

THE THEME OF NEED IN *ILIAD* 9-11

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THE NIGHT RAID OF Odysseus and Diomedes that comprises Book 10 of the *Iliad* contains such eccentricities of expression and linguistic form that on grounds of style commentators are probably correct in viewing it as a separate composition from the *Iliad*, inserted only later into the poem.¹ Moreover, the contents of the book, though sometimes praised for their intrinsic interest, have most often been judged a blemish in the structure and an irrelevance to the plot of the *Iliad*.² For Achilles' rejection of the embassy from Agamemnon in Book 9 seems to set the stage sufficiently for the resumption of the battle on the next morning and the defeat of the Greeks in Book 11. The night raid into the Trojan camp, on the other hand, is only rather loosely tied to this causal sequence. The heightened sense of urgency in the Greek camp after Achilles' rejection of the embassy may provide motivation for the intrigue that follows, and the success of Odysseus and Diomedes inspires the Greeks with a confidence that makes the reversal of the next day in Book 11 seem all the more dramatic.³ However, the length of the night raid seems disproportionate to the triviality of this immediate result, and far from having any long-term consequences, the raid is never mentioned again in the poem. There is no parallel to such a lengthy passage of narrative that contributes nothing to the essential logic of the development of the plot. In this paper, I argue, however, that the *Doloneia* has been carefully integrated into the fabric of the *Iliad* and, whatever the original form of the story, has undergone such extensive

¹Walter Leaf, *Homer: Iliad*² (Cambridge 1900) 1.424-425, and G. S. Kirk, *The Songs of Homer* (Cambridge 1962) 205-207, discuss some of the linguistic evidence for later composition. Recently, Georg Danek, *Studien zur Dolonie* (Vienna 1988), has performed extensive formulaic analysis on the contents of the book and also argues for later insertion into a pre-existing poem. In this paper, all quotations from the *Iliad* employ the OCT text of David B. Monro and Thomas W. Allen (third edition, 1920).

²Few critics have displayed such enthusiasm for the poetic technique of Book 10 and for its relevance to the plot of the poem as Alexander Shewan, *The Lay of Dolon* (London 1911). Bernard Fenik, *Iliad X and the "Rhesus": The Myth* (Brussels 1964, *CollLatomus* 73) 40, expresses the more common view: "A careful reading of the book, and a brief examination of the facts presented by Ameis-Hentze and Ranke will show that a marked inferiority in technique here cannot possibly be interpreted away, even with the best of wills."

³The need for a temporary resurgence of Achaean spirits is the only rationale for Book 10 that could be adduced by E. T. Owen, the most enthusiastic among modern commentators for the integrity of the *Iliad* as we have it: cf. *The Story of the Iliad* (Ann Arbor 1966) 106-109.

manipulations of theme and detail as to have acquired a striking structural and thematic congruence with the books that immediately precede and follow it. Indeed, I will even speak of Books 9, 10, and 11 as comprising a triad of books of similar tripartite structure: recognition of need, journey, return and report. For Books 9, 10, and the Nestor-Patroclus episode of Book 11 explore in various stages the complications and dynamic interplay of competitive and co-operative needs ($\chi\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$) which sustain Achaean society in a perilous state of equilibrium during the crisis of the mid-point of the poem.⁴ Book 9 among its other interests and concerns vividly explores the complex, paradoxical, and ultimately self-destructive nature of Achilles' social and psychological needs, which endanger his comrades and at the same time keep him inactive and confined to the periphery of Achaean society. Book 10 then dramatizes in counterpoint through the exploits of Diomedes and Odysseus a more co-operative form of heroic *ethos* based on mutual need, which compensates for this disruption and maintains the integrity of the Achaean host through joint heroic endeavor. Finally, the Nestor-Patroclus episode of Book 11 draws together these two conflicting approaches to heroism in a dialectical and historical excursus in which the virtues and benefits of service to the common good, so effectively elucidated in the preceding book, acquire an additional positive paradigm in the story of Nestor's early deeds and are set against the negative effects of the kind of wild, anti-social heroism represented by Achilles.

The Greek word $\chi\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$ has been defined as "need" in the sense of a "subjective and occasional tendency to appropriate something."⁵ The narrator of the *Iliad*, avoiding a vocabulary of fluctuating meaning and subjective mental states,⁶ employs the expression only once (8.57); however, his characters, most especially the vacillating and introspective Achilles, use it repeatedly throughout Books 9–11 in a complex dialectic of competing and complementary desire. $\chi\rho\epsilon\acute{\iota}\omega$ or the equivalent form $\chi\rho\epsilon\acute{\omega}$ occurs eleven times in the speeches of Books 9–11 and only five times in the rest of the *Iliad* (1.341, 8.57, 18.406, 21.322, 23.308). The frequency of the term in the embassy to Achilles and its immediate aftermath marks the presence of a significant motif that has not to my knowledge been sufficiently explored.

At the beginning of Book 9, in the preliminary stage of the tripartite pattern, panic has seized the Greeks due to the Trojan victory (9.2). Whereas

⁴Structural and thematic similarities between Books 9 and 10 have often been noted; for example, cf. F. Klingner, "Über die Dolonie," *Hermes* 75 (1940) 337–368, at 339 f. However, to my knowledge, no one has noted that the Patroclus-Nestor episode of Book 11 follows a similar pattern.

⁵Cf. Georges Redard, *Recherches sur XPH, XPHΣΘAI: Étude sémantique* (Paris 1953) 67, cited in Pietro Pucci, *Odysseus Polutropos. Intertextual Readings in the Odyssey and the Iliad* (Ithaca 1987) 159.

⁶Cf. Elizabeth Block, "Narrative Judgment and Audience Response in Homer and Vergil," *Arethusa* 19 (1986) 155–169, at 157.

Agamemnon earlier summoned his retainers through heralds (cf. 2.50–51, 442 f.), he now takes equal part with them in the work (9.9–12) and conducts two councils of his chiefs in order to decide to fight or flee (cf. Klingner [above, note 4] 339, note 2). Nestor assumes the dominant role in this emergency. First, he introduces the leitmotif of this triad of books in his assessment that the Achaeans now have very great need (μάλα δὲ χρεώ, 9.75) of good and wise counsel. Secondly, he suggests that Achilles must be propitiated (9.111–113) and appoints Phoenix, Ajax, and Odysseus as emissaries (9.167–170). The second stage of the pattern consists in the journey to the huts and ships of the Myrmidons, the description of which is accompanied by the use of the famous dual number to describe the three ambassadors (9.182, 185, 192, 197).⁷ Along the way, “the two” pray to Poseidon that they might persuade Achilles; however, no answer is forthcoming from the god, and the reader is left in suspense as to the outcome of the venture. Upon their arrival, Achilles greets his comrades with a question which echoes Nestor’s earlier words about need (9.75) and looks forward to other questions that will be asked on that night of crisis and during the following day:

χαίρετον· ἦ φίλοι ἄνδρες ἰκάνετον· ἦ τι μάλα χρεώ,
οἷ μοι σκυζομένῳ περ Ἀχαιῶν φίλτατοί ἐστων. 9.197–198

Walter Leaf has concisely explicated the ambiguities of this disjointed sentence: Achilles’ sincere pleasure at the visit of his friends is given simultaneous expression with his sense of triumph at the obvious reason for the visit—their need of him. Yet Leaf admits that another interpretation of χρεώ is possible: Achilles may be expressing, however unconsciously, *his own* need of a visit from his friends (Leaf [above, note 1] 386). More recently, Michael Lynn-George has convincingly argued that both of these interpretations of χρεώ are valid and meaningful in context: the language of this question speaks equivocally of the need for Achilles and Achilles’ own need, precisely *because* Achilles’ need is to be needed by his comrades. Lynn-George connects this question of Book 9 with the hero’s earlier oath to Agamemnon’s heralds in Book 1, “that some day there will be need of me (χρεῖώ) to beat back shameful destruction from the rest” (1.340–341).⁸ However, as Lynn-George argues, because Agamemnon now speaks the language of barter rather than of need—the offer of gifts is made contingent

⁷Charles Segal, “The Embassy and the Duals of *Iliad* 9.182–198,” *GRBS* 9 (1968) 101–114, at 105, suggests that the poet risked the strained effect of describing the heralds by the dual form in order to point out the connection of this embassy with Agamemnon’s embassy in Book 1 (cf. 1.327, 331, etc.), where the original insult was offered to Achilles. I will suggest below that the duals in the journey of Book 9 equally anticipate the uses of the dual in Book 10 to describe Odysseus and Diomedes and their journey into the Trojan camp.

⁸Cf. Michael Lynn-George, *Epos: Word, Narrative and the Iliad* (Atlantic Highlands, N.J. 1988) 123–131.

upon the relenting of anger (9.261, 299)—Achilles proclaims that he has no need (οὐ τί μὲ . . . / χρεώ, 9.607–608) of the kind of honor that he is offered. The hero's professed self-sufficiency is strikingly encapsulated in the image of his singing the κλέα ἀνδρῶν while playing the lyre which he himself took from the spoils of the sack of Thebe (9.186–189). Yet Achilles' need to be needed asserts itself repeatedly in the conflicting speeches which he makes to each of the three ambassadors. To Odysseus he asserts that he will leave tomorrow (9.356–363), to Phoenix, that he will decide tomorrow whether to leave (9.618–619), and to Ajax, that he will not fight until Hector reaches his ships (9.650–655). The dialectic of Book 9 seems to break off only one step short of a resolution. (Patroclus will assume the identity of a fourth ambassador in Book 16 and propose a further compromise.) In the third stage of the pattern, return and report, Odysseus speaks before the assembly of the Achaean chiefs, first addressing Agamemnon in the tone of formal politeness that characterizes this book: "Most glorious son of Atreus, Agamemnon lord of men" (9.677; cf. below, note 10). Yet he tells the Greeks only that Achilles has decided to leave (9.682–683). True, this answer may be taken as Achilles' official reply,⁹ but the despondency of the Greeks at the beginning of Book 10 is based at least partly upon miscommunication and a false understanding of his wavering state of mind. The confusion and complexity of the hero's needs simply defy adequate summary.

Book 10 dramatizes the multiplicity of needs engendered in the Achaean army as a result of Achilles' rejection of the embassy. The effect of this setback is revealed most critically as a heightened need of co-operative endeavor on the part of the Achaean army, as if in compensation for the tension and disruption caused by the secession of its greatest hero. Leaf complained both of the uncharacteristically mannered nature of the narrative style here—there is a distinct effort to produce striking contrasts—and also of the meticulous care lavished on the preliminaries of the night-raid itself, which extend over two hundred lines (cf. Leaf [above, note 1] 386). I suggest, however, that style and content match each other perfectly: the Achaean lapse into extremities of unprecedentedly polite behavior is well conveyed through a language of almost eccentric poetic expression that places the highest premium upon co-operation and joint effort in vivid contrast to individual effort. Furthermore, the preliminaries to the night-raid are necessarily drawn out at such length in order to establish this new Achaean mood of co-operation and deference.

The action of Book 10, like its predecessor, involves a discussion of need, a journey (now taking the form of an *aristeia*), and a report to those left behind of the deeds accomplished. In the first stage, Menelaus, unable to sleep during the night of crisis, visits his brother Agamemnon, who is

⁹Cf. Mark W. Edwards, *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* (Baltimore and London 1987) 230.

preparing for a visit to Nestor (10.17-20). In effect, Menelaus, wondering at his brother's plans, suggests the stratagem that will eventually be employed by the Achaean leaders: a spying expedition against the Trojans under cover of darkness (10.37-41). Such an expedition is at first envisioned only as a remote possibility, since, as Menelaus observes, it would require a very bold heart to venture alone (οἶος) against the enemy at night. Agamemnon, echoing Nestor's words at the beginning of Book 9 (cf. 9.75-76), tells Menelaus that they are in need (χρεώ, 10.43) of wise counsel, and divides between the two of them the task of calling the chiefs to a meeting. Earlier, as I pointed out above, the king had summoned his retainers through heralds or in the crisis at the beginning of Book 9 even took part with them in the work (9.9 f.). In the present emergency, he asserts that he and his brother must not be too proud to perform the work of a herald and should themselves summon each man by his patronymic and a complimentary title (10.68-70). Such politeness of expression from the leader of the expedition marks the extremity of the present predicament and recurs throughout as the chiefs are summoned.

Agamemnon visits Nestor first, whom he addresses as "Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaeans" (10.87). Such elaborate formal address, extending the entire length of a hexameter line, is quite unusual for an Achaean chief. Books 9 and 10 are marked by an emphasis upon scrupulously polite forms of address and behavior.¹⁰ Nestor responds, "Most glorious son of Atreus, Agamemnon lord of men" (10.103), an echo of several of his earlier addresses to the king (10.103 = 2.434, 9.96, 9.163) and immediately takes charge of the crisis as he did in Book 9. First, he twice sounds the leitmotif of this triad of books, both in his original question to the king, τίπτε δέ σε χρεώ; (10.85), and then in his assessment of the need for collective planning, χρεῖω γὰρ ἰκάνεται οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτός (10.118). The essential details of this first visit become almost a type of subsequent events in the summoning of the chiefs and are repeated in abbreviated form when Agamemnon and

¹⁰Until the crisis of Book 9, addresses of one hero to another are rather perfunctory; however, the worse things get, the nicer they become. In the first eight books, the only elaborate formal addresses filling a full hexameter line and not intended as insults are: Achilles to Agamemnon (1.122), which has commonly been regarded by commentators as an insult, but cf. G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary. Volume I: Books 1-4* (Cambridge 1985) *ad loc.*; Nestor to Agamemnon (2.434); Agamemnon to Odysseus (4.358), while apologizing for an earlier insult; Athena to Diomedes (5.826); Helenus to Hector (7.47); Hector to Ajax (7.234). Throughout Books 9 and 10, however, politeness increases dramatically and heroes are commonly addressed by name, patronymic and complimentary title: cf. 9.308, 9.624, 9.644, 9.677, 9.697, 10.87, 10.103, 10.144, 10.234, 10.555. Interpreting these data is difficult. Homeric criticism would profit much from a study of the manner in which conventions of naming reflect social status and feelings toward the addressee. J. N. Adams, "Conventions of Naming in Cicero," *CQ* n.s. 28 (1978) 145-166, is a model study in this regard.

Nestor visit the camp of Odysseus. For he is also accorded the greatest consideration and is addressed by Nestor as "divine-born son of Laertes, resourceful Odysseus" (10.144) in answer to his question, ὅ τι δὴ χρεῖω τόσον ἔκει (10.142). Next, the three chiefs visit Diomedes, and in a fine adjustment of typical material to dramatic context, Nestor and Diomedes banter almost playfully in the style of parent and recalcitrant child, a scene which recalls the almost familial nature of their relationship as Nestor described it in Book 9 (cf. 9.57–58). They address each other only as "son of Tydeus" (10.159) or "old man" (10.164), but the grim reality of their present plight quickly resurfaces in Nestor's reminder that, μάλα μεγάλη χρεῖω βεβήκεν Ἀχαιοὺς (10.172).

When the leaders of the Achaeans finally assemble beyond the wall of the camp, Nestor, duplicating his initiative of Book 9, proposes that some hero undertake the sort of spying expedition that Menelaus had earlier mentioned (10.204–217). Diomedes volunteers but first chooses Odysseus as his companion, suggesting that success is more likely if two men work together in close co-operation. The terms in which he envisions the likelihood of success or failure will be fully confirmed during the course of the night-raid itself:

σύν τε δὺ' ἐρχομένω, καὶ τε πρὸ ὃ τοῦ ἐνόησεν
ὅππως κέρδος ἔη· μόνος δ' εἴ πέρ τε νοήσῃ,
ἀλλὰ τέ οἱ βράσσων τε νόος, λεπτή δέ τε μῆτις. 10.224–226

Following an extended arming scene in which Thrasymedes and Meriones share their arms with Diomedes and Odysseus (10.254–271), the two heroes begin the second stage of the pattern as they venture forth from camp upon an *aristeia*. The repeated use of the dual form to describe their movements (10.272, 273, 297, etc.) seems an echo of the dual number from Book 9. So the narrator reminds us that the necessity of this mission arises from the failure of its predecessor. At the same time, while he situates the reader in the second stage of the gradually unfolding, repeating pattern, he emphasizes the close harmony in which these two heroes think and act. As in Book 9, the beginning of the journey is accompanied by prayer; both Odysseus and Diomedes pray to Athena (10.278–294). The narrator, remarking that Pallas Athena hears them (10.295), provides the assurance of their eventual success; in contrast, the prayer to Poseidon in Book 9 went unanswered.

This second mission confronts not Achilles but a lesser figure who resembles him in a number of ways. While the Greeks are busy, Hector on the Trojan side prepares to dispatch his own spy into the Greek camp. In the exaggerated style of parallelism and contrast that marks this book, a certain Dolon volunteers to carry out the mission alone; he is an unpleasant figure (εἶδος μὲν ἦν κακός, 10.316) who, unlike Odysseus and Diomedes,

lacks the major attributes of a hero, except for fleetness of foot (ποδῶκης, 10.316). Dolon's enterprise commences inauspiciously. For the narrator describes this otherwise unknown person as the only (μῶνος, 10.317) son of his father Eumedes, an innocent biographical remark that nonetheless seems to echo Diomedes' earlier characterization of the solitary (μῶνος, 10.225) man of limited intellectual reach (λεπτὴ δέ τε μῆτις, 10.226). Indeed, Dolon's subsequent words and actions—he recognizes no dependency or need of others—will confirm both the narrator's unfavorable introduction and the truth of Diomedes' generalization. Hence, Dolon has a certain obvious importance as a negative paradigm in the theme of social need vs. individual autonomy that imparts coherence to Books 9–11. Moreover, I suggest the presence of a subtle design that extends beyond the merely local context of the night raid to color our perceptions of the choices that Achilles has made in the preceding book. For Dolon impudently requests the horses and chariot of Achilles as a reward for his daring (10.319–327). The incongruous image suggested through the repeated metonymic identification of these two figures (cf. 10.321–331, 392–393, 401–404)—that on some unspecified day in the future such an insignificant Trojan will ride the chariot of the best of the Achaeans—invites us to consider what the two actually share in common. In this regard, we should note that, with the obvious exception of Achilles to whom the epithet is regularly applied, Dolon is the only hero in the poem qualified as ποδῶκης (10.316);¹¹ furthermore, both are the only sons of their fathers. Thirdly, both confront Odysseus and are the victims of his deceit.¹² More importantly, however, Dolon and Achilles embrace a common ideology of self-sufficiency.¹³ Thus, not only does Dolon venture forth alone (οἶος, 10.385), but, when captured by Diomedes and Odysseus,

¹¹The noun ποδῶκεια is used once of the scout Polites at 2.792, but the adjective ποδῶκης is applied only to Achilles (frequently), to Dolon once, and to various teams of horses (e.g., 2.764, 17.614).

¹²Odysseus attempts to deceive Achilles in Book 9 by suppressing the full implications of the king's offer of gifts: they are intended as a token of Agamemnon's superiority (cf. 9.158–160), but Odysseus deletes this information from his report. Achilles, perhaps sensing a lie, responds that he hates deception as much as he hates the gates of Hell (9.308–313). Edwards (above, n. 9) 222 suggests that the audience here may be reminded of the lying Odysseus of the *Odyssey*. In a more sinister fashion Odysseus deceives Dolon in Book 10: he tells him to take no thought of death (10.383) but makes no promise actually to spare his life.

¹³One of the anonymous readers has suggested that Dolon's ugliness puts one in mind of Thersites. Indeed, Thersites (Book 2) and Dolon (Book 10) appear almost as mock Doppelgänger of Achilles, performing immediately futile re-enactments of the greater hero's enterprises of Books 1 and 9. Thersites opposes Agamemnon in assembly (2.211–242) in much the same way as Achilles did in Book 1; similarly, Dolon charts a course of solitary action that recalls Achilles' choice in Book 9 to "go it alone." As a further parallel between Thersites and Dolon, both suffer defeat at the hands of Odysseus, whose prominence in Books 2 and 10 of the *Iliad* is defined in terms of the epithet "sacker of

he asks to be spared on the promise that he will ransom himself (ἐγὼν ἐμὲ λύσομαι, 10.378). These words mark an odd and unprecedented variation on the common theme of a father's paying ransom for the life of his son.¹⁴ The death of Dolon at the hands of his enemies seems a minor foreshadowing of the fate that awaits Achilles as a result of his rejection of the embassy in Book 9, for he will lose his homecoming (οὐδ' ἐμὲ νοστήσαντα, 18.330). Similarly, Dolon does not return from his expedition. A triumphant homecoming (νόστου, 10.509; also cf. 10.246–247) in this microcosm of the *Iliad* is reserved for heroes who trust in and rely upon their comrades.

The actions of Odysseus and Diomedes conform totally to the latter's almost programmatic generalizations about the virtues of comradeship as opposed to individual initiative (10.224–226). Odysseus first formulates the plan that results in the capture of Dolon (10.341–348), while Diomedes throws the spear that stops him in his tracks (10.372–377). Similarly in the attack upon the Thracians, Diomedes performs the work of killing, while Odysseus clears a path in order to steal the fabulous white horses of Rhesus (10.482–502). Speech and narrative subtly combine to emphasize this harmony of effort. Thus, setting forth from camp, Odysseus prays to Athena (10.278–282), and the emphatically personal nature of his opening remarks (cf. μὲν μοι, μὲ, 10.278–282) forms an unexpected prologue to the request that *both* heroes share in the glory that will arise from the expedition (εὐκλείας, 10.281). Patron goddess and poet combine their efforts to insure that the prayer is answered. Athena favors them with an omen (10.274–276), provides Diomedes with added strength (10.482), and at the critical moment admonishes him to remember his homecoming (10.509–511). For his part, the poet credits both Odysseus and Diomedes with the killing of Dolon and thus causes much confusion among the commentators, who attribute the slaying now to Diomedes and now to Diomedes and Odysseus. For as George Stagakis has pointed out, both Odysseus (10.561) and the narrator (10.526) claim that the two together have slain Dolon. Yet this repeated assertion is clearly in conflict with the testimony of 10.455 f., where Diomedes alone slays Dolon. Stagakis rather weakly

cities": cf. Adele J. Haft, "'The City-Sacker Odysseus' in *Iliad* 2 and 10," *TAPA* 120 (1990) 37–56, at 38.

¹⁴Dolon tells Odysseus and Diomedes that his father is wealthy and will provide a great ransom (10.380–381); however, the reflexive verb λύσομαι bears witness to his sense of self-sufficiency; he thinks of himself as both the subject and object of the transaction. Jasper Griffin, *Homer on Life and Death* (Oxford 1980) 52 f., has demonstrated how effectively the scenes of ransom on the battlefield are varied to suit the characters of the individuals involved. In the *Iliad*, ransom may be provided by or promised in the name of a father (1.13, 6.46, 11.106, 11.122, 24.116), both parents (22.340–341), or a guest-friend (21.42), but Dolon alone speaks of ransoming himself. (Lycaon at 21.80 says that he will furnish (πράν) ransom, but Willcock and the scholia take λύμην there as passive rather than middle.)

maintains that Odysseus is identified as a slayer only to emphasize his role as an accessory.¹⁵ I suggest, however, that the gap which once again opens up between the doing of a deed and its later subjective description is in this case not a product of the confusing material to be summarized, but rather the narrator's artful response to the prayer of Odysseus for a joint *aristeia* in the service of the need of the community.¹⁶ For in the third stage of the pattern, when the two heroes return to camp, Odysseus makes his report to Nestor, who first suggested the expedition. He addresses him in the same tone of formal politeness that he earlier employed with Agamemnon at the conclusion of the embassy (cf. 9.677): "Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Achaeans" (10.555), and once again, though without harmful effect and with the endorsement of the narrator (10.526), his words do more than summarize; they also distort. He claims that the two together have slain Dolon (εἵλομεν, 10.561). Through parallels of structure and theme, Book 10 in its happy outcome offers momentary compensation for the disruptive crisis of Book 9. In contradistinction to their mood at the end of Book 9, the Achaeans rejoice (χαίροντες, 10.565) and so begin Book 11 in a new spirit of heightened confidence. However, they will quickly find themselves in great need once more.

At the beginning of Book 11, the battle fluctuates back and forth across the plain. Following the *aristeia* and wounding of Agamemnon (11.15–279) and the renewed attack of Hector (11.284 f.), Odysseus and Diomedes appear a second time as the champions of the Achaeans in their hour of need (χρεώ, 11.409). However, the latter is wounded and Odysseus left alone (οἰώθη, 11.401; μῶνον, 467) on the battlefield, only to be rescued by Ajax and Menelaus (11.485–488). The Achaeans face a worse crisis in Book 11, since in addition to the absence of Achilles their best men have been removed from combat.

When Machaon the physician is wounded and brought to safety by Nestor (11.516 f.), Achilles reappears, watching the battle from the prow of his ship. A complex system of parallels and contrasts with the preceding two books begins to emerge as he summons Patroclus from his tent to learn the identity of the wounded man. The theme of need returns to prominence with Nestor once again a major protagonist. For his part the narrator marks the significance of the moment with an ominous proleptic utterance that is nicely ambiguous of Patroclus and Achilles and hints at their interdependence: "... and that was the beginning of evil for *him*" (11.604). Speaking

¹⁵George Stagakis, "Dolon, Odysseus, and Diomedes in the *Doloneia*," *RhM* 130 (1987) 193–204, at 203.

¹⁶Lynn-George (above, n. 8) 53, remarks that in Book 9 the narrator virtually retires at the beginning of the embassy in order to allow his characters the free play of their own speech. In Book 10, the narrator seems a more active presence, engaging in lengthy passages of description and even, as here, answering a prayer in the manner of a divinity.

his first words in the poem, Patroclus might be thought to reflect the social conscience of the Achaean chiefs in Book 10 when he repeats the question asked several times prior to the night raid: τί δέ σε χρεὼ ἔμειο; (11.606; cf. 10.85, 142). Though Achilles will spend much of the rest of the poem learning the answer to this question,¹⁷ at this point the only need he recognizes is that of the Achaeans, which he hopes will bring them to their knees. Before dispatching Patroclus, he repeats Nestor's earlier analysis of their plight: χρεὼ γὰρ ἱκάνεται οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτός (11.610 = 10.118), an important echo which indicates that Achilles here stands in the role of Nestor within the formal pattern being adopted from Books 9 and 10. For the third time in this triad of books, the reversal of Achaean fortunes and a critical need caused by the animosity of Achilles prompts a journey. In Book 9 the Achaeans sent emissaries to Achilles and in Book 10 spies against the Trojans, both at the behest of Nestor. In Book 11, Achilles reverses this process, sending an emissary to his comrades. Verbal echoes and the presence of Nestor in all three complexes of need invite us to appreciate what the three books have in common and also how they differ. As for differences, we should note first that in Books 9 and 10 Nestor initiated journeys which attempted to confirm and strengthen Achaean solidarity. In Book 11, he becomes the goal for a far less altruistic journey, sparked by mere curiosity, that separates Achilles from Patroclus and eventually will result in both of their deaths. Secondly, Book 10, demonstrating that two companions working together in a joint *aristeia* may even halt the fragmentation of an army in need, provides a positive paradigm against which we may measure—and also lament—the unfortunate developments that isolate Achilles even from his closest companion.

In terms of overall structure, on the other hand, the Nestor-Patroclus episode matches Books 9 and 10 in general outline. Once again we find the same tripartite division: recognition of need, journey (to the tent of Nestor for an account of the old hero's youthful *aristeia*), and—if we include Patroclus' return to Achilles in Book 16—the inaccurate and in this case disastrous report of the *aristeia* to the dispatcher of the mission. Hence, the embassy to Achilles and the night raid both match and anticipate the complex account of Nestor's youthful exploits against the Epeians in Book 11, a story which he relates to Patroclus as an example from which Achilles is urged to profit (11.656–803). In terms of function, Nestor's exhortation is closely related to the other paradigmatic speeches within the *Iliad*, especially that of Phoenix in Book 9. However, Schadewaldt, whose analysis remains the fullest and most insightful study that we have of the passage, notes an essential difference between conventional heroic narrative and the

¹⁷Cf. James A. Arieti, "Achilles' Inquiry about Machaon: The Critical Moment in the *Iliad*," *CJ* 79 (1983) 125–130, at 125.

subject of Nestor's speech, which he finds lacking "der grosse Rhythmus, der bewegende Atem" of the deeds of the Trojan War.¹⁸ Nestor tells Patroclus a story of his youth, when a rather minor border dispute erupted between the Pylians, his people, and the Epeians. At that time he killed Itymoneus, drove the herds of his enemies to Pylos, and thus effected the repayment of a great debt (χρεῖος, 11.686, 698) which was owed to the Pylians by the Epeians (11.671–707), who had been preying upon their weaker neighbors. Later, he killed Moulius and a hundred (!) Epeians when they unsuccessfully attempted reprisals (11.736–749). The casualty figures in the Epeian war may appear suspect; nevertheless, in this story of his youthful exploits, Nestor appears not so much as the figure of conventional heroism and counselor of the mighty as he portrayed himself in Book 1 (1.260–273). Rather, as Schadewaldt pointed out, the story is cleverly chosen and adapted to fit the crisis of Book 11. Nestor's deeds acquire meaning and significance in his memory not so much for their effects, however noteworthy, as for the occasion of their performance: a crisis of need had been facing the Pylians due to an earlier invasion of the region by Heracles (11.690–694; Schadewaldt 84–85). What is most significant for the old man, and hence emphasized through its placement early in the speech, is that the best of the Pylians were dead (κατὰ δ' ἔκαταθεν ὅσσοι ἄριστοι, 11.691) at the time of the performance of his *aristeia*. Indeed, the present urgency of the Achaeian situation provides a setting that corresponds in a number of ways to these early events of Pylian history. First of all, the best men of the Achaeians lie wounded among their ships (οἱ γὰρ ἄριστοι / ἐν νηυσὶν κέαται βεβλημένοι, 11.658–659), and secondly the Achaeians have been greatly weakened by Hector much as Heracles within the paradigm had injured the Pylians. (As Agamemnon said in Book 10, perhaps with justified hyperbole, Hector's deeds surpass those of any hero in his memory [10.46–52].) Finally, through his emphasis upon material compensation as a remedy for acts of outrage (11.677–707), Nestor very subtly suggests that Achilles should reconsider Agamemnon's offer of compensation made in Book 9. Further, this story of Nestor's youth may also shed light retrospectively upon his prominence within Books 9 and 10 as the initiator both of the embassy to Achilles and the night raid. For as a member of the Achaeian host before Troy, he relives and profits from the crisis of his youth when he settled debts owed to the Pylian people and also saved them in their time of greatest need.¹⁹ According to Nestor, Achilles, on the other hand, lacks such a social sense, preferring to enjoy

¹⁸Wolfgang Schadewaldt, *Iliasstudien*³ (Darmstadt 1966) 86.

¹⁹I disagree then with Victoria Pedrick, "The Paradigmatic Nature of Nestor's Speech in *Iliad* 11," *TAPA* 113 (1983) 55–68, at 60, who claims that "the paradeigma is . . . remarkably unsuited to Nestor's point." Karl Reinhardt, *Die Ilias und ihr Dichter* (Göttingen 1961) 264, views the prominence of Nestor in Books 10 and 11 in a somewhat different light; he contrasts the innovations of Nestor in Book 10 ("sein Neues") with

alone (οἶος, 11.763) the benefits of his virtue. The old man's characterization of Achilles assumes the dimensions of a warning in light of the drama of collective versus individual effort enacted in the preceding book. At the conclusion of his speech, Nestor appends to his paradigm a complex set of instructions. On the one hand, he admonishes Patroclus to report the contents of the speech to Achilles for the purpose of arousing him to fight (11.765–793), but then adds as a second best alternative the suggestion that Patroclus enter the battle dressed in Achilles' armor (11.794–803). Indeed, the speech of Nestor lacks a certain clarity of focus at least partly because the elaborate paradigm around which it is organized is intended for Achilles, who is not present, and is actually delivered to Patroclus, for whom it is meant only secondarily (Pedrick [above, note 19] 57). Such a situation has no parallel in the paradigmatic speeches of the poem.

Under the spell of Nestor's oratory, Patroclus becomes the gentle adversary of the man whose need he set off to serve and a persuasive defender of the needs of the Achaeans. Meeting the wounded Eurypylus in the Achaean *agora* (11.807), a significant setting because there the reciprocity among the men of the army is confirmed, Patroclus expresses his pity for the Achaeans and delays his return to Achilles (11.816–841).²⁰ Then, as Reinhardt noted, he ignores the mission originally entrusted to him under the pressure of the more important injunction of Nestor (Reinhardt [above, note 19] 264). Thus Nestor reprises his role as dispatcher of envoys, Patroclus becomes a fourth ambassador from the Achaeans, and for the third time in this triad of books the returning emissary both reports and distorts what has occurred on the journey. Indeed, commentators seldom notice how radically Patroclus alters the terms of his second mission.²¹ Speaking to Achilles, he pointedly fails to mention Machaon, though he repeats almost verbatim the opening of Nestor's speech recounting the wounding of the best of the Greeks: Diomedes, Odysseus, Agamemnon, and Eurypylus (11.658–662 = 16.23–27). Following the elegant and critical metaphor of Achilles the rock (16.29–35), Patroclus repeats the final ten lines of Nestor's speech, which contain the old man's *second* best alternative, that he take the field in Achilles' place (11.794–803 = 16.36–45). The impressiveness of Patroclus' reach across the span of the entire speech demonstrates that the intervening paradigm and exhortation addressed to Achilles have not

his role in Book 11, "wo der Gedanke Nestors vom festliegenden Geschehen bestimmt wird."

²⁰Cf. Steven Lowenstam, *The Death of Patroklos. A Study in Typology* (Königstein 1981) 144.

²¹For example, cf. Lowenstam (above, n. 20) 120: "Essentially he [sc. Patroclus] follows Nestor's advice." But cf. Richard P. Martin, *The Language of Heroes: Speech and Performance in the Iliad* (Ithaca and London 1989) 62: "But Patroklos improvises his performance rather than copying Nestor's."

been forgotten but rather deleted intentionally in the course of a grand improvisation altering the essence of the old man's intent. Perhaps Nestor's example has affected Patroclus so profoundly that he wishes to usurp for himself the role of savior of the host—recall that his first words in the poem reflected the anxious desire to be needed—or Patroclus may realize more than Nestor the idleness of such an appeal to Achilles' social sense under the present circumstances. In any event, the likely futility of the repetition of the entire speech may reflect in the mind of the speaker the impossibility of a simple recreation of Nestor's *aristeia* at this stage of the Trojan War, at least with Achilles in the role of Nestor.

The relationship of Patroclus to Achilles undergoes a number of transformations, difficult if not impossible to analyze fully, in the course of the movement from Book 11 to Book 16. On the one hand, Patroclus, assuming the role of an Achaean messenger, has become in a sense the rhetorical foe of his comrade and thus leaves Achilles isolated all the more from Achaean society. Patroclus' detachment, however, is not reciprocated, for Achilles, knowing nothing of what has transpired recently, sees only his beloved comrade begging a favor and grants the request merely in response to his friend's gentle nature (16.7-19, 49-100).²² Nestor's desperate plan for a surrogate Achilles becomes in the hero's mind a means to increase his personal honor, and with no understanding of his now total isolation he even associates Patroclus with himself in his wish for further glory (cf. 16.84).

Book 10 glorifies the beneficent social effects of the joint *aristeia* of two comrades; in it even the problems of human communication in the stresses of war are turned to good ends. The book offers temporary compensation for the crisis of Book 9 and adds the weight of narrative authority to Nestor's warnings in Book 11 against enjoying alone (οἶος) the benefits of virtue: such behavior brings later grief (11.762-764). (In contrast to this ideal, Patroclus takes the field alone [οἶος, 16.243] in a mock "return" of Achilles, which results in his death, and only later does Achilles return, alone and in *propria persona*.) Book 10, functioning as the centerpiece of an elaborate exploration of needs in conflict, presents cooperation as the most effective means of insuring the integrity of the group and offers a paradigm against which the darker and more ambiguous interactions of Books 9 and 11 advance the story toward its tragic outcome.³⁰

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²²Cf. Martin Mueller, *The Iliad* (London 1984) 50; cf. also: "The plot of the *Iliad* is made possible by the blindness of the protagonists" (49).

³⁰I would like to thank Jane E. Phillips and the two anonymous readers of *Phoenix* for helpful comments on an earlier draft of this paper.