

The Iliad of Homer: Book 1.

Greek Summer School 2017.

Brief Notes. (P.G. Brown)



Figure 1.Homer

General Introduction:

- Homer's composition of the Iliad is generally dated about 750 BC. Herodotus (2.53) puts Homer '400 years before my own time, at the most' which would put the date at roughly 850 BC, but this is generally thought to be too early. Homer's works describe 'events' that took place long before (c. 1334-1150 BC) during the Late Bronze Age and prior to what has been termed the Dark Ages, when there was general and

widespread decline in the Greek world. There are many references in the poems to artifacts and practices from earlier times that were alien to Homer's own age.

- The Iliad was originally an oral poem, written down, and hence roughly fixed, during the time of Peisistratus in the 6th century. There were, perhaps, even earlier written versions. The work was passed down from Homer to that time by professional bards who had committed the works to memory. Milman Parry's great work in the early 20th century with Yugoslavian bards has shown that this was indeed possible.
- The Iliad does not give the story of the defeat and fall of Troy. It describes the events in the couple of weeks in the tenth year of the war between the Greeks (Danaans rather than Hellenes) and the Trojans. It is really the 'Tragedy of Achilles' – a tragedy because Achilles' sense of honour is slighted and this results in the death of his beloved Patroklos. There is also tragedy in the death of Hektor and all its concomitant misery for his wife and impending doom of Troy, which, although not contained in the Iliad, hangs over the poem like a shroud. This is particularly brought out in the second half of the poem.
- Homer has clearly inherited a basic story, or more probably a collection of stories. He draws freely from these and given emphasis to some parts while undoubtedly ignoring or playing down others. The story of Bellerophon in Book 6 is a typical example of this. The story clearly belongs to a larger tale with Homer gives only in a summary form, leaving many of the details vague and shadowy. Similarly, the stories concerning Diomedes possibly come from some sort of *Diomedea*. (One might also compare Book 10, the so-called *Doloneia*, which is clearly a separate story which Homer has woven into the larger tale.) Homer's great skill lies (in part) in combining the material together fairly seamlessly, and in such a way as to add greatly to the overall effect of the story. In Book 5, Diomedes has been fighting the gods and in particular he has wounded Aphrodite and Ares who retire to Olympos, yet in Book 6 he explicitly says he would not fight against the gods and is fearful that if he did he would suffer terribly for it.
- The language of the poem is old Ionic with traces of Aeolic.

Some of the key features are:

- Lack of contraction of vowels, especially in verbs.
 - Augments are often omitted.
 - Alternate forms (such as Κρονίδης, Κρονίων) are used indifferently (except *metri gratia*)
 - Consonants are often doubled
 - The genitive masc/neut. singular is often –οιο
 - Tmesis is fairly common.
- **Particles:** Homeric Greek abounds in the use of particles. So much so that one can become fairly lazy in translating them. However Homer often uses particles in very subtle ways that are hard to translate but which should not be overlooked. Here is a list of the most commonly occurring ones.

ἄρα, ἄρα, ῥά - connected with the verb ἄραρίσκω, so perhaps originally had the sense of 'fittingly', 'accordingly'. Often used to indicate a consequence or a reason. Paley says it denotes 'connection and consequence'.

(Note γάρ = γε + ἄρα).

γέ - calls attention to a word or statement. Can sometimes be rendered as 'at least' or 'at any rate'.

δή - originally a temporal particle meaning 'now' (note ἦδη = ἦ + δή), but often seems to do little more than add emphasis.

ἦ - denotes a strong affirmation and is often used to strengthen other words.

νύ - a shortened form of νύν. It is used as an affirmative particle, rather less emphatic than δή.

οὖν - in Homer this does not mean 'therefore', but rather 'after all' or 'be that as it may'.

πέρ -connected with περί meaning 'beyond', or 'exceedingly'. It can also mean 'although'.

τοί - denotes a kind of restricted affirmation, 'at least, yet surely', and is connected with σοί as a kind of ethic dative, 'if you please'.

- The Homeric poems are written in dactylic hexameter metre. This consists of 6 feet that may have three syllables _ υυ (dactyl) or two long syllables __ (spondee). In Homer there is generally a word break, called a *caesura* in the third foot and the last foot is generally a spondee.

Here are the opening lines of Longfellow's Courtship of Miles Standish which give some idea of how the hexameter works:

*In the Old | Colony | days, in | Plymouth the | land of the | Pilgrims,
To and | fro in a | room of his | simple and | primitive | dwelling,
Clad in a | doublet and | hose, and | boots of | Cordovan | leather,
Strode, with a | martial | air, Miles | Standing the | Puritan | Captain.*

- The Homeric poems abound in stock epithets such as 'well-greaved Achaeans' and 'glorious Odysseus'. In some cases these seem to add nothing to the sense and in other cases the epithet is entirely inappropriate (such as 'blameless Aegistheus' – who is hardly 'blameless' !), however, a closer examination shows that we cannot always simply dismiss these as mere 'fillers' introduced to fit the metre or fill up the line.

Commentaries and Editions:

We will read the OCT edition, edited by Munro and Allen, 1902 (reprinted 1966).

The Iliad: A Commentary Vol. I, Books 1-4, G. Kirk, 1990.

The Iliad of Homer, Books I-XII, M.M. Willcock, 1978.

The Iliad of Homer, Books I-XII, W. Leaf and M.A. Bayfield, 1895 (reprinted 1962.)

Homer, Iliad, Books I-XII, D.B. Munro, 1894.

Homer Iliad I, L.D. Wainwright, 1903.

Homer Iliad I, D.B. Monro, 1871.

Other Books:

History and the Homeric Iliad, Denys Page.

Homer on Life and Death, Jasper Griffin, 1980.

An Introduction to Homer, W.A Camps, 1980.

A Companion to the Iliad, Walter Leaf, 1892.

Introduction to Homer, R. C. Jebb, 1894.

Introduction to the Language and Verse of Homer, T.D. Seymour, 1981.

Homer and the Homeric Tradition, C.H. Whitman, 1958.

The Language and Background of Homer, ed. G.S. Kirk, 1967.

Notes:

Lines 1-7: The Wrath of Achilles.

4. ἐλώρια - 'prey'. (Root ἐλ-). Recall that without proper burial of the body the soul could not find peace.

5. ἐτελείετο - 'was being accomplished'.

6. ἐξ οὗ - take with ἄειδε - 'sing from the time when'. Willcock disagrees.

διασπότην - 'separated, parted company'. (Dual aor.).

Lines 8-21: Apollo was the cause.

8. ἔριδι ξυνέηκε - 'brought them together in strife'.

14. στέμματα - these were the loose ends of a band of wool wrapped around the top of his staff.

Note that Apollo has the epithet of an archer god, which presages his sending of the plague as arrows against the Greeks. The repetition of the epithet in v.21 may be a veiled threat.

20. δέχεσθαι - infinitive for imperative.

Lines 22-32: Anger of Agamemnon.

22. ἐπευφήμησαν - 'gave their voices in favour'.

29. ἔπεισιν - 'shall come upon'

31. ἀντιόωσαν - 'presenting herself to'.

32. ἴθι imperative from εἶμι.

νέηαι < νέομαι - 'return, depart'.



Figure 2. Chryses approaches Agamemnon.



Figure 3. Chryses prays to Apollo.

Lines 33-42: Chryses prays to Apollo.

37. ἀμφιβέβηκας - 'protect', lit. 'walk around, stand over'.

38. Killa was a town near Troy and Tenedos was a small island off the coast.

39. ἔρεψα - 'roofed in'.

Lines 43-52: Apollo hears and sends a plague.

45. ἀμφηρεφέα - 'covered at both ends'.

47. κινηθέντος – passive in form but active in meaning.

48. ἔηκεν = σέσηκεν from ἴημι originally σίσημι.

51. αὐτοῖσι – refers to the men.

ἔχεπευκές - lit. 'holding sharpness', hence 'painful, biting'.

52. Note the powerful *enjambment* and the tense of βάλλ'.



Figure 4. Apollo (Belvedere) c. 120-140 AD

Lines 53-67: Achilles calls an assembly.

53. κῆλα - 'shafts'.

57. 'When they met up and were gathered together'.

Note ἤγερθεν = ἤγέρθησαν as often in Homer.

59. πάλιν πλαγχθέντας - 'wandering back', 'going back (without having taken Troy)' others take it as 'baffled'. Some write these as one word – in any case, note the alliteration.

61. ὁμοῦ - 'together'.

δαμᾶ – future.

63. 'for a dream also comes from Zeus'.

64. ὅτι - 'for what reason', 'why'.

65. εὐχολῆς - 'vow'.

67. ἀντιάσας -`having met with'. The particles indicate that Achilles is not at all sure that they will be successful in their appeal to Apollo.

Lines 68-83: Kalchas reveals the cause of the plague.

75. The spondaic ending to the line gives it solemnity and import.

76. σύνθεο -`make an agreement with me', `give heed'.

79. οἱ -`him'.

81. εἴ περ -`even if'.

καταπέσσω -`keep down', `suppress', `swallows'.

82. κότον -`resentment, spite'.

ὄφρα τελέσση -`until he makes an end of it'.

Lines 84-91: Achilles promises support.

85. θεοπρόπιον -`prophecy'.

86. Κάλχαν is vocative.

ἀναφαίνω -`reveal'.

Lines 92-100: Kalchas speaks.

98. ἐλικώπιδα – of doubtful meaning. Either `shiny eyed', `with well-rounded face', or `with rolling eyes'.

100. πεπίθοιμεν – reduplicated aorist opt.

Lines 101-120: Agamemnon is angry but agrees to give her back.

105. κάκ' ὀσσόμενος -`with evil in his look'.

106. κρήγυος -`good, favorable'.

111. This is the first time the girl is named, and her name simply means `daughter of Chryses'.

113. προβέβουλα -`I prefer (her to)'. Perfect in Greek, but translated as present in English.

115. ἔργα-`talents, accomplishments`.

120. `For you all indeed see that my prize is going elsewhere`. ὅ = ὅτι.

Lines 121-129: Achilles responds.

122. φιλοκτηανώτατε -`most avaricious`.

124. `We do not know of quantities of public booty stored anywhere`.

125. ἐκπράθομεν < ἐκπέρθω. `What we took as plunder, these things have been divvied up`.

δέδασται < δατέομαι.

129. ἐξαλαπάζω -`sack, utterly destroy`.

Lines 130-147: Agamemnon replies.

132. μὴ κλέπτε νόῳ - lit. `do not play the thief in your mind`.

οὐ παρελεύσεαι -`you will not get around me`.

133. αὐτῶς -`alone`.

135. The apodosis is not expressed.

136. Lit. `making it pleasing (lit. fitting) to my mind, so that it will be an equivalent`. ἄρσαντες < ἀραρίσκω.

140. μεταφρασόμεσθα -`consider afterwards`.

141. Note how Agamemnon changes the subject to avoid further public discord, while intending to cause grief to Achilles.

142. ἐπιτηδές -`for the purpose, in sufficient numbers`.

143. ἄν for ἀνά.

146. ἐκπαγλότατε- `most terrible`.

Lines 148-171: Achilles reviles Agamemnon.

149. ἀναιδείην ἐπιειμένε -`clothed in shamelessness`. From ἐφέννυμι.

κερδαλέοφρων - 'of crafty mind, sly'.

154. μέν = μήν.

155. ἐριβώλακι βωτιανείρη - 'deep-soiled, nurse of men'.

156b-157. 'for many things lie between us—shadowy mountains and sounding sea.'

160. 'of this you take no thought or care'.

165. πολυάικος - 'restless, furious'.

166. διέπουσιν - 'were engaged in'.

168b. 'whenever I am weary of making war'.

170. σ' = σοι

171. τὸ ἄφενος - 'wealth'.

ἀφύξειν - tr. 'pile up'. Metaphor taken from drawing water from a well.

Lines 172-187: Agamemnon tells Achilles to go.

174. πάρ = παρείσι

181. ὄθομαι - 'care for, show regard for, heed'.

186b-187. 'and may anyone else abhor to think themselves my equal and match me face to face.'

Lines 188-205: Achilles draws his sword but is restrained by Athena.

188. ἐν is adverbial, with στήθεσσιν locative.

189. διάνδιχα μερμήριξεν - lit. 'was considering two alternatives', tr. 'was divided this way and that'.

191. τοὺς μὲν ἀναστήσειεν - 'he should break up the assembly'.

192. ἐρητύω - 'to check'.

193. ὥρμαινε - 'tossed it over', 'pondered'.

196. ὁμῶς = ὁμοίως - 'equally'.

200. φάανθεν = ἐφάενθησαν.

205. ὑπεροπλίησι - 'arrogance'.



Figure 5. Achilles and Agamemnon. Giovanni Battista Tiepolo d. 1770.

Lines 206-214: Athena speaks.

211b. '(Tell him) how it shall be'.

214. ἴσχεο – imperative middle of ἴσχω.

Lines 215-222: Achilles obeys.

216. σφωίτερον – second person dual.

εἰρύσασθαι - 'to respect'. (Second meaning of εἰρύω).

219. ἦ - 'thus he spoke'.

Lines 223-244: Achilles again reviles Agamemnon.

223. ἀταρτηρός - 'baneful'.

225. Note that ὄμματα in the plural can mean 'face'.

228b. 'This seems to you like death'.

231b. `since you rule over nobodies`.

232. `else indeed this would have been your last outrage`.

235. τομήν - `stump`.

236. λέπω *- `peel (away)`.

238. δικασπόλοι - `judges`.

239. εἰρύαται – (3rd.p.pl.) `guard, protect`.

πρὸς Διός - either `under the supervision of Zeus` or `from Zeus`.

243. ἀμύσσω - `tear, gnaw`.

Lines 245-284: Nestor intervenes.



Figure 6. Nestor.

248. ἀνόρουσε - `rose up`, <ἀνορούω (*) ~ ὄρνωμι.

251. τράφεν = ἐτράφησαν. Take ἅμα with reflexive οἱ.

255. γηθήσαι – 3rd.p. sing. aorist optative.

256. κεχαροίατο– reduplicated aorist optative (3rd p.p.).

258. `You who excel among the Danaans in council and you who excel in battle`. περίειμι - `I surpass, excel`.

260. ἀρείοσιν ... ὑμῖν - 'better in comparison with you'.

261. ἀθερίζω - 'disdain, scorn'.

262. Subjunctive with future sense.

268. φήρ aeolic (since Thessalian) for θήρ. These are generally taken to be the Centaurs.

ἐκπάγλως - 'horribly, terribly'.



Figure 7. A Lapith fighting a Centaur.

270. ἀπίης - 'distant'. Ἀπίη Γαίη may be an ancient name for the Peloponnesos.

271. κατ' ἑμε αὐτόν - 'by myself'.

273. ξύνιεν for συνιέσαν.

Note the ring structure (common in Homer):

a. 259: Accept my advice.

b. 260-61: I kept company with men who accepted my advice.

c. 262-71: Here is the story.

b'. 271-3: They were better men than you, and they listened to me.

a'. 274: So accept my advice.

278-9. 'since the king who holds the sceptre does not meet with equal honour, he whom Zeus has given high status'.

Lines 285-291: Agamemnon replies.

286. κατὰ μοῖραν - 'fittingly'.

289b. 'I think there is someone who will not obey', i.e. probably himself!

291. προθέουσιν – this word is problematic. One can take it as a one-off form equivalent to προτιθέασιν and translate 'allow, grant'.

Lines 292-303: Achilles interrupts.

292. ὑπερβλήδην – either 'breaking in' or 'looking askance'.

302. πείρησαι - 'just try it!'.

303. ἔρωέω - 'rush', 'gush'.

Lines 304-317: The assembly disbands.

304. ἀντιβίοισι - 'opposing, hostile'.

309. Note the alliteration in this line.

311. εἶσεν – causative.

313. ἀπολυμαίνεσθαι - 'to cleanse themselves' (ritual purification after war before making an offering to the gods)

Lines 318-325: Agamemnon sends servants for Briseis.

325. ῥίγιον - 'more terrible'. Formed from ῥῖγος - 'chill'.

Lines 326-344: The servants go to get Briseis.

341. ἡ χρειώ - 'need'.

λοιγός - 'destruction'.

342. θύω - 'to rage'.

Lines 345-356: Achilles prays to his mother.

349. λιάζομαι - 'to go apart'.

352. μινυυθάδιον - 'short lived'.

356. ἀπούρας- 'deprive', from ἀπαυράω



Figure 8. Thetis.

Lines 357-363: Thetis appears.

358. i.e. Nereus.

361. καταρρέζω - 'soothe'.

Lines 364-412: Achilles speaks to Thetis.

366. Eetion is the daughter of Andromache and is mentioned again in Book 6.

376. ἐπευφήμησαν - 'shouted assent'.

383. ἐπασσύτεροι - 'one after the other', 'thick and fast', 'in quick succession'.

383b-384a. 'the shafts of the god ranged everywhere'.

393. περιέχω - 'protect, defend'.

396. ἔφησθα - imperfect, 'you used to say'.

397. εὐχομένης - here 'boasting'.

402. ὤκα - 'swiftly, suddenly'.

403. βριάρεων - 'the strong one'. The *hekatoncheires* (with one hundred hands each, fifty pairs of shoulders and fifty heads) consisted of Kottos, Briareos and Gyas and were primaeval monsters. They are described in Hesiod's *Theogony* 617ff.

The human name Aigaion is obscure, but may be connected with the Aegean Sea.



Figure 9. Hekatoncheires. (Second picture shows a cartoon of them being used as an allegory for the threat to capitalism from labour unrest in 1890.)

405. γαίω - 'rejoice, exult'. (Only used in the present.)

409. ἔλσαι < εἶλω - 'to pen them in'.

410. 'so that they might all derive benefit from their king' (sarcastic). The verb is ἐπαυρίσκομαι - 'to enjoy'.

Lines 413-427: Thetis promises to appeal to Zeus.

415. αἶθε - used to introduce a wish.

417. οἰζυρός - 'piteous'.

423-4. The absence of the gods gives a break in the story and allows time for Chryseis to be returned to her father.

Lines 428-445: Odysseus returns Chryseis.

434. προτόνοισιν ὑφέντες - 'having lowered it using the fore-stays'.

436. εὐνή - 'anchor stone'.

πρυμνήσια - 'stern ropes', 'hawsers'.

Lines 446-456: Chryses prays to Apollo.

448. ἐξείης - 'in turn, in order'.

449. οὐλοχύτας - 'barley grains' sprinkled between the horns of the victim. This may be a very old practice dating back to a time before the grinding of grain, cf. use of unleavened bread in Jewish custom.

454. ἴψαο < ἴπτομαι - 'you oppressed'.

Lines 457-474: Apollo hears the prayer and they feast and dance.

459. αὐέρυσαν - 'they pulled up' (sc. the heads of the victims).

461. ὠμοθέτησαν - 'they placed raw flesh upon them (the thighs)'.

463. πεμπώβολον - 'five-pronged fork'.

464. κάη - 3rd.p.sing. aorist passive.

465. πείρω - 'pierce', 'fix'.

466. 'roasted it carefully and drew it all off'.

468. 'nor did their hearts lack anything of the equal feast'.

469. ἐξίημι - 'remove'.

471. ἐπάρχομαι - 'performing the initiatory rites'.

Lines 475-492: They rest, but Achilles remains angry.

478. ἀνάγοντο μετὰ - 'they set sail for'.

479. ἴκμενον - 'coming', hence 'welcome, favourable'.

481. ἐμπρήθω - 'inflate'.

482. στείρη – locative, ‘at the stern’. (The word refers to the stem or cutwater of the ship).

483. διαπρήσσουσα κέλευθον - ‘accomplishing her path’.

486. ἔρματα - ‘props’.

487-8. Note the clever use of ‘ships’ to link one scene to another.

490. πωλέομαι - ‘to attend, frequent, return to’. The form here is one of three iteratives in these lines.

Lines 493-510: Zeus returns and is supplicated by Thetis.

493. ἐκ τοῖο - ‘from that time’.

497. ἡερίη - ‘early (in the morning)’. The word may mean ‘clad in mist’.

499. πολυδειράδος - ‘with many ridges’.

501. ἀνθερών - ‘chin’.

505. ὠκυμωρότατος - ‘most short-lived’.

509. τόφρα ... ὄφρα - ‘until such a time as’. Note τίθει is imperative.

510. lit. ‘may they increase him in honour’, probably meaning ‘increase his honour by giving him compensation’. Tr. ‘make him rich in recompense’.
ὀφέλλω - ‘increase, magnify’.

Lines 511-516: Zeus remains silent.

513. ἔχετ’ ἐμπεφυῖα - ‘she held on clinging to him’.

515. ἔπι for ἔπεστι - ‘there is’. The sense is perhaps, ‘you are afraid of nothing’.

Lines 517-527: Zeus responds.

518. λοίγιος - ‘deadly’. Tr. ‘this is surely a bad business’.

519. ἐχθοδοπήσαι - ‘to quarrel’, (only here). Tr. ‘It is a bad business in that you have caused me to quarrel with Hera’.

519. ἔρεθω - `provoke`.

520. αὐτῶς - `likewise`.

522. ἀποστείχω - `depart`.

524. εἰ δ' ἄγε - `come on now`. (As in 302)

526. τέκμωρ - `pledge`.

Tr. `My pledge is not reversible nor deceitful nor unfulfilled.`

Lines 528-543: Hera berates Zeus.

529. ἐπιρρώομαι - Tr. `flowed out`. Usual meaning is `wave`.

530. ἐλελίζω - `shake, cause to tremble`.

531. διατμήγω - `depart`.

537. ἀγνοέω - `fail to notice`.

539. κερτομίοισι - `with taunting (contemptuous) words`.



Figure 10. Hera.

543. πρόφρων - `eagerly`. The point being that he will have to tell her anyway.

Lines 544-550: Zeus replies.

547-550. 'Whatever it is fitting for you to hear, this none other shall know before you, whether of gods or men; but what I wish to devise apart from the gods, of all this do not in any way inquire nor ask'.

ἐπιεικῆς - 'fitting'.

Note the ponderous spondees at the end of line 548.

Lines 551-559: Hera replies.

552. αἰνότατε - 'most dreadful'.

554. εὐκῆλος - 'without care, at your ease'. Tr. 'but at your ease you devise all things whatever you wish'.

555. παρῆπον - 'persuade, cajole, beguile, delude'.

Lines 560-567: Zeus warns Hera to be silent.

561. 'you are always suspecting and I cannot escape your notice'.

οἴω - 'suspect', often in the middle.

562. ἀπὸ θυμοῦ - 'far from my heart'. i.e. 'disliked'.

564. 'If this thing is as you say, then it must be pleasing to me'.

566-7. 'lest all the gods that are in Olympos avail you not against my drawing near, when I put forth upon you my irresistible hands'.

567a. sc. με.

Lines 568-583: Hephaistos tries to make peace.

569. ἐπιγνάπτω - 'bend, bow'. Here used of feelings.

570. ὥχθησαν - 'were troubled'.

572. ἐπὶ ἤρα φέρων - 'doing a favour'.

575. κολῳός - 'strife, wrangling'.

577. παράφημι -`advise`.

577b. `wise though she be herself`.



Figure 11. Hephaistos at the forge. (Coustou 18th century).

579. σύν ... ταραΰξη -`bring confusion upon`.

581. στυφαλίζω -`to hurl down`.

Lines 584-594: Hephaistos tells Hera to forebear.

589. ἀργαλέος -`difficult`.

ἀντιφέρομαι -`to resist`.

590-1. `On a time before this, when I was striving to save you, he caught me by the foot and hurled me from the heavenly threshold`.

A different version of Hephaistos falling from heaven is to be found in Iliad 18:395ff.

τεταγών - `touch. lay hold of`. Reduplicated aorist with no surviving present. Cognate with *tetigi* from *tango*.

βηλός -`threshold`.

594. ἄφαρ - 'straightway'. The Sintians were pre-Greek inhabitants of Lemnos and referred to in Odyssey 8.294 as 'wild in speech'.

Lines 595-611: Peace is restored.

597. ἐνδέξια - 'from left to right'.

600. ποιπνύονται - 'bustling about'. The original sense was 'beathing heavily'.

606. κακκείοντες - desiderative.

607. ἦχι - 'where'.

ἀμφιγυήεις - 'lame on both feet'.