, and Achilleus was angry."

specifically to describe divine anger and Achilles' anger. Homer's original audience could understand the extended implications of *mēnis* because they would have been trained and expected to see such subtle meanings in the poet's repeated vocabulary.<sup>22</sup> The modern English reader, however, would have to look very close to realize the complicated shades of meaning in the usages of "rage" in Lattimore. What Lattimore ends up doing, then, rather than translating the formulaic meaning of *mēnis*, is translate the *literal* meaning "rage," without translating the metonymic signified meaning, "godly rage."

Peter Green, in contrast to Lattimore, attempts to express the uniqueness of *mēnis* without changing its meaning. By placing "wrath," a word which denotes "extreme anger, typical of a god,"<sup>23</sup> at the front of the sentence, contrary to typical English word order, Green's choice of syntax compels the reader to recognize that the "wrath" of Achilles is somehow special.<sup>24</sup> In such a way, even though he does not add any words or expand upon the meaning, Green communicates to the reader that Achilles has wrath (by the meaning of the words themselves) and, at the same time, that his wrath seems to be special (by the strange syntax of the sentence). The two meanings that Green provides in this line are synonymous with the metonymic signification that Homer employs. Finally, Green achieves his signification of "wrath" immediately; the reader realizes at the moment they read the first line that Achilles' wrath is special. In Greek, likewise, the listener

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<sup>22</sup> See Lord 1960 for descriptions of audience knowledge and preparation.

<sup>23</sup> OED s.v.

<sup>24</sup> Cf. Eco 2003 for differing methodologies with similar effects in translation.

metonymically recognizes *mēnīs* to represent godlike wrath the moment the listener hears it. However, Green's sentence, due to its strange syntax, is not as easy to understand instantly as the clear Greek. He alleviates some of this incomprehensibility by repeating "wrath" in line 2, but even so, the first line is not easily readable. Some incomprehensibility may be, in translating between cultures so far removed from each other, the price for recovering the extending meaning of *mēnīs*.

Lisa Peterson and Denis O'Hare, in *An Iliad*, mute the traditional nature of *mēnīs*. The actor on stage screams out the first word of the *Iliad*, translated as "RAGE," assuring that the audience will understand that the upcoming play will focus closely on the "rage of Achilles." However, unlike every other translation here, Peterson & O'Hare do not include any other instance of *mēnīs* in their text. Achilles' *mēnīs* is not just the scariest, grandest, or most stubborn of all the *mēnīs* of the heroes; in Peterson & O'Hare's play, it is the only *mēnīs*. In such a way, the reader is left with the impression of a story *only* about "two great fighters—Achilles and Hector." The traditional nature of the word *mēnīs* is conveyed in the Greek text by repetition (otherwise, Achilles' rage would not be noteworthy), but since Peterson & O'Hare remove that repetition, the word "RAGE" is not so much traditional as descriptive. Simply put, Peterson & O'Hare make an Achilles who has great and terrible rage, but since it is not compared to a god's rage, it appears to be terrifying but little else. The reduction of *mēnīs* to just "rage" is symptomatic of Peterson and O'Hare's overall compression of the story, which is in part purposeful, and in part necessitated by the constraints of the modern theater.

Christopher Logue begins the poem with a description of the Greek forces,

but, then, startlingly, makes Achilles into the Poet, putting into Achilles' mouth the opening line of the *Iliad*, translated as "Source, hear my voice."<sup>25</sup> There are two important features in Logue's translation of the first line of the *Iliad* here: first, *thea* is translated as "source," rather than "goddess" or "muse," and secondly, the Source, instead of being asked to *aeide* ("sing"), hears Achilles who speaks in place of the poet.<sup>26</sup> The Source which Achilles refers to is quickly revealed to be Thetis, who is Achilles' mother, and therefore, "the source" of Achilles. Achilles tells her that he has been deeply insulted by Agamemnon, as if he had been painted "with fresh Trojan excrement."<sup>27</sup> After he has spoken, Thetis asks him "Why tears, Achilles?" He then goes on to narrate the rest of the proemium, from the capture of Chryseis (called "Cryzia") to the plague inflicted by Apollo ("Mousegod"). Thetis then asks Achilles "Then what?" The narrator takes over the narration from that point on: "Their early pietà dissolves, and we move ten days back."<sup>28</sup>

Logue therefore transforms the proemium of the *Iliad* from an invocation to a dialogue between Achilles and Thetis. Their dialogue, in turn, is a discussion of the source of the *mēnis* of Achilles ("Why tears?"); and because of their discussion, the narrator of the poem, after being prompted again by Thetis' "Then what?" tells the story of Achilles' rage, which is the rest of *War Music*. Whereas the Greek has a

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<sup>25</sup> Logue 2003, 5.

<sup>26</sup> *Thea* – "goddess" – is nearly universally understood to mean Muse; see also Pulleyn 2000, Martin's introduction in Lattimore 2011, Kirk 1985, Jones 2003, and Postlethwaite 2000. Logue is likely exploiting the ambiguity of the word by having it refer to Thetis instead.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.* 5ff.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.* 10

Poet invoking the Muse to sing of the *mēnis* of Achilles, which brings pain and death to the Greek soldiers and heroes, Logue gives Achilles a *mēnis* which directly brings about the story which is then told. *War Music*, in effect, becomes a story prompted by Achilles' rage and weeping. Achilles' rage, in Logue's translation, is not unique because it is godlike in character, as the text of the *Iliad* implies, but rather is special because it is meta-poetic. *Mēnis* is, in the Greek, *exactly* that same motivator for the poem which is then told; the poet asks *mēnin aeide thea*, which prompts the rest of the *Iliad*; in *War Music*, Thetis asks "Then what?" to prompt the Narrator to explain the source of his rage, which is the text of *War Music*.

In this short chapter, I hope to have shown the variety of methods that translators have available to them to make equivalences to the original Greek. Lattimore, in representing the literal level of the text without showing the metonymic level, only shows that Achilles is angry, but does not convey the god-like quality of that rage. Green, using the syntax of the sentence, makes the wrath of Achilles especially prominent, which is parallel to the notion of Achilles having a divine rage, though not exactly equivalent. Peterson & O'Hare isolate the rage to just Achilles, which is indicative of their reduction of the play. Finally, Logue goes in a direction no other translator does, making the rage of Achilles the impetus for the telling of his poem.

## The Shield of Achilles

Do not wait to strike till the iron is hot; but make it hot by striking.

—W.B. Yeats

The Shield of Achilles sequence occurs at the end of Book 18, after Achilles decides to re-join the battle to avenge the death of Patroclus. Since Hector has taken Achilles' armor (itself a symbolic act<sup>29</sup>), Thetis, Achilles' mother, journeys to Olympus and asks Hephaestus to make her son new armor and a new shield.<sup>30</sup> Hephaestus readily agrees, setting out to his forge to create the godly armaments. The poet devotes nearly the next hundred and sixty lines to a detailed description of the decorations as Hephaestus hammers them out. Objects described by their manufacturing process are common in Homeric poetry, such as the description of Pandaros' bow (*Il.* 4.105-11), Odysseus' brooch (*Od.* 19.228-31), and Odysseus' raft (*Od.* 5.244-61).<sup>31</sup> However, the description of the Shield of Achilles seen at the end of Book 18 surpasses all other similar scenes in length, complexity, and unity. The description of the Shield is divided into seven parts: an overview, a city at peace, a city at war, a farmer's year, shepherding scenes, a dance, and the river of Oceanus. In the overview, heavenly bodies appear to surround the shield, but are still inside the outer ring of Ocean (16.607-08). Beneath them is depicted the Earth, upon which the other scenes will take place. The sun, moon, and numerous

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<sup>29</sup> See Edwards 1991, 139ff.

<sup>30</sup> *Iliad* 18.368ff

<sup>31</sup> See Edwards 1990 83-4

stars are described as well (16.486-9).<sup>32</sup> Two cities are then shown, one at peace and one at war. Within the peaceful city there is a wedding and the peaceful resolution of a conflict:

ἄμφω δ' ἰέσθην ἐπὶ ἵστορι πείραρ ἐλέσθαι

Both men placed for an arbitrator, to achieve an end.

The two men's dispute centers on the correct dispensation of *poine*, or blood money, that one man owes the other, since the would-be debtor killed the other man's brother. Although the Greek is ambiguous, it appears that the slayer has offered compensation to the other man, who refused to take it. They each then seek independent arbitrators (elders), to decide their case. The impartiality of the arbitrators is assured by a prize of two talents of gold to the elder who will have delivered the fairest verdict.<sup>33</sup> Though in actuality such a system might not produce the most unbiased results, the *Shield*, taken at face value, is attempting to depict a world where judicial decisions are made fairly, justly, and peacefully.

Justice, with the power to reach a peaceful resolution, is found nowhere else in the *Iliad*. Its absence is especially felt in Book 1, where Achilles' anger over a disagreement with Agamemnon is not averted by any independent arbitrator. Since Agamemnon acts as chief justice of the army, his decision is seen by Achilles as unacceptable and biased, *unlike* the city at peace. Ajax, in fact, compares Agamemnon and Achilles' feud to a dispute concerning a blood price, "A man accepts recompense even from his brother's or his own son's murderer — while the

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<sup>32</sup> For Homeric astronomy, see Dicks 1985

<sup>33</sup> Overall, I would not call this a fantastic method to assure judge impartiality, but the *Shield* clearly is *supposed* to depict a well working judicial system.

killer pays a steep price, and then says in his home town, and the kinsman's emotional passion is duly tempered by the blood-price he has received. (9.632ff)<sup>34</sup> Therefore, there is an implicit comparison between between the world of the Achaeans, where the resolution of Achilles' and Agamemnon's argument is seen as unjust, and the world of the Shield, where the argument between two individuals has a just outcome. The world of the Shield, therefore, is foreign to the world of the Achaeans.

The second city, the city at war, is equally, and perhaps surprisingly, *unlike* the *Iliad*. In the city at war, two armies besiege a city.<sup>35</sup> The leaders of the besieging forces are shown debating,

ἤ ἐ διαπραθέειν ἢ ἄνδιχα πάντα δάσασθαι  
Whether to destroy everything or to divide everything in two.

In Book 22, Hector thinks to himself to propose the same offer to Achilles, to divide everything (women, slaves, gold) in two, but decides against it, reasoning that such a solution is impossible, since Achilles would be more likely to kill an unarmed Hector than to negotiate with him.<sup>36</sup> Considering what Achilles says to Hector shortly thereafter – “Hector, speak not to me, curse you, your pacts. There are no pacts between lions and men” (22.261-62) – it seems that Hector's decision to meet Achilles outside the Skaian Gate armed was a prudent choice. Therefore, even the city at war is beyond Achilles' world; the war which Achilles fights cannot

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<sup>34</sup> Green 2015,

<sup>35</sup> Jones 2003 and Markoe 1985 argue that it is one army divided into two halves as a consequence of the two-dimensional representation likely imagined by the poet.

<sup>36</sup> Book 22.111ff

be resolved by any peaceful means. The final three scenes on the Shield, farming, both on a small plot and at a larger estate, the shepherding scene, and the dance are also far outside of the Trojan War and the narration of the *Iliad*.

Each of the scenes depicted on the Shield represents a happier world, away from the irresolvable and interminable Trojan War, which Achilles will never experience again because he is fated to die. The scenes on the Shield are not empty of suffering, but they are not scenes *of* suffering. Rather, the shield depicts a happy world upon which suffering intrudes. Oliver Taplin observes that with the Shield, “Homer has allowed us temporarily to stand back from the poem and see [war] in its place—like a detail from the reproduction of a painting—within a larger landscape, a landscape which is usually blotted from sight by the all-consuming narrative in the foreground.”<sup>37</sup> Taplin goes on to argue that the Shield makes the audience “contemplate the life that Achilles has renounced and the civilization that Troy will never regain. The two finest things in the *Iliad*—Achilles and Troy—will never again enjoy the existence portrayed on the shield: that is the price of war and of heroic glory. The shield of Achilles brings home the loss, the cost of the events of the *Iliad*.”<sup>38</sup> I do not disagree with this analysis, but, as Taplin himself notes, his argument makes Homer into more of a pacifist than others might argue.<sup>39</sup> I would

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<sup>37</sup> Taplin 1985,  
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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 15

<sup>39</sup> See Weil 1940

instead rephrase Taplin's argument along the lines of the metonymic significations which I have been discussing so far. The Shield of Achilles becomes a symbol of what Achilles will not experience. Achilles never will again live in a city, settle for peace, own an estate, farm, dance, drink wine with friends at home, or do anything else pleasant; instead, he is fated now to die on the battlefield. The poet puts the scenes of happiness which Achilles will never experience on Achilles' own Shield to remind the listener every time that Achilles uses his Shield of the cost that Achilles has paid for his "undying glory."<sup>40</sup> The artistry of the Shield is in the reversal of its literal usage (a weapon of war) and its symbolic meaning (the impending loss of life of its bearer). It becomes, in such a way, a tragic symbol.

### **Lattimore's Diagram**

The way translators represent the Shield is consistent with how they deal with the less complicated issue of *mēniō*. The Shield presents two unique difficulties for translators: first, its meaning, purpose, and artistry (essentially, the whole reason the Shield is in the text) is dependent on the Shield's reference to other passages in the poem. Secondly, the Shield is an example of ekphrasis, which is a type of poetry that is relatively unfamiliar to modern readers. Lattimore, Peterson & O'Hare, and Logue primarily attempt to resolve the first difficulty and ignore the second; Green, on the other hand, primarily attempts to resolve the second.

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<sup>40</sup> Achilles will use his Shield at 22.290 to block Hector's spear, sealing Hector's fate.

Lattimore gives a straightforward and exact translation of each section. The quarrel between the litigants moves toward resolution when “Both then made for an arbitrator, to have a decision.” Lattimore renders “*peirar belesthai*” as the more specific “to have a decision,” rather than “to come to an end.” The translation is both reasonably literal and reasonably interpretative. As I have argued above, however, the passage’s focus on judicial decision making recalls the *lack* of a judicial overview in the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon (and, to a lesser extent, between Achilles and Hector and Achilles and Priam). Lattimore attempts to go further than just replicating Homer’s general meaning. As I have noted, he also seeks to replicate Homer’s syntax and repeated usages, generally by translating a formula identically every time it appears. In most passages in the Iliad which are thematically linked, there is also repeated formulaic language (see Chapter Three: Death and Prophecy). Here, however, the descriptions of the Shield and the passages to which they refer do not share repeated formulaic imagery. (I will call the scenes which the Shield refers to as “the referent passages” from now on.) The lack of repeated formulaic language is strange for Homer, since it forces his audience to link the Shield to its referent passages by the subject matter alone. Lattimore, ever faithful, replicates that lack of repeated formula in his translation. When Lattimore writes that two armies at war considered a plan to “share between both sides the property and all the possessions the lovely citadel held hard within it,”<sup>41</sup> the English reader can certainly relate that passage to

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<sup>41</sup> Lattimore 2011, 410

Lattimore's Hector, who considers a plan for peace in the Trojan War where the Trojans would "divide up all that is hidden within the city, and take an oath thereafter for the Trojans in conclave not to hide anything away, but distribute all of it, as much as the lovely citadel keeps guarded within it."<sup>42</sup> Though "lovely citadel" is repeated, the passages feature no other formulaic repetition. The rest of the Shield features the same lack of repeated formulaic imagery with its referent passages.

Lattimore seems in the Shield of Achilles to be doing an extraordinary job of creating an equivalent to Homer's technique. But what is not clear is whether such a translation is understood by the audience in an equivalent way. Since the perspectives and understandings of the audience determine some (if not all) of the meaning of a work, understanding how the Greek and modern day audience interact with literature is essential. Though Lattimore has replicated Homer's structure, that does not mean that Lattimore's audience will have an equivalent response to Lattimore's translation as Homer's audience had to the *Iliad*. Discussing audience reception in the Classical world is difficult because of our lack of evidence, so I will start with a basic question: "Does Lattimore's audience interpret the Shield of Achilles scene differently than Homer's audience interpreted the Shield of Achilles?"

The answer is yes. We cannot know exactly how Homer's audience encountered the *Iliad*, but we can know some very general things, which is enough

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<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 460

to conclude that a modern reader understands the Shield scene differently than the ancient one. First, the original is oral, not written, so any references that Homer makes in the Shield to other parts of the *Iliad* require the audience to remember other parts of the *Iliad* and then connect the Shield to their memories. Lattimore's audience, meanwhile, can see (physically) one passage and then flip pages and see the passage which it appears to refer to. The notable distinction is not the between difficulty of memorization versus reference, because we cannot know how difficult Homer's audience found memorizing vast poems (they were certainly much better at it than we are), but in the task itself. Homer's Shield refers to something in the memory and mind of the listener, while Lattimore's translation refers to a passage which can be viewed repeatedly. Homer's audience, in effect, actively participates in the intertextual references of the Shield scene because they must remember everything the Shield refers to, while Lattimore's audience can passively see, with our various marginalia and highlighting, the structure of the Shield scene through repeated viewings. Secondly, since it is clear that Homer's composition is based on formulaic repetition, we can reasonably conclude that his audience understood the poem based upon that same formulaic repetition. There are, of course, many differences between the ancient audience's reaction to Homeric poetry and the modern reaction to Lattimore's poem, such as public performance versus private reading, religious meanings, cultural values,, etc., but suffice it to say, an oral text will be understood by its original, oral audience differently than it would be by a literate audience. This leads to the question: how differently do the two audiences experience the text?

I think it is impossible to know, and a discussion would likely be speculation. I can only say now that it appears clear that the Homeric audience understood the text of the *Iliad* differently than a modern audience does. Therefore, since Lattimore replicates the structure of the text, but the audience today understands that structure differently, it does not appear that a reader will experience the text of the Shield passage the same as a Homeric listener would have. If one believes that translation is about giving the new audience the equivalent experience of the original audience, then Lattimore's translation is not a "true" equivalent.

But Lattimore's Shield of Achilles does parallel Homer's Shield of Achilles in composition, if not in the way his audience receives it. It is a notable accomplishment. Lattimore's Shield is deeply useful precisely because it parallels Homer's form without attempting to parallel its reception (which is a risky endeavor). I believe such a parallelism is why scholars so vehemently prefer Lattimore over other translators; if the reader of Lattimore understands Homeric poetics very deeply, they can easily 'read through' Lattimore and see the inner workings of the Ancient Greek. Lattimore's translation works then more like a blueprint or a description of Homer's Shield of Achilles. Lattimore shows his readers all the important scenes and how they connect to other scenes, but he does not invite his reader into the story as Homer does to his Greek audience. Lattimore is less "doing" art, than "showing" art. To avoid sounding too meta-poetic, Lattimore's translation of the Shield of Achilles functions like a diagram of the original poem. Perhaps Lattimore, then, has not 'translated' the Shield of Achilles for a modern audience, but 'reproduced' the Shield, like how a photograph shows a

painting but can never give the viewer the experience of being in front of it. Yet even that, to produce a picture of the *Iliad*, seems extraordinary.

### **Logue and Peterson & O'Hare's Thematic Translations**

Christopher Logue, on the other hand, intends his translation of the Shield to capture the feeling which he believes the reader should experience, regardless of whether the technique Logue uses to achieve that is represented in the Greek. In fact, Logue does not include the ekphrastic scenes on the Shield. Instead, after Patroclus' death Chapter 18 ends, and Chapter 19 begins with the delivery of the armor by Thetis. Although other translators also include the scene, Logue alone makes it speak for the Shield in general, so it is worth special consideration as an account of the Shield passage, rather than just Achilles' arming scene. As Logue has it, Thetis arrives to find

Achilles  
Gripping the body of Patroclus  
Naked and dead against his own,  
While Thetis spoke:  
'My son...'  
His fighters looking on;  
Looking away from it; remembering their own:  
'Grieving will not amend what Heaven has done.  
See what I brought...'  
And as she laid the moonlit armor on the sand  
It chimed...  
And the sound that came from it  
Followed the light that came from it  
Like sighing  
Saying:  
*Made in Heaven.*

And those who had the neck to watch Achilles weep  
Could not look now.  
Nobody looked. They were afraid.

Except Achilles: looked,  
Lifted a piece of it between his hands;

Turned it; tested the weight of it; and then  
Spun the holy tungsten like a star between his knees,  
Slitting his eyes against the flare, some said,  
But others thought the hatred shuttered by his lids  
Made him protect the metal.

His eyes like furnace doors ajar.

When he had got its weight  
And let its industry assuage his grief:  
“I’ll fight,  
He said. Simple as that. ‘I’ll fight.’

And so Troy fell.

Logue does not replicate the complicated symbolic references of the Greek. In fact, nothing about Logue’s translation is similar to the Greek word choice or formulaic structure or general style. On the other hand, Logue’s passage attempts to replicate the function of the Shield: it becomes an emblem of Achilles’ godlike nature, allowing him to achieve undying glory. As I have argued above with regard to Lattimore’s translation, the original Greek *Iliad* also uses the Shield as a symbol of Achilles’ coming death. Logue’s translation has three sections: the presentation of the armor, Achilles’ unique ability to enjoy the armor, and his decision to fight.

Logue begins with a description of the armor being laid out on the sand by Thetis, ending with the phrase “*Made in Heaven*,” which is a play on modern manufactured goods bearing labels like “Made in the USA” or “Made in China.” Stylistically, the phrase bears no resemblance to the original ekphrasis. Functionally, however, the phrase “Made in Heaven” does give the reader the idea of Hephaestus’s divine workmanship. Next, Achilles begins to spin “the holy tungsten like a star between his knees.” The other soldiers, who are lesser men, cannot look at the spectacle. Achilles, who has *menis* like a god, not only looks upon

the armor, but also seems to enjoy being near it. The line “His eyes like furnace doors ajar” reveals not only that Achilles can endure the sight of the armor, but also that he seems to be invigorated by it. Moreover, the simile comparing his eyes to “furnace doors” also recalls the forge of Hephaestus. The brutality of the image, a fire burning inside Achilles, also foreshadows his upcoming *aristeia*, as if he is about to unleash fire and death on those around him. In such a way, the divine armor transmits its divinity to Achilles. Fully prepared and in his splendor, Achilles says “I’ll fight,” and, as if in reply, the narrator states “And so Troy fell.”

Logue’s tripartite structure progressively reveals the thematic meaning of Achilles’ armor. First, the armor is divine, seen in the way that Thetis presents it and the sound that suggests “made in heaven.” Secondly, the way that Achilles is uniquely able to handle his heavenly armaments confers their supernatural status on him. Finally, Achilles, now prepared, can set out on his quest to achieve eternal glory, and thereby meet his death.

The Greek and English differ greatly in style and technique, of course, but both of them make the armor of Achilles into a symbol of his imminent death; so even though Logue is writing his translation in a deeply un-Homeric style, he uses typical modern symbols, foreshadowing, and allusions to achieve the effect that the Shield has in the original.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>43</sup> There is a very minor difference in focus, which is worth noting, but not much more than that. The original Greek focuses entirely on the shield; indirectly, the shield gives some impression of Achilles. In Logue, however, the focus is on how Achilles relates to his armor. The armor is notable only because of how Achilles interacts with it. The difference between the two exists, but can be explained as an

Although Logue is successful, his method has some drawbacks. The technique of a poem is not like a machine, which can be improved or altered to make an identical product faster; changing how the poem creates its message changes the poem. Much could be said about Logue's disregard for the formal features of the *Iliad*. After all, many readers, including myself, would say that understanding and encountering Homeric style is essential to understanding the *Iliad*. Logue, however, shows no interest in finding formulas or epithets in his account of the rage of Achilles.

The more interesting result of Logue's account is the narrowness of his translation. Overall, Logue's Shield is a dark, terrifying one, filled with a fear of the godlike Achilles and the death that Achilles will soon unleash and suffer. Logue, a pacifist deserter in real life, has produced an anti-war account of the *Iliad*. His Shield scene does not glorify the armor or Achilles, but makes them both seem powerful and terrifying. Logue's translation is no "*dulce et decorum est pro patria mori*. ("It is sweet and proper to die for one's country"). " For Logue, Horace's phrase would be what Wilfred Owen famously called "the old lie."

The *Iliad* can certainly be interpreted as an anti-war poem, but pro-war interpretations are also possible.<sup>5</sup> Every translation necessarily "loses something," as the common saying goes, and in Logue's translation of the Shield, the loss is in the varied understandings that the original Greek could sustain. But whereas

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attempt at streamlining or modernizing the text by Logue. The difference is, of course, fairly small.

Lattimore (and Green, to be discussed below) generally attempt to retain the varied possible meanings of the original, Logue has winnowed his translation down to only anti-war readings. If the reader of Logue agrees with his heavily anti-war interpretation of the Shield, then the experience of reading Logue would conform well to what that reader thinks is the correct response to the *Iliad*.

Peterson & O'Hare, like Logue, break with the style of the original Greek in an attempt to express the symbolic greatness of Achilles. Speaking through their Homer, Peterson & O'Hare describe the Shield as:

A shield—the most magnificent shield I've ever seen. Hephaestus begins to fashion an immense orb—a shield as big as a room—with the river of the Ocean circling...he puts the earth, the sky, the oceans, the sun, the moon, all the stars. He hammers out two cities on this shield: in one there is a wedding taking place, a bride is led down a hillock past trees to her nervous groom—a city at peace. The other city is a walled city and outside it a siege is going on—two armies clash by a river. He fashions a field, large with furrows and he shows the horses tilling back and forth and the farmers being refreshed with barge cups of wine and honey—a farmer bringing home his cattle and a lion attacks of the bulls, and back blood pools on the bottom of the shield—a boy playing a lyre—heartbreaking music—a song of the dying day—a circle of boys and girls dancing, with a crowd gathered around, capping, singing, laughing.

This is Achilles' new shield and it gleamed with a, with a beam that it-it-it went so far. It was as if you were-you were, you were far out at sea, you know, a sailor when they have to look out at the shore and try to find their bearings and they look for a light and you have lighthouses now—but then, sometimes, we would have, like a—one guy on a mountain, herding his sheep and he would have a very strong light, you know to try to...keep the sailors, sailors safe. And...and they're way out at sea, and this light beam comes flying out. That's how Achilles' shield looked from a distance. It-it-it just bounced the light back, shot it way out like that.

*(a great wind kicks up, and quickly grows.)*

The passage can be divided into roughly two sections: first, a summary of the individual scenes on the Shield, and second, a comparison between the Shield and ancient lighthouses. The first section is straightforward, describing the world that

the Shield depicts and preserving the metaphorical implications of the Greek original—the Shield describes the world Achilles does not experience and will not experience because he is fated to die.

The second part of their description takes a new approach, comparing the Shield to a light that serves to “keep sailors, sailors safe” and help them “get their bearings.” Since the purpose of a lighthouse is to warn sailors of impending danger like cliffs or coral reefs, the Shield of Achilles warns others that its owner poses terrible danger that must be avoided. The Shield again becomes an emblem of Achilles’ superhuman nature, a symbol visible to men across the battlefield.

Peterson & O’Hare’s methodology is similar to Logue’s. They change the style and technique of the original to create a theme similar to that of the original. However, unlike Logue, Peterson & O’Hare’s new translation introduces an extended simile, are extremely common in the *Iliad*. They have merely transposed that technique to the Shield scene. In effect, they’ve changed the technique of the Shield scene, but they’ve changed it to something which is very Homeric.

### **Green’s Ekphrasis**

Each translator so far has sought to replicate the structure (Lattimore) or effect (Logue, Peterson & O’Hare) of the Shield scene. Unlike the other translators, Peter Green alone attempts to replicate the effect of the original ekphrasis. As Green writes in his Foreword, his general goal in his translation is to be “as close as possible, in every respect [to] metre, rhythm, formulaic phrases, style, and vocabulary...[and] that what I have written should be naturally

declaimable.”<sup>44</sup> Green’s attempt to preserve the content of the ekphrasis while also allowing it to be “naturally declaimable” suggests that he seeks a middle road between Lattimore and Logue: a translation that stays close to the Greek ekphrasis was but is easy enough for a modern audience to understand and speak.

First, unlike Lattimore, Green is not concerned with the lack of repeated formulaic phrases in the passage. Instead, he simply translates the Shield passage with formulaic phrases from the referent passages. For example, in the city at war, Green writes that the besieging army asks whether they should “share out between both sides all the wealth that this lovely city contained?”<sup>45</sup> In Book 22, Hector asks himself if he should suggest to Achilles to “share out with the Achaians all the wealth that this city contains?”<sup>46</sup> Green has, in his translation, written the formulaic phrases “share out” and “all the wealth that this...city contains” in both lines. The two lines in Greek, however, are quite different:

Line 18.511-2: *ē andīxa panta dasasthai / ktēsīn osēn ptoliethron epēraton entos eergen.*

Line 22.117-8: *hama d’amphis Achaiōis / all’ apodassesthai, hos ate ptolis hēde kekeuthe.*

Formulaic repetition also occurs in the rest of the war section, the sections about the farming estate, and the dancing scene. Green links the Shield passages which are thematically similar by using similar formulaic language. He may have done this because he is attempting to be “naturally declaimable” and has found that using stock phrases allows him to write certain lines within his pseudo-hexameter verse

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<sup>44</sup> Green 2015, 18

<sup>45</sup> Green 2015, 352

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 403

very easily. Perhaps though, Green, like Logue and Peterson & O'Hare, is simply uninterested in perfectly replicating the absence of formulaic phrases in the original.

Instead, Green focuses on paralleling the ekphrasis of the Greek. As Andrew Becker writes, ekphrasis in the Shield of Achilles is a technique which enables the poet to develop a "*mise en abîme*, 'a miniature replica of a text embedded within that text; a textual part re-duplicating, reflecting, or mirroring (one or more than one aspect of) the textual whole'...in ekphrasis not only does the bard become one of us, an audience, but also the description itself, metonymically, becomes a model for the poem."<sup>47</sup> What Becker argues is that the technique of ekphrasis creates a relationship between an (imagined) physical object and a poetic, artistic description of that object. In such a way, the technique of ekphrasis makes the physical object into more than just an object: it makes it into a symbol. Likewise, the poem, instead of just being words or expressions, is given gravitas and weight by its relationship to something physical. Becker outlines the two core elements of Greek ekphrasis: first, a description of the object as an object, seen in details like what it is made out of or how it is made; secondly, a description of experiencing the object, seen in movement and other impossible expressions, i.e. describing a frieze of an eagle by the noise it makes while flying.<sup>48</sup> Other translators haphazardly match this description of ekphrasis, but only Peter Green clearly

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<sup>47</sup> Becker 1995, 4-5

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*

attempts to model his translation of ekphrasis on Greek ekphrasis.

Peter Green achieves his effect by joining together description and movement, principally through imperfect verb forms and highly emotive descriptive phrases. For example, in the opening description, Hephaestus “fashioned the earth, the sea, and the heavens, / the unwearying sun, the moon on its increase to full.” The objects themselves are described, fulfilling the first element of ekphrasis; but the moon, instead of being stagnant, is “on its increase to full.” Though there are no verbs in the phrase “on its increase to full,” the motion described is a continuous imperfect: it is not a completed action, like a perfect (“the moon has increased”), nor is it being described as an action in full, like a simple past or aorist (“the moon increased”), nor is it being described as beginning, like an inchoative imperfect (“the moon began/started to increase”). Rather, it describes a continuous action (“was increasing”) which has been captured by Hephaestus’ craft. Three other continuous imperfects occur in quick succession in the City at Peace scene: “in the first, there were marriages and banquets, with brides *being led* from their quarters by flaring torchlight through the city...People *were backing* both sides, cheering one or the other, while heralds held them back, and the elders *were sitting* on polished seats of stone” [emphasis added].<sup>49</sup> All these verb forms are imperfects which show an action in motion. Therefore, Green’s translation fulfills the second requirement of ekphrasis in the early scenes of the Shield of Achilles: though static objects are described, Green gives the impression of movement.

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<sup>49</sup> Green 2015, 352

Green's translation makes his reader imagine not only a Shield, impossibly ornate, but a Shield in motion: because of the continuous repetition of the imperfect verb forms, Green's reader can see brides moving across the Shield, or people loudly cheering, or elders sitting down on stone. Green has made a Shield of many moving parts. It is ancient ekphrasis in modern English.<sup>50</sup>

## Conclusions

I have covered four radically different approaches to the Shield of Achilles. Lattimore gives the most straightforward translation, attempting to show the structure of the Shield scene. Specifically, he shows each of the symbolic connections the Shield makes with other passages throughout the *Iliad*, without fashioning any new formulaic connections which are not in the original. By contrast, Logue and Peterson & O'Hare translate their Shield scene with an eye towards how their audience will accept it. Their translations are pointed interpretations of the original Shield scene, and, as a consequence, they share nearly none of the stylistic features of the original. Green alone goes a different

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<sup>50</sup> For comparison, the following are the same lines as quoted above in Lattimore's translation:

18.483: "He made the earth upon it, and the sky, and the sea's water, / and the tireless sun, and the moon beginning to wax into her fullness."

18.491ff: "There were marriages in one, and festivals. / They led the brides along the city from their maiden chambers / under the flaring of torches....

People were speaking up on either side, to help both men. But the heralds kept the people in hand, as meanwhile the elders / began to sit in session on benches of polished stone."

Lattimore prefers to use simple past tenses ('led') and inchoative imperfects ("kept the people in hand" "began to sit"), rather than the continuous imperfects of Green.

route and remakes the technique of the Shield scene, ekphrasis, uniting descriptions of static objects with movement.

So far, I believe I have shown that the techniques the translators use all “bring out” some aspect of the original text. None of the four translations shown are incorrect in their translations. Lattimore’s text is an exact diagram, Logue’s is filled with drama and tension, Peterson & O’Hare’s makes Achilles fearful, and Green’s is practical musical in his ekphrasis. All of those feelings can be convincingly shown to be in the original *Iliad*. I hope to have shown here, leading towards a larger point in my next chapter, the notion that these translations all analyze the text in a certain way, and therefore replicate certain aspects of it.

## Death and Prophecy; Translation as Analysis

To himself everyone is immortal; he may know that he is going to die, but he can never know that he is dead.

—**Samuel Butler**

I tell you in truth: All men are prophets or else God does not exist.

—**Jean-Paul Sartre**

In Book 16, Patroclus, after killing Sarpedon, is slain by Hector. Hector kills Patroclus. Achilles, enraged at the death of his beloved comrade (see the next chapter for their relationship), promises in Book 19 to avenge Patroclus and to kill Hector. In Book 22, Achilles succeeds in his goal, killing Hector outside the Trojan walls. Finally, though the *Iliad* does not directly depict it, Achilles is killed with a poisoned arrow by Paris in revenge for Hector's death and the attempted desecration of Hector's body. Therefore, the death of Patroclus at the hands of Hector creates a narrative arc which ends with Paris killing Achilles. When Hector kills Patroclus, he effectively guarantees his own death at Achilles' hands; equally, when Achilles kills Hector, he ensures his death because of Paris. The imagery of the poem confirms that the heroes are, in a sense, killing themselves as they kill their opponents. When Achilles fights Hector in Book 22, Hector is wearing Achilles' old set of armor, "the bronze armor, the fair armor which he had stripped from mighty Patroclus when he slew him (22.322ff)." The imagery, then, is of Achilles fighting a pseudo-Achilles. The doubling of Achilles encourages the listener of the poem to see that when slaying Hector, Achilles is killing himself. Although the battle between Achilles and Hector is the only scene in the *Iliad* to feature doubling imagery in armor, the same can be said of each hero from

Patroclus on. In Weil's terminology, the application of force leads towards the equal application of force.<sup>51</sup>

To reduce the last six books of the *Iliad* to some sort of narrative of the adage “an eye for an eye makes the whole world blind” would be incorrect. The interest of the last six books is not just *that* the heroes confront their own mortality (although they all inevitably do), but *how* they confront mortality. There are two specific scenes that illustrate Hector's and Achilles' outlook on death: Book 16.

843-861, the death of Patroclus, and Book 22. 356-366, the death of Hector.

### Book 16, 843-861:

τὸν δ' ὀλιγοδρανέων προσέφησ' Πατρόκλεες ἵππευ:  
 ἤδη νῦν Ἔκτορ μεγάλ' εὖχεο: σοὶ γὰρ ἔδωκε  
 νίκην Ζεὺς Κρονίδης καὶ Ἀπόλλων, οἳ με δάμασσαν 845  
 ῥηιδίως: αὐτοὶ γὰρ ἀπ' ὤμων τεύχε' ἔλοντο.  
 τοιοῦτοι δ' εἴ πέρ μοι ἐείκοσιν ἀντεβόλησαν,  
 πάντες κ' αὐτόθ' ὄλοντο ἐμῶ ὑπὸ δουρὶ δαμέντες.  
 ἀλλὰ με μοῖρ' ὀλοῆ καὶ Λητοῦς ἔκτανεν υἱός,  
 ἀνδρῶν δ' Εὐφορβος: σὺ δέ με τρίτος ἐξαναρίζεις. 850  
 ἄλλο δέ τοι ἐρέω, σὺ δ' ἐνὶ φρεσὶ βάλλεο σῆσιν:  
 οὐ θην οὐδ' αὐτὸς δηρὸν βέη, ἀλλὰ τοι ἤδη  
 ἄγχι παρέστηκεν θάνατος καὶ μοῖρα κραταιή  
 χερσὶ δαμέντ' Ἀχιλῆος ἀμόμονος Αἰακίδαο.

ὥς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε: 855  
 ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων παταμένη Ἄϊδος δὲ βεβήκει  
 ὄν πότμον γοόωσα λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἥβην.  
 τὸν καὶ τεθνηῶτα προσηύδα φαίδιμος Ἔκτωρ:  
 Πατρόκλεις τί νύ μοι μαντεύεται αἰπὺν ὄλεθρον;  
 τίς δ' οἶδ' εἴ κ' Ἀχιλεὺς Θετίδος παῖς ἠὲ κόμοιο 860  
 φθίῃ ἐμῶ ὑπὸ δουρὶ τυπεῖς ἀπὸ θυμὸν ὀλέσσαι;

Then you answered him, Patroclus, horseman, your strength spent,  
 'For now, Hector, boast mightily; for Zeus, the son of Cronos,

<sup>51</sup> Weil 2005, 3

And Apollo, have granted victory to you, they who defeated me 845  
 Easily; for they took the armor off my shoulders.  
 But if twenty men like you had faced me,  
 All would have died, defeated by my spear.  
 But destructive fate and the son of Leto slew me,  
 And of men, Euphorbus, but you slay me as the third. 850  
 And another thing I will tell you,  
 And do you lay it to heart: surely you  
 Shall not yourself be long in life,  
 But even now does death stand hard by you and irresistible fate,  
 Slain by the hand of Achilles, the incomparable grandson of Aeacus.'

Thus now having spoken, the end of death seized him: 855  
 But his soul fled from his limbs, flying to Hades,  
 His soul which bewailed its fate, leaving manliness and youth.  
 And Hector, glorious, spoke to him, even in death:  
 Patroclus, why do you now prophesy harsh destruction to me?  
 Who knows but that even Achilles, son of fair-haired Thetis, 860  
 May first be struck by my spear and lose his life?"

**Book 22, 356-367:**

τὸν δὲ καταθήσκων προσέφη κορυθαίολος Ἔκτωρ: 356  
 ἦ σ' εὖ γινώσκων προτιόσσομαι, οὐδ' ἄρ' ἐμελλον  
 πείσειν: ἦ γὰρ σοί γε σιδήρεος ἐν φρεσὶ θυμός.  
 φράζεο νῦν, μή τοί τι θεῶν μήνιμα γένωμαι  
 ἥματι τῷ ὅτε κέν σε Πάρις καὶ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων 360  
 ἐσθλὸν ἐόντ' ὀλέσωσιν ἐνὶ Σκαίῃσι πύλῃσιν.

ὥς ἄρα μιν εἰπόντα τέλος θανάτοιο κάλυψε,  
 ψυχὴ δ' ἐκ ῥεθέων παταμένη Ἄϊδος δὲ βεβήκει  
 ὃν πότμον γοόωσα λιποῦσ' ἀνδροτῆτα καὶ ἦβην.  
 τὸν καὶ τεθνηῶτα προσηύδα δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς: 365  
 τέθναθι: κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι ὀππότε κεν δῆ  
 Ζεὺς ἐθέλῃ τελέσαι ἠδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι.

But, dying, Hector of the flashing helmet said to him: 356  
 'You, I know well and I see what will be, nor was I destined  
 To persuade you; for the heart in your breast is iron.  
 But think now, lest I become a cause of the gods' wrath against you  
 On the day when Paris and Phoebus Apollo 360  
 Slay you, though you are valiant, before the Scaean gates.'

Thus now having spoken, the end of death seized him;  
 But his soul fled from his limbs, flying to Hades,  
 His soul which bewailed its fate, leaving manliness and youth.  
 And noble Achilles, spoke to him, even in death: 365  
 'Die now; I will accept my fate, when Zeus or the other

Immortal gods wish to bring it to pass.<sup>52</sup>

In both passages, Patroclus and Hector, dying, prophesy the deaths of their killers, and then their killers reply to their corpses. The prophecies that Patroclus and Hector deliver share only one formulaic phrase.<sup>53</sup> However, both passages do refer to fate. Patroclus says that death and “*moira kratairē (irresistible fate)*” press on Hector, while Hector says that he was not “*emellon (destined)*” to persuade Achilles.<sup>54</sup> Here, *emellon* means “destined” rather than “intended” since Hector obviously did “intend” to persuade Achilles but was unable to do so. Discussion of fate is hardly unique to these two passages in the *Iliad*, however, so the similarities between the two passages are primarily in their subject matter: prophecies given immediately before death.

The second stanzas, by contrast, are deeply formulaic in both passages. In fact lines 16.855-858 and 22.362-365 are essentially identical. The two passages can

<sup>52</sup> Both translations by me. As before, I provide these sample translations only for ease of reading for any readers who do not speak Greek.

<sup>53</sup> They do share introductory formulaic phrases:

Line 16.843: τὸν δ' ὀλιγοδρανέων προσέφη Πατρόκλεες ἴπευδ

Line 22.356: τὸν δὲ καταθνήσκων προσέφη κορυθαίολος Ἔκτωρ

However, the line-type: *ton* [nominative or accusative phrase, ~2 feet in length] *prosephē(s)* [nominative phrase, ~2.5 feet in length], appears some 100 times in the *Iliad*.

<sup>54</sup> “To persuade Achilles” is a reference either to the fact that Hector could not persuade Achilles to accept a truce between Troy and the Achaean forces (22.90-130) or to agree not to desecrate each other’s corpses (22.250-272). Alternatively, *peisein* could be translated as “to prevail,” so that Hector actually means that he was not destined to defeat Achilles in battle. Since Hector has just asked that Achilles give back his body to the Trojans, *peisein* as “to persuade to respect each other’s bodies” seems the most defensible interpretation.

be thought of as referential to each other or referential to a shared, separate standard line formula. The first possibility, that the two passages refer to each other, works in the following way: hearing these first four lines from Book 16 (or Book 22), the audience may remember some past performance of Book 22 (or Book 16), and realizes that the killer is about to respond in a way that is formulaically similar to the other passage to which it refers. In effect, the repetition of the formulaic phrase puts these two passages in apposition to each other. The second possibility, which I consider more likely, is that these three lines would have already primed the audience to expect a killer's response which reveals something about the killer himself. In such a way, lines 16.855-857 and 22.362-364 work as a sort of signal phrase to the audience, preparing them to consider the following speech in a specific way. Since Hector's and Achilles' speeches are both introduced in such a way, they are innately comparable since they are similar "types" of speeches, but in this interpretation the formulaic phrases are not allusions to each other.<sup>55</sup>

Of course, under either model, the passages form an implicit comparison between the two men who make the speeches. Hector, having killed Patroclus, is told that he will be slain by Achilles, "the incomparable grandson of Aeacus"

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<sup>55</sup> An example in English of these two kinds of models working can be useful. Were I beginning a novel with the sentence "Call me Jonathan," I would certainly be alluding to *Moby Dick*. On the other hand, were I to begin my novel with the phrase "once upon a time," I would not be making a specific reference (even though "once upon a time" is frequently used by Hans Christian Anderson), but instead I would be using practiced, coded language to signify the beginning of a fairy tale. The former is my first model; the latter is my second.

(16.856). The speech of Patroclus was understood, like most prophecy in the *Iliad*, such as the prophecies of Calchas, to be an accurate prediction, rather than subjective hope on the part of Patroclus. Hector's response, however, reveals that Hector does not agree with Patroclus' vision of the future: "Who knows but that even Achilles, son of fair-haired Thetis, / May first be struck by my spear and lose his life? (16.862-3)" Hector thinks, mistakenly, that he might be able to kill Achilles. Given how Achilles has been described in the previous 16 books, the audience likely finds Hector's confidence in himself to be misplaced. But Hector goes further than just doubting Achilles' fighting ability: he replaces Achilles' epithet of *amumonos Aiakiḗdao* ("incomparable grandson of Aeacus") with *Thetiḗdos pais ēukomoio* ("child of fair-haired Thetis"); by changing Achilles' lineage from the patrilineal to the matrilineal, Hector subtly belittles Achilles. Instead of being the grandson of the powerful king Aeacus, Achilles is named as the son of a mother with very nice hair. In effect, then, Hector not only denies what is fated to happen, but he also seems to disparage Achilles.

On the other hand, Achilles accepts his fate with all the grace that twenty-two books of character development can give him. After mortally wounding Hector and being told that he will be killed by Paris and Apollo, Achilles simply says "Die now; I will accept my fate, when Zeus or the other / Immortal gods wish to bring it to pass." (22.366) His single word imperative "*tethnathi*" ("Die now") is abrupt and dismissive and typical. Part of Achilles' curtness stems from his rage over Hector's role in the death of Patroclus, but Achilles, who has bested Hector, also treats him as a lesser hero than himself. So with a simple command, Achilles orders Hector to die, and Hector *does* die. It is significant, however, that Achilles immediately goes

on to say that he himself will be fully willing to die whenever “Zeus or the other / Immortal gods wish to bring it to pass.” So although Achilles can kill Hector, Achilles does not have the pride to think that he is above the will of the gods. Achilles, then, is revealing himself to be the perfect Homeric Hero. He is a killer of men, efficient and better than anyone else, which confirms his status as “Best of the Achaeans.” That power to kill easily puts Achilles on a semi-divine level (much like the Shield in Chapter 3) but, crucially, Achilles never presumes himself to be equal to or better than the gods. He is, in his grandiosity, still humble before them.

The translations of these passages all must interact with these concerns:

	Lattimore	Green	Peterson & O'Hare
<b>Book 16</b>	<p>And now, dying, you answered him, O rider Patroklos: "Now is your time for big words, Hektor. Yours is the victory giving by Kronos' son, Zeus, and Apollo, who have subdued me easily, since they themselves stripped the arms from my shoulders. Even though twenty such as you had come in against me, They would all have been broken beneath my spear, and have perished. No, deadly destiny, with the son of Leto, has killed me, And of men, it was Euphorbos; you are only my third slayer. And put away in your heart this other thing that I tell you.</p> <p>You yourself are not one who shall live long, but now already Death and powerful destiny are standing beside you, To go down under the hands of Aiakos' great son, Achilleus."</p> <p>He spoke and as he spoke the end of death closed in upon him,</p>	<p>Then, strength ebbing, you answered him, horseman Patroklos: "Go on, boast big while you can! You were handed this triumph by Apollo and Zeus, son of Kronos, who overwhelmed me easily: they themselves removed the gear from my shoulders.</p> <p>If twenty men such as you had confronted me, all Would have perished here, quelled by my spear! Oh no, it was Deadly fate and the son of Leto that slew me, and of mortals Euphorbos: you're only the third hand in my killing. And another thing I'll tell you, and you lay it to heart:</p> <p>You yourself are not for a long life: now already Death's moved in close beside you, your all-mastering fate To be slain at the hands of Achilles, Aiakos's peerless grandson."</p> <p>When he'd spoken thus, death's end enshrouded him,</p>	<p><b>Poet:</b> And then Patroclus— holding his body together with his hands—Patroclus curses Hector.</p> <p><b>Patroclus:</b> ...you won't live long yourself, I swear. Already I see them looking up beside you—death And the strong force of fate, to bring you down—</p> <p><b>Poet</b> (<i>a simple funeral ritual</i>). Death cut him short. The end closed in around him.</p>

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And the soul  
fluttering free of his  
limbs went down  
into death's house  
mourning her  
destiny leaving  
youth and manhood  
behind her.

Now though he was  
a dead man glorious  
Hektor spoke to  
him:

Patroklos, what is  
this prophecy of my  
headlong  
destruction?

Who knows if even  
Achilleus, son of  
lovely-haired Thetis,  
Might before this be  
struck by my spear,  
and his own life  
perish?"

And the soul fled from  
his limbs, fluttered  
down to Hades  
Bewailing its fate,  
youth and manhood all  
abandoned.

Yet still Hektor  
harangued him, dead  
though he was:  
Patroklos, why do you  
prophecy sheer  
destruction for me?

Who knows if perhaps  
Achilles, fair haired  
Thetis' son,  
May, struck by my  
spear, lose his life  
before that happens?

Flying free of his limbs  
His soul went winging  
down to the House of  
Death.

But Hector can't stop  
yelling at Patroclus, even  
though he's dead:

**Hector** You think you  
know *my fate*?? Why should  
I fear Death? No. Death is  
on *my* side. He is *my brother*.  
And together we were  
devastate you, we will  
murder all Greeks!

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<b>Book 22</b>	<p>Then, dying, Hektor of the shining helmet spoke to him:          “I know you well as I look upon you; I know that I could not persuade you, since indeed in your breast is a heart of iron.          Be careful now; for I might be made into the gods’ curse upon you, on that day when Paris and Phoibos Apollo destroy you in the Skaian gates, for all your valor.”</p> <p>He spoke and as he spoke the end of death closed in upon him, and the soul fluttering free of the limbs went down into Death’s house Mourning her destiny, leaving youth and manhood behind her.</p> <p>Now though he was a dead man brilliant Achilles spoke to him:          “Die: and I will take my own death hat whatever time Zeus and the rest of the immortals choose to accomplish it.”</p>	<p>Then, dying, bright-helmeted Hektor said to him:          “I know you too well, I foresee my fate: I could never Persuade you. Truly the heart in your breast is of iron. Think on this, then: it may be I who provoke the gods’ wrath Against you, that day when Paris and Phoibos Apollo Kill you, for all your valor, before the Skaian Gates.”</p> <p>When he’d spoken thus, death’s end enshrouded him, And the soul fled from his limbs fluttered down to Hades, Bemoaning its fate, youth and manhood all abandoned.</p> <p>Yet noble Achilles still harangued him, even when dead:          “Lie there, corpse! My own fate I’ll accept whenever Zeus may determine it—he, and the other immortal gods.”</p>	<p><b>Hector:</b>          I know you well—I see my fate before me.</p> <p>Iron inside your chest, that heart of yours.          But now beware, or my curse will draw god’s wrath Upon your head, that day when Paris and Lord Apollo—          For all your fighting heart—destroy you at the Scaean Gates!</p> <p><i>Poet (Performing a brief ritual.)</i>          Death cut him short. The end closed in around him. Flying free of his limbs His soul went winging down to the House of Death.</p> <p><i>Achilles (Doing a kind of victory dance.)</i>          Now,          Come, you sons of Achaea, raise a song of triumph! Down to the ships we march and bear this corpse on high—          We have won ourselves great glory. We have brought Magnificent Hector down, that man the Trojans Glorified in their city like a god!</p>
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## Words Do Things

Although the translations have numerous differences in detail, they are remarkably similar over all. Many phrases come out nearly the same in all three: for example, Lattimore translates “indeed in your breast is a heart of iron,” Green writes “Truly the heart in your breast is of iron,” and Peterson & O’Hare put “Iron inside your chest, that heart of yours.” In fact, the lines that do appear substantially different have very similar functions: Green and Lattimore say Patroclus “answered” Hector, while Peterson & O’Hare’s Patroclus alone “curses” Hector. Even here, the difference seems, at best, minor. Since Patroclus predicts Hector’s doom, “curse” hardly seems to be out of place as an introductory verb. In that same line, Lattimore’s Patroclus is “dying,” Green’s has his “strength ebbing,” and Peterson & O’Hare’s is “holding his body together with his hands.” All of those are certainly different, especially how much more vivid “holding his body together with his hands” is than the other two translations, but all three translations *do* the same thing: they make it clear that Patroclus is dying and that these will be his last words.

Within Patroclus’ speech, Green and Lattimore differ on the modality of his conditional sentence in 16.847:<sup>5657</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> Peterson & O’Hare do not translate that part of the speech; generally, since they are writing a play, the difference is less for literary merit than for time purposes.

<sup>57</sup> The sentence can be pared down to the conditional “if *antebolēsan*, then *olonto*.” The verb in the protasis *antebolēsan* is an active aorist subjunctive third-person plural of *antiboleō*, while that in the apodosis *olonto* is a middle aorist indicative third-person plural of *ollumi*: the sentence pattern appears to be a mix of a past general in the protasis and a past contra-factual in the apodosis

*toioutoi d'ei per moi eeikosin anteboēsan, / pantes k'autoth' olunto emō hypo dourī damentes.*  
 But if twenty men like you had faced me / All would have died, defeated by my  
 spear.

In his typical fashion, Lattimore translates the text exactly as it appears “Even though twenty such as you had come in against me, / They would all have been broken beneath my spear, and have perished,” where the first line is an aorist past general, while the second line is a past contra-factual. Though Lattimore’s English features an unusual pairing of past general and past contra-factual clauses, it is certainly properly reflective of the Greek.<sup>58</sup> Green, meanwhile, turns the entire line into a past contra-factual (“If twenty men such as you had confronted me, all would have perished here, quelled by my spear!”). The difference between the two is in the modality of the protasis (“even though...had come” vs. “if...had confronted”), but whether that difference actually affects the reading of the passage seems unlikely for any reader who is not a grammarian. Both translations present to the reader the idea that if Patroclus had been confronted with twenty men as good as Hector, he would have killed them all with his spear.

There are other slight differences between the translations. For example, Achilles’ single word command to Hector “*tethnathi*” has been rendered by Lattimore as “Die,” by Green as “Lie there, corpse!” and by Peterson & O’Hare only as a stage direction, “*Doing a kind of victory dance.*” All three are different, of course, but express the same idea: Achilles is greater than Hector, Achilles is glad

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<sup>58</sup> A more typical English example of this mixed clause structure is the following: “Even though it was raining, I would have visited the store,” as opposed to a purely past contra-factual “If it had been raining, the store would have been visited.”

that Hector is dead, Achilles wants Hector to stop talking and simply be dead, and by making such a command, Achilles makes himself nearly a god, commanding death to another. Functionally, all these translations accomplish their goal, but in slightly different ways. “Lie there, corpse!” and “Die,” are practically intralingual<sup>59</sup> translations of each other. Peterson & O’Hare’s stage direction, taken in the context of a performance, presents an effect equivalent to Lattimore and Green’s translations: by dancing Achilles seems happy that Hector has died, pleased that he has defeated Hector, whose corpse he insultingly dances on.

For the four formulaic repeated lines (16.855-858 and 22.362-365) there is very little difference in the translations. They use almost the same syntax but with slightly different word choice. The first line is rendered by Lattimore as “He spoke and as he spoke, the end of death closed in on him,” by Green as “When he spoke thus, death’s end enshrouded him,” and by Peterson & O’Hare as “Death cut him short. The end closed in around him.” The three translations are very similar in English, and the differences, such as Peterson & O’Hare’s conversion of the line into two sentences or Green’s use of “enshrouded,” a more poetic term, seem unlikely to produce a difference in the reader’s reception of the work. All three translators use the formulaic lines the same way: they repeat the same words nearly verbatim for Patroclus’ death and Hector’s death. In terms of the two types of models translators could use to understand the repeated formulaic phrasing, all

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<sup>59</sup> Intralingual translation: a translation in the same language. Paraphrasing or summarizing are two examples of intralingual translation. See Jacobson 2000.

three decisively utilize the first, comparative model. There is no way for the audience of Lattimore's, Green's, or Peterson & O'Hare's translations to realize *on sight* (which is what the second model demands) that a great hero has died and that his killer is about to speak. The formulaic phrases in all three translations work only in reference to each other, and, therefore, are allusions to each other.

Why are the translators varying in individual words but not in the way they use those words? To rephrase so that I do not spend the next few pages guessing at Richmond Lattimore's thoughts, are there any features of the Greek text itself which encourage certain words or phrases to be used the same way by the translators but allow for different translations of the actual words?

If the answer to why the translations are so similar is not in the English language, it must be in the Greek text. I will begin with a very basic notion. Words do things in sentences and in literature, and they frequently do multiple things. What they do, I will refer to as their "function." Words always have grammatical function; for example, in the previous sentence, "have" is a verb which functions to define what things "words" possess. Words also have literary function, however. For example, in the first line of the *Iliad*, *mēnis* functions as a marker to the audience of what the theme of the poem is. If a *definition* is the answer to the question "what does a word mean?" then a *function* is the answer to the question "what does a word do?" In these passages, I propose that the Greek formulaic phrases are providing a "backbone" of sorts that the translators are working off. Specifically, translators are replicating most of the functions of the Greek formulaic phrases. The functions which translators are all replicating, and this is why their translations all sound so similar, are those words which have grammatical or

narratological functions. To speak more clearly, words which govern the grammar or the narrative of the passage have that function translated. However, translators do not always agree on the literal (“what does a word mean?”) translation of the formulaic phrases, so we see minor differences in the literal words used in their texts, even if those words all do the same thing in all three translations.

Translators, in seeking to make an equivalent of the *Iliad*, more easily replicate the function of words than their literal meanings. For example, *ekho* means “to have,” and in a simple Greek sentence, like *Omeros ekhei ton biblion*, (“Homer has the book”) every translator will use a word in place of *ekhei* to show what *Omeros* owns. However, they could use “possess,” “has,” “controls,” “governs,” “grips,” etc. The literal meanings of words are, in translation, separated from the function they possess; a translator seeks to replicate the function *and* the meaning of a word, but, since Greek and English do not have easily interchangeable lexicons (the two languages divide the world differently), translators are frequently confronted with Greek words for which there are English words with equivalent function (English words which do the same thing) but no English words with exact equivalent meanings (English words which mean the same thing). The original writer, however, cannot see function and meaning as separate entities. When I write *Omeros ekhei ton biblion*, I choose to use the word *ekhei* because of its literal meaning and function, but, in composing, the meaning and the function of the word *ekhei* come together in the one word, *ekhei*. I cannot choose a word which means “to have,” or some variation thereof, which does not also have the function of a word which means “to have.”

In such a way, translation can be compared to rebuilding a house. Certain structures in the house, like electrical wiring, plumbing, or load-bearing walls would all need to go in the same location as in the original house, not just because one is attempting to rebuild a house, but because those objects *do* something in the house. A load-bearing wall, for example, must be in the right place, otherwise the house could collapse. That wall could be pink, blue, or decked in paintings, but its function, bearing the weight of the house, *must* be replicated. The same process, I argue, is happening here in translations of the *Iliad*.

### Words Functioning in the *Iliad*

Examples are sorely needed to show how translations analyze the function of their originals. Line 16.843 suffices for an example:

*ton d'oligodraneōn prosephēs Patroklees hippeu.*

Then you answered him, Patroclus, horseman, your strength spent

The first formula is *oligodraneōn*, meaning “lacking in strength” or “weakened,” but connoting “dying.” It appears three times in the *Iliad*, each time reflecting the final speech of a dying character.<sup>60</sup> Translators attempt to replicate it as a marker of death, so Lattimore translates “dying”; Green, “strength ebbing”; and Peterson & O’Hare, “holding his body together with his hands.” The translations differ in the exact words they use, and in fact, those different words carry different denotations, but each one functions as a marker for Patroclus’ impending death. *Oligodraneōn* covers all three of the translations relatively well, but

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<sup>60</sup> 15.246; 16.843; 22.337

serves only the one function which all three translations replicate. Equally, *prosephēs* functions grammatically to introduce the upcoming speech, so when Lattimore and Green write “answer” and Peterson & O’Hare write “curse,” they are both replicating the same grammatical function of a word which introduces a speech, but they differ on the literal level. They are all replicating the “load-bearing” of the load-bearing wall, but their walls are all different colors.

*Hippeu*, (“horseman”) however, shows what happens when narrative or grammatical functions are not present: Lattimore and Green, as the most word-for-word and line-for-line translators, give their own interpretation of the epithet (“rider,” Lattimore; “horseman,” Green), but Peterson & O’Hare do not translate it at all. Since *hippeu* functions only as a decorative and metrical marker, Peterson & O’Hare can choose to not translate it without affecting the narrative of their passage (unlike *oligodraneōn*) or the grammar of their passage (unlike *prosephēs*).<sup>61</sup> Since it is no longer as essential to translate for its function, the translations begin to differ. The same pattern plays out in the longest formula in the passages: 16.855-857 and 22.362-364. The function of the lines works the same for each translator, as a marker that the speaker is dying and that the killer is about to speak. In doing so, it links the deaths of Patroclus and Hector to each other, even six books apart. All three translators replicate that function by repeating 16.855-7 in 22.362-364

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<sup>61</sup> *Hippeu*’s thematic function is that it establishes Patroclus as a rider of horses, and specifically links him to the horse-races which are so central to his funeral games. In such a way, calling him *hippeu* at this point may be foreshadowing of his upcoming funeral. But the primary function of *hippeu* appears metrical: the Poet needed a final spondee and *hippeu* both made sense and was easy to use.

identically. This formula especially shows the discontinuity between literal meaning and function: the formulaic phrases in lines 16.855-857 and 22.362-364 achieve their function by repetition in the translated texts.<sup>62</sup>

In such a way, translation tells the reader a great deal about the original by separating how what words *do* from what words *mean*. The only other way to understand how the Greek passages work is by analyzing them in scholarly fashion. Yet, that is exactly what translation is doing. In fact, translation, at this abstract level, essentially *is* analysis. Discovering what words do (and going beyond words: what lines, stanzas, books, etc., do) is the exact thing which analysis, and translation, reveal. Taken a step further, and this is a step beyond the bounds of my thesis, I would be willing to say the opposite as well: analysis *is* translation. The two cognitive processes are deeply interwoven—the only difference is that if one does it across languages, it is called translation. I see no reason to not think of Milman Parry as a wonderful translator of Homeric verse, since he brought its meaning and art across the ages, though he never wrote a single line.

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<sup>62</sup> The decision by the translators to use repetition to achieve the function of the formulaic phrases corresponds to the first model, which I introduced earlier in this chapter, of how the formulaic phrase functions.

## Achilles and Patroclus: Creating Sexuality

I have almost completed a long novel, but it is unpublishable until my death and England's.

—**E.M. Forster**

Vienna was a city with no exit, a city that banished you and then didn't allow you to leave.

—**Ruth Kluger**

There is likely no part of the *Iliad* so vastly reinterpreted and revisited throughout the ages as the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. Their relationship has been variously interpreted as romantic, pederastic, militaristic, feudal, or platonic. In general, the various interpretations of their relationship can be correlated to the type of male-male relationships which have been most prized or rewarded at the time of the interpretation. The translations which I have been looking at reflect many possible interpretations of the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus, but since they are only from the last half-century, the five translations only reflect a small part of the long continuum of understandings of Achilles and Patroclus. First, I will review the various interpretations of their relationship from Classical Athens, early modern Europe, and contemporary culture. Stanley Fish's model of the interpretative community provides the best guide to explaining the existence of so many interpretations. After re-applying that model back onto the various cultural explored, I will discuss how translators approach Achilles and Patroclus.

### **Ancient Greek Pederasty, and Achilles and Patroclus**

Classical Athens viewed the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus as primarily pederastic. Pederastic relationships in Athens were, in general terms, relationships between older men, called *erastes*, and younger men, *eromenos*, in

which the *erastes* gave the *eromenos* status, honor, knowledge, or tutelage, while the *eromenos* gave the *erastes* some form of sexual pleasure. The relationship, in a sense, became a highly refined gift-exchange system.<sup>63</sup> The *erastes* pursued the *eromenos*, while the *eromenos* fled or pretended to flee. For example, Theognis 1311-1316:

You haven't fooled me, boy — I'm on your trail —  
 You've stolen off to your new fast friend,  
 And thrown my love away in scorn.  
 But you were no friend of theirs before.  
 No, out of them all, I thought it was you I'd made a trusted  
 Mate. And now you hold another lover.<sup>64</sup>

Jealousy on the part of the *erastes* is common in the poetry of Theognis. Theognis, addressing his *eromenos* ("boy"), says "I'm on your trail" and "You've stolen off to your new fast friend," indicating that the *eromenos* ran from a pursuing *erastes*.

How the *erastes* psychically interacted with *eromenos* is not clear in archaic poetry like Theognis: vase paintings are the best indicators of the physical processes which could occur in a pederastic relationship. In Figure 1, below, the figure on the left has a beard and leans on a cane. Lear writes that the "posture/prop set for an *erastes* in red-figure vase-painting...is...arch-typical; perhaps one could say that it symbolizes the *erastes*' leisured status and/or the leisureliness of courtship."<sup>65</sup> The bearded man holds his hand to his heart in a gesture whose meaning is not certain. He holds his courtship gift behind him, hiding what appears to be a hare from the figure on the right. The right figure,

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<sup>63</sup> See Mauss 2001

<sup>64</sup> Trans. by Bing and Cohen 1991, 101.

<sup>65</sup> Andrew Lear 2010, 39

meanwhile, is shorter than the figure on the left, indicating his youth, and he wears his cloak in a manner which covers his entire body. That clothing can be interpreted as a sign of modesty, but since it also covers his hands, the heavy clothing also prohibits the viewer from seeing if the young man is ready to accept or reject the gift.<sup>66</sup> The older man appears to be actively attempting to court the seemingly passive youth on the right. Their relationship appears to be in its earliest stage: the *erastes* has not yet presented a gift, but is preparing to do so. Taken literally, Fig. 1 implies *erastai* gave gifts like hares to their *eromenoi*. There are many other vases which depict a similar scene.<sup>67</sup> Fig. 1 indicates that the pursuit by the

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<sup>66</sup> As a sign of modesty, see Ferrari 1990

<sup>67</sup> Würzburg etc.

*erastes* of the *eromenos* very frequently took the form of a gift-courtship whose success was not a guarantee.

Fig. 2 (Würzburg 480) depicts a similar courtship scene, but a few moments later. The figure on the right, standing, with a cane, is clearly the *erastes*, while the seated figure, wearing a cloak similar to the cloaked figure in Fig. 1, is the *eromenos*. The *erastes* holds a hare out forcefully in the face of the *eromenos*. The forcefulness of the gesture can be interpreted as erotic. The *eromenos*, however, modestly stays seated. He makes no indication of acceptance or rejection of the gift. His cloak and pose betray no hint of his thoughts. If the scene is taken metaphorically, the *erastes*



Figure 1: Figure 2: Würzburg 482

is forward, demanding, and aggressive, while the *eromenos* is being coy, distant, and

modest. The primary qualities of the *erastes* and the *eromenos*, chasing and fleeing, respectively, which Theognis describes, are displayed in Fig. 1 and Fig. 2.

But what happens if that courting goes well? What is the purpose of a pederastic relationship? What exactly happened during the consummation of a pederastic relationship is unclear. If it did happen, like the relationship which existed before it, pederastic consummation appears to have favored the *erastes* at the expense of the *eromenos*. Cohen argues that courtship in the pederastic relationship was essentially a zero sum game, where if the *erastes* won, the *eromenos* lost.<sup>68</sup> Since submission by the *eromenos* meant passivity to the male *erastes*, and passivity was dishonorable, the relationship between the *erastes* and the *eromenos* was a competition imbued with the “politics of reputation, whose normative poles are honor and shame.”<sup>69</sup> The most dangerous pitfall for the *eromenos* was to become an example of Jack Winkler’s *kinaiḗdos*:

Since sexual activity is symbolic of (or constructed as) zero-sum competition and the relentless conjunction of winners with losers, the *kinaiḗdos* is a man who desires to lose...the *kinaiḗdos* simply and directly desires to be mastered. Women too, in this ideology, are turn on by losing, a perception which is at the core of Greek misogyny.<sup>70</sup>

To avoid the danger of *wanting* to be passive, the *eromenos*, if he did yield to the *erastes*, was not expected to find pleasure in the sex act. Socrates in Xenophon’s *Symposium*, for example, says that a “youth does not share in the pleasure of the

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<sup>68</sup>Figure 5: Würzburg 480

<sup>69</sup> Cohen 1991, 183

<sup>70</sup> Winkler 54

intercourse as a woman does, but looks on, sober, at another in love's intoxication. Consequently, it need not excite any surprise if contempt for the lover is engendered in [the *eromenos*]."<sup>71</sup> Plato also writes in *Phaedrus* that the *eromenos* must not experience any pleasure in the pederastic relationship: "But what consolation or what pleasure can he give the beloved? Must not this protracted intercourse bring him to the uttermost disgust?"<sup>72</sup> These two descriptions of pederastic consummation are, at best, disturbing to modern sensibilities.

There is a clear picture of the overall look of Greek pederasty: a relationship between an older man and a younger man in which the older man chases and the young man flees. Emotions were involved, at the very least on the part of the *erastes*. The younger *eromenos*, for all the toil and torment which he undergoes, receives the tutelage of his *erastes*. Sexual consummation is presented as joyful only for the *erastes* and not for the *eromenos*.

The Greeks saw this pederastic relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. Though many writers vaguely refer to Achilles and Patroclus as pederastic, Aeschines, Aeschylus, Plato, and Xenophon are the only authors I have found who directly refer to Achilles and Patroclus as pederastic. Xenophon, in his *Symposium*, argues through an interlocutor that Achilles's rage at Patroclus' death should not be viewed as *just* a product of their shared bed, but *also* their

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<sup>71</sup> Xenophon 8.21-22

<sup>72</sup> Plato 240C-E

comradeship.<sup>73</sup> Xenophon's underlying assumption is that most Greeks thought Achilles's rage over Patroclus' death came from their pederastic relationship.

In the *Symposium* Plato writes that the Greeks thought Achilles and Patroclus were pederastic, writing through his interlocutor Phaedrus, "Achilles, son of Thetis...when he learned from his mother that he would die if he killed Hector...dared to choose to go to his lover Patroclus' aid and avenge him, and so not merely to die for him but to add his own death to his."<sup>74</sup> Phaedrus adds, "Aeschylus is talking nonsense when he claims that Achilles loved Patroclus, because his beauty exceeded not only Patroclus' but in fact that of all the heroes, and he was still beardless, and also much younger, as Homer says."<sup>75</sup> Phaedrus is arguing in this passage that love inspires honorable deeds, and so it is a safe assumption that he would reach for common, axiomatic examples of couples to prove his point. Achilles and Patroclus seem to satisfy that requirement. Moreover, Phaedrus even mentions a claim made by Aeschylus that Achilles is the *erastes* and Patroclus the *eromenos*. Though it is impossible to know which statement by Aeschylus Plato, through Phaedrus, is referring to, Aeschylus fragments 135 and 136 from *Myrmidons* both imply that Achilles was an *erastes* to Patroclus' *eromenos*. Achilles, speaking to Patroclus' dead body says:

Fragment 135: "And you did not respect the sacred honor of the thigh-bond, ungrateful that you were for those countless kisses."

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<sup>73</sup> Xenophon 8.31

<sup>74</sup> Plato 179e1-180a5.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.* 180a5-b5

Fragment 136: “And I honored the intimacy of your thighs by bewailing you.”<sup>76</sup>

Both “thigh-bond” and “thighs” refer to the same word “*mērōn*” (“thigh”), a stand-in for intercrural sex, a common form of consummation in pederastic relationships.<sup>77</sup> Since the *erastes* penetrated the thighs of the *eromenos*, if Achilles honors the intimacy of Patroclus’ thighs, then Achilles is being portrayed as the *erastes*. Finally, in the speech *Against Timarchus*, [346 BCE] Aeschines bluntly states that “the relationship between Patroclus and Achilles...we are told, had its source in passion.” Moreover, Aeschines argues, as Phaedrus in Plato’s *Symposium* does, that it was the love between Patroclus and Achilles that propelled Achilles to avenge Hector and achieve undying glory.<sup>78</sup>

In summary, there is significant evidence to indicate that the Greeks saw Achilles and Patroclus as a pederastic couple. The certainty that the Greek audience felt in its interpretation of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus is only equaled by the ambiguity of the text itself. The *Iliad* shows no definitive proof of pederasty between Achilles and Patroclus, at least no explicit proof.<sup>79</sup> The standard mentor-pupil relationship is not present in the text.<sup>80</sup> The two heroes are

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<sup>76</sup> Sommerstein 2008, 145

<sup>77</sup> *Ibid.*, Dover 1989, 96-99, 197. Also see Lear & Cantarella 2010 for images of intercrural sex scenes in Greek vase artwork.

<sup>78</sup> *Against Timarchus* 133 and 141ff

<sup>79</sup> For a full treatment of pederasty between Achilles and Patroclus: Symonds 1873; Percy 1996, 38-41; Boswell 1980, 47; Sergent 1986, 13; Halperin 1990, 75ff; MacCary 1982, 127ff; Skinner 2005, 43-44; Patzer 1982, 93-95; Lear and Cantarella 2010, 10-12.

<sup>80</sup> Chiron, the centaur, is said to have been Achilles’ tutor when Achilles was a child. Book 11.831

roughly the same age. Patroclus is slightly older, yet Achilles is by far the senior in rank, fame, and honor. Courtship scenes of the type depicted on vases are absent from the *Iliad* entirely. Finally, in a poem which incessantly recounts the personal history of every combatant, no matter how trivial they may be, it would be strange for a pederastic courtship between Achilles and Patroclus to go unmentioned. As Percy writes, “We appear to be confronted by a social change that postdated the development of the basic story of the *Iliad* and yet achieved such prominence in the culture that readers of the poem willingly espied pederastic behavior in the chief of the gods and in the revered of their heroes even though the epic text specified no such thing.”<sup>81</sup> If Percy is correct, and I think he is, then later pederastic Greek culture is casting the *Iliad* into their own mindset.

### **Reception of Achilles and Patroclus Outside Ancient Greece**

Far more briefly, I will now sketch out early modern European and modern interpretations of the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus. From the medieval era through the modern era, scholars generally censored Greek homosexuality entirely, and, where unable to do so, severely downplayed it.<sup>82</sup> Depictions in Europe of the couple after 1300 are relatively few, but they paint a picture of camaraderie, not sexuality. With the notable exception of Shakespeare’s *Troilus and Cressida*, the poets of the 14<sup>th</sup> to 20<sup>th</sup> centuries assumed there was a heterosexual relationship between the two characters. In the *Historia destructionis Troiae*, (1287) by Guido

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<sup>81</sup> Percy 1996, 42

<sup>82</sup> See King 1987 for full treatment of Achilles in medieval era.

delle Colonne, Achilles and Patroclus' relationship is presented as one of friendship. In fact in Colonne's account, Achilles returns to battle not out of grief for the death of Patroclus, but because Agamemnon (written 'Agamemon') orders him to kill Hector, an order which he, as a pseudo-vassal to his Lord Agamemnon, faithfully obeys.<sup>85</sup> *The Seege of Troye* and *Troy Book* (1420), anonymous and by John Lydgate, respectively, follow the same pattern. However, until the arrival of the Romantic era in Europe renewed interest in Homer and Ancient Greece, Europe remained firmly Virgilian. While there are perhaps ten works which directly deal with the Trojan War that are extant from the Medieval and Early Modern eras, there are hundreds from the 1800s onward. In works such as the poem *No Second Troy* by William Butler Yeats (1910), or the opera *La belle Hélène* by Jacques Offenbach (1864), there is no hint of a sexuality between Achilles and Patroclus.

Beginning with *Kassandra* (1983), by Christa Wolf, many novels, translations, and adaptations of the *Iliad* have made Achilles and Patroclus into a modern gay couple of equals. *Kassandra* modernizes the story fully, making Achilles a closeted gay man, afraid of openly loving Patroclus and losing the admiration of his soldiers. The novels of Mary Renault, especially the *King Must Die* (1958), also sexualize Achilles and Patroclus. *Ransom*, by David Malouf (2009) outlines the relationship between the two as romantic, powerful, and sexual. However, the most direct depiction of a homosexuality between Achilles and Patroclus is Madeline Miller's novel *The Song of Achilles* (2012). Explicitly advertised as a "romance," it

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<sup>85</sup> Figure out these medieval citations.

tells the story of Patroclus and Achilles beginning with their shared childhood as they slowly and falteringly fall in love with each other. They become a modern relationship, gay relationship. The entire plot of the novel is about that bond. All of these depictions of Achilles and Patroclus have been published over the last half-century, which is precisely the time when gay civil rights have expanded in the United State.

There are roughly three interpretations of the *Iliad* that have been advanced over the last two millennia: Achilles and Patroclus as a pederastic couple, as brothers-in-arms, and as equal gay lovers. Each of these interpretations reflects broad cultural consensus. The assumption within Classical Athens was that Achilles and Patroclus had a pederastic relationship, while the medieval and early modern world assumed they had a militaristic relationship. Now it is assumed that Achilles and Patroclus are a homosexual couple.

### **Fish and the Interpretive Community**

The best explanation for these interpretation, I believe, is given by Stanley Fish in "Interpreting the Variorum." I have made an assumption about the text of the *Iliad*, which here I wish to refer to and show to be an unjustified assumption. I have assumed that there is a relationship between Achilles and Patroclus which can be encountered prior to interpreting that relationship; in doing so, and as my writing in this chapter might reveal to my reader, I am implicitly *de-fictionalizing* the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, attempting to make them into real humans whose relationship can exist without a viewer. The *Iliad*, no matter how majestic, cannot make that final jump beyond the textual. The *Iliad* is dependent upon the reader to understand it. Fish writes:

The reader's activities are regarded, not as leading to meaning, but as *having* meaning. The meaning they have is a consequence of their not being empty; for they include the making and revising of assumptions, the rendering and regretting of judgments, the coming to and abandoning of conclusions.... In a word, these activities are interpretive...[and] a description of them will also be, and without any additional step, an interpretation, not after the fact, but of the fact (of experiencing).<sup>84</sup>

The claim that Fish makes is that by reading a text, the reader implicitly and unavoidably interprets the text.<sup>85</sup> Moreover, the very interpretation is, of itself, indescribable except by the same process of interpretation by another reader. In effect, readers of identical interpretive structures can understand each other clearly, but readers with different interpretive structures always interpret each other, and so cannot understand each other's structures except through their own. Readers with the same interpretive structures are said to be members of the same interpretive community.<sup>86</sup> Taken to its ultimate, solipsistic end, as Fish surely intends to, this argument implies that there is no independent, verifiable meaning in a given text, and that the interpretive communities alone determine the meaning of the text. I would endorse that interpretation.

Skeptics might think to themselves that such an analysis is absurd, and that even though the cultural beliefs of readers certainly influence a reader's understanding of a text, a reader should be able to recover the pure meaning of a

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<sup>84</sup> Fish 1976, 474

<sup>85</sup> I will continue to use the word "reader," but I do not mean to limit myself to written texts. A "listener," in this case, can be casually substituted for "reader" at any stage of the present analysis.

<sup>86</sup> The limits of the interpretive community (who is in it, who is not) are drawn like the limits of a language: vaguely and without strong definitions.

work, unfiltered by a reader's beliefs, by attempting to understand the linguistic, social, psychological, political, literary, etc., merits of the work as it was given by the author. Working through an English language example makes the question simpler: apocryphally, King Charles II described the newly completed St. Paul's Cathedral as "artificial and awful."<sup>87</sup> A reader today, who is unversed in 17<sup>th</sup> century English vocabulary, would conclude that King Charles II did not admire the Cathedral. However, a reader knowledgeable about archaic vocabulary may know that "artificial" could have meant "artistic," and "awful" could have meant "full of awe." Moreover, since the Oxford English Dictionary can confirm that those words held those definitions in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, my skeptic seems justified in arguing that there is an informed reader and an uninformed reader, and that the informed reader has a measurably superior understanding of the text compared to the uninformed reader. However, an assumption, and a crucial assumption, has been made by the informed reader: that King Charles II *intended* "artificial and awful" to mean "artistic and full of awe." The Oxford English Dictionary can only prove that it *can* carry those two meanings, but the informed reader must make the decision that King Charles II *did* mean that. In this small example, that decision seems justified and unavoidable. But, and this is central to my point, in understanding the quotation, both readers are making decisions about what the *intentions* of the author of that quotation are, and the substantive difference

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<sup>87</sup> <http://quoteinvestigator.com/2012/10/31/st-pauls-cathedral/>. The example is still useful even if there is no historical basis.

between the informed and uninformed reader stems from the evidence, beliefs, and opinions that guide their interpretation of that authorial intention. These successive decisions about the author's intentions, collectively, amount to the reader's attempt at understanding the text.<sup>88</sup> In summary then, "to describe that experience [of reading a text] is to describe the reader's efforts at understanding, and to describe the reader's efforts at understanding is to describe his realization (in two sense) of an author's intention."<sup>89</sup> In the case of vocabulary, the reader is limited to simpler intention; in the case of literature, the reader looks at "the specifying of every aspect of successively intended worlds," which is to say, every aspect of a text.<sup>90</sup>

How does Fish's understanding of the essential role that the reader has in the formation of a text relate to the three different understandings of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus? Briefly, what each society thought of as an acceptable form of male-male relationship affected and altered how its readers experienced the text of the *Iliad*. Athens, with its approval of pederasty, understands the poem as displaying the same pederasty. Early modern Europe, with its armies and intense vassal-lord relationships, defines such relationships by loyalty and camaraderie, so it understands the Poet's intentions in the same way. Today, as gay rights become more common and accepted in the Western world, modern readers see such intimate relationships between men as gay and therefore

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<sup>88</sup> In the example of King Charles II's vocabulary, these decisions come relatively easily. In interpreting the *Iliad*, they are infinitely more difficult.

<sup>89</sup> Fish 1976, 476

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 477

understand the poem that way too. Positivist, formalist, or independent understandings of the relationship which do not refer to the reader of that relationship do not appear to be possible.<sup>91</sup> Instead, the beliefs which define an interpretive community are filtered back through into the text of the *Iliad*.

Fish's theory of the interpretative reader is easily transferable to a discussion of translation of the *Iliad*. The translation itself is subject to Fish's analysis. Translating the *Iliad* utilizes the exact same "reading activities" which Fish discusses, such as "making and revising of assumptions, the rendering and regretting of judgments, the coming to and abandoning of conclusions." The act of translating, in this sense, is subject to the same theoretical concerns as the act of reading. Translations of the *Iliad* can be seen as records of the translators' interpretive structures. The *Iliad* by Peter Green, for example, is the story of the *Iliad* but also a record, like an imprint from a seal, of the interpretive structures of Peter Green and his interpretive community. It is not simply that Peter Green's translation reflects what Peter Green thinks of the story of the *Iliad*, though it obviously does, but that Peter Green's translation reflects the social, psychological, cultural, etc., norms which govern how he experiences the text. In my previous

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<sup>91</sup> Rather than seeing a text and basing our understanding of that relationship on the text, we do the opposite: "I 'saw' what my interpretive principles permitted or directed me to see, and then I turned around and attributed what I had 'seen' to a text and an intention. What my principles direct me to 'see' are readers performing acts; the points which I find (or to be more precise, declare) those acts to have been become (by a sleight of hand) demarcations *in* the text; those demarcations are then available for the designation 'formal feature,' and as formal features they can be (illegitimately) assigned the responsibility for producing the interpretation which in fact produced them." *Ibid.* 478.

chapter I discussed how translation can show a great deal about how the *Iliad* works, but now, I wish to discuss the opposite trend: translation tells us a great deal about the translator, and the culture, which made the translation.<sup>92</sup>

### **Translation Recording Interpretive Structures**

My four translations represent Achilles and Patroclus on a spectrum from militaristic, brothers-in-arms to homosexual love. Lattimore & Green's translation privileges loyalty, while Peterson & O'Hare indicate a romance between the two. Logue is less definite, but the subtext present in many scenes allows a reader to interpret their relationship as romantic. Each decision by the translators to represent Achilles and Patroclus correlates to the cultural ethos of the time period, the location where the translators were produced, or some other factor, which will be provided as supporting evidence that the translation can be read as an accurate reading of the translators and the culture of the translators themselves.<sup>93</sup>

Lattimore sketches out the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus in Books 17, 18, and 23, through the dialogues and monologues of Achilles. Lattimore characterizes their relationship as a close friendship but gives no indication of romantic sensibilities (or pederastic sensibilities, for that matter) between them. In Book 16, for example, Achilles says to Patroclus who is weeping, "Why then / are

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<sup>92</sup> Resolving the apparent paradox between these two effects will be discussed in the conclusion.

<sup>93</sup> In terms of my own methodology, I wish to avoid the impression that I am trying to "guess" what is in the head of the translators. Instead, I wish to show why in the New York theater environment, Peterson & O'Hare can and are far more willing to interpret Achilles and Patroclus's relationship as homosexual than Richmond Lattimore, in 1950, was able to or willing to.

you crying like some poor little girl, Patroklos.... You are like such a one, Patroklos, dropping these soft tears.”<sup>94</sup> Calling Patroclus, essentially, a little girl does not preclude the possibility of romance between Achilles and Patroclus, but it hardly sets it them up for a romantic relationship. Lattimore follows the same pattern throughout his translation: he does not directly deny a romantic relationship but Lattimore does not in any way imply one either. He only shows a militaristic, soldier-to-soldier bond. One of the passages most frequently interpreted as romantic is 16.97-100, but Lattimore has translated it in such a way to deny any definitive romance. Here, Achilles is finally allowing Patroclus to wear his armor and lead the Myrmidons. Before he finally relents, Achilles says: “if only / not one of all the Trojans could escape destruction, not one / of the Argives, but you and I could emerge from the slaughter / so that we two alone could break Troy’s hallowed coronal.”<sup>95</sup> Someone might argue against my position and say that Lattimore is using coded language, hiding their romantic relationship. Such an interpretation, however, has no basis in the text, and would be a supreme example of a reader interposing their own opinion of the text. Moreover, since there exists no other example in Lattimore’s *Iliad* of a homosexual relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, there is no reason to read a subtle subtext into the quotation. Rather, the quotation should be interpreted as one expressing a deep

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<sup>94</sup> Lattimore 2011, 351

<sup>95</sup> Greek:

and meaningful heterosexual relationship. Lattimore does not give the reader any reason to see them in any other light.

The next time Achilles speak to Patroclus seems to confirm that brothers-in-arms mentality: “Rise up, illustrious Patroklos, rider of horses...Get on your armor; faster; I will muster our people.”<sup>96</sup> The descriptive phrase that Lattimore renders as “illustrious” is *diogenes*, which appears 22 other times in the *Iliad*. In every example, one hero is addressing another hero, and in 17 of those 22 usages, the hero being addressed and the hero addressing is not Patroclus. The epithet appears, then, to be a general one used in discourse between Homeric heroes. Lattimore translates every instance of *diogenes* as “illustrious,” just as he does here in 16.126.

“Illustrious,” then, in Lattimore’s replicated formulaic language, is a word of camaraderie, defined by its usage among the soldiers for other soldiers. It does not have or confer upon Patroclus any special status beyond that of a fellow hero. When Achilles learns of Patroclus’ death, Lattimore’s Achilles cries out “My mother, all these things the Olympian brought to accomplishment. But what pleasure is this to me, since my dear companion has perished, Patroklos, whom I loved beyond all other companions, as well as my own life.”<sup>97</sup> Lattimore repeats “companion” twice, his translation of the word *betairos* (“companion,” “friend”), establishing Patroclus as one of Achilles’ companions, though Achilles “loved [him] beyond all other[s].” The implication is that Patroclus was, essentially, Achilles’

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<sup>96</sup> Lattimore 2011, 354

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 398

best friend, but still just one of Achilles' friends. Lattimore repeats the same description of Patroclus soon after, as Achilles says "I was no light of safety to Patroklos, nor to my other companions."<sup>98</sup> Their friendship, of course, is not a minor relationship to either Achilles or Patroclus. When Thetis comes to find Achilles after Patroclus has died, she finds "her beloved son lying in the arms of Patroklos, crying shrill, and his companions in their numbers about him mourned."<sup>99</sup> Lattimore's translation of "crying shrill" closely links that passage with the Ghost visitation scene in Book 23, when Achilles "could not [embrace] him, but the spirit [of Patroclus] went underground, like vapor, crying shrill, and Achilleus started awake, staring."<sup>100</sup> Here, Achilles tries to embrace Patroclus, but cannot because Patroclus' body is gone, and, until Achilles holds a proper funeral for his soul, Patroclus cannot move on. Their unsuccessful embrace is not a reflection of sexual desire but an indication of Patroclus' death—his body is gone, and it will not come back.

So what does Lattimore's preference to show the relationship of Achilles and Patroclus as a militaristic companionship tell the audience about the interpretive structures under which Lattimore's *Iliad* was made? Lattimore wrote this translation in 1951, and the fruits of this inquiry will tell us something we already know. Lattimore's translation, a record of a preference for the militaristic and the non-sexual over the romantic and the homosexual, is indicative of the time,

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<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 399

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 414

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 475

1951, right after World War II, and the translator himself, a veteran of the Navy in World War II. Homosexuals would not be accepted as mentally or morally sound individuals for decades, so homosexual romance or sex would have been completely out of bounds for Lattimore to depict, even if he wanted to. I do not mean to say here that Lattimore's translation is just a 'product of its time,' because that would put the cart before the horse; looking at 1951 and the history of Lattimore cannot tell us anything about Lattimore's translation, because any number of factors which we cannot know about could have influenced Lattimore in a way that would not be typical of 1951 (Lattimore could have had a hidden belief that Achilles and Patroclus were gay, etc.). Rather, looking at Lattimore's translation gives us a record how the story of Achilles and Patroclus was understood in 1951. The underlying interpretive structure which governs how Lattimore receives the text of the *Iliad* is a product of the interpretive community to which Lattimore belongs. Achilles and Patroclus, at least in the interpretive community which Lattimore was a part of (American classicists, perhaps), appears to have been received as heterosexual friendship.

### **Peterson & O'Hare and a Gay Achilles**

Peterson & O'Hare depict a gay Achilles and Patroclus. In just one speech, describing Achilles and Patroclus' relationship, said by their Homer right before Patroclus asks Achilles for his armor, Peterson & O'Hare give their image of the couple:

Patroclus was Achilles' friend. His only friend. They were boyhood friends. Patroclus was sent by his own father to live with Achilles' family—he's slightly older than Achilles, good with horses, and practical. His father said to Patroclus: "It's your duty to take care of Achilles. You're wiser than he is. Counsel him and he'll listen to you." And so Patroclus and Achilles were

more than friends, they were brothers. And really they were more than brothers, they loved each other. When Achilles couldn't sleep, Patroclus would hold him — that kind of thing. Friends. (*A sip of whiskey.*)

The language used by Peterson & O'Hare here strongly implies that Achilles and Patroclus were homosexuals by the final line, "When Achilles couldn't sleep, Patroclus would hold him — that kind of thing." It is technically possible the Peterson & O'Hare do not mean to imply a sexual relationship between Achilles and Patroclus, but the language is coded in such a way to allow the audience to easily picture that. Their language is not as explicit as, say, *The Song of Achilles*, which includes explicit sexual scenes, but to interpret Peterson & O'Hare's Achilles and Patroclus as straight, militaristic figures seems more difficult. "That kind of thing" gives Peterson & O'Hare's audience just enough room to believe that Achilles and Patroclus had a sexual relationship without seeming like Peterson & O'Hare are altering the story. In the implied space which "that kind of thing" makes, the audience can find a homosexual Achilles and Patroclus, and, considering the obvious cryptic nature of the interruption, it seems clear that Peterson & O'Hare want them to find that relationship there.

After this passage, the play quickly focuses on the impending conflict between Achilles and Hector, making Patroclus' death the catalyst for the battle between Achilles and Hector. The next mention of the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus is when Achilles is told that Patroclus died. There, Peterson & O'Hare instead only preserve a few lines and then swiftly move on to the next scene in the *Iliad*: "A black cloud of grief came shrouding over Achilles. Achilles suddenly loosed a terrible, wrenching cry, and his noble mother heart him....He's

dead. And I sent him out there. It should have been me. What do I do now?"

Thetis answers that Achilles will need new armaments, and then the poem goes on to detail the Shield of Achilles and the final battle with Hector. They move on quickly from Patroclus' body towards vengeance. Afterwards, when the funeral games for Patroclus take place in the original, which is nearly 900 lines of the Greek text in Book 23, Peterson & O'Hare give only one line: "But Achilles' fury just won't end...and so he drags Hector's body round and round Patroclus' tomb, day after day after day. And the thing you have to ask yourself is: It's been TEN DAYS!!!!!! What's there left to drag?" That paragraph is the only mention of Patroclus after his death in the play, and even in that paragraph, Patroclus's tomb is only the setting where Achilles tries to mutilate Hector's body. The focus of the play, even here, is not on Achilles and Patroclus, but on Achilles and Hector.

So why is the focus placed so heavily on Achilles and Hector over Achilles and Patroclus? In general, the attention of the play is on the battle between Achilles and Hector, so Peterson & O'Hare want to show the audience the body's mutilation rather than change subjects entirely to Patroclus' funeral games.<sup>101</sup> By allowing Achilles and Patroclus to have a romantic relationship, but then de-emphasizing that relationship against the main story of Achilles and Hector, Peterson & O'Hare are, in a sense, normalizing the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. The relationship between Achilles and Patroclus is only a part of

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<sup>101</sup> In a twenty-four book long poem, there is room for both, but, as I have said before, in a play Peterson & O'Hare do not have the time to address as much as the *Iliad* covers.

Achilles' world-view—in short, Achilles is more than just a gay man in Peterson & O'Hare, so Achilles, and the play, do not have to focus exclusively on his homosexuality.

What does the play's ability to imply that Achilles and Patroclus are gay lovers say about the reception of the *Iliad* today? Almost certainly, *An Iliad* speaks to how the audience of the *Iliad* is far more likely to receive the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus as homosexual than the audience of Lattimore was. Moreover, since the relationship itself is de-emphasized as only a part of Achilles' worldview, the translation of Peterson & O'Hare also reflects a reception of the acceptance of the homosexuality of Achilles and Patroclus, which is to say that Achilles can be understood by today's audience as the ultra-masculine while also being understood as gay. This interpretation of the reception of Achilles and Patroclus seems justified in the context with which the play was produced: a play produced in Seattle and ultimately in New York can easily reflect a great acceptance of gay rights, since these are two cities whose political views tend to be more liberal. Moreover, theater-goers are, in general, a more liberal audience today, especially towards LGBT acceptance. Whereas Lattimore, even if he wanted to showcase a gay Achilles, could not have because of the time he lived in, the liberal context of Peterson & O'Hare's play affords greater leverage to what they can showcase in their play. They appear to have been able to take advantage of that reception.

### **Logue and Achilles' Emotions**

Logue articulates a sexual relationship between Achilles and Patroclus but does not make it explicit. Logue is, of the four works discussed here, the most

violent and the most concentrated on violence, and, here too, the relationship between Achilles and Patroclus is depicted as a harsh, brutal, intense love, which is equaled only by the intensity of Achilles' response to it. Book 23 was not translated by Christopher Logue before his death, so I will analyze what is available, but it is more than enough to show a different, modern take on Achilles and Patroclus.<sup>102</sup>

Beginning in *Patrocleia*, Logue's translation of Book 16, Achilles, in a show of friendship, asks Patroclus "Why tears, Patroclus?"<sup>103</sup> 'Why tears' is a repeated line-type in Logue's translation, primarily used by Thetis to speak lovingly to Achilles, such as in the beginning of the first book, when she says "Why tears, Achilles? Rest in my arms and answer from your heart."<sup>104</sup><sup>105</sup> When Achilles uses it for Patroclus, he indicates a more familial relationship. Patroclus then asks Achilles for his permission to lead the Myrmidons into battle and to borrow the armor of Achilles to frighten the Trojans. Achilles responds, "O love, I am so glutted with resentment that I ache."<sup>106</sup> Calling Patroclus "love," indicates a homosocial relationship, perhaps bordering into homosexual. Logue, throughout *War Music*, keeps their relationship in that liminal zone between homosocial and homosexual.

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<sup>102</sup> Logue did leave a list of things which he felt must be translated before his translation could be considered "complete." Book 23 is one of them, so my analysis must be understood as an analysis of only part of what Logue hoped to complete.

<sup>103</sup> Logue 2016, 225

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 10

<sup>105</sup> Later in Book 16, Hector twists that line as he kills Patroclus, "Putting his spear through...ach, and saying: 'Why tears, Patroclus?'" (248)

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 226

In doing so, Logue denies his reader a clean label to put on Achilles and Patroclus. They cannot be called 'boyfriends,' or 'lovers,' or 'friends,' because Logue denies the audience a simplistic view into their relationship. Instead, the reader is confronted with the totality emotional bond between the two characters. In the most evocative line of the scene when Achilles finally relents and gives Patroclus his armor, Achilles tells Patroclus that he "would be glad if all the Greeks lay dead / while you and I demolished Troy alone."<sup>107</sup> The quotation could be read to indicate a deep friendship, homosocial bonding, or a homosexual relationship, and Logue gives no indicators around it to clarify what the exact meaning of the line is. It strikes me as romantic sub-text since Logue emphasizes "you and I" instead of the simpler "we" and privileges "alone" as the last word of the line, but the line is too vague to make an objective determination of the status of Achilles and Patroclus from it. The only thing which the reader can be certain of is that Achilles is indicating a close, closed off bond between him and Patroclus, even to the exclusion of their fellow Greeks. In fact, when Achilles learns of Patroclus' death, he experiences complete despair:

Down on your knees, Achilles. Further down.  
 Now forward on your hands and thrust your face into the filth,  
 Push filth into your open eyes, and howling, howling,  
 Sprawled howling, howling in the filth,  
 Ripping out locks of your long redcurrant-colored hair,  
 Towel up its dogshit with your mouth.

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<sup>107</sup> *Ibid.*, 228

Achilles's deep despair shows Logue's audience the depth of Achilles feelings towards Patroclus. The audience is not given a solid label to apply to their bond, but must understand Achilles and Patroclus by the emotions they feel towards one another.

Those emotions reach their highest point in a semi-erotic scene as Achilles finds Patroclus' body:

Achilles laved the flesh and pinned the wounds  
 And dressed the yellow hair and spread  
 Ointments from Thetis' cave on every mark  
 Of what Patroclus was, and kissed its mouth,  
 And wet its face with tears, and kissed and kissed again,  
 And said: 'My love, I swear you will not burn  
 Till Hector's severed head is in my lap.'

Moreover, in *Pav*, Logue's translation of Book 19, Thetis arrives with the Shield of Achilles to find "Achilles // gripping the body of Patroclus / Naked and dead against his own."<sup>108</sup> Taken together, these two passages demonstrate the confusing and difficult to label relationship which Logue has written. The implication of romance seems especially strong in the line "kissed and kissed again," and that sense of romance seems strengthened by the vocative "my love." The specific body imagery, "dressed the yellow hair," "spread ointments," "kissed its mouth," "wet its face with tears," "gripping the body of Patroclus naked and dead against his own," all imply a physical intimacy. The imagery, however, is mixed with horror. Achilles is dressing the dead body of Patroclus and promising to cut Hector's head off. By combining the sexuality of the scene with horror, the reader cannot easily label the

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<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 275-79

relationship of the two characters. A reader would be hard-pressed to say that they are just friends, since the sexual imagery is too much for most friendships. Yet, a reader would also have difficulty in giving them a homosexual relationship, since the horror inherent to the scene makes it difficult to know if this outpouring by Achilles was normal or simply a strange reaction to seeing his best friend dead. Homosocial bonding also seems unlikely, since Achilles is dead and erotic bonding between straight males is unnecessary. Instead, the reader, aware of the sexuality of the scene but unable to define the scene by that sexuality, is left simply understanding without labeling the powerful emotions felt by Achilles towards his dead friend Patroclus. These two quotations are the last substantial mention of Patroclus in *War Music*.

Logue, as always, presents an interesting case for the theoretical model that I have been working with. *War Music* seems to me to show a more ambivalent relationship than either Lattimore or Peterson & O'Hare. Logue implies a homosexual relationship, or at least a strong homosocial bond between Achilles and Patroclus. Moreover, the militaristic ties between them are less notable than in Lattimore or Green. *War Music*, then, represents a reception of Achilles and Patroclus' relationship which suspects a homosexuality between them but does not make it central aspect of their relationship. Instead, Logue defines them by the raw emotions that they feel towards each other; the severity of Logue's Achilles' emotions is much greater than those of the other translations. Perhaps, Logue's translation shows a changing understanding of Achilles and Patroclus as brothers-in-arms to Achilles and Patroclus as deeply emotional and invested in each other.

Logue's middle ground between homosexuality and un-sexuality tracks with the publishing history of his poem. *War Music* is a collection of smaller poems which have been published over the last half-century, and *Patrocleia*, which represents Book 16 of the *Iliad*, was the first published, in 1961. Yet the most evocative and erotic passages quoted above were published throughout the 1970s in *G.B.H.* and *Pax*. Perhaps, as homosexuality becomes more accepted from 1950 on, Logue represents a snapshot in that movement, the exact moment when deep, pseudo-romantic emotions between men become acceptable to discuss but just before those emotions can reflect an underlying homosexuality. Stuck in that state, Logue's translation represents not just a twenty-five-hundred-year old story, but also a rapidly changing image of the modern world.

### **Peter Green and A Shift Back**

Green's translation represents the strongest and most militaristic of the translations so far. Green not only ensures that his readers see Achilles and Patroclus in strictly militaristic camaraderie, but he also excludes any possibility of homosocial bonding, let alone any homosexual bonding.

From the very beginning of Book 16, the audience is shown the militaristic relationship between Achilles and Patroclus. Achilles calls Patroclus a "a girl, a small child...That's what you're like Patroklos, shedding those big round tears!"<sup>109</sup> Like Lattimore before, Achilles' insult does not promise any forthcoming romance. After Patroclus asks Achilles if he can command the Myrmidons into battle,

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<sup>109</sup> Green 2015, 16.6-11

Achilles calls Patroklos “Zeus-born,” as a translation of *diogenes* (a wonderfully etymologically accurate translation).<sup>110</sup> As in Lattimore before, Green only uses “Zeus-born” when one hero addresses another hero. In such a way, it becomes a word defining relationships based around militaristic relationships. Even at the end of Achilles’ speech, when Achilles finally relents and lets Patroclus take his armaments and lead the Myrmidons, Achilles only says “How much I wish—Zeus, Father, Athene, and Apollo!—/ That not one out of all the Trojans might escape death, / nor a single Argive, but that only we two should not perish, / and together, alone, should loosen Troy’s sacred diadem!” The emphasis is on the desire for Achilles and Patroclus together to be alone *from* the rest of the Trojans and Greeks, rather than for Achilles and Patroclus to be together. At Green has translated the line, the emphasis seems to be on the death of all the Trojans and the Argives, rather than on Achilles and Patroclus themselves.

Achilles’ mourning shows Green’s focus on militaristic bonding. After he is told of Patroclus’ death, Achilles “gathered up the dark grimy dust, scattered it over his head, befouled his handsome features, and on his fragrant tunic the black ash settled.”<sup>111</sup> The mourning ritual seems like a ritual, rather than an emotional outpouring. Achilles does not “drench” or “pour” the black ash over his face, as he does in Lattimore, nor does he “unleash a cry” like in Peterson & O’Hare, nor does he “thrust [his] face into the filth” as he does in Logue. Instead, Achilles seems

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<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*, 16.49

<sup>111</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.22ff

measured in his mourning, like he is doing the proper rituals which must be done. The same thing occurs after Achilles kills Hector and tells his men that they must now “mourn [Patroklos]: this is a dead man’s privilege...So he spoke...three times round the corpse they drove their fine-maned steeds, weeping, while Thetis stirred in them an urge for lamentation.”<sup>112</sup> Achilles, though he obviously cares deeply about Patroclus, seems to be satisfying ritual, rather than massive emotional pain. In fact, when Patroclus lays his “murdering hands upon his comrade’s breast,” he does so upon his “comrade’s” breast, not his “friend,” not his “love’s,” not even his “companion’s.” Green has chosen the most militaristic translation of *betairoi* possible by translating it as “comrade,” and in doing so, forecloses any possible romantic undertones. When Patroclus, in the dream, returns to Achilles as a ghost, Achilles responds to him with the same epithet, “Why, dearest comrade, have you come here to me thus?”<sup>113</sup> Patroclus, in Green’s translation, is Achilles’ dearest comrade, but only his “comrade.” Green has translated their relationship into the military realm and completely outside the romantic.

Green’s reception of the *Iliad* is significantly different than many other modern interpretations of Achilles and Patroclus. Peterson & O’Hare, contemporaneous with Green, depict a far more sexual Achilles and Patroclus than Green does. Green may even be less sexual than Lattimore. Peterson & O’Hare are not scholars or classicists, and perhaps, in Green’s attempt to translate the text for

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<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.9-15

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.94

scholars and students, he has completely rejected the homosexual. Green, then, might not so much represent a change in the reception of Achilles and Patroclus but a *division* in an interpretive community. Taking Green and Peterson & O'Hare together, it appears that the scholarly community rejects a homosexual relationship between the two while the popular culture accepts it. Peter Green's translation has been out less than a year since the completion of this thesis. However, if translations, as I have argued they are in this chapter, are a record of the reception of a work in a time period, then Green's translation represents, at least in the academic interpretive community within which he writes, a dramatic shift back towards the Lattimore militarism of Achilles and Patroclus. Whether that pattern will continue, only time will tell.

## Conclusions

I hope to have done three things in this thesis: first, a description of how four notable translations have attempted to replicate the *Iliad* in English today. Though a great deal of work has been done on reception of the Classical world, with books published even exclusively on the reception of Homer, not nearly enough has been published on translations of the Classical world.

Being separated by so much time and culture, translating from Ancient Greek to English (or any modern language) is less about linguistic and conceptual difficulties, though those certainly exist, and more about attempting to make art work in an environment which it is wholly unaccustomed to be in. Achilles, were he to be alive today, would be called a war lord, a rapist, a dictator, and a possibly even guilty of genocide. In Ancient Greece, Achilles is a model of the struggle against death, a courageous warrior representing the impossible fight against fate. Translation is the process of bridging these, and many other, worldviews. I hope to have shown in my second, third, and fourth chapters how translators accomplish this goal.

I have made no overarching theory of translation to explain the technique of translators. I hope to have offered here only a sketch of what techniques translators have used and what those techniques tell us about translation, and about the *Iliad*. But, as the last point to my thesis, I hope to have shown how those techniques by translators reveal the implicit reception of the *Iliad* which those translators and the culture which they are apart of hold. In such a way, I hope to bridge translation and reception theory, ultimately with the goal of unifying them. Perhaps then, my readers may appreciate and understand the art of translations just a bit better.

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