THE BETA TRADITION

ON THE ORIGIN OF THE ILIAD

WARD BLONDÉ

The Beta-tradition

The Beta-tradition on the origin of the Iliad

Ward Blondé

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All passages from the Iliad and the Odyssey in this book make use of the translations of Richmond Lattimore.

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Ward Blondé has been fascinated by the Homeric Question since he was 12. He studied Latin mathematics and one year of Greek at the Sint-Lodewijk college in Lokeren. Because of his talent for mathematics and logic, he became a civil engineer in physics and a doctor in applied biological sciences. He worked as a postdoc in Graz, Trondheim, and Amsterdam, but nowadays, he works as a bioinformatician in Belgium (Ghent region). Since 2000, he has been studying the Homeric Question in his spare time.

Contents

Introduction

This book on the European Beta-tradition is the second in the series on Homeric traditions. This series consists of five orally transmitted Greek narrative traditions that I have discovered in the Iliad. The first book in the series is *The Alpha-tradition: On the Origin of Greek Stories*, to which I refer from time to time. The entire series of books fits into one overarching theory on the origin of the Iliad. All five oral traditions date back to Greek prehistoric times and are named the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, the European Beta-tradition, the Aeolian Gamma-tradition, the narrative Delta-tradition, and the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. A speculative timeline showing the oral traditions can be found in Figure 1.

In this book, the following three propositions are proven: 1) there is a consistent oral tradition hidden in the Iliad, which is the European Beta-tradition; 2) the European Beta-tradition is the basis for the creation and further development of the Iliad; and 3) the historical society behind the European Beta-tradition is located in non-Greek Europe.

Therefore, this book is primarily about the European Beta-tradition although the similarities and differences with the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition are also explained. The European Beta-tradition is an oral tradition that, much like the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, was handed down orally for five hundred to a thousand years before being recorded in the Iliad, around 700 BC; their origins and the routes they followed were quite different, however.

Reading guide

We can now start researching the European Beta-tradition, which I will simply refer to as the Beta-tradition. In chapter 1, the literary aspects of the Beta-tradition are described. In chapter 2, the archeological characteristics of the Beta-society are systematically examined, and then, in chapter 3, these

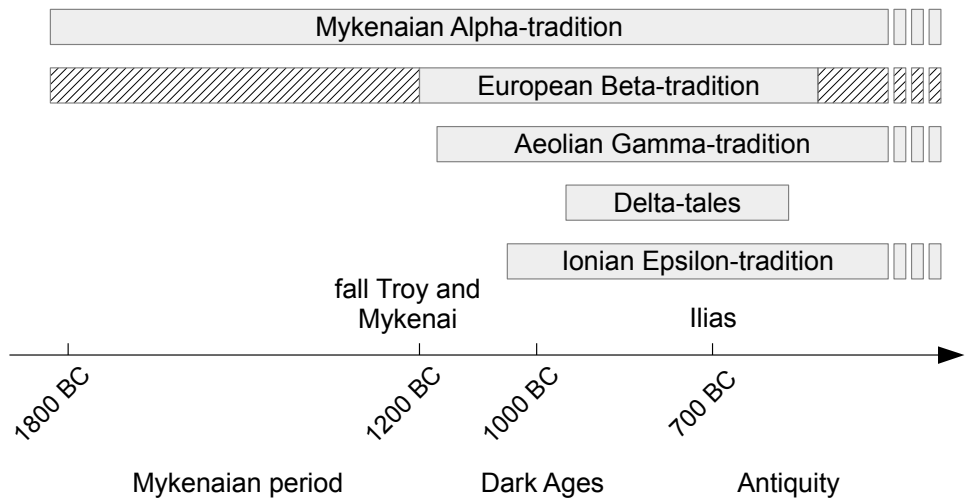

Figure 1: A speculative timeline of the five discovered Greek oral traditions. The oblique shaded zone represents the European Beta-tradition on non-Greek soil.

characteristics are compared with the archeological characteristics of a series of historical societies, including non-Greek Europe in the second millennium BC. Chapter 4 runs through the Trojan cycle from the viewpoint of the Beta-tradition. Chapter 5 follows the detailed description of the Beta-tradition by means of forty-five oral characteristics and a series of analyzed passages. Chapter 6 describes seven typical scenes that are strongly developed in the Beta-tradition; their discovery leads to a series of new findings, such as those of the catalogue of ships and the archeology of the rampart that the Greeks built at Troy. This is followed by a chapter that shows the age of a number of passages, which is done by uncovering typical scenes. Chapter 8 sheds light on the relationship between the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition. Then, in chapter 9, a theory is presented that, on the one hand, provides an answer to the question of how the Beta-tradition has ended up in Greece and, on the other hand, deals with a series of interesting historical issues, including the fall of the Mykenaian Empire and the arrival of the Dark Ages in Greece. Finally, in chapter 10, conclusions about the Beta-tradition are drawn.

Chapter 1

The literary characteristics of the Beta-tradition

In this chapter, the literary aspects of the Beta-tradition are introduced. An answer is given to a number of questions, including the following: What is the content of the Beta-tradition? What are oral traditions? How has the Beta-tradition been discovered? What are oral characteristics and typical scenes?

The core content: the battlefield

The Beta-tradition is about a society of hostile clans led by godfathers who surround themselves with many sons, sons-in-law, and bastard sons all in their attempt to protect the clan. Here, blood feuds play an important role.

The real core of the Beta-tradition is the actions on the battlefield: the battle scenes in which the spears fly, and descriptions of all sorts of often horrible injuries are given. The greatest heroes stand on their chariots while their drivers take care of the reins. Sometimes, these heroes jump off to start hand-to-hand combat using their swords. In the Iliad, we find thousands of verses with such descriptions.

When studying the Beta-tradition, initially, the temptation can be great to reduce it to descriptions of the battlefield. Whoever does this, however, throws out the baby with the bath water, so to speak. At its best, the Beta-tradition is found in the way it focuses on the world outside of the battlefield.

Just outside the battlefield, we find the gods who watch—and even participate in—the battle. At the home front, we find the father and the combat teacher who wait hopefully for the fame their pupil will reap on the battle-

field. But also, the worried woman is there in the bedroom, where the hero himself can appear or—worse—the enemy with burning torches. The focus of the story can go to the moments just before the battle, in which expensive oaths are made and promised gifts are given, or to the spectacle afterwards, such as nightly meetings, mourning for the dead, and feeding the horses. Even more variety can be found in the descriptions of the armor and in the descent of the fighters. Finally, there are themes that are closely related to the development of suspense in the story, such as the reason behind the war and the decisions of Zeus, the supreme god who directs everything.

This brings me to the following proposition: the Iliad as a whole is a narrative of the Beta-tradition. From the high-pitched quarrel between Achilleus and Agamemnon to the funeral of Hektor, we are close to the battlefield where the Greek and Trojan heroes perish in droves. No excursion in the narrative is far removed from this bloody place, except in short expansions such as the Homeric similes or the peaceful scenes that the god Hephaistos drew on the shield of Achilleus.

In addition, the Iliad is almost the only work from Greek Antiquity in which we find the Beta-tradition. There is still a parody of the Iliad—namely the war between frogs and mice—which was also attributed to the legendary Homer. In this parody, we find similar combat passages, which also are found in passages in the Odyssey in which Odysseus fights against the suitors in his palace. Other stories from the Trojan cycle probably also contain passages from the Beta-tradition, but only a short summary of these stories has been preserved. With the Romans, we also find the Beta-tradition in the Aeneid of Virgil. However, there is a chance that the Aeneid is an imitation of the Iliad rather than stemming from an uninterrupted tradition.

Oral traditions and typical scenes

But how is it that a superficial investigation into the Beta-tradition initially seems to lead exclusively to what constitutes its core, that is, the combat passages? This has everything to do with the popularity of the Beta-passages that are not about the battlefield. To put it briefly, these passages away from the battlefield started to lead a life of their own. Under the influence of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition, they ultimately obtained a different appearance. As a result, they are often difficult to recognize as passages of the Beta-tradition.

In the 1930s, the American Milman Parry started the investigation into oral traditions. Tragically, dying at the age of thirty-three in a car accident,

he was never able to experience the successes of his research. His greatest merit has been his comparative research between the oral texts of Yugoslavian bards and the Homeric works: the Iliad and the Odyssey. His research was later continued by Albert Lord, who made several important publications about it.

Although the twentieth-century Yugoslav oral tradition has nothing to do with those oral traditions from prehistoric Greece, Parry established all types of narrative-technical similarities between the oral texts he recorded with his tape recorder and the Iliad and Odyssey. Bards use fixed formulas to present their texts through improvisation. In the oral texts, we find many combinations of a noun with a fixed adjective—called an epithet—that is needed to complete a verse. An example here would be Hektor of the shining helm and the smoothed chariot. Also so-called *typical scenes* are universal for oral traditions. These are scenes that regularly occur, such as ending the day or killing an enemy, and this the bards can easily present by heart. The following is an example of a short typical scene:

> *As he dropped, Elephenor the powerful caught him by the feet, Chalkodon's son, and lord of the great-hearted Abantes, and dragged him away from under the missiles, striving in all speed to strip the armor from him, yet his outrush went short-lived.*
> *(Iliad IV 463-466)*

It goes without saying that many variations of these typical scenes are possible and that Elephenor, Chalkodon, and the Abantes can be replaced with other names.

In the context of the Beta-tradition, typical scenes will be further divided into *progressive* typical scenes, *thematic* typical scenes, and *highly developed* typical scenes. Progressive typical scenes are typical scenes that allow the story of the bard to progress to the next chapter. Examples include the gathering of warriors, gathering up the army for the fight, the organization of a duel, the nightly meeting, the start of a new day, and so on. Thematic typical scenes reflect an important theme of the Beta-tradition, such as the warrior in need and the helper or fame for the father. Although progressive typical scenes occur in a specific place in the poetry, thematic typical scenes can be used anywhere. Highly developed typical scenes are typical scenes that are popular enough to appear outside their normal context, such

as bedroom scenes. Gathering up the army for the fight is a progressive typical scene that is also a highly developed typical scene. All other discovered highly developed typical scenes are thematic typical scenes.

The scholars who study the Iliad as a text that has arisen orally are generally referred to as oralists. However, they have never gone so far as to distinguish different oral traditions within the Iliad and the Odyssey. Instead, they assume that the Homeric works originated within the Ionian dialect of the eighth century BC. The theory of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition has laid the foundation for distinguishing among various oral traditions. This path will continue to be explored in this book. This means that a basic assumption about the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition will be further extended:

- The Iliad and the Odyssey have reached their final forms in the Ionian Epsilon-tradition.
- All narrative content, including that of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition, was ultimately translated into the dialect and the Homeric verse restrictions of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition.

Discovery method

As with the other narrative traditions, the Beta-tradition has been discovered through the iterative listing of the clusters of oral characteristics, which have been shown to have belonged to the same oral tradition. In parallel, the splitting of the Iliad into base passages that must have belonged to the Beta-tradition is also refined iteratively. The most important factors for classification of two oral characteristics in the same cluster are their occurrence in the same passage and the existence of a conceptual link between them. A concrete example is the erection of a burial mound and the construction of a rampart in front of the Greek ship camp. Both oral characteristics appear in the same passages because they are discussed simultaneously in a meeting and because they are executed simultaneously. They are conceptually linked because in both cases, the events concern the amassment of a large pile of earth. By structuring such clusters systematically, a true oral tradition is exposed over time. The listing of base passages—ultimately after a second iteration—invalidates the paradigm of a strict analysis: many passages are formed by means of different oral traditions (instead of a single one) that have been superimposed as narrative layers.

Oral characteristics

Because the language in which an oral tradition is performed is always adapted to the spoken language of the audience, the Beta-tradition in the Iliad cannot be traced based on a particular dialect of Greek. Oral traditions can be distinguished based on their *oral characteristics*. For the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, we saw a few examples, such as the hero who defeats an entire army on his own and failed marriages. For the Beta-tradition, we will distinguish forty-five oral characteristics, including seven highly developed typical scenes. Examples of these are the duo of brave warriors, the combat teacher, and the fight over a corpse.

Unique about the Beta-tradition, however, is the way in which its typical scenes have developed, such as gathering up the army for the fight and fame for the father. And in this sense, the typical scenes are the cornerstones of the Beta-tradition; they show themselves both in the largest and in the smallest passages. Most prominently, they show themselves in the themes of the Iliad and the Trojan cycle, such as the relationship between Achilleus and Peleus and the anger of Achilleus. In the smallest, we find the typical scenes in the form of short scenes—and often bedroom scenes! There, we see that women take on a role in the typical scene, such as the person that convinces the warrior to fight. It are precisely these popular passages that were most often retold in other oral traditions and that are hence much more influenced by the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. Thanks to the typical scenes of the Beta-tradition, we can expose this process and discover the true origins of these bedroom scenes.

With this, we have discussed a number of important characteristics of the Beta-tradition. The following chapter zooms in on the archeological and historical aspects of the Beta-tradition to subsequently use this information in the search for the true society behind the Beta-tradition.

Chapter 2

The archeological characteristics of the Beta-society

This chapter discusses the most important characteristics which we can use to trace the historical and geographical origin of the Beta-tradition through archeology. Some of these characteristics are the clan structure in which the fighters grew up, the blood feud, the manner of fighting, the armor, the rampart of wood and earth that the Greeks built, and the funeral habits.

The archeological characteristics of the Beta-tradition will then be compared with six historical societies: the Scottish clans, the "barbarians" (Celts and Gauls), the Archaic Greeks, the Greek Dark Ages, the Mykenaians, and the non-Greek Europe from the second millennium BC. The latter will eventually be put forward as the most likely historical society in which the Beta-tradition originated.

A clan father surrounded by numerous sons

The first characteristic of the Beta-tradition that will be compared with a series of historical societies is the social structure that emerges when analyzing the Beta-verses. Specifically, this is a social structure of a clan society in which the clans fight each other to the death in small-scale battles.

Priam, king of the Trojans, is known in European history as the ancestor of numerous royal houses. With his fifty sons, he was also a suitable mythological character for this. The Romans were the first to trace their imperial family trees back to Priam. The medieval royal houses in Europe imitated the Romans in this aspect, and to this day, the British queen is ad-

dressed as a descendant of Priam. We will see, though, that Priam's fifty sons is a myth. This idea of having many sons is just an oral characteristic of the Beta-tradition.

When investigating the many fighting passages in the Iliad, one discovers a typical background situation for the fighters that is the same for both the Greeks and the Trojans. The fighters belong to a clan led by a powerful godfather; they have numerous brothers, half-brothers, and bastard brothers, all of whom the godfather has with his lawful wife and with his many concubines. These many sons are jointly trained to fight by a combat teacher. The sons-in-law of the godfather are also embedded as fighters.

On this basis alone, we can sense that something is not right with the classic idea that the Iliad would have arisen as a result of a large-scale war between the empires of the Mykenaians and the Hittites at Troy. How else would we encounter a typical background situation that is similar for Greeks and Trojans? The empire of the Hittites, of which Troy was a part, belonged to a completely different language group and culture. Therefore, the typical background situation of the fighters must date back to a warrior culture that most probably should not be found near the plains around Troy.

This typical background is discovered thanks to the many encouragements that the warriors on the battlefield scream to each other. When a warrior was killed, a brother, half-brother, or brother-in-law was urged to avenge his death. The closest bond that two fighters could have is the fact that they were trained by the same combat teacher. Achilleus and Patroklos were bosom friends because they had been brought up together by Phoinix to be a warrior in the palace of Peleus. Nevertheless, Patroklos was a true bastard son who had been adopted by Peleus. Thus, we see a clear pattern in which wealthy clan fathers surrounded themselves with as many sons as possible to fight off other clans.

Let us take a look at some verses from the Iliad that tell us more about the function of sons in the Beta-society. When the Trojan Simoeisios was killed, the narrator says the following:

> *He could not render again the care of his dear parents; he was short-lived, beaten down beneath the spear of high-hearted Aias. (Iliad IV 477-479)*

The sons, therefore, had to render their training as warriors to their parents by protecting them later in life. The Greek hero Diomedes lets us know something more via his actions:

> *Now he (Diomedes) went after the two sons of Phainops, Xanthos and Thoön, full grown both, but Phainops was stricken in sorrowful old age nor could breed another son to leave among his possessions. There he killed these two and took away the dear life from them both, leaving to their father lamentation and sorrowful affliction, since he was not to welcome them home from the fighting alive still; and remoter kinsmen shared his possessions.*
> *(Iliad V 152-158)*

Without sons, it is apparently not even possible to have personal possessions. Violence is clearly deeply ingrained in this society, and the number of militant sons determined the status of a family or a clan. We also learn more through cynical mockery. When the Greek Idomeneus killed a certain Othryoneus, even the function of daughters comes to light:

> *Othryoneus, I congratulate you beyond all others if it is here that you will bring to pass what you promised to Dardanian Priam, who in turn promised you his daughter. See now, we also would make you a promise, and we would fulfill it; we would give you the loveliest of Atreides' daughters, and bring her here from Argos to be your wife, if you joined us and helped us storm the strong-founded city of Ilion.*
> *(Iliad XIII 374-380)*

And that is how Idomeneus mocked his dead enemy. It can be seen from this that daughters were especially useful for supplying militant sons-in-law.

The pattern of the clan father with the many sons is nicely defined for Priam and the Trojans. For the Greeks, it does not fit that well, and this is probably because every Greek hero of significance has been elevated to king status. Moreover, Agamemnon fights on the battlefield, unlike Priam. The

Greek hero Teukros is addressed by Agamemnon as follows:

> *Telamonian Teukros, dear heart, O lord of your people, strike so; thus you may be a light given to the Danaäns, and to Telamon your father, who cherished you when you were little, and, bastard as you were, looked after you in his own house.*
> *(Iliad VIII 281-284)*

The oral tradition here clashes with itself. King Teukros is presented as a bastard son. Or is it the opposite? Did the bastard son become a king? We have to conclude that the typical backgrounds of the fighters here are merely oral characteristics that helped the bards, forming a base for improvising their verses.

The blood revenge

In this chapter, the culture of small-scale clan battles is brought to light. This is best portrayed by the Trojans, but this culture is equally applicable to the Greeks. How was this warrior culture then organized? Surprisingly enough, we find in its core an element that was also central to the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition: the blood feud. This principle states that the murder of a relative must be avenged by also killing a member of the murderer's family. Thus, we understand Hektor's following reproach to Melanippos, which shows that even cousins are bound by the blood feud:

> *Shall we give way so, Melanippos? Does it mean nothing even to you in the inward heart that your cousin is fallen? Do you not see how they are busied over the armor of Dolops? Come on, then.*
> *(Iliad XV 553-556)*

The following remark by the mocking Trojan Akamas makes everything clear regarding the function of the blood feud:

> *Think how Promachos sleeps among you, beaten down under my spear, so that punishment for my brother may not go long unpaid. Therefore a man prays he will leave behind him one close to him in his halls to avenge his downfall in battle.*
> *(Iliad XIV 482-485)*

The blood feud is thus nicely illustrated. It served mainly as a deterrent for warriors on the battlefield: whoever dared to kill one warrior would later be killed himself.

The manner of fighting

Another important point that is at odds with a large-scale war at Troy is the psychology of the warriors in battle. When the warriors meet on the battlefield, they often try to outdo each other with words and expensive armor. Both the blood revenge and bluffs are much better suited to a small-scale meeting of a few dozen fighters on both sides. In this small-scale scenario, the battlefield is a kind of negotiation area in which nobles try to resolve their quarrels. Therefore, it is important to make a strong first impression. In the case of large-scale, geopolitical wars, bluffs and blood feuds do not make any sense.

The turbulent battle on the battlefield can thus be seen as a failed negotiation attempt. But there is another phase between the bluffing and total war. Between them is the direct duel between two nobles. The army of the person who dies first surrenders and must pay a predetermined price. We see this happening in the direct duel between Menelaos and Paris, with the beautiful Helen as a bet. If the Trojans would have kept their word, the war would have ended in Iliad III.

When he meets Diomedes on the battlefield, the Lycian Glaukos surrenders before the duel; he exchanged his precious armor for the much cheaper armor of Diomedes—gold for bronze, a value of a hundred cattle for a value of less than ten (Iliad VI 240).

With this precious armor, we find another element that points to small-scale fights. The fighters are focused on immediate material gain. They try to rob the armor of a killed enemy and, sometimes, also the corpse to sell it later as a ransom. This indicates these were fights where only one or a few deaths have occurred.

In the Iliad, there are many mentions of armor that are excessively expensive. The Trojan Nastes even appeared in the battle covered in gold (Iliad II 872). This did not benefit him in the dense battle, though, for he was killed by Achilleus. Pandaros, who also fought on the Trojan side, even complains that he had left his horses at home despite the advice of his father:

> *I did not let him persuade me, and that would have been far better, sparing my horses, who had grown accustomed to eating all they wished, from going hungry where the men were penned in a small place.*
> *(Iliad V 201-203)*

To this can be added that the expensive horses of Pandaros in the jostle of the endless battles in the Iliad would impress the enemy much less than in a small-scale fight.

Finally, some descriptions of chariots also seem closer to what would be seen in small-scale combat. Occasionally, it is mentioned that the driver walks out before the horses so that the breath of the horses blows on his neck. There are also two mentions of a third reserve horse that is tied to the two draft horses (Iliad VIII 80-90 and Iliad XVI 470). Moreover, the warrior would often jump off his chariot to start the fight. All this indicates that the chariots were, in the first place, a means of transport that also served as a bluff.

Taking this all together, we get the next picture. Two clans mutually agree on a neutral terrain where they will meet each other. On both sides, a few dozen or a few hundred fighters come walking, whereas the captains are transported in a chariot and are donned in their heavy and expensive armor. A driver walks before the horses and leads them by hand. When the two armies meet, the chariots drive close to each other so that the leaders can negotiate. Whoever has the largest army, the best training as a fighter, the most noble origin, and the most precious weapons has the best chances here. This is why they try to use bluffs with their words and show off their lineage. If no agreement is found, they jump off their chariots and challenge each other to a direct duel. From that moment on, the negotiation starts to fail, and the battle escalates. Nevertheless, the two armies remain cautious, even if someone dies. They first concentrate on material gain and try to rob the precious armor of the fallen leader. If possible, they even try to take the whole body. Only

when several warriors have died does the battle fully escalate. Then, the typical dynamics of flight and chase ensue, the same that we encounter often in the Iliad. The weakest side now risks being completely exterminated.

After the fight, the brave deeds of the combatants are praised, in particular those of the nobles. The booty is divided, and promised gifts are solemnly handed over. But plans are also being made to avenge the nobles who were killed by the enemy. This shows how effective it can be to bluff when one is of a noble origin.

Thus, the bards of the Beta-tradition used the characteristics of a battle between enemy clans, fitting them into the years-long, powerful duel between the Greeks and the Trojans. A good example to illustrate this is the way in which Automedon and Alkimedon, the drivers of Achilleus, are characterized in passage XVII 456-542 of the Iliad. The bard who composed that passage must have doubted whether it would be possible to drive horses at the same time while participating in the battle. On the one hand, he lets Automedon, who was alone on Achilleus' chariot, avoid the battle, and on the other hand, he mentions how Automedon persecuted the enemy:

> *Automedon fought from them, though grieving for his companion. He would dash in, like a vulture among geese, with his horses, and lightly get away out of the Trojans' confusion and lightly charge in again in pursuit of a great multitude, and yet could kill no men when he swept in in chase of them. He had no way while he was alone in a separate chariot to lunge with the spear and still keep in hand his fast-running horses.*
> *(Iliad XVII 459-465)*

A little later on, he allows Alkimedon to take over the chariot and lets Automedon, now serving the role of a real captain, jump off the chariot to start the fight. Yet Automedon did not disappear in the total battle, for he gave Alkimedon the order to send the horses behind him so that they would be breathing down his neck. In this, we again recognize the friendly behavior of a driver or a bluffing captain who walks just before the horses at a first meeting, right before the full battle has erupted. In the end, Automedon could kill one enemy and put his armor on the chariot. The driver Automedon, a Greek, is thus upgraded to a dueling captain. At the same time, the whole

scene is fitted into the grand, disorderly battle that had been going on all day.

We already can start to see into the core of the Beta-tradition. In the foreground, there is the battle on the battlefield, and it is a small-scale battle between the two armies of neighboring clans, in which blood revenge is the prevailing power principle. In the background is the godfather of the clan, who surrounds himself with as many sons, bastard sons, and sons-in-law as possible to protect the clan. This is all preceded by the fact that a combat teacher has taught them how to fight.

The armor

The description of the armor of the fighters is preeminently an element that provides support for archeologists. Yet we must first answer the question whether these descriptions of armor belong to the Beta-tradition. Looking at the descriptions, this does not appear to be the case. One of the main characteristics of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition is the materialistic description in which everything is beautiful, shiny, costly, and neatly fabricated. The following passage about the goddess Hera is a clear example of this:

> *Next with her hands she arranged the shining and lovely and ambrosial curls along her immortal head, and dressed in an ambrosial robe that Athene had made her carefully, smooth, and with many figures upon it, and pinned it across her breast with a golden brooch, and circled her waist about with a zone that floated a hundred tassels, and in the lobes of her carefully pierced ears she put rings with triple drops in mulberry clusters, radiant with beauty, and, lovely among goddesses, she veiled her head downward with a sweet fresh veil that glimmered pale like the sunlight. Underneath her shining feet she bound on the fair sandals.*
> *(Iliad XIV 177-186)*

When we study a detailed description of armor, we find the same materialistic style. The following passage about Agamemnon (Atreus' son) shows many characteristics of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition:

And Atreus' son cried out aloud and drove the Achaians to gird them, while he himself put the shining bronze upon him. First he placed along his legs the beautiful greaves linked with silver fastenings to hold the greaves at the ankles. Afterward he girt on about his chest the corselet that Kinyras had given him once, to be a guest present. For the great fame and rumor of war had carried to Kypros how the Achaians were to sail against Troy in their vessels. Therefore he gave the king as a gift of grace this corselet. Now there were ten circles of deep cobalt upon it, and twelve of gold and twenty of tin. And toward the opening at the throat there were rearing up three serpents of cobalt on either side, like rainbows, which the son of Kronos has marked upon the clouds, to be a portent to mortals. Across his shoulders he slung the sword, and the nails upon it were golden and glittered, and closing about it the scabbard was silver, and gold was upon the swordstraps that held it. And he took up the man-enclosing elaborate stark shield, a thing of splendor. There were ten circles of bronze upon it, and set about it were twenty knobs of tin, pale-shining, and in the very center another knob of dark cobalt. And circled in the midst of all was the blank-eyed face of the Gorgon with her stare of horror, and Fear was inscribed upon it, and Terror. The strap of the shield had silver upon it, and there also on it was coiled a cobalt snake, and there were three heads upon him twisted to look backward and grown from a single neck, all three. Upon his head he set the helmet, two-horned, four-sheeted, with the horse-hair crest, and the plumes nodded terribly above it. Then he caught up two strong spears edged with sharp bronze and the brazen heads flashed far from him deep into heaven. And Hera and Athene caused a crash of thunder about him, doing honor to the lord of deep-golden Mykenai.
(Iliad XI 15-46)

Despite the clear Ionian Epsilon-tradition style, this passage is fitted into a typical scene about gathering up the army for the fight, which is unmistakably part of the Beta-tradition. So at one point, a description of the armor according to the Beta-tradition must have fit at this place in the text. However, the many techniques within the Ionian Epsilon-tradition to improvise such materialistic passages must have caused that the description of armaments

has come within the capacity of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. In any case, the descriptions of the armaments are consistent within the Beta-tradition. For example, the "helmet crested with horse-hair" is a fixed formulation that fits every mention of a helmet. Yet that horse-hair crest is extensively described in the materialistic descriptions of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. Moreover, it corresponds to the helmets of the Greek hoplites around the seventh century BC. We already find this formulation in the very first fight passage of the Beta-tradition:

> *Antilochos was first to kill a chief man of the Trojans, valiant among the champions, Thalysias' son, Echepolos. Throwing first, he struck the horn of the horse-haired helmet, and the bronze spearpoint fixed in his forehead and drove inward through the bone.*
> *(Iliad IV 457-461)*

One might conclude from this that the horse-hair crest has crept into the Beta-tradition as a fixed formula (an epithet) of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. This is not the case, however, as can be seen from the following passage in which the helmet with the horse-hair crest forms part of the story:

> *But Meges stabbed with the sharp spear at the uttermost summit of the brazen helmet thick with horse-hair, and tore off the mane of horse-hair from the helmet, so that it toppled groundward and lay in the dust in all its new shining of purple.*
> *(Iliad XV 535-538)*

Yet the Beta-passages remain sober compared with the typical materialistic passages of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. There is one notable exception that confirms the rule. The following passage contains an excessive amount of materialistic adjectives compared with a typical battle passage of the Beta-tradition:

> *Drawing his sword with the silver nails, the son of Atreus sprang at Peisandros, who underneath his shield's cover gripped his beautiful axe with strong bronze blade upon a long polished axe-handle*

of olive wood. They made their strokes at the same time and Peisandros chopped at the horn of the helmet crested with horse-hair at the very peak. Menelaos struck him as he came onward in the forehead over the base of the nose.
(Iliad XIII 610-616)

We can conclude that the descriptions of the armaments do not offer much guidance when it comes to tracing the origins of the Beta-tradition. The fact that all the weapons and armor are made of bronze is, though, not coming at the expense of the proposed era in the European Bronze Age.

A rampart of wood and earth with a ditch

An important oral characteristic of the Beta-tradition is the rampart of wood and earth that the Greeks built around their ship camp. In the Iliad, this rampart is a central element in numerous battle passages. Oralism provides a simple explanation for this: the Beta-tradition originated in an area where battles at ramparts of wood and earth regularly occurred. The bards of the Beta-tradition then ensured that such a wall was present in their poetry. The absence of battles around stone walls is equally remarkable. It is apparent, then, that the Beta-tradition did not originate in an area where battles around stone walls regularly occurred.

After a day with an intense battle in Iliad VII, the old, wise Nestor advises burning the bodies of the fallen. After this, he talks about the rampart of the Greeks:

And let us gather and pile one single mound on the corpse-pyre indiscriminately from the plain, and build fast upon it towered ramparts, to be a defense of ourselves and our vessels. And let us build into these walls gates strongly fitted that there may be a way through them for the driving of horses; and on the outer side, and close, we must dig a deep ditch circling it, so as to keep off their people and horses, that we may not be crushed under the attack of these proud Trojans.
(Iliad VII 336-343)

The actual construction of the rampart is described as follows:

But when the dawn was not yet, but still the pallor of night's edge, a chosen body of the Achaians formed by the pyre; and they gathered together and piled one single mound all above it indiscriminately from the plain, and built a fort on it with towered ramparts, to be a defense for themselves and their vessels; and they built within these walls gates strongly fitted that there might be a way through them for the driving of horses; and on the outer side and against it they dug a deep ditch, making it great and wide, and fixed the sharp stakes inside it.
(Iliad VII 433-441)

Therefore, stones are not used for the rampart. It is an earthen wall in a wooden framework.

Incineration, urns and burial mounds

That the funeral habits in the Iliad belong to the same oral tradition as the construction of the rampart and ditch is supported by the fact that both are mentioned in the same breath and executed at the same time:

Therefore with the dawn we should set a pause to the fighting of Achaians, and assembling them wheel back the bodies with mules and oxen; then must we burn them a little apart from the ships, so that each whose duty it is may carry the bones back to a man's children, when we go home to the land of our fathers. And let us gather and pile one single mound on the corpse-pyre indiscriminately from the plain, and build fast upon it towered ramparts, to be a defense of ourselves and our vessels. And let us build into these walls gates strongly fitted that there may be a way through them for the driving of horses.
(Iliad VII 331-340)

Tombs are mentioned in several places in the Iliad and in all kinds of contexts. For example, Paris hides behind a burial mound to secretly take aim

at the enemy. On the trip to buy the corpse of his son Hektor, Priam goes past a burial mound. Both situations fit into the Beta-tradition, and there seems to be no reason why they should belong to an oral tradition that is separate from the Beta-tradition.

Indeed, in several places in the Iliad, reference is made to burning the dead and to erecting a burial mound for them. From the funeral of Patroklos, there is even a detailed description:

> *The close mourners stayed by the place and piled up the timber, and built a pyre a hundred feet long this way and that way, and on the peak of the pyre they laid the body, sorrowful at heart; and in front of it skinned and set in order numbers of fat sheep and shambling horn-curved cattle; and from all great-hearted Achilleus took the fat and wrapped the corpse in it from head to foot, and piled up the skinned bodies about it. Then he set beside him two-handled jars of oil and honey leaning them against the bier, and drove four horses with strong necks swiftly aloft the pyre with loud lamentation. And there were nine dogs of the table that had belonged to the lord Patroklos. Of these he cut the throats of two, and set them on the pyre; and so also killed twelve noble sons of the great-hearted Trojans.*
> *(Iliad XXIII 163-175)*

Achilleus leads the funeral ceremony of his soulmate. After the fire of the stake had burned for a night, he gives further orders to the Greeks:

> *First put out with gleaming wine the pyre that is burning, all that still has on it the fury of fire; and afterward we shall gather up the bones of Patroklos, the son of Menoitios, which we shall easily tell apart, since they are conspicuous where he lay in the middle of the pyre and the others far from him at the edge burned, the men indiscriminately with the horses. And let us lay his bones in a golden jar and a double fold of fat, until I myself enfold him in Hades. And I would have you build a grave mound which is not very great but such as will be fitting, for now; afterward, the Achaians can make it broad and high—such of you Achaians as*

may be left to survive me here by the benched ships, after I am gone.
(Iliad XXIII 237-248)

The Trojan Hektor is also buried in this way. The Iliad ends with the funeral of Hektor. These are the very last verses of the Iliad:

When the tenth dawn had shone forth with her light upon mortals, they carried out bold Hektor, weeping, and set the body aloft a towering pyre for burning. And set fire to it. But when the young dawn showed again with her rosy fingers, the people gathered around the pyre of illustrious Hektor. But when all were gathered to one place and assembled together, first with gleaming wine they put out the pyre that was burning, all where the fury of the fire still was in force, and thereafter the brothers and companions of Hektor gathered the white bones up, mourning, as the tears swelled and ran down their cheeks. Then they laid what they had gathered up in a golden casket and wrapped this about with soft robes of purple, and presently put it away in the hollow of the grave, and over it piled huge stones laid close together. Lightly and quickly they piled up the grave-barrow, and on all sides were set watchmen for fear the strong-greaved Achaians might too soon set upon them. They piled up the grave-barrow and went away, and thereafter assembled in a fair gathering and held a glorious feast within the house of Priam, king under God's hand. Such was their burial of Hektor, breaker of horses.
(Iliad XXIV 785-804)

The Iliad presents a consistent picture of the funeral habits of the warriors, and this image comes from the Beta-tradition: the corpse is burned together with material resources, the leftover remains are placed in an urn, and that urn is covered with a large burial mound.

With this, we have sufficient archeological and historical aspects of the Beta-tradition shown as being present in the Iliad. Next, these characteristics are compared with a series of historical societies.

Chapter 3

Looking for the historical Beta-society

The Scottish clans

The best-documented culture that shows strong similarities to the core of the Beta-tradition is probably that of the Scottish clans who, just until a few centuries ago, fought each other with swords in bloody battles. In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, more than fifty battles in the Scottish Highlands were recorded, in which thousands of people died. The culture of endless fighting between neighboring clans stems directly from their Celtic ancestors. We have every reason to believe that this lifestyle has been an uninterrupted tradition dating back to long before what Julius Caesar described in *De bello Gallico*, a tradition that he famously used in his divide-and-conquer strategy. The hatred between neighboring Celtic clans was so intense that they were only too happy to go to war with the Roman army to defeat their old enemies.

The word clan comes from the Scottish-Gaelic *clann*, meaning descent or family. Paul Murton, himself a descendant of the MacGregor clan, in the BBC documentary *Highland Clans* tells the secrets of clan life in the Scottish Highlands. He delves deeper into the perpetual vicious circle of violence between the clans.

The fact that bards were of great importance in a clan society is shown by the fact that to this day, there are Scottish bards that represent a certain clan. They function as an oral database in which all the clan's stories and pedigrees are stored. Paraig MacNeil, the bard who has been representing the MacGregors since 2000, explains the importance of bard stories as follows:

"The nobles were in the fight in front. Their subjects were behind them, but were less disciplined than the nobles. The singing of the pedigrees made the nobles proud, so they felt strong during the fighting. That made the oral traditions of vital importance."

The death of Gregor Ruadh MacGregor in 1570 AD gave rise to the climax in Gaelic poetry, here showing a clear parallel with the story of Romeo and Juliet. The poet is Marion Campbell, the wife of Gregor, who composed an elegy after she was forced to view Gregor's execution. Just like for Romeo and Juliet, the love between Marion and Gregor was made impossible by the hatred between rival clans. Did we also find the true origins of the love story between Helen and Paris with this look at Gaelic poetry? It seems an interesting and realistic possibility.

One of the oldest fragments of Scottish battle poetry is an incitement to battle (a *brosnachadh*) for the battle of Harlaw in 1411 AD. The poem has a fixed meter and contains an alphabetical list of words that describe an ideal fighter. In this sense, it can be considered an important teaching material for bards. The fragment, as edited by Derick S. Thomson (Matheson 1969), is as follows:

Clan Donald's incitement to battle, on the day of the battle of Harlaw.
By Lachlann Mór MacMhuirich, MacDonald's Aos-dàna.

O Children of Conn, remember
Hardihood in time of battle:
Be watchful, daring,
Be dextrous, winning renown,
Be vigorous, pre-eminent,
Be strong, nursing your wrath,
Be stout, brave,
Be valiant, triumphant,
Be resolute and fierce,
Be forceful and stand your ground,
Be nimble, valorous,
Be well-equipped, handsomely accoutred,
Be dominant, watchful,
Be fervid, pugnacious,
Be dour, inspiring fear,
Be ready for action, warrior-like,

Be prompt, warlike,
Be exceedingly fierce, recklessly daring,
Be prepared, willing,
Be numerous, giving battle,
Be fiery, fully-ready,
Be strong, dealing swift blows,
Be spirited, inflicting great wounds,
Be stout-hearted, martial,
Be venomous, implacable,
Be warrior-like, fearless,
Be swift, performing great deeds,
Be glorious, nobly powerful,
Be rapid in movement, very quick,
Be valiant, princely,
Be active, exceedingly bold,
Be exceedingly fierce, king-like,
Be eager, successful,
Be unflurried, striking excellent blows,
Be compact in your ranks, elated,
Be vigorous, nimble-footed,
Be ready, fresh and comely,
In winning the battle
Against your enemies.
O Children of Conn of the Hundred Battles,
Now is the time for you to win recognition,
O raging whelps,
O sturdy heroes,
O most sprightly lions,
O battle-loving warriors,
O brave, heroic firebrands,
The Children of Conn of the Hundred Battles
O Children of Conn, remember
Hardihood in time of battle.

We can conclude from this poem that the glorification of violence was deeply rooted in Scottish clan culture and that an oral tradition was an essential part of it. The fighters felt supported by the idea that their acts of war would also be incorporated in the oral tradition. This applied particu-

Figure 2: In this castle in the Scottish Highlands in the sixteenth century, Kilchurn, Gray Colin of the Campbells, concocted his war plans against Gregor Ruadh MacGregor. Once, it had been a stronghold that could accommodate 200 fighters.

larly to people of noble birth, who evidently were given an important role by the bards. There is also a more recent example of oral epics: Mexican drug barons pay singers to compose songs that glorify them. Violence and poetry apparently go well together.

The similarities between the Scottish clan culture and the Mykenaian Empire on the one hand and the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition on the other hand also deserve attention. An aspect that is vital in a culture of hostile clans is a strong fortress that can withstand a long siege. In Scotland, as in Mykenaian Greece, we find numerous examples (see Figure 2). These fortresses were built in such a way that a clan could lock itself up inside with many fighters and for a long period. From there, it could prepare a surprise attack on the army that surrounded the fortress. Because both Scotland and Greece are mountainous, we find stone fortresses in geographically strategic places.

An interesting similarity between the Scottish clan society and the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition is robbing and herding cattle. As evidenced by the life of the Scottish folk hero Rob Roy MacGregor (1671-1734), the herding of cattle was an important economic activity in the Scottish Highlands of the eighteenth century. The cattle were driven straight through the highlands to markets in the south, and the custom was for farmers to pay protection money to insure themselves against theft.

Despite these clear correspondences between the Scottish clans and the Beta-tradition, there are also links with the Mykenaian society and the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Therefore, we need to dive deeper into the subject to be able to come up with an accurate conclusion about the historical society behind the Beta-tradition. Before we get to those arguments, the warrior culture will be further investigated through a discussion of Celtic society.

The barbarians: Celts and Gauls

With the non-Greek Europe in the second millennium BC the area is meant between the Black Sea and the Atlantic west coasts of Europe. This Bronze Age area will be put forward at the end of this chapter as the origin region for the Beta-tradition. We know much less about that region and that time than about the literate cultures in the eastern Mediterranean where the Mykenaians, the Hittites, and the Egyptians ruled. Yet it seems to have been a culturally fairly homogeneous area, with similar warfare, funeral habits, and art skills, such as pottery decorations. Therefore, it seems obvious that epic poetry was also quite homogeneous in this area. To learn more about the people of the Bronze Age in non-Greek Europe, however, we can consult the Greek and Roman historians who described the descendants of those from non-Greek Europe in more detail. This concerns the Celts and the Gauls, who are also called “barbarians.”

The Celts and the Gauls were particularly war-like peoples who were proud of their fighting spirit. Despite their shared material culture and religion, they lived in tribes that fought each other to the death. Thanks to Julius Caesar (100 BC - 44 BC), among others, we learn more about how such battles took place. Caesar described the warfare of the British Celts at De Bello Gallico:

This is their manner of fighting from chariots. At first the charioteers ride in all directions, usually throwing the ranks into confusion by the very terror caused by the horses, as well as the noise of the wheels; then as soon as they have come between the squads of horsemen, they leap from the chariots and fight on foot. The drivers of the chariots then withdraw a little from the battle and place the chariots together, so that if the warriors are hard pressed by the number of the enemy, they have a safe retreat to their own. Their horsemen possess such activity and their foot soldiers such steadfastness in battle and they accomplish so much by daily training that on steep and even precipitous ground they are accustomed to check their excited horses, to control and turn them about quickly, to run out on the pole, to stand on the yoke, and then swiftly to return to the chariot.
(De Bello Gallico IV, 33, Translated by Cheyney)

This shows that the use of the chariot is quite similar to what we find in the Iliad.

According to Dionysius of Halicarnassus (60 BC - after 7 BC, XIV, 10 (17), 1), the barbarians fought like wild beasts, which was far from an efficient way of fighting. This may also indicate why bravery and fighting spirit were sung about in epic Celtic poetry: the fighters fought to prove themselves as heroes rather than to reach the goal of winning the war efficiently. All in all, it seems that the manner of warfare of the Celts was even closer to that of the Beta-tradition than was the case with the Scots. We do not have the epic songs of the Celts of the first century BC, but we have every reason to believe that such songs, like for the Scottish clans, played an important role in Celtic culture and that they were closely related to the Beta-tradition.

Diodorus of Sicily talks about Gauls instead of Celts, but these are also descendants of the peoples that will be put forward at the end of this chapter as the origin of the Beta-tradition. The similarity between the Iliad's and the description of Diodorus (V, 29, 1-5) of the Gallic's warfare is so striking that we almost have to believe that he, or the Gauls, gained their inspiration from the Iliad. Yet there are a number of clear differences that make Diodorus' report seem authentic.

Diodorus starts with a description of the use of the chariots:

> *In their journeyings and when they go into battle the Gauls use chariots drawn by two horses, which carry the charioteer and the warrior; and when they encounter cavalry in the fighting they first hurl their javelins at the enemy and then step down from their chariots and join battle with their swords. (Diodorus V, 29, 1)*

This use of the chariots by the Gauls is consistent with that of the British Celts described by Caesar and with the Beta-tradition in the Iliad. Diodorus continues with a direct duel between two fighters:

> *Certain of them despise death to such a degree that they enter the perils of battle without protective armour and with no more than a girdle about their loins. They bring along to war also their free men to serve them, choosing them out from among the poor, and these attendants they use in battle as charioteers and as shield-bearers. It is also their custom, when they are formed for battle, to step out in front of the line and to challenge the most valiant men from among their opponents to single combat, brandishing their weapons in front of them to terrify their adversaries. (Diodorus V, 29, 2)*

This behavior is in line with the behavior of Paris and Menelaos when the armies of the Greeks and the Trojans meet for the first time in the Iliad (III 15-78). The same thing happens later when Hektor challenges the Greeks to a direct duel (VII 46-92). After giving a challenge to a duel, Diodorus talks about the bluffs that we find so often in the Iliad:

> *And when any man accepts the challenge to battle, they then break forth into a song in praise of the valiant deeds of their ancestors and in boast of their own high achievements, reviling all the while and belittling their opponent, and trying, in a word, by such talk to strip him of his bold spirit before the combat. (Diodorus V, 29, 3)*

It is an interesting observation that the heroes could also recite the verses that were composed about them by the bards. This shows that the oral

tradition was not only of vital importance to the Scots, but also to the Gauls. Beautiful examples in the Iliad of bluffs in which ancestors are praised are seen in the Lycian Glaukos (Iliad VI 140-235) and the Dardanian Aineias (Iliad XX 160-260) before they went into battle with the Greeks Diomedes and Achilleus.

A noticeable difference when compared with the Iliad is Diodorus' description of what happens to the body of the vanquished enemy:

> *When their enemies fall they cut off their heads and fasten them about the necks of their horses; and turning over to their attendants the arms of their opponents, all covered with blood, they carry them off as booty, singing a paean over them and striking up a song of victory, and these first-fruits of battle they fasten by nails upon their houses, just as men do, in certain kinds of hunting, with the heads of wild beasts they have mastered.*
> *(Diodorus V, 29, 4)*

In any case, Diodorus has not fully adopted the Iliad when describing the Gauls. The Iliad often describes a fight for a corpse or armor but never a fight for a head. However, Achilleus promises the dead Patroklos that he will bring him the head and weapons of Hektor (Iliad XVIII 335). In the Iliad XIV 497-499, we read that the Greek Peneleos cut off Ilioneus' head and raised it like a poppy on his spear to show it to all the Trojans. Yet we do not know what Peneleos did with this head. Together with the following warning given by the goddess Iris to Achilleus about the corpse of Patroklos, they are exceptional mentions in the Iliad:

> *Beyond all glorious Hektor rages to haul it away, since the anger within him is urgent to cut the head from the soft neck and set it on sharp stakes.*
> *(Iliad XVIII 175-177)*

The description of Diodorus is thus consistent with the Iliad but provides more details about the battles over corpses.

Finally, Diodorus talks about paying ransom for the remains of a defeated enemy:

> *The heads of their most distinguished enemies they embalm in cedar-oil and carefully preserve in a chest, and these they exhibit to strangers, gravely maintaining that in exchange for this head some one of their ancestors, or their father, or the man himself, refused the offer of a great sum of money. And some men among them, we are told, boast that they have not accepted an equal weight of gold for the head they show, displaying a barbarous sort of greatness of soul; for not to sell that which constitutes a witness and proof of one's valour is a noble thing, but to continue to fight against one of our own race, after he is dead, is to descend to the level of beasts.*
> *(Diodorus V, 29, 5)*

And in the Iliad, it is Priam who had to pay a large treasure to buy the corpse of Hektor.

At this point, we must conclude that the description of the warfare of the nations north of the Greeks and Romans corresponds very well with the Beta-tradition in the Iliad. Moreover, we know from the burial gifts found in graves that these barbarians did indeed honor a hero cult. Given the continuity of the warfare of the British Celts to the Scots over a period of fifteen hundred years, we can assume that a continuity reaches back another thousand to fifteen hundred years. With that, we come to the non-Greek Europe of the second millennium BC.

The Homeric Era

The most obvious place in which we can find the true culture on which the Beta-tradition is based, of course, is Greece itself. Three periods of time must be taken into account: the Archaic period, from 800 BC to 480 BC, in which the Iliad came into a fixed form, the Dark Ages, from 1200 BC to 800 BC, and the flourishing of the Mykenaian Empire, from about 1600 BC to 1200 BC. Each of these three periods is identified by some Homeric scholars as the most important for explaining the Iliad and the Odyssey.

As far as the Beta-tradition is concerned, I think the Archaic period is not a possible source of the Beta-culture for several reasons. An important reason is that the rulers in the Archaic period did not belong to a nobility who entrenched themselves in well-defended fortresses. Still, the terrain in Greece

is extremely suitable for building defensive strongholds. Furthermore, there is nothing to suggest that during the Archaic period, warriors were trained by an oral tradition to fight neighboring clans. Yet there are Homeric scholars, such as Hans van Wees (2004), who show that the Archaic period can well explain the fighting passages in the Iliad.

During the Archaic period, there was a strong population surge, and the Greek city-states arose. As a result, warfare began to be organized on a large scale. The armies consisted of heavily armed soldiers (hoplites) who marched on foot in closely connected rows (phalanxes) and lightly armed soldiers (peltasts) who attacked the hoplites. Horses and chariots were not used, and there were no bluffs or duels between captains. Yet in the Iliad, we find two notorious exceptions that may indicate that the practice of the phalanx has crept into the oral tradition. The following description can be found in two places in the Iliad:

> *Shield against shield at the base, so buckler leaned on buckler, helmet on helmet, man against man, and the horse-hair crests along the horns of their shining helmets touched as they bent their heads, so dense were they formed on each other.*
> *(Iliad XIII 131-133 = Iliad XVI 215-217)*

Furthermore, in the Iliad XIII 152 and Iliad XV 618, we find that the fighters were as closely connected as "a wall." Despite these exceptions, the vast majority of combat passages do not contain this idea of the phalanx.

A second reason why the Archaic period does not contain the Beta-culture is the age of the Beta-tradition itself. In chapters 6 and 7, we will see several examples of the oral characteristics and passages that have been replaced over time with more modern elements, such as chariots that have changed into ships. This betrays a long historical evolution.

The Dark Ages

For more or less the same reasons as for the Homeric era, the Dark Ages preceding the Greek Antiquity are not a good fit for finding the true Beta-culture. After the fall of the Mykenaian Empire around 1200 BC, the population fell by a quarter, and the mighty castles fell into ruins that would never be inhabited again. The hero of the Dark Ages was the navigator who founded new

colonies in distant coastal areas, not a warrior on the battlefield. Despite the thesis of Carolyn N. Conter (2003), there are few who believe that chariots were used during the Dark Ages in Greece.

The Mykenaian Empire

The Mykenaian Empire is undoubtedly a promising candidate as the origin culture of the Beta-tradition. This time period began on the Greek mainland in the first half of the second millennium BC and consisted of a decentralized system of palaces in which a military nobility ruled over the surrounding valleys.

The palaces were built in strategic places, such as on the tops of hills and rocky heights; they were surrounded by thick, so-called Cyclopean defensive walls that consisted of huge, ton-heavy stones. The walls were thick enough to be passable and to build a parapet with battlements on. The throne room, in which the ruler enjoyed a semidivine status, was in the middle of the palaces. The castles were optimized over time to withstand a long siege, with secret storage stocks, outlets, and bastions from which the entrances could be defended.

The warfare and the production of weapons were under direct control of the rulers of these palaces. As shown by inscriptions from the secretariat in the palaces, each municipality was forced to supply a certain share of men who had to undergo military service. The nobles themselves also took part in the war. Fighting mainly took place with the spear, but also with swords, bows, axes, clubs, and garlands. Typical of the Mykenaian fighters were their helmets, which were made of swine teeth (see Figure 3), and man-sized, eight-shaped, or rectangular shields.

One of the main arguments for many Homeric scholars when it comes to dating the Iliad back to the Mykenaian Empire is their use of the chariot. Thanks to reliefs (see Figure 4), coins, seals, and paintings on vases and walls, but also the ground plans of ruins with horse stables, there is sufficient archeological evidence that the Mykenaian nobility possessed numerous chariots. The drawings show that in addition to the driver, there is often a warrior who uses a bow or a spear to attack. The chariot was also a status symbol with which the nobility moved around or that was shown during parades.

Figure 3: A fresco from the palace of Pylos, dated around 1300-1200 BC. Depicted is a fight between barbarians in animal skins and palace guards, who are recognizable by their helmets made with swine teeth.

Mykenaian, didactic anatopisms

Even though the Mykenaian period seems at first to be a suitable society that would explain the Homeric works, many Homeric experts now come to a different conclusion. Archeological research in the last 150 years has uncovered a Mykenaian society that shows striking differences with what is found in the Iliad and the Odyssey. With the aid of writing, the Mykenaian palaces were bureaucratic centers that led the economy. We do not find anything remotely like this in the Homeric works. In the Homeric primal society, the script seems to be unknown.

Although the Mykenaians were particularly war-like, there are few indications that the rulers in the various castles regularly fought each other.

Figure 4: A tombstone of a royal tomb in Mykenai, dated around 1500 BC, contains one of the earliest images of a chariot in Greece.

As was shown in the previous chapter, mutual hostility and the accompanying small-scale battles are absolutely necessary as a source of inspiration for the Beta-tradition. The enemies of the Mykenaians, on the other hand, were the Minoans, the Hittites, the Egyptians, or even barbarians (see Figure 3). The Mykenaians, however, always worked together in these confrontations with enemy forces. As far as the Trojan War is concerned, the picture of the shipped chariots fits, whether as a true fact or myth. The Beta-tradition, on the other hand, needs a different origin.

There are other signs that show something. The typical helmet with the boar teeth and the man-high shields are also not part of the arsenal of the typical Homeric fighters: they have ordinary bronze helmets and round shields. With the use of the chariot, there is also something that does not fit well. During the heyday of the Mykenaian Empire, the nobility had enough chariots to ship and arrange them, using their chariots in a full line that could literally crush the enemy, as happened with the Hittites and the Egyptians (Greenhalgh 1973). Yet we read in the Iliad that the nobility leaps before the battle off the chariot to duel on foot. In addition, the Mykenaian nobility was buried unburned in shaft graves instead of being placed in an urn under a burial mound with the burnt remains. These are all kinds of typical Myke-

Figure 5: A bronze dagger, inlaid with silver and gold, found in a shaft-grave within the walls of Mykenai. The dagger is dated between 1150 BC and 1500 BC. You can see a lion hunt and the typical man-sized shields of the Mykenaians.

naian features that archeology has uncovered and that appear to be absent in the Homeric society.

The problem is also underlined by a special phenomenon in the Iliad and the Odyssey. There are, in fact, a number of unambiguously clear descriptions of Mykenaian elements that are often cited by Homeric experts. What strikes me is that these occur exactly once in the poems and that they are usually accompanied by a striking, negative tone.

In Iliad VI, we find the most famous mention of a Mykenaian characteristic. The Lycian Glaukos tells the Greek Diomedes when bluffing about his origin about king Proitos, who sent Bellerophon to Lycia:

> *He sent him away to Lykia, and handed him murderous symbols, which he inscribed in a folding tablet, enough to destroy life, and told him to show it to his wife's father, that he might perish.*
> *(Iliad VI 168-170)*

This is the only mention of writing in the Homeric works, and the negative tone ("murderous" and "enough to destroy life") does not escape Homeric scholars. The most common explanation is that during the Dark Ages, when the knowledge of writing had been lost, a great distrust prevailed regarding the art of writing. Yet this passage cannot be separated from the other special references to Mykenaian characteristics.

In his reconstruction of the Homeric heroes, Connolly (1991) could only conclude that the enormous shield of Aias is a reference to the man-sized Mykenaian tower shields. In Iliad VII, we find the following description:

> *Now Aias came near him, carrying like a wall his shield of bronze and sevenfold ox-hide which Tychios wrought him with much toil; Tychios, at home in Hyle, far the best of all workers in leather who had made him the great gleaming shield of sevenfold ox-hide from strong bulls, and hammered an eighth fold of bronze upon it.*
> *(Iliad VII 219-223)*

Teukros, an archer and a companion of Aias, sometimes uses the giant shield to hide behind during archery. In addition, Aias pushes the shield aside whenever Teukros wants to shoot (Iliad VIII 265-270). Aias is the only hero with such a shield. All the other heroes, both Greeks and Trojans, have circular shields of normal proportions.

One of the most famous examples of a reference to a Mykenaian characteristic is the helmet with swine teeth (see Figure 3):

> *Meriones gave Odysseus a bow and a quiver and a sword; and he too put over his head a helmet fashioned of leather; on the inside the cap was cross-strung firmly with thongs of leather, and on the outer side the white teeth of a tusk-shining boar were close sewn one after another with craftsmanship and skill; and a felt was set in the center. Autolykos, breaking into the close-built house, had stolen it from Amyntor, the son of Ormenos, out of Eleon, and gave it to Kytherian Amphidamas, at Skandeia; Amphidamas gave it in turn to Molos, a gift of guest-friendship, and Molos gave it to his son Meriones to carry. But at this time it was worn to cover the head of Odysseus.*
> *(Iliad X 260-271)*

The fact that Autolykos stole the helmet makes this passage a parody of the classic digression about the descent of an heirloom. It can be seen as a

kind of warning that a helmet with boar teeth has a special status in the oral tradition.

Another clear example can be found in the Odyssey, which refers to a decorated bandolier:

> *There was a terrible belt crossed over his chest, and a golden baldrick, with marvelous works of art that figured upon it, bears, and lions with glaring eyes, and boars of the forests, the battles and the quarrels, the murders and the manslaughters. May he who artfully designed them, and artfully put them upon that baldrick, never again do any designing.*
> *(Odyssey XI 609-614)*

This description agrees well with the decorations on the Mykenaian dagger in Figure 5. Here, the negative tone is found in the adjective "terrible" and in the cursing of the artist who made the bandolier.

All these Mykenaian characteristics are unique exceptions that clearly differ from the rest of the Iliad. One possible explanation is that the Greek bards had to give a place to certain Mykenaian characteristics in the enormous wealth that made up their oral traditions. After all, the bards were also historians and geographers who passed on their knowledge to the next generations with the aid of this oral tradition. This is why the bards described certain Mykenaian characteristics in their stories but only in the form of a specialty that coincided with a kind of warning: this characteristic does not belong in the authentic narrative tradition. The unique mention of such didactic anatopism (an anachronism in the place) puts these Mykenaian characteristics in the right perspective. Possibly, they belonged to the Ionian Epsilon-tradition.

A lack of oralistic logic

Apart from these arguments, which have often been discussed among Homeric experts, there are a number of arguments based on what we know about oralism: the scientific domain of oral traditions. According to oralism, a bard will always use the oral techniques and characteristics he knows. What stands out then is that a considerable part of the Iliad is about the battle at a defensive rampart of earth and wood, but there is no mention of a battle at the

stone walls of Troy. My argument is this: if the Beta-tradition would have arisen during the Mykenaian period in Greece, then a series of the oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition would be about the siege of a stone fortress. In addition, the oral characteristics about the attack on a rampart of earth and wood would be absent. The oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition would then influence the stories of the Trojan War over the centuries, so we would expect different chapters in the Iliad in which the stone walls of Troy are attacked. The idea that a single bard—the legendary Homer—can completely reform these stories goes against the laws of oralism.

Three typical scenes are particularly expected in the case of a Mykenaian Beta-tradition: the surprise attack from the besieged castle; the bombarding of the attacking army from the battlements and the bastions; and the attack on the weak spots of the city. In all of the Iliad and the Odyssey, we find no example of a typical scene or a systematically occurring oral characteristic of one of these three types. Yet there are references in the Iliad and the Odyssey to such scenes, namely to the stories from the Trojan cycle in which Troy is attacked. The wooden Trojan horse filled with Greeks, for which the Trojans broke their gate to get it into their city, is the best example of this. We recognize several techniques here being used to attack a fortress of stone: the covered battering ram under which the attackers take shelter, the ruse to enter the city, the destruction of the stone walls and gates, and the chariot. Yet in the Iliad, we do not find the slightest hint of this pattern or even a reference to the Trojan horse. The only references to the Trojan horse in the Homeric works are found in the Odyssey and far beyond the context of the Beta-tradition.

A reference in the Iliad to an attack on the stone walls in the Trojan cycle can be found in the following words from Andromache to Hektor:

> *Please take pity upon me then, stay here on the rampart, that you may not leave your child an orphan, your wife a widow, but draw your people up by the fig tree, there where the city is openest to attack, and where the wall may be mounted. Three times their bravest came that way, and fought there to storm it about the two Aiantes.*
> *(Iliad VI 431-436)*

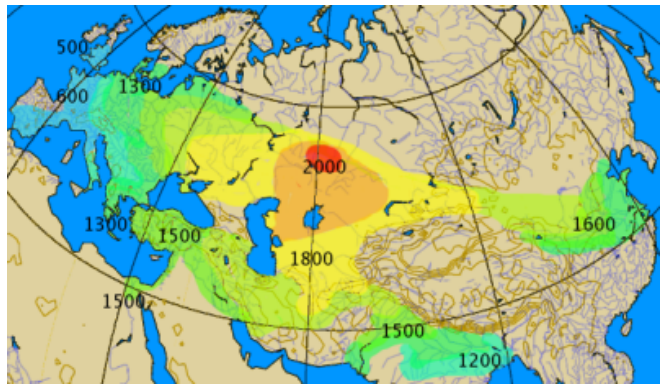

Figure 6: The historical and geographical distribution of the earliest use of chariots. Source: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Chariot_spread.png

The fact that this is only a reference to an instant before the Iliad begins confirms the pattern that oral characteristics have been excluded from the Iliad regarding the siege of a stone fortress. For most of its development in Greece, the Iliad seems to have been mainly a story of the Beta-tradition.

The non-Greek European bronze age

The European manner of fighting

After examining all the plausible origins of the Beta-tradition, only one candidate remains: the non-Greek European Bronze Age of the second millennium BC that laid between the Black Sea and the Atlantic west coasts of Europe. In this region, we find the ancestors of the Gauls: the Celts and the Scots. Because there were few drastic changes in this region, it is justified to assume that the manner of fighting during this time was similar to that of their Gallic and Celtic descendants. By means of the archeologically discovered weapons and burial gifts, we can deduce that there has been an uninterrupted heroic cult. The fact that chariots were used in the non-Greek Europe of the second millennium BC can be seen in Figure 6.

The way in which the Beta-tradition has spread to Greece is discussed in more detail in chapter 9. But for the time being, we can focus on the idea that the Beta-tradition, along with a series of other cultural characteristics, was forced upon the Greeks by the peoples of non-Greek Europe after the fall

of the Mykenaian Empire. This means that the Beta-tradition was present in Greece since around 1200 BC. Another possibility is that it spread via contact between Greece and non-Greek Europe.

In addition to the manner of fighting, there are two important similarities between the Beta-tradition in the Iliad and the archeological characteristics of non-Greek Europe in the Bronze Age: the funeral habits and the defense constructions being attacked. The funeral habits included burning of the corpses and the placing of the bones in an urn which would then be placed under a burial mound. For the defense constructions, these were made of ramparts of wood and earth, surrounded by a ditch over which there would be a bridge at the gate.

The European funeral habits

Just around the period of the fall of the Mykenaian Empire, around 1200 BC, we can see something remarkable happening in Central Europe. Until then, the Tumulus and Urnfield peoples were two separate peoples who conducted a funeral by the raising of a burial mound (or Tumulus) and the placement of the deceased's ashes in an urn, respectively. In this overcrowded region in Central Europe, where both came into contact with each other, they then switched to a combined practice: the ashes were placed in an urn, above which a burial mound was built. This combined practice is also found in the Iliad, as shown in the previous chapter. The similarity is so striking that an alternative theory about the origin of the Iliad is certainly welcome.

The European defense ramparts

In the non-Greek Europe of the second millennium BC, we also find settlements that were reinforced in the same way as the ship camp of the Greeks in the Beta-tradition: with ditches and ramparts consisting of a wooden framework and earth (see Figure 7 and Figure 8: Nitriansky Hradok in Slovakia and Biskupin in Poland, respectively). An example in the area in which the Tumulus culture merged with the Urnfield culture is the Wittnauer Horn (Aargau district, Swiss hill country near Germany). In Blučina (Czech Republic), the bodies of a hundred fighters who were killed in a bloody battle around such a rampart have been found. Probably, these fights occurred regularly and in scattered places in Central Europe. Apparently, there was little manpower left after the battle in Blučina to take care of the funeral because the corpses were buried on the spot in the ditch of the fortification and under

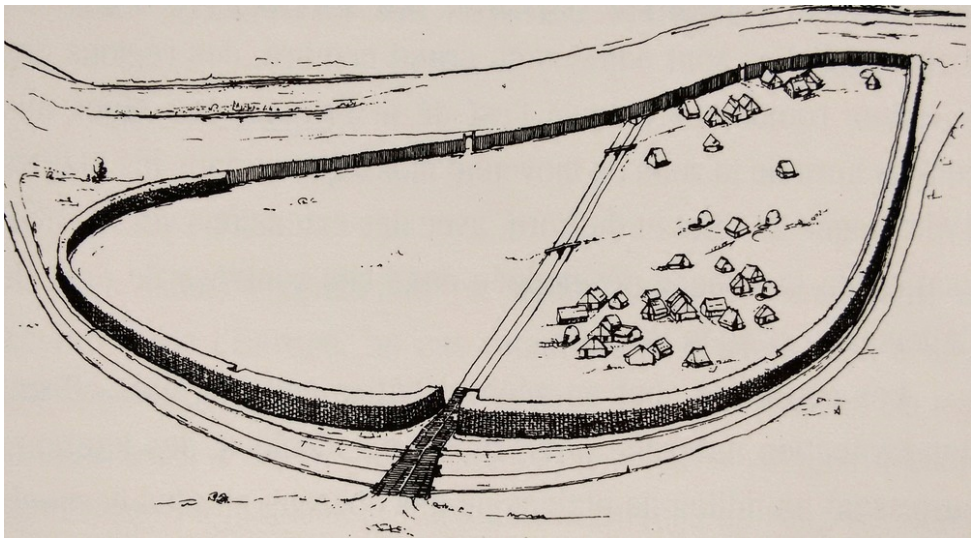

Figure 7: This is a reconstruction of the fortified site Nitriansky Hradok from the Bronze Age in Southwest Slovakia (Mohen 1999, p. 72). The bridge over the ditch that surrounds an earthen rampart is also present in the typical scene involving gathering up the army for the fight in the Beta-tradition.

the debris of the rampart. This gives us a unique view of the real historical background of the battles described in the Iliad.

Together, the manner of fighting, the ramparts of the strongholds, and the funeral habits provide a unique fingerprint of the geographical origin of the Beta-tradition. Only non-Greek Europe corresponds to these elements. However, before we continue with a detailed discussion of the forty-five oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition, it may be useful to get acquainted with the Beta-tradition through a series of passages from the Iliad. This is done in the next chapter.

Figure 8: This well-defensible village (Biskupin, Poland) from the Lausitz culture is a reconstructed excavation. Although it dates from around 500 BC, similar measures were taken in the second millennium BC to protect villages: ditches, ramparts, only a few gates, and building on heights or surrounded by water. Sometimes, there are traces of violence.

Chapter 4

An introduction to the Trojan cycle and the Iliad

This chapter examines where the Beta-tradition can be found in the Trojan cycle, the story cycle about the Trojan War. In particular, the plot development of the Iliad will be discussed by looking at passages that contain the Beta-tradition.

The prequel of the Iliad

The Cypria is the first story of the Trojan cycle, and it is immediately followed by the Iliad. It begins with the golden apple of discord that the goddess Eris threw at the wedding of Peleus and the goddess Thetis, the parents of Achilleus. The apple drops down in the midst of the goddesses, with Eris saying that the apple was for the most beautiful. The discord that arose between the gods because of this apple being thrown continued between the people on earth in the form of the Trojan War. The gods Athene, Hera, and Poseidon chose the camp of the Greeks, while Zeus, Aphrodite, and Apollo supported the Trojans.

The part of the story that explains how this occurred does not belong to the core of the Beta-tradition, however. The apple of discord is a motif that comes from the East, where Adam and Eve also argued with Yahweh over an apple. Nevertheless, some quarrels among the gods probably belong to the Beta-tradition. Therefore, let us start with the prequel of the Iliad from its beginning.

Twelve gods were invited to the wedding of the mortal Peleus and the goddess Thetis. Eris, the goddess of discord, was not invited as the thirteenth guest. Yet she came to the wedding and threw a golden apple that had the inscription "for the most beautiful" in the midst of the goddesses. Thus, she burdened the gods with the perilous task of deciding which of the goddesses was the most beautiful. Three goddesses fought for this honor: Athene, Aphrodite, and Hera. Zeus, the supreme god, was expected to make a judgment. Zeus quickly realized his problem, so he chose a mortal who had to decide. This mortal was Paris, the Trojan prince who himself was one of the most beautiful men on earth.

Aphrodite promised Paris a marriage with the most beautiful woman on earth if he chose her. In the power and the wisdom promised to him by Hera and Athene, the frivolous Paris was not interested. He gave the golden apple to Aphrodite, greatly angering the other two goddesses and setting up disaster for all Trojans. The most beautiful woman on earth was Helen, and she was already married to Menelaos, the ruler of Sparta and brother of the powerful Agamemnon.

Paris was not a brave fighter. If at all he appeared on the battlefield, it was with a bow so that he could hit the enemy from a safe distance. Paris appeared instead on the dance floor using a different kind of bow: the lyre. Paris robbed Helen in Sparta while Menelaos was absent. Along with many valuables, he led Helen onto his ship and took her to Troy.

The robbing of women and valuables is all part of the narrative content of the Beta-tradition. From here, the Beta-tradition starts off: the recruitment of the warriors, collecting together the recruited warriors, the journey to the battlefield, and the first encounter of the armies become the inevitable continuation. Menelaos informed his brother Agamemnon of Helen's robbery. He, in turn, passed along the message to all the Greek cities and sent heralds to the farthest corners to gather warriors. The old Nestor was sent to Phthia, where Peleus lived. Achilleus has been trained with the adopted Patroklos for the battle by their combat teacher Phoinix.

Achilleus did not join the Greek forces until later on when Agamemnon had already left for Troy. This was a first point of contention between the combative Achilleus and the proud army commander Agamemnon. Achilleus reproached Agamemnon for not having waited for him.

There is also an alternative anecdote about Achilleus. In Achilleus' childhood, his mother Thetis was so worried about him that she hid him in a girls' school when the Greeks recruited soldiers. But the crafty Odysseus

had a clever plan to find Achilleus. He laid a number of weapons in the girls' school and then blew the war trumpet. All the girls fled, except for Achilleus, who immediately armed himself for battle.

The Iliad

It was not until much later that the violent quarrel between Achilleus and Agamemnon was ignited. Achilleus had conquered many of the neighboring cities of Troy in the meantime and thereby had seized many slave girls. But after nine long years of war, the bravery of Achilleus turned into an indomitable anger. This is how the Iliad starts. We start at the beginning: the exordium about the anger of Achilleus:

> *Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians, hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting of dogs, of all birds, and the will of Zeus was accomplished since that time when first there stood in division of conflict Atreus' son the lord of men and brilliant Achilleus.*
> *(Iliad I 1-7)*

Atreus' son here denotes Agamemnon. He got into an argument with Achilleus and deprived him of his honor gift, the slave Briseis. Achilleus was angry about this and withdrew from battle. Not impressed, Agamemnon gathered together his troops again. The old Nestor urged him with the following words:

> *"Son of Atreus, most lordly and king of men, Agamemnon, let us talk no more of these things, nor for a long time set aside the action which the god puts into our hands now. Come then, let the heralds of the bronze-armored Achaians make proclamation to the people and assemble them by the vessels, and let us together as we are go down the wide host of the Achaians, to stir more quickly the fierce war god."*

He spoke, nor did the lord of men Agamemnon neglect him, but straightway commanded the clear-voiced heralds to summon by proclamation to battle the flowing-haired Achaians; and the heralds made their cry and the men were assembled swiftly. And they, the god-supported kings, about Agamemnon ran marshaling the men, and among them gray-eyed Athene holding the dear treasured aegis, ageless, immortal, from whose edges float a hundred all-golden tassels, each one carefully woven, and each worth a hundred oxen. With this fluttering she swept through the host of the Achaians urging them to go forward. She kindled the strength in each man's heart to take the battle without respite and keep on fighting. And now battle became sweeter to them than to go back in their hollow ships to the beloved land of their fathers.
(Iliad II 434-454)

The precious aegis fits well in the picture of a small meeting on a battlefield where both parties try to bluff each other. The captain—in this case the goddess Athene—went first and held up the aegis.

When the army was lined up, all the leaders were checked one by one. Their name and descent, the region where they came from, and the size of the regiment that they presented were all mentioned. With the Trojan War as the background, the size of the army was measured by the number of ships with which the leader had sailed to Troy:

Swift Aias son of Oïleus led the men of Lokris, the lesser Aias, not great in size like the son of Telamon, but far slighter. He was a small man armored in linen, yet with the throwing spear surpassed all Achaians and Hellenes. These were the dwellers in Kynos and Opoeis and Kalliaros, and in Bessa, and Skarphe, and lovely Augeiai, in Thronion and Tarphe and beside the waters of Boagrios. Following along with him were forty black ships of the Lokrians, who dwell across from sacred Euboia.
(Iliad II 527-535)

This is a small part of the famous catalogue of ships, and dozens of regiments are mentioned in this way. As we will see in chapter 6, the catalogue of ships forms part of the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight.

When the Greeks had set up their army, they went to battle. The Trojans saw them coming, and they also took up their weapons. Both armies met before the ramparts of Troy. Paris (also called Alexandros), the great sinner who had robbed the wife of Menelaos, went before the ranks:

> *Menelaos was happy finding godlike Alexandros there in front of his eyes, and thinking to punish the robber, straightway in all his armor he sprang to the ground from his chariot. But Alexandros the godlike when he saw Menelaos showing among the champions, the heart was shaken within him; to avoid death he shrank into the host of his own companions.*
> *(Iliad III 27-32)*

Hektor, the greatest hero of the Trojans, saw his brother Paris disappear. He called him so that Paris would have to agree to a personal duel between him and Menelaos. This was followed by a ceremony in which both parties determined what would happen if the duel was decided.

Paris, who was better at dancing than competing, lost the game. After throwing spears and a short sword fight, Paris was lying powerless on the ground:

> *Flashing forward he laid hold of the horse-haired helmet and spun him about, and dragged him away toward the strong-greaved Achaians, for the broidered strap under the softness of his throat strangled Paris, fastened under his chin to hold on the horned helmet. Now he would have dragged him away and won glory forever had not Aphrodite daughter of Zeus watched sharply. She broke the chinstrap, made from the hide of a slaughtered bullock, and the helmet came away empty in the heavy hand of Atreides. The hero whirled the helmet about and sent it flying among the strong-greaved Achaians, and his staunch companions retrieved it. He turned and made again for his man, determined to kill him with the bronze spear. But Aphrodite caught up Paris easily, since she was divine, and wrapped him in a thick mist and set him down again in his own perfumed bedchamber.*
> *(Iliad III 369-382)*

What followed was the first bedroom scene in the Iliad, in which Paris shares a bed with Helen. The Greeks were still in full armor outside the ramparts and demanded Helen back. To prevent the war from ending prematurely, the gods plotted; they persuaded another warrior, Pandaros, who shares many similarities with Paris, to shoot an arrow at Menelaos. Athene descended among the fighters, and she also ensured that Pandaros' shot was only a harmless, grazing shot. When the Greeks saw the bleeding Menelaos, they again declared war on the Trojans.

After the armies were re-established for battle, Agamemnon walked past the ranks to encourage his warriors. When he came to Diomedes and his driver, Sthenelos, he reprimanded them for their wait-and-see attitude. Sthenelos protested, but Diomedes urged his driver to remain silent:

> *"Friend, stay quiet rather and do as I tell you; I will find no fault with Agamemnon, shepherd of the people, for stirring thus into battle the strong-greaved Achaians; this will be his glory to come, if ever the Achaians cut down the men of Troy and capture sacred Ilion. If the Achaians are slain, then his will be the great sorrow. Come, let you and me remember our fighting courage." He spoke and leapt in all his gear to the ground from the chariot, and the bronze armor girt to the chest of the king clashed terribly as he sprang. Fear would have gripped even a man stout-hearted.*
> *(Iliad IV 412-421)*

It is significant that Diomedes jumped from his chariot just before the start of the battle. As we shall see later, the impressive noise that he made is even a part of the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight. This shows the way actual chariots were used: they served as a bluff for the first encounter, but for the real fight, the warriors jumped off. Not much later, the fight began:

> *Antilochos was first to kill a chief man of the Trojans, valiant among the champions, Thalysias' son, Echepolos. Throwing first, he struck the horn of the horse-haired helmet, and the bronze spearpoint fixed in his forehead and drove inward through the bone; and a mist of darkness clouded both eyes and he fell as*

a tower falls in the strong encounter. As he dropped, Elephenor the powerful caught him by the feet, Chalkodon's son, and lord of the great-hearted Abantes, and dragged him away from under the missiles, striving in all speed to strip the armor from him, yet his outrush went short-lived. For as he hauled the corpse high-hearted Agenor, marking the ribs that showed bare under the shield as he bent over, stabbed with the bronze-pointed spear and unstrung his sinews. So the spirit left him and over his body was fought out weary work by Trojans and Achaians, who like wolves sprang upon one another, with man against man in the onfall.
(Iliad IV 457-472)

Countless verses in the Iliad are arranged in this seemingly monotonous style. For those who study these verses well and learn to distinguish all sorts of typical scenes in them, these verses quickly become a fascinating whole; they give us a glimpse into a warrior society that once must have existed.

The battle still takes a while, after which the focus shifts to a single hero, Diomedes. Diomedes then conducted a triumphant raid in which he killed many enemies. Typical of the Beta-tradition is the bright glare that shone from Diomedes:

There to Tydeus' son Diomedes Pallas Athene granted strength and daring, that he might be conspicuous among all the Argives and win the glory of valor. She made weariless fire blaze from his shield and helmet like that star of the waning summer who beyond all stars rises bathed in the ocean stream to glitter in brilliance. Such was the fire she made blaze from his head and his shoulders and urged him into the middle fighting, where most were struggling.
(Iliad V 1-8)

Diomedes attacked numerous Trojans but eventually hesitated when he was met by the god Ares himself. He stopped by his chariot to cool his wounds until Athene came to encourage him. With the help of Athene, Diomedes used his spear to strike Ares in his stomach. The god shouted "with a sound as great as nine thousand men make, or ten thousand, when they cry as they carry into the fighting" (Iliad V 860-861).

The fight then went on and on until Zeus became seriously involved in the battle. That he was the almighty ruler of people and gods can be seen from the following passage:

> *Now Dawn the yellow-robed scattered over all the earth. Zeus who joys in the thunder made an assembly of all the immortals upon the highest peak of rugged Olympos. There he spoke to them himself, and the other divinities listened: "Hear me, all you gods and all you goddesses: hear me while I speak forth what the heart within my breast urges. Now let no female divinity, nor male god either, presume to cut across the way of my word, but consent to it all of you, so that I can make an end in speed of these matters. And anyone I perceive against the gods' will attempting to go among the Trojans and help them, or among the Danaäns, he shall go whipped against his dignity back to Olympos; or I shall take him and dash him down to the murk of Tartaros, far below, where the uttermost depth of the pit lies under earth, where there are gates of iron and a brazen doorstone, as far beneath the house of Hades as from earth the sky lies. Then he will see how far I am strongest of all the immortals."*
> *(Iliad VIII 1-17)*

The Greeks soon realized that they no longer had the support of the gods. Diomedes had just saved the old Nestor from the heat of the battle. Yet he wanted to rage and fight against the Trojans again. This turned out to be against the will of the supreme god:

> *He thundered horribly and let loose the shimmering lightning and dashed it to the ground in front of the horses of Diomedes and a ghastly blaze of flaming sulfur shot up, and the horses terrified both cringed away against the chariot. And the glittering reins escaped out of the hands of Nestor, and he was afraid in his heart and called out to Diomedes: "Son of Tydeus, steer now to flight your single-foot horses. Can you not see that the power of Zeus no longer is with you? For the time Zeus, son of Kronos, gives glory to this man; for today; hereafter, if he will, he will give it to*

us also; no man can beat back the purpose of Zeus, not even one very strong, since Zeus is by far the greater."
(Iliad VIII 133-144)

The Greeks were forced to withdraw in their walled ship camp. The Trojans occupied the plain outside, driving Agamemnon to despair. Late at night, at a meeting of the Greeks, Agamemnon spoke as follows:

Friends, who are leaders of the Argives and keep their counsel: Zeus son of Kronos has caught me badly in bitter futility. He is hard: who before this time promised me and consented that I might sack strong-walled Ilion and sail homeward. Now he has devised a vile deception and bids me go back to Argos in dishonor having lost many of my people. Such is the way it will be pleasing to Zeus, who is too strong, who before now has broken the crests of many cities and will break them again, since his power is beyond all others. Come then, do as I say, let us all be won over; let us run away with our ships to the beloved land of our fathers since no longer now shall we capture Troy of the wide ways.
(Iliad IX 17-28 = Iliad II 110-118 + Iliad II 139-141)

These exact same words had been used by Agamemnon before gathering up the army for the fight in Iliad II. Then, he wanted to put his army to the test. Here, in Iliad IX, it is bitter seriousness. Nestor, the oldest and wisest among the fighters, gave advice:

No one shall have in his mind any thought that is better than this one that I have in my mind either now or long before now ever since that day, illustrious, when you went from the shelter of angered Achilleus, taking by force the girl Briseis against the will of the rest of us, since I for my part urged you strongly not to, but you, giving way to your proud heart's anger, dishonored a great man, one whom the immortals honor, since you have taken his prize and keep it. But let us even now think how we can make this good and persuade him with words of supplication and with the gifts of friendship.
(Iliad IX 104-113)

It was decided to send an embassy to the tent of Achilleus. Many precious gifts were promised to him if he gave up his anger. It did not help. Achilleus stubbornly refused to fight again. He even threatened to sail away with his entire army:

> *You will see, if you have a mind to it and if it concerns you, my ships in the dawn at sea on the Hellespont where the fish swarm and my men manning them with good will to row. If the glorious shaker of the earth should grant us a favoring passage on the third day thereafter we might raise generous Phthia. I have many possessions there that I left behind when I came here on this desperate venture, and from here there is more gold, and red bronze, and fair-girdled women, and gray iron I will take back; all that was allotted to me. But my prize: he who gave it, powerful Agamemnon, son of Atreus, has taken it back again.*
> *(Iliad IX 359-368)*

With this evening's intermezzo in the tent of Achilleus, the Beta-tradition has built in a pause between the battle passages. However, the battle resumed the next morning. It starts with a nice illustration of the typical scene about gathering up the army for the fight:

> *Then he caught up two strong spears edged with sharp bronze and the brazen heads flashed far from him deep into heaven. And Hera and Athene caused a crash of thunder about him, doing honor to the lord of deep-golden Mykenai.*
>
> *Thereupon each man gave orders to his charioteer to rein in the horses once again by the ditch, in good order, while they themselves, dismounted and armed in their war gear, swept onward to the ditch, and their incessant clamor rose up in the morning. In battle array they came to the ditch well ahead of the horseman and the horseman followed a little behind. And the son of Kronos drove down the evil turmoil upon them, and from aloft cast down dews dripping blood from the sky, since he was minded to hurl down a multitude of strong heads to the house of Hades.*

On the other side of the ditch at the break of the plain the Trojans gathered about tall Hektor and stately Poulydamas and Aineias, honored by Trojans in their countryside as a god is, and the three sons of Antenor, Polybos, and brilliant Agenor, and Akamas, a young man still, in the likeness of the immortals. And Hektor carried the perfect circle of his shield in the foremost, as among the darkened clouds the bale star shows forth in all shining, then merges again in the clouds and the darkness. So Hektor would at one time be shining among the foremost, and then once more urging on the last, and complete in bronze armor glittered like the thunder-flash of Zeus of the aegis, our father.
(Iliad XI 43-66)

After this typical scene, Agamemnon achieved great fame during his long and triumphant raid. Yet Zeus decided again to oppress the Greeks. Many of the bravest Greeks were wounded, and the Trojans threatened to set fire to the Greek ships. The help of Achilleus became increasingly urgent. In the end, it was Patroklos, the bosom friend of Achilleus, who tried to persuade him. Crying of the scenes he had seen, he arrived at Achilleus' tent. Achilleus received Patroklos with the following words:

"Why then are you crying like some poor little girl, Patroklos, who runs after her mother and begs to be picked up and carried, and clings to her dress, and holds her back when she tries to hurry, and gazes tearfully into her face, until she is picked up? You are like such a one, Patroklos, dropping these soft tears. Could you have some news to tell, for me or the Myrmidons? Have you, and nobody else, received some message from Phthia? Yet they tell me Aktor's son Menoitios lives still and Aiakos' son Peleus lives still among the Myrmidons. If either of these died we should take it hard. Or is it the Argives you are mourning over, and how they are dying against the hollow ships by reason of their own arrogance? Tell me, do not hide it in your mind, and so we shall both know."

Then groaning heavily, Patroklos the rider, you answered: "Son of Peleus, far greatest of the Achaians, Achilleus, do not be angry; such grief has fallen upon the Achaians. For all those who were

before the bravest in battle are lying up among the ships with arrow or spear wounds. The son of Tydeus, strong Diomedes, was hit by an arrow, and Odysseus has a pike wound, and Agamemnon the spear-famed, and Eurypylos has been wounded in the thigh with an arrow. And over these the healers skilled in medicine are working to cure their wounds. But you, Achilleus; who can do anything with you? May no such anger take me as this that you cherish! Cursed courage. What other man born hereafter shall be advantaged unless you beat aside from the Argives this shameful destruction? Pitiless: the rider Peleus was never your father nor Thetis was your mother, but it was the gray sea that bore you and the towering rocks, so sheer the heart in you is turned from us.
(Iliad XVI 6-35)

Achilleus was impressed by Patroklos' argument but did not give up his anger yet. He agreed with the special proposal from Patroklos, namely that Patroklos would go to war in Achilleus' armor. The Trojans would then think that Achilleus had given up his anger and flee. Achilleus' men, the Myrmidons, went to battle under the leadership of Patroklos and beat the Trojans back; they chased the Trojans in the direction of Troy, with Patroklos killing many enemies. But this fame was short-lived:

And Patroklos charged with evil intention in on the Trojans. Three times he charged in with the force of the running war god, screaming a terrible cry, and three times he cut down nine men; but as for the fourth time he swept in, like something greater than human, there, Patroklos, the end of your life was shown forth, since Phoibos came against you there in the strong encounter dangerously, nor did Patroklos see him as he moved through the battle, and shrouded in a deep mist came in against him and stood behind him, and struck his back and his broad shoulders with a flat stroke of the hand so that his eyes spun. Phoibos Apollo now struck away from his head the helmet four-horned and hollow-eyed, and under the feet of the horses it rolled clattering, and the plumes above it were defiled by blood and dust.
(Iliad XVI 783-796)

After Patroklos was beaten by the god Apollo, he was wounded by the spear of Euphorbos. In the end, it was Hektor who delivered the final blow:

> *But Hektor, when he saw high-hearted Patroklos trying to get away, saw how he was wounded with the sharp javelin, came close against him across the ranks, and with the spear stabbed him in the depth of the belly and drove the bronze clean through. He fell, thunderously, to the horror of all the Achaian people.*
> *(Iliad XVI 818-822)*

After the death of Patroklos, a fight arose around his corpse. Menelaos first protected the corpse alone, but eventually, he had to give way to the superior numbers:

> *Menelaos backed away from them and left the dead man, but kept turning on his way like some great bearded lion when dogs and men drive him off from a steading with weapons and shouts, and in the breast of the lion the strong heart of valor freezes, and he goes reluctant away from the fenced ground. So fair-haired Menelaos moved from Patroklos, but turning stood fast when he had got back to the swarm of his own companions, and looked all about for huge Aias, the son of Telamon, and saw soon where he was, at the left of the entire battle encouraging his companions and urging them into the fighting, since Phoibos Apollo had smitten them all with unearthly terror. He went on the run, and presently stood beside him and spoke to him: "This way, Aias, we must make for fallen Patroklos to try if we can carry back to Achilleus the body which is naked; Hektor of the shining helm has taken his armor."*
> *(Iliad XVII 108-122)*

The corpse of Patroklos would eventually be saved from the hands of the Trojans thanks to Aias. When Achilleus was informed about the death of Patroklos, he was overcome with anger and grief. He cursed Hektor and gave up his anger against Agamemnon to kill Hektor. Because he no longer had any armor himself, he asked his divine mother Thetis for new weapons. She visited Hephaistos, the god of forging. In this way, Achilleus could go to war

with new weapons:

> *Brilliant Achilleus helmed him. A clash went from the grinding of his teeth, and his eyes glowed as if they were the stare of a fire, and the heart inside him was entered with sorrow beyond endurance. Raging at the Trojans he put on the gifts of the god, that Hephaistos wrought him with much toil. First he placed along his legs the fair greaves linked with silver fastenings to hold the greaves at the ankles. Afterward he girt on about his chest the corselet, and across his shoulders slung the sword with the nails of silver, a bronze sword, and caught up the great shield, huge and heavy next, and from it the light glimmered far, as from the moon. And as when from across water a light shines to mariners from a blazing fire, when the fire is burning high in the mountains in a desolate steading, as the mariners are carried unwilling by storm winds over the fish-swarming sea, far away from their loved ones; so the light from the fair elaborate shield of Achilleus shot into the high air.*
> *(Iliad XIX 364-380)*

The Trojans could not stand against Achilleus. He drove them all the way back from the ships, sending them back to Troy, killing many in the attack. The Trojans who escaped Achilleus fled within the ramparts of the city. Only Hektor was too proud to flee within the city. He waited for Achilleus and dueled him. When he threw and missed his spear, Hektor realized that the battle was lost:

> *"But now my death is upon me. Let me at least not die without a struggle, inglorious, but do some big thing first, that men to come shall know of it."*
>
> *So he spoke, and pulling out the sharp sword that was slung at the hollow of his side, huge and heavy, and gathering himself together, he made his swoop, like a high-flown eagle who launches himself out of the murk of the clouds on the flat land to catch away a tender lamb or a shivering hare; so Hektor made his swoop, swinging his sharp sword, and Achilleus charged, the heart within*

him loaded with savage fury. In front of his chest the beautiful elaborate great shield covered him, and with the glittering helm with four horns he nodded; the lovely golden fringes were shaken about it which Hephaistos had driven close along the horn of the helmet. And as a star moves among stars in the night's darkening, Hesper, who is the fairest star who stands in the sky, such was the shining from the pointed spear Achilleus was shaking in his right hand with evil intention toward brilliant Hektor. He was eyeing Hektor's splendid body, to see where it might best give way, but all the rest of the skin was held in the armor, brazen and splendid, he stripped when he cut down the strength of Patroklos; yet showed where the collar-bones hold the neck from the shoulders, the throat, where death of the soul comes most swiftly; in this place brilliant Achilleus drove the spear as he came on in fury, and clean through the soft part of the neck the spearpoint was driven. Yet the ash spear heavy with bronze did not sever the windpipe, so that Hektor could still make exchange of words spoken.
(Iliad XXII 303-329)

Hektor begged Achilleus in his last breaths to exchange his body for a high ransom so that the Trojans could weep and burn him. Achilleus refused this and dragged Hektor's body through the dust, but the gods kept the body from being damaged. Then, they even sent Thetis, the mother of Achilleus, to the Greek tent camp to change Achilleus' mind. Under these circumstances, Priam, Hektor's father, arrived at Achilleus' tent and begged him:

"Achilleus like the gods, remember your father, one who is of years like mine, and on the door-sill of sorrowful old age. And they who dwell nearby encompass him and afflict him, nor is there any to defend him against the wrath, the destruction. Yet surely he, when he hears of you and that you are still living, is gladdened within his heart and all his days he is hopeful that he will see his beloved son come home from the Troad. But for me, my destiny was evil. I have had the noblest of sons in Troy, but I say not one of them is left to me. Fifty were my sons, when the sons of the Achaians came here. Nineteen were born to me from the womb

> *of a single mother, and other women bore the rest in my palace; and of these violent Ares broke the strength in the knees of most of them, but one was left me who guarded my city and people, that one you killed a few days since as he fought in defense of his country, Hektor; for whose sake I come now to the ships of the Achaians to win him back from you, and I bring you gifts beyond number. Honor then the gods, Achilleus, and take pity upon me remembering your father, yet I am still more pitiful; I have gone through what no other mortal on earth has gone through; I put my lips to the hands of the man who has killed my children."*
> *(Iliad XXIV 486-506)*

Here, we come again to the usefulness of brave sons in a clan society; they serve to protect the clan's possessions against residents, which can be read as "neighboring clans." An old father without sons is pitiable.

Achilleus was persuaded and accepted the large ransom. Priam returned with the corpse and brought it inside the ramparts of Troy. The Trojans wept for ten days, after which the body was burnt and placed in a urn under a burial mound.

The sequel of the Iliad

The story of Troy is finished outside the Iliad in the other stories of the Trojan cycle. Those stories have, unfortunately, not been preserved, save for the Odyssey. We know their summary, though, through other sources. In this way, we also learn more about the invincibility of Achilleus. Thetis tried to immortalize Achilleus in his early youth by hanging him above a fire.[1] But when she held him over the flame, she grasped him by his left foot. In this way, Achilleus became completely invincible, except for the famous "Achilles tendon." Exactly there, Achilleus was struck by an arrow from Paris. Achilleus died from his injury.

Despite the death of Achilleus, the Greeks still won the war. This is largely because of the stratagem that Odysseus had invented. He had a large wooden horse built. Using the wooden horse, the Greeks acted as if they gave up the battle and carried away their ships. In the hollow horse, however, a dozen brave Greeks were hiding. The feasting Trojans broke their city walls

[1] According to another story, she dipped him in the river Styx.

to bring the horse inside the ramparts. When all the Trojans were drunk and asleep, the Greeks jumped out of the horse and slaughtered the Trojans, hence the symbolism of the "Trojan horse."

After this overview of the Beta-tradition, we can go more in depth into the Iliad. In the next chapter, the oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition are listed and discussed one by one.

Chapter 5

The oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition

The Beta-tradition includes both the highlights in the narrative, such as the discussions between the protagonists, and the most monotonous battle scenes. In the previous chapter, we can see the direction of Zeus, who decides how the story will proceed. He uses his power over the other gods, who often appear on the battlefield in person.

In the unwinding of the events in the Iliad, we arrive at many oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition. First, the army is gathered up, and the captains are described in full glory. The armies meet, after which the fighters jump off their chariots and attack each other with words and bluffs. This is followed by a duel, the outcome of which is the outcome of the total battle between the two armies. The fighters provoke each other with reproaches.

All these elements are oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition. Here, an oral characteristic is a feature that characterizes the narratives of a particular oral tradition. By enumerating all the oral characteristics, we can obtain a fingerprint of the oral tradition. A list of about fifty oral characteristics has also been established for the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. The different lists show the differences between these oral traditions.

The distinction with the societal background

The list of oral characteristics in this chapter describes two aspects in parallel: the Beta-tradition in the Homeric era and the historic Beta-society from the non-Greek European Bronze Age. These two, the oral tradition and the

society, are slightly separated. For example, the enormous masses of warriors form an oral characteristic of the Beta-tradition. As has been shown in chapter 2, the social background, though, is rather one of small-scale fights. Fighting while riding a chariot is also a characteristic of the Beta-tradition but not of the historic Beta-society. We must assume here that the bards of the Beta-tradition liked to exaggerate in their performances. Still, the bards were able to make the distinction between true descriptions and exaggerations. When they worked out a scene in more depth, they tended to use the true model.

The forty-five oral characteristics

Now, let us go one step further and give a full description of the Beta-tradition and its social background by using thirty-eight common oral characteristics and seven typical scenes:

1. **The battle scene**
   A bard who improvises the battle passages of the Beta-tradition imagines himself as a spectator on a battlefield where two hostile armies fight in a battle to the death. The warriors bombard each other with spears, sword, bow and arrow, or even with heavy stones. The battlefield is a plain that can be bounded by rivers or defense ramparts. Sometimes, the bard gives vague information about the location such as “to the left of the battlefield” or “at the front of the rampart.” Yet the battle is usually a disorderly tangle.
   (Iliad IV 457, Iliad XIII 305, Iliad XXI 521)

2. **The gruesome injuries**
   The most gruesome injuries are described in detail. Viscera flow out, and bloody brains and severed heads fly around. Even pierced intestines are called by name.
   (Iliad XII 185, Iliad XIII 204, Iliad XIV 467)

3. **The chariots**
   The Beta-tradition presents a detailed picture of the chariot. Next to the warrior is a driver who controls the two horses that pull the chariot. Sometimes, a third horse is mentioned, which probably serves as a replacement for a wounded horse. The hero can throw his spear while driving, but often, he jumps off to fight with sword. In this case, the

driver must wait on the spot or follow the warrior closely with the horses. If the warrior is wounded on foot, he seeks refuge with his driver. Also, slain warriors and robbed armor are sometimes taken away with a chariot. Finally, the chariot is used to pursue the fleeing enemy.
(Iliad VI 40, Iliad VIII 86, Iliad XIX 392)

4. **Progressive typical scenes**
   The progress in the Iliad comes on account of the progressive typical scenes of the Beta-tradition: the start of the battle, a duel, a meeting, a change in the tide of battle, and so on. Gathering up the army for the fight is strongly developed within the Beta-tradition. Among others, the catalogue of ships and Iliad VI have grown out of this progressive typical scene.
   (Iliad II 441, Iliad III 1, Iliad XI 1)

5. **Thematic typical scenes**
   A particularly interesting finding about the Beta-tradition is the presence of six thematic typical scenes that are related to the major themes in the Iliad: the warrior in need and the helper; the warrior who blames his companion; the cowardly archer; the withheld honor gift; the resentful warrior; and fame for the father. Many of these thematic, typical scenes are still hard to spot because they have been distorted over time. Sometimes, they are also mixed, and we find the characteristics of several of these in a single passage.
   (Iliad V 166-178, Iliad VIII 266-329, Iliad XIII 246-332)

6. **The intervention of the gods**
   The gods have their darlings on the battlefield. When a hero is in great distress, he always has an asset in the form of a god as a last resort. A god can descend on the battlefield and give him physical support. An often-used method is to wrap the hero in a cloud and remove him from the emergency. If necessary, the hero is even cared for by the gods.
   (Iliad V 445, Iliad XVII 562, Iliad XX 330)

7. **The duels**
   The fight is mainly one of man against man. Sometimes, all the warriors stop the fight, save for two significant warriors who compete against each other in a direct duel. This duel is then supposed to be decisive for both armies. Throughout the entire battle, the bard focuses on the duels

between great heroes.
(Iliad III 70, Iliad VII 42, Iliad XVII 9)

8. **The clan system**
   Passingly, descriptions of the fighters and their mutual relations make it clear that they belong to warrior clans. At the head of a clan is a godfather who has many wives and concubines. The godfather's power is proportional to the number of his sons, sons-in-law, and bastard sons who are willing to fight for the clan. In the battle, these sons try to prove themselves as much as possible so that they are held in high esteem by the godfather and his eldest son, the successor of the clan. In this way, they receive their first gifts in the form of one or more women, a house within the ramparts of the stronghold, the status of chariot driver, or valuables.

   A clan also has a combat teacher who educates the boys and who serves as counsel in the war.
   (Iliad XIII 368, Iliad XXI 95, Iliad XXIV 495)

9. **The combat psychology**
   The brave warriors are driven by a fighting spirit and the desire for fame. The cowards are trapped between the fear of revenge and the fear of not becoming fully respected within their clan. This balance can explain the battle scenes that we read in the Iliad. We see a similar battle psychology today in video recordings of hooligans fighting each other. The rapid alternation between fight and flight and the varying relentlessness of the battle is characteristic of such battles. Therefore, it is an important achievement to teach the enemy a lesson for the future. Total victory over a clan is achieved by killing its army.
   (Iliad IV 305, Iliad IV 505, Iliad XIV 81)

10. **The fixed formulas**
    In the battle passages, we find many fixed formulas, such as the ones that describe the death of a warrior—"a mist of darkness clouded both eyes"—to incite other fighters—"be men now, dear friends, remember your furious valor"—or a call—"Trojans, Lykians, Dardanians who fight at close quarters." The Beta-tradition seems to have little character at the level of the vocabulary, like words for descriptions of soil types that are typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition.
    (Iliad IV 461, Iliad XIII 150, Iliad XIV 452)

11. **The duo of brave warriors**
    Some fighters regularly operate as a duo in battle. Some examples are Diomedes and Odysseus, Achilleus and Patroklos, Menelaos and Antilochos, the two Aiantes, and also Aias and Teukros. These duos often figure as the main characters of the many typical scenes in the Beta-tradition. As a result, they can show themselves in various roles, such as chariot fighter versus driver, father versus son, old versus young, or brave versus coward. This does not alter the fact that certain characters have a preferential role, such as Diomedes and Antilochos as the youngsters and Nestor as the father figure. Yet these roles will also sometimes change because as main characters, they have grown into more-rounded characters.
    (Iliad VIII 267, Iliad XI 312, Iliad XIII 201)

12. **Robbing the armor, the horses, or a corpse**
    When a warrior kills an enemy, he leaps for the corpse to strip it of its armor. In doing so, he increases his personal fame. If the dead is a famous hero, then the victor sometimes tries to rob the whole corpse. The bloodhorses and the precious chariot of the great heroes are also salable war booty. Such robberies have often developed into typical scenes in the Iliad and the Trojan cycle, such as those in which the Odysseus–Diomedes duo plays a leading role. The Menelaos–Antilochos duo also robs horses and a chariot.
    (Iliad V 589, Iliad XII 195, Iliad XIII 197)

13. **The godfathers and the bastard sons**
    The godfathers who are in charge of the stronghold have numerous sons. They have these sons thanks to several concubines, but also thanks to the adoption of bastard sons with whom they have no blood ties. These bastard sons are brought within the ramparts of the stronghold at a young age and trained by a combat teacher. They become, so to speak, part of the family, and in the fight, all brothers, half-brothers, and bastard brothers put their lives at stake to protect the stronghold.
    (Iliad IV 499, Iliad VIII 284, Iliad XI 103)

14. **The direction of Zeus**
    Zeus is the almighty supreme god who decides who wins the battle and who loses it. He also has control over the course of the battle. Thus, Zeus forbids the other gods in Iliad VIII through XX to take part in the battle. It is also he who keeps letting the Greeks be defeated over and

over.
(Iliad VIII 397, Iliad XII 173, Iliad XV 4)

15. **The fight for a corpse**
When a warrior dies, there is often a fight within the fight: the killer tries to rob the corpse, while the friends and the family of the dead try to retrieve the corpse to take back to their own camp. Certainly, if the dead had been held in high regard, the bet is much higher. Often, there are many extra deaths during that fight. Just as for the robbery of the armor, the killer wants to increase his fame and gain the ransom that the enemy will want to pay after the battle.
(Iliad IV 467, Iliad XIV 471, Iliad XVII 13)

16. **The highborn champions**
In the Beta-tradition, it is the members with the highest nobility who are the bravest in the fight. They set the example for the footmen and the lesser fighters, who support the noble chariot fighters in the back. The nobles also enjoyed the best training as fighters, and the revenge that follows their death makes them inviolable. Because of their high position, they can also make bluffs. These brave warriors are also keenly aware of the honorable way in which they will be remembered when they die in the battle. Returning alive and healthy to the stronghold after a lost battle is a nightmare for them because they will be viewed as cowards within their clan.
(Iliad IV 297, Iliad VII 162, Iliad XIII 119)

17. **The chase and the flight**
The tide of the battle can change quickly, and it often happens that one of the two parties flees and is pursued by the other party. Chariots are used both in the pursuit and in the flight. The last men of the fleeing party are killed.
(Iliad VIII 94, Iliad XI 178, Iliad XVI 283)

18. **The triumphant raid of a single hero**
The narrative regularly focuses on the exploits of a single, eminent warrior. This warrior makes a whole series of deaths among the enemy. Usually, the enemy is on the run during such an episode. This triumphant raid is called “aristeia” in Greek.
(Iliad V 1, Iliad XI 92, Iliad XVI 284)

19. **Bluff, scorn, and reproach**
    The warriors on the battlefield are not nice to each other. The enemy is showered with bluffs and insults before an attack and scorn after the attack. When an enemy is killed, the killer boasts about it out loud. The enemy also boasts about successes in a previous encounter. Warriors from their own camp, on the other hand, are often accused of being inadequate in the fight.
    (Iliad VIII 163, Iliad XIV 501, Iliad XVI 619)

20. **The warrior who does not fight**
    The theme of a hero who does not fight is a good main theme for a story. The main theme of the Iliad developed from this. There are several reasons why a warrior will stay behind while the rest of the warriors are on the battlefield. We find the warrior who is angry with the clan leader, the warrior who is wounded, the warrior who is still too young, the warrior who must steer the horses, the warrior who is a coward, the warrior without horses, and the warrior with broken weapons or is completely without weapons. This oral characteristic could possibly also be regarded as a thematic typical scene.
    (Iliad II 769, Iliad VI 326, Iliad XIII 250)

21. **The shiny light around the great hero**
    A hero who is described in all of his glory will always be surrounded by a brilliant light. Sometimes, it is even a god who lights up this fire around the hero.
    (Iliad V 4, Iliad XI 44, Iliad XVIII 211)

22. **The blood revenge**
    Friend and enemy on the battlefield are no strangers to each other. They have met each other in the past, and they are sometimes on the look-out to take revenge on a warrior who killed a family member. When someone sees a relative die, he immediately retaliates. A warrior from a large family is therefore better secured in a fight.
    (Iliad XI 250, Iliad XIII 464, Iliad XIV 485)

23. **The sons-in-law**
    The many daughters of the clan leader can also contribute to the size of the army that protects the clan. Their husbands must swear allegiance to the clan leader in exchange for the daughter's hand. These sons-in-

law also go into battle.
(Iliad XIII 173, Iliad XIII 376, Iliad XIII 429)

24. **The rampart and the ditch**
The frequent mention of the ditch before the rampart of wood and earth, which the Greeks built on the Trojan coast, is connected to passages from the Beta-tradition. This oral characteristic is so well integrated in the narrations of the Beta-tradition that it dates back to stories in which such a rampart and a ditch protected a stronghold or a city instead of the ship camp seen with the Greeks in the Iliad. It is an important factor when searching for the origin of the Beta-tradition.
(Iliad VIII 255, Iliad XI 48, Iliad XVIII 215)

25. **The allies**
Before the clans go to war, they first call on their allies to take part in the fight. The various allies are mentioned when the battlefield is stepped upon, when describing the battle, and in the conversations between the warriors.
(Iliad II 819, Iliad XII 108, Iliad XVI 538)

26. **Background information for every warrior**
For most warriors mentioned in the story, the bard gives a bit of background information. In this way, the listener learns more about the family relations of the warrior or about his motivation to participate in the fight. It is remarkable that the characteristics of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition are often used in such background information, such as the possession of horses or sheep, the killing of a relative, or the adultery of a woman. After all, the background information is given in the form of a short digression, which in itself is also a characteristic of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Possibly, this was also the reason for the mixing of the two oral traditions, namely here why the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition attracted these digressions.
(Iliad XI 221, Iliad XV 638, Iliad XVI 571)

27. **Ares, Eris, and Iris**
We know Ares as the god of war, Eris as the goddess of strife, and Iris as a goddess who brings messages from Zeus to people and gods. Possibly, these gods can be derived from the same deity who incited the fighters for the battle in the early stages of the Beta-tradition in Greece. Certainly, for Ares and Eris, we see clear parallels in the verses in which

they stir up the fighters (IV 439-447 and XI 70-85). Eris seems to be so strongly connected with the formulations of the Beta-tradition in that she was the only god still present on the battlefield while all other gods had to remain on the Olympos of Zeus (XI 73-78). Iris takes a similar role by inciting Hektor (XI 199-210) and Achilleus (XVIII 196-202). (Iliad V 455, Iliad VIII 399, Iliad XX 46)

28. **The combat teacher**
Each clan has a combat teacher who has to train the sons and the bastard sons in the stronghold to become warriors. This combat teacher has a close relationship with his students. If he dies during the battle, he will be avenged by them. During the war, the combat teacher also serves as counsel.
(Iliad XI 785, Iliad XIII 466, Iliad XXIII 90)

29. **The fame for posterity**
The warriors are always aware of the great fame they will achieve through their actions. Their fame will be sung about in many songs by the posterity. When Patroklos tries to persuade Achilleus to join the fight, he emphatically points to the judgment that the posterity will have about Achilleus.
(Iliad VI 358, Iliad VIII 148, Iliad XVI 31)

30. **Incineration, urns, and burial mounds**
When a warrior dies, it is very important that he is buried honorably. This is done by burning his body, putting his bones in an urn, and burying the urn under a large burial mound.
(Iliad VII 336, Iliad XI 371, Iliad XXIV 787)

31. **The corpse that remains for dogs and birds**
Sometimes, a deceased warrior is less fortunate, and his body remains on the battlefield as food for dogs and birds. The same can happen if the home camp does not pay enough ransom for a robbed corpse.
(Iliad I 4, Iliad XI 395, Iliad XI 453)

32. **Chariot warriors and infantry**
The bard often emphasizes that a certain warrior is a chariot fighter and hence does not belong to the foot soldiers. Yet we never get a clear picture of these foot soldiers. Fighters on foot are apparently not worth mentioning. Because of the long service record of the Beta-tradition

and because of the interactions with other oral traditions, all the known names of the fighters have grown into leaders and kings who can hardly fulfill the role of a foot soldier.
(Iliad IV 297, Iliad XI 150, Iliad XIV 473)

33. **Huge crowds of warriors**
A certain type of exaggeration seems to have been worked by the bards. The enumeration of the armed forces, the description of the battlefield, and the war in general are always expressed in superlatives.
(Iliad II 459, Iliad IV 427, Iliad XII 278)

34. **The worried wife waiting at home**
It is not only on the battlefield where doom and gloom are found, but also at the home front. There, the women of the warriors are waiting anxiously for their men's return. When a warrior dies, his wife scratches her cheeks in misery (Iliad II 700 and XI 393) and awakens her roommates with her complaints (Iliad V 412).
(Iliad V 412, Iliad XVII 28, Iliad XXII 515)

35. **The care for a wounded warrior**
A warrior who gets hurt must eventually stop the fight, however much this is against his will. Far behind the battle, he is skilfully cared for by doctors. Sometimes, even the gods intervene to give this warrior the necessary care.
(Iliad IV 190, Iliad V 445, Iliad XI 846)

36. **One or two heroes who withstand alone**
When one of the two armies encounters trouble, it is often a single warrior—or a duo—who stands up to cover the retreat of the rest of the army. In particular, this happens when an army flees into the stronghold through the main gate. Eventually, these warriors are also driven back, and they have to flee inside. In a variation of this, the warrior stands in the front lines, after which he has to retreat between his friends. Examples of such heroes are Odysseus and Diomedes, Hektor and Deiphobos, the Lapiths, Aias, Antilochos, and Agenor.
(Iliad XI 314, Iliad XII 145, Iliad XXI 545)

37. **The driver who should watch the horses**
Just before a chariot warrior starts the fight, he instructs his driver to watch the horses. Sometimes, the driver has to stay behind, but often,

his mission is to follow the chariot warrior with the horses.
(Iliad IV 226, Iliad XI 47, Iliad XVII 501)

38. **Precious weapons**
Some warriors join the battlefield in particularly costly armor. A detailed description of the weapons is accompanied by the gloss and glitter emblazoned on the weapons. The description of the weapons also serves to glorify the wearer. In the Iliad, Agamemnon (XI 16-45) and Achilleus (XVIII 478-617 and XIX 364-398) are especially glorified in this way.

This description, however, was mostly taken over by the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. Yet we can assume that this process did not take place to the same extent everywhere. As a result, the gloss and glitter of the Beta-tradition is still shining through in many places in the revised verses of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition.
(Iliad II 872, Iliad VI 235, Iliad XVI 130)

So far, we have seen the main thirty-eight oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition. Now, we look at the seven highly developed typical scenes, which can also be regarded as oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition.

39. **Gathering up the army for the fight**
The typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight gives us important clues about the origin of the Beta-tradition. Valuable geographical information in the famous catalogue of ships is incorporated in one of these scenes.
(Iliad IV 222-456, Iliad XI 1-83, Iliad XVI 129-258)

40. **The warrior in need and the helper**
A warrior is in great trouble and cannot call for help because of the loud clamor of the battle. A companion sees his need and goes to get help from a young, strong warrior.
(Iliad V 166-178, Iliad XII 329-377, Iliad XVII 651-701)

41. **The warrior who blames his companion**
The accusation of one member of a duo to another is one typical scene of the Beta-tradition. It is often the duo of a driver and a chariot warrior. The accused warrior will answer with an appropriate excuse, after which weapons will be exchanged.
(Iliad V 166-216, Iliad XII 309-330, Iliad XVI 20-46)

42. **The cowardly archer**
The archetype of the cowardly archer also belongs with the Beta-tradition. The archer must be urged by a brave fighter to follow him to the most crowded part of the battle, but often, the archer is the helper in need. This archetype is related to different thematic typical scenes, such as the warrior who blames his companion, the warrior who does not fight, and the warrior in need and the helper.
(Iliad VI 321-338, Iliad VIII 266-329, Iliad XIII 712-722)

43. **The withheld honor gift**
One Dutch proverb states, "A lot of promise and little giving makes the fools live in joy." This is how the godfathers seem to reason when they send their warriors into the battlefield. More than once, the bards talk about warriors who risk their lives for a gift that turns out to be no more than an empty promise. Usually, these gifts are horses and a chariot, but sometimes, the gifts are also women. Becoming a chariot warrior or becoming a member of the noble family remains an unreachable dream for many. Of course, there are also accounts of godfathers who effectively hand over such gifts.
(Iliad VIII 281-291, Iliad X 303-332, Iliad XVII 229-236)

44. **The resentful warrior**
The clearest example of the resentful warrior in the Iliad is without a doubt Achilleus. But we find also other heroes, such as Meleager and Aineias, and even the Olympic gods, who fulfill this role. The resentment almost always goes hand-in-hand with refusing to fight. Remarkable is that this typical scene is strongly linked to sexual scenes, where the resentful warrior also refrains from sexual intercourse—or (more interesting for the listeners) does not.
(Iliad I 348-367, Iliad VIII 457-468, Iliad XIV 292-314)

45. **Fame for the father**
This oral characteristic appears as a thematic motif throughout the Iliad. Numerous short passages and digressions of the bards appear to be derived from this. The son is initially too young to go to war although he looks forward to that day. His father forbids him from fighting and keeps him trapped at home. When the son eventually goes to war, he first achieves great fame and eventually dies honorably. This theme is also found in the Trojan cycle as a whole, especially in the relationship

between Achilleus and his father Peleus.
(Iliad VIII 278-291, Iliad XI 714-721, Iliad XVI 80-100)

These are the forty-five oral characteristics that characterize the Beta-tradition and distinguish it from other oral traditions.

Analyzed passages

These numbered oral characteristics can now be used to analyze passages of the Beta-tradition by adding the number of each oral characteristic in square brackets in the text.

The first analyzed passage is about an action by the warrior duo Menelaos and Antilochos (oral characteristic 11). Menelaos is the warrior in need, and Antilochos is the helper (oral characteristic 40). Both kill a man. It is a standard battle passage from the Beta-tradition:

So as Aineias [16] and Menelaos [16] raised hand and sharp spear [1] standing to face each other [7] and furious to do battle [9], Antilochos [11] took his stand close beside [40] the shepherd of the people. Nor did Aineias hold his ground [17], though yet a swift fighter [1], as he saw two [11] men staying with each other against him. These, when they had dragged back the bodies [12] among the Achaian people, dropped the poor youths into the hands of their company, and themselves wheeled about once more to fight among the foremost [1]. There these killed [1] Pylaimenes the equal of Ares [27], lord of the Paphlagonian [26] men in armor [26], high-hearted. Menelaos the spear-famed [10], son of Atreus, stabbed him with the spear as he stood his ground, and struck the collar-bone [2], while Antilochos struck down Mydon, his charioteer [3] and henchman, Atymnios' [26] brave son, as he wheeled the single-foot horses [3] about, with a stone [1] striking mid-elbow [2], and from his hands the reins [3] pale with ivory dropped in the dust groundling [10]. Antilochos charging drove the sword [1] into his temple [2], so that gasping he dropped from the carefully wrought chariot [3] headlong, driven deep in the dust his neck and shoulders [2]; and there, since he chanced to light in a depth of sand, he stuck fast while his horses trampled [2] him into the dust [10] with their feet. Antilochos

lashed [3] and drove back [12] into the host [1] of the Achaians. (Iliad V 567-589)

This shows how often and how diverse the oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition turn up in a typical battle passage. The following passage contains two typical scenes as oral characteristics and shows the archer Teukros in a leading role:

Then which of the Trojans first did Teukros the blameless [10] strike down? [18] Orsilochos first of all [18], and Ormenos [18], and Ophelestes, Daitor and Chromios, and Lykophontes the godlike, and Amopaon, Polyaimon's son, and Melanippos [33]. All these he felled to the bountiful earth in close succession. Agamemnon the lord of men [10] was glad as he watched him laying waste from the strong bow [1,42] the Trojan battalions [1]; he went over and stood beside him and spoke a word to him: "Telamonian [26] Teukros, dear heart, O lord of your people [10], strike so; thus you may be a light [29] given to the Danaäns, and to Telamon your father [45], who cherished [28] you when you were little, and, bastard [13] as you were, looked after you in his own house [8]. Bring him into glory [45], though he is far away; and for my part, I will tell you this, and it will be a thing accomplished [43]: if ever Zeus [14] who holds the aegis and Athene grant me to sack outright the strong-founded citadel of Ilion, first after myself I will put into your hands some great gift [43] of honor; a tripod [43], or two horses and the chariot [3,32,43] with them, or else a woman [43], who will go up into the same bed with you."

Then in answer to him again spoke Teukros the blameless: "Son of Atreus, most lordly[10]: must you then drive [19] me, who am eager myself, as it is? Never, so far as the strength is in me, have I stopped, since we began driving [17] the Trojans back upon Ilion; since then I have been lurking here with my bow [1,42], to strike down [1] fighters. And by this I have shot eight long-flanged arrows [1,42], and all of them were driven into the bodies of young men, fighters [1]; yet still I am not [42] able to hit this mad dog [19]." He spoke, and let fly another shaft from the

bowstring [1], straight for Hektor, and all his heart was straining to hit him; but missed his man, and struck [1] down instead [42] a strong son of Priam [26], Gorgythion the blameless, hit in the chest by an arrow; Gorgythion whose mother was lovely Kastianeira [26], Priam's bride [8] from Aisyme, with the form of a goddess [10]. He bent drooping his head [2] to one side, as a garden poppy bends beneath the weight of its yield and the rains of springtime; so his head bent [2] slack to one side beneath the helm's [1] weight.
(Iliad VIII 273-308)

In this passage, we find the typical scene of the withheld honor gift (oral characteristic 43) and of the cowardly archer (oral characteristic 42). Yet the cowardice in the Iliad no longer fits a hero like Teukros, who was also a powerful Greek king according to tradition. Per the typical scene of the cowardly archer, Teukros would have to hit Hektor in an awkward or clumsy place. Instead, he shoots Hektor's driver in the chest. With that, this passage nevertheless finds the right balance between the awkward second-rank hero and the famous king who undertakes his own triumphant raid (aristeia, oral characteristic 18).

The third analyzed passage focuses on Aineias, the hero who will later flee to Italy and become the ancestor of the Romans:

So he spoke [19], and the heart in Deïphobos was divided, pondering whether to draw back [17] and find [40] some other high-hearted Trojan to be his companion, or whether to attempt him singly. And in the division of his heart this way seemed best to him, to go [40] for Aineias [16]. He found him at the uttermost edge [44] of the battle [1] standing, since he was forever angry [44] with brilliant Priam [8] because great [1] as he was he did him no honor [43] among his people. Deïphobos came [40] and stood close to him and addressed him in winged words [19]: "Aineias, lord of the Trojans' counsels [28], now there is need of you to stand by your brother-in-law [23], if this bond of kinship [22] touches you. Come then, stand by Alkaïthoös, who was your sister's husband [23] and in time past nursed [28] you in his

house [8] when you were still little. But now Idomeneus [16] the spear-famed [1] has killed him in battle."

So he spoke, and stirred the anger in the breast [10] of Aineias. He went against [7] Idomeneus, strongly eager [9] for battle. (Iliad XIII 455-469)

Here, Aineias takes on a leading role in three different typical scenes: the helper in "the warrior in need and the helper" (oral characteristic 40), the warrior in "the withheld honor gift" (oral characteristic 43), and in "the resentful warrior" (oral characteristic 44). Aineias is still driven to fight because of the blood feud (oral characteristic 22). Alkathoös turns out to be both the brother-in-law (oral characteristic 23) and combat teacher (oral characteristic 28) of Aineias.

This closes the analyzed passages. Because of the great importance of the typical scenes in the Beta-tradition, they are discussed in detail in the next chapter. These typical scenes prove the success of oralism and the theory that traditions can be transmitted orally for centuries.

Chapter 6

Seven typical scenes

We have now characterized the Beta-tradition by breaking it down into forty-five oral characteristics. Seven of these characteristics are highly developed typical scenes that shape short—and sometimes longer—passages. Some elements from a typical scene, such as the brilliant glow emanating from a warrior, are in turn the oral characteristics of the Beta-tradition. When we see the same combination of oral characteristics appearing in passages, we are dealing with a typical scene.

The following typical scenes are within the Beta-tradition: gathering up the army for the fight, the warrior in need and the helper, the warrior who blames his companion, the cowardly archer, the withheld honor gift, the resentful warrior, and fame for the father. These typical scenes are often hidden quite well in the text. By digging them up and mapping them out, we can expose the Beta-tradition further.

The typical scenes are usually difficult to detect without extra explanation. Yet they are of great importance for the analysis of the Iliad because they are mostly related to larger themes that have formed the basis of many stories throughout the ages. A general description of these scenes is not easy because there are numerous variations and mixing of these scenes in the Iliad. Therefore, the analysis will be limited to the seven typical scenes mentioned, and all types of possible variants will be accommodated therein. The descriptions of these seven types, each consisting of a dozen optional oral characteristics, will almost never be found in this completeness in the Iliad.

What makes finding these typical scenes even more difficult is a denial of its typical form often also occurs. Zeus, who, like a warrior, wanted to set himself apart on Mount Ida, would have to abstain from sexual intercourse if we are following the typical scene. In the Iliad, though, we see the opposite

happening. Nevertheless, the intercourse between Hera and Zeus contributes to identifying the typical scene of the resentful warrior. As a result, tracing typical scenes often leads to finding specific associations between oral characteristics.

Gathering up the army for the fight

The first typical scene to be investigated here is gathering up the army for the fight. This scene has undoubtedly been indispensable throughout the history of the Beta-tradition. Every story must start with it. We find this already in Iliad II although there are seven other occasions on which this scene pops up in the Iliad. For each of the typical scenes, a description of a minimal core of the scene follows first, and then, a full description with all the optional oral characteristics follows with a list of the references of passages in which the scene occurs; then, one or more sample passage and a discussion are given.

Core of the typical scene

The army is being gathered on the battlefield.

Full description of the typical scene

A nobleman or god warns the clan leader of the upcoming war. The clan leader answers this call. He collects many fighters to his stronghold.

The clan leader, as well as the captain who himself goes into battle, is described in full glory. After this, the warriors arm themselves. The captain goes to stand on the rampart of the stronghold to oversee the enemy that has gathered on the battlefield. The bright glare of his armor shines in the sky.

After these preparations, the army leaves the stronghold using a bridge that passes over the ditch. The advancement of the numerous warriors is accompanied by a lot of brilliance, noise, and clatter. To encourage his men, the captain shouts a battle cry that is overwhelmingly loud. Then, the army is gathered together. In addition, the various regiments are listed, and their leaders and their numbers are mentioned.

The captain moves around and encourages the deployed army. He holds up a war symbol. The gods of war wander through the ranks and ignite the warriors' fighting spirit. The Olympic gods each choose their side and pro-

vide their support to the fighters. Before commencing the battle, the captain first enters the stronghold again to invoke the gods and make sacrifices.

The clan leader remains inside the stronghold and watches from the ramparts. The captain, on the other hand, leads the army ahead. All together, they now move forward to the hostile army waiting in the field. When the armies are close to each other, the chariot warriors jump off their chariots. The loud clatter of their armor is mentioned.

The chariot warriors follow the captain while the drivers keep the horses near the ditch. The drivers follow a little later on foot, bringing with them the horses. Then, the fight ignites. One or more warriors die as the first in a foolish, ridiculous way.

List of passages

This typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight can be found in the following passages:

II 434-877	The Greeks and the Trojans gather themselves up before Troy
III 161-265	Priam watches the armies and drives on the battle field
IV 222-456	Agamemnon inspects the Greek army for the fight
VI 76-118	Hektor regroups the Trojans in front of the ramparts of Troy
VIII 213-266	Diomedes is the first to cross the ditch after a regrouping
XI 1-83	The Greeks position themselves in front of the ditch at dawn
XII 75-117	The Trojans regroup in front of the ditch
XVI 129-258	The Myrmidons set themselves up, led by Achilleus and Patroklos
XVIII 196-231	Achilleus shines at the ditch, and the Trojans die like fools
XIX 349-XX 75	People and gods set themselves up at the ditch for battle

Featured sample passages

Let us take a closer look at the passage in Iliad VI. Helenos, a clairvoyant bird wizard, described while advising Hektor and Aineias how the army had to be gathered up once more after it had been disrupted:

Hektor and Aineias, on you beyond others is leaning the battle-work of Trojans and Lykians, since you are our greatest in every course we take, whether it be in thought or in fighting: stand your ground here; visit your people everywhere; hold them fast by the gates, before they tumble into their women's arms, and become to our enemies a thing to take joy in. Afterward, when you have set all the battalions in motion, the rest of us will stand fast here and fight with the Danaäns though we are very hard hit indeed; necessity forces us; but you, Hektor, go back again to the city, and there tell your mother and mine to assemble all the ladies of honor at the temple of gray-eyed Athene high on the citadel; there opening with a key the door to the sacred chamber let her take a robe, which seems to her the largest and loveliest in the great house, and that which is far her dearest possession, and lay it along the knees of Athene the lovely haired.
(Iliad VI 77-92)

We recognize in this passage the encouragement of the army and the return to the city to make sacrifices. In Hektor's obtaining of this council, we get even more characteristics of the typical scene, such as jumping off the chariot, passing before the rows of warriors, the war symbol that is held high, the loud shouting, and the help of a god:

So he spoke, and Hektor did not disobey his brother, but at once in all his armor leapt to the ground from his chariot and shaking two sharp spears in his hands ranged over the whole host stirring them up to fight and waking the ghastly warfare. So they whirled about and stood their ground against the Achaians, and the Argives gave way backward and stopped their slaughtering, and thought some one of the immortals must have descended from the starry sky to stand by the Trojans, the way they rallied. But Hektor lifted his voice and cried aloud to the Trojans: "You high-hearted Trojans and far-renowned companions, be men now, dear friends, and remember your furious valor until I can go back again to Ilion, and there tell the elder men who sit as counselors, and our own wives, to make their prayer to the immortals and promise them hecatombs."

(Iliad VI 102-115)

With these two passages from Iliad VI, we have a fragmentary version of the typical scene for gathering up the army for the fight. We can also shed light on the typical scene by separating one of its oral characteristics. The very last oral characteristic of the typical scene is the warrior who dies in a ridiculous way. So we better understand why the enumeration of the Trojan forces ends as follows:

Nastes came like a girl to the fighting in golden raiment, poor fool, nor did this avail to keep dismal death back; but he went down under the hands of swift-running Aiakides.
(Iliad II 872 - 874)

This forms a parallel with the typical scene in Iliad XII:

Asios, Hyrtakos' son, lord of men, was unwilling to leave his horses there and a charioteer to attend them but kept them with him, and so drove on at the fast-running vessels, poor fool, who by the ships in the pride of his horses and chariot was not destined to evade the evil spirits of destruction.
(Iliad XII 110-114)

Another parallel is found in the typical scene of Iliad XVIII. In it, the ridiculous death is linked to the flaming glow and the loud battle cry of the captain:

The charioteers were dumbfounded as they saw the unwearied dangerous fire that played above the head of great-hearted Peleion blazing, and kindled by the goddess gray-eyed Athene. Three times across the ditch brilliant Achilleus gave his great cry, and three times the Trojans and their renowned companions were routed. There at that time twelve of the best men among them perished upon their own chariots and spears.
(Iliad XVIII 225-231)

Also, the early death of Protesilaos—the first Greek to jump off his ship—who was immediately killed by a Trojan (Iliad II 698-702), probably stems from this optional oral characteristic of gathering up the army for the fight.

Discussion of the typical scene

The typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight is a very useful discovery. Three cases can be demonstrated with this archeological treasure:

1. The ditch before the rampart is an essential part of the Beta-tradition. It was present in old narratives around a besieged city in a plain.

   In Iliad XII, we find the scene clearly. The warriors are jumping off their chariots with their heavy weapons, as is emphasized in IV 419-420 and XI 47-49. They follow their leaders and set themselves up in neatly ordered groups, and meanwhile, the leaders are enumerated. Then, there is an action by the fool, who is the first to be killed. But curiously enough, the roles of the attacker and the defender have changed. The Trojans, who are currently attacking the Greek ship camp, put their chariots by the ditch. In Iliad XI, the original logic is preserved: the defending army goes with the chariots from inside the rampart over the ditch and then sets the chariots just in front of the ditch. The following formula literally occurs in both chapters: "Thereupon each man gave orders to his charioteer to rein in the horses once again by the ditch, in good order." (Iliad XI 47-48 = XII 84-85)

   If we read the other passages, we can better understand why this happens. In half of the passages about gathering up the army for the fight, the ditch is mentioned—although never for gathering up the army at the ramparts of Troy. The association with the ditch is so strong that the whole scene was applied with a distorted logic to the attack on the rampart and the ditch of the Greeks.

   In particular, the driving of the chariots across the ditch is often emphasized. Usually as a breakneck venture (VIII 254, XII 62, XVI 370) but sometimes just along a bridge before the gate (VIII 213, XII 120), which is the logic of the old scene.

   The fact that the ditch for a defense wall is a characteristic of this oral tradition is undoubtedly important material for archeologists. Based on this typical scene, it seems plausible that the Beta-tradition has its roots

in an area where strongholds were surrounded by a ditch. Let us not forget that to this day, we tell stories about castles and princesses many hundreds of years in the past and thousands of miles away.

2. The famous catalogue of ships in Iliad II has grown over time from the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight.

   The catalogue of ships is one of the most famous passages in the Iliad. It contains the list of all the Greek leaders and their residences. The geographical information in it suggests that the passage is old, dating to the Mykenaian period, or possibly from the period immediately after the fall of the Mykenaian Empire. Many historians have given their opinion on this passage; one of the theories is that the entire catalogue would go back to a preserved archive and later would have been added to the Iliad with a number of adjustments.

   In any case, the catalogue of ships shows all the characteristics of the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight. To begin with, the piece before the seemingly authentic part of the catalogue must also be taken into account. Iliad II 441, where Agamemnon collects the army, indicates an older pivot point in the text compared with II 494, the beginning of the rigid enumeration. In between, Athene encourages the Greeks with the aegis (the war symbol), and Agamemnon, the leader, "conspicuous among men, and foremost among the fighters," is described in all of his greatness. The phrase "and now battle became sweeter to them than to go back in their hollow ships to the beloved land of their fathers," can also be read in the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight in Iliad XI (Iliad II 453-454 = Iliad XI 13-14). But even the rigid part of the catalogue, the enumeration itself, is in the shape of this typical scene. One by one, the regiments are enumerated with their leaders, paying attention to the order and position of the ships on the beach. Occasionally, an anecdote is told about a leader, sometimes about his death.

   Even though the entire catalogue of ships seems to have grown organically, this does not mean that the geographical information is not valuable. The Mykenaian Alpha-tradition is also strongly present in the catalogue, given the frequent mention of all kinds of gods, dynasties, shrines, Herakles, rivers and place names, and vocabulary to describe soil types. These interesting data come from the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and has mixed with a typical scene from the Beta-tradition.

We can conclude from the analysis of the typical scene about gathering up the army for the fight that there must always have been a list of leaders in the stories about the Trojan War.

3. Over time, the chariots, which form an important element in the typical scene, have been transformed into ships within the narratives.

   In the scene in Iliad VIII, we see how Agamemnon passes before the tents and the ships and then stands on Odysseus' ship, which was lying in the middle. From there, he could shout to both sides. He holds his purple cloak in his hand. In the scene in Iliad XI it is Eris, the goddess of contention, who stands on Odysseus' ship to rile up the warriors with a shrill call while holding up the divine aegis. The tour and the war cry of the central leader is part of the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight. In Iliad IV, we find Agamemnon in a more logical place: before the chariots instead of before the ships.

   The catalogue of ships often lists how many ships each leader commanded. Each time, the tribute ends with a sentence such as, "Following along with these were forty black ships." Following the leader is clearly an element of the typical scene. The warriors follow him on foot, and the drivers come behind with the chariots (IV 226-230, XI 47-52, XII 76-78). Also in the catalogue of ships, we find Protesilaos, who was immediately killed by a Trojan, as soon as he jumped off his ship when landing on the Trojan coast. Jumping off a chariot, in full armor, is also part of the typical scene.

   Apart from the chariots that have become ships, other transformations have occurred over the course of time. For example, the captain who ignites the fighters with loud shouting and a spear in his hand, is often transformed into a deity. Athene, Eris, and Ares fulfill this role, and they hold the aegis. The ship of Odysseus is apparently also associated with the whole scene.

All of this shows that we have to look back far in place and time to find the roots of the Iliad. Finding the right patterns is of the utmost importance for a correct analysis of the Iliad. In addition, another six typical scenes contribute to this. The next typical scene about the warrior in need and the helper details a situation during the full battle.

The warrior in need and the helper

Gathering up the army for the fight is a progressive typical scene that ushers the story into the next phase. The warrior in need and the helper, like the following five typical scenes, is a thematic typical scene. These scenes have grown from the great themes of the Beta-tradition and have become embedded in the details of short passages in the form of typical scenes. A minimal and a maximal description, a list of passages, explained example passages, and a discussion also follow for these thematic typical scenes.

Core of the typical scene

A warrior in need is helped by a heroic companion.

Full description of the typical scene

A warrior is overpowered by a superior number of enemies. This is generally an older or weaker warrior or a warrior who needs help because of certain circumstances. It can even be about a warrior who has just died and around whose corpse a battle has begun. The warrior is alone and cut off from his own army. He can just catch the attention of one of his companions.

The lonely warrior and the companion are crying out for help, but these calls are drowned out by the clamor of battle. The companion then goes in search of a strong helper to provide assistance. This helper is far behind the battle or is not even fighting. A chain of different messengers must be set up to get the helper.

The helper himself is more youthful and stronger. In some cases, it is a proficient archer. The companion—or at least the last person in the chain—describes, sometimes while weeping, the emergency situation and asks for help. The strong warrior rushes in immediately. He comes to stand next to the warrior in distress. Sometimes, even a group of helpers support the lonely warrior from behind. The warrior in need is pleased, and the enemy retreats. He—or his corpse in case he was killed—is taken away on a chariot. Then, the battle is balanced again.

List of passages

This typical scene of the warrior in need and the helper can be found in the following passages:

V 166-178	Aineias seeks the archer Pandaros to fight Diomedes
V 454-470	Apollo calls on Ares to help Aineias against Diomedes
V 561-574	Antilochos, the youthful, helps Menelaos
VI 312-341	Hektor is looking for Paris, the archer
VIII 78-112	Diomedes, the youthful, helps the old Nestor
VIII 198-207	Hera calls on Poseidon to help the Greeks against Zeus
IX 1-713	Nestor and Odysseus summon Achilleus to fight for Agamemnon
X 42-73	Agamemnon asks Menelaos for help from the Greeks
XI 345-348 + XI 396-400	Odysseus helps Diomedes
XI 459-488	Menelaos asks Aias to help Odysseus
XI 575-596	Eurypylos asks the Greeks to help Aias
XI 785-805 + XVI 1-45	Nestor asks Patroklos to call Achilleus for help
XII 329-377	Thoös asks Aias and the archer Teukros to help Menestheus
XIII 455-469	Deiphobos asks Aineias to fight for the body of Alkathoös
XIII 476-495	Idomeneus and Aineias call their friends for help
XV 220-252	Zeus asks the arch god Apollo to help Hektor
XV 430-442	Aias calls the archer Teukros to fight for Lykophron
XV 568-574	Menelaos invokes the help of the young Antilochos
XVI 490-553	Glaukos asks Apollo and the Trojans to help Sarpedon
XVI 553-562	Patroklos calls the Greeks and the Aiantes for help
XVII 89-124	Menelaos seeks the help of Aias to fight for the corpse of Patroklos
XVII 235-261	Aias asks Menelaos to call in the help of the Greeks
XVII 651-701	Aias asks Menelaos to call for the help of Achilleus via Antilochos
Little Iliad	Diomedes and Odysseus are going to get the help of the archer Philoktetes
Little Iliad	Odysseus is going to get the help of Neoptolemos

Featured sample passages

The clearest example of this typical scene is found in the chain of messengers who were mobilized to save the body of Patroklos:

Now Aias spoke to him of the great war cry, Menelaos: "Look hard, illustrious Menelaos, if you can discover Antilochos still living, the son of great-hearted Nestor, and send him out to run with a message to wise Achilleus how one who was far the dearest of his companions has fallen." He spoke, and Menelaos of the great war cry obeyed him, and went on his way.
(Iliad XVII 651-657)

Menelaos found Antilochos on the left flank of the battlefield. He rushed toward him and said:

"The best of the Achaians has fallen, Patroklos, and a huge loss is inflicted upon the Danaäns. Run then quickly to Achilleus, by the ships of the Achaians, and tell him. He might in speed win back to his ship the dead body which is naked. Hektor of the shining helm has taken his armor." So he spoke, and Antilochos hated his word as he listened. He stayed for a long time without a word, speechless, and his eyes filled with tears, the springing voice was held still within him, yet even so he neglected not Menelaos' order but went on the run, handing his war gear to a blameless companion, Laodokos.
(Iliad XVII 689-699)

In turn, Antilochos brought the unfortunate message to Achilleus:

"Ah me, son of valiant Peleus; you must hear from me the ghastly message of a thing I wish never had happened. Patroklos has fallen, and now they are fighting over his body which is naked. Hektor of the shining helm has taken his armor."

He spoke, and the black cloud of sorrow closed on Achilleus. In both hands he caught up the grimy dust, and poured it over his head and face, and fouled his handsome countenance.
(Iliad XVIII 18-24)

The corpse of Patroklos could eventually be saved thanks to the tough Aias. Yet Achilleus also had a hand in the rescue, namely by appearing on the rampart of the Greeks. The Trojans trampled each other out of fear of his sight.

In a second example in the Trojan camp, several thematic typical scenes are mixed together:

> *The heart in Deïphobos was divided, pondering whether to draw back and find some other high-hearted Trojan to be his companion, or whether to attempt him singly. And in the division of his heart this way seemed best to him, to go for Aineias. He found him at the uttermost edge of the battle standing, since he was forever angry with brilliant Priam because great as he was he did him no honor among his people. Deïphobos came and stood close to him and addressed him in winged words: "Aineias, lord of the Trojans' counsels, now there is need of you to stand by your brother-in-law, if this bond of kinship touches you. Come then, stand by Alkaïthoös, who was your sister's husband and in time past nursed you in his house when you were still little. But now Idomeneus the spear-famed has killed him in battle." So he spoke, and stirred the anger in the breast of Aineias. He went against Idomeneus, strongly eager for battle.*
> *(Iliad XIII 455-469)*

Aineias stood behind the rows, as is common for this typical scene. But the reason why has to be found in another typical scene, namely that of the resentful warrior. Also, the scene of the warrior who blames his companion and the withheld honor gift can be found here.

Discussion of the typical scene

The typical scene of the warrior in need and the helper is well integrated in all the seven typical scenes. We can see several mixes with other typical scenes, such as those of the cowardly archer and the warrior who blames his companion. In the appeal to Aineias, even the withheld honor gift and the resentful warrior are mixed with this typical scene. The help of Achilleus goes through the typical scene of gathering up the army for the fight.

In the warrior in need and the helper, we often see a duo of warriors at work: Diomedes and Odysseus, Menelaos and Antilochos, and Aias and Teukros. It seems difficult to find an explanation for these duos within a single, uniform Greek oral tradition. They are particularly connected with the Beta-tradition.

We see the warrior in need and the helper in the Iliad at large in the form of Patroklos and Achilleus. Several emissaries try to persuade Achilleus to join the battle, but ultimately, Antilochos is the one who turns Achilleus' relentless heart. The chain of messengers goes through Menelaos, who in turn was called by Aias. The latter tries to keep the corpse of Patroklos out of the hands of the Trojans.

The warrior who blames his companion

Core of the typical scene

A warrior accuses a companion of being a coward, but this turns out to be unjustified.

Full description of the typical scene

The enemy gets the upper hand in the battle. One of the warriors of a duo that often fights together, or even the driver of a duo on a chariot, cannot fight for some reason. Then, his companion calls him to fight by starting with a reproach of cowardice. He continues with the call to fight side by side or to climb on the same chariot. The reproached warrior answers with an excuse, explaining why he could not fight so fiercely until then. The excuse is accepted, and the fighters encourage each other to go into the battle again. New weapons, often shields, are put on or exchanged, or the roles of driver and fighter change. The warriors now proceed orderly and together into the battle with their shields frontward.

List of passages

This typical scene from the warrior who blames his companion can be found in the following passages:

III 38-76	Hektor reproaches Paris for his cowardice

IV 327-373	Agamemnon blames Menestheus, Odysseus and Diomedes
IV 411-421	Diomedes speaks angrily to Kapaneus, his driver
V 166-216	Pandaros responds to a complaint from Aineias
V 217-240	Aineias rebukes Pandaros and invites him to his chariot
V 793-841	Athene accuses Diomedes cowardice and drives his chariot
VI 325-341 + VI 503-VII 12	Hektor accuses Paris, and they go to war
VIII 91-98	Diomedes calls Odysseus in vain to fight alongside him
VIII 101-117	Diomedes rebukes Nestor and invites him to his chariot
VIII 292-301	Teukros responds to an admonition from Agamemnon
X 241-273	Diomedes chooses Odysseus as a companion, and they exchange weapons
XI 310-322	Odysseus calls Diomedes to come and fight next to him
XI 345-349	Diomedes calls Odysseus to stand together
XII 292-330	Sarpedon takes his shield and accuses Glaukos.
XIII 89-135	Poseidon rebukes the Greeks, who then set themselves up
XIII 215-245	Poseidon urges Idomeneus to fight
XIII 246-332	Idomeneus encourages Meriones to the fight
XIV 9-13	Nestor changed his shield with his son Thrasymedes
XIV 362-387	Poseidon asks the Greeks to change their shields
XV 436-483	Aias admonishes Teukros after his bowstring broke
XVI 20-100	Patroklos accuses Achilleus, and they change armor.
XVII 140-193	Glaukos reproaches Hektor, who puts on Achilleus' weapons
XVII 456-483	Alkimedon reprimanded Automedon, who, as a driver, could not fight
XVII 679-699	Antilochos, exhorted by Menelaos, gives his driver his weapons
XXII 227-247	Athene encourages the fleeing Hektor
XXIII 422-441	Menelaos reproaches Antilochos for driving his chariot too close

Featured sample passages

An interesting example of the typical scene showing this reproach is the passage that follows after the death of Patroklos. Patroklos had the weapons and

armor of Achilleus, which had been robbed by Hektor after his death. Hektor exchanged his own armor for that of Achilleus' on the battlefield. The changing of weapons is in itself a characteristic of the typical scene of the warrior who blames his companion, but more important is the fact that Hektor could not fight for this moment and had to go behind the ranks to change out his weapons. Glaukos is the one who criticized Hektor for this reason:

> *Hektor, splendid to look at, you come far short in your fighting.*
> *That fame of yours, high as it is, belongs to a runner.*
> *(Iliad XVII 142-143)*

Then comes a long reproach to the address of Hektor, in which Glaukos claimed, among other things, that Hektor is afraid to fight Aias. But Hektor defends himself:

> *Glaukos, why did a man like you speak this word of annoyance?*
> *I am surprised. I thought that for wits you surpassed all others of*
> *those who dwell in Lykia where the soil is generous; and yet now*
> *I utterly despise your heart for the thing you have spoken when*
> *you said I cannot stand in the face of gigantic Aias.*
> *(Iliad XVII 170-174)*

Then, Hektor invited Glaukos to come and fight next to him so that he could see for himself how brave he is:

> *So speaking he called afar in a great voice to the Trojans: "Trojans, Lykians, Dardanians who fight at close quarters, be men now, dear friends, remember your furious valor while I am putting on the beautiful armor of blameless Achilleus, which I stripped from Patroklos the strong when I killed him." So spoke Hektor of the shining helm, and departed from the hateful battle, and running caught up with his companions very soon, since he went on quick feet, and they had not gone far carrying the glorious armor of Peleus' son toward the city.*
> *(Iliad XVII 183-191)*

Far behind the ranks, Hektor exchanged his armor, but his excuse was accepted. His bravery was no longer doubted.

Discussion of the typical scene

The most interesting thing when analyzing the Iliad for this typical scene is the fact that the weapon change of Achilleus and Patroklos also seems to be related to this scene. Patroklos accuses Achilleus of not fighting, after which Achilleus apologizes and Patroklos puts on the weapons of Achilleus. Both then gather up the army and Automedon—another close friend of Achilleus—becomes the new driver. This sequence of events characterizes the typical scene of the warrior who blames his companion.

This typical scene seems to be a fusion of two different aspects of the relationship between two companions who often fight as a duo on the battlefield. This type of duo may be a further development of the relationship between driver and chariot warrior. The role of the driver, however, is so modest that most known duos later on in the oral tradition have grown to become chariot warriors and even the captains of a regiment of allies. Nevertheless, there is often a driver in the enumerated passages. A clear example of this is the scene in which Diomedes and Nestor ride on the same chariot (Iliad VIII 101-117).

The changing of weapons or the search for new weapons seems to be another basis for this scene, in which one of the members of a duo could no longer fight because his weapon broke. The clearest example of this is the scene in which Meriones is encouraged by Idomeneus after his spear was broken (Iliad XIII 246-332).

We have to wonder here what the significance is of changing out a weapon in this typical scene. A possible explanation lies in the fact that only the noblemen possessed expensive armor. The accusation and changing of armor may then mark the moment when, after his bluff, a nobleman passes on a war task to a brave warrior who is of lower descent. This person may well be the driver of his chariot.

The cowardly archer

Core of the typical scene

An archer participates in the battle but achieves a questionable result.

Full description of the typical scene

A warrior who is well skilled in shooting from far with bow and arrow is positioned far behind the battle scene. A great hero comes to fetch him and urges him to fight in the heat of the battle. The archer follows the great hero closely but constantly hides behind his shield. He shoots his arrows at the enemy from hidden positions. When he hits an enemy with his arrows, it is not in the front but always from behind or in a clumsy or awkward place. He fails to kill his opponent. Eventually, his bow even breaks, and he flees again from the heat of the battle.

List of passages

This typical scene of the cowardly archer can be found in the following passages:

I 43-52	Apollo moves darkened and shoots his arrows from far
III 30-37	Paris dives back in the ranks out of fear for Menelaos
III 373-382	Paris is shrouded in a mist and brought within the ramparts
IV 86-140	Pandaros shoots sheltered and from behind shields.
IV 183-187	Pandaros can only scratch Menelaos with his arrow
IV 507-514	Apollo encourages the Trojans from within the ramparts
V 95-113	Pandaros can only injure Diomedes in the shoulder
V 166-191	Aineias takes Pandaros to the heat of the battle
VI 321-338	Hektor calls on Paris to follow him into the battle
VIII 80-82	Paris hits the reserve horse of Nestor with his arrow
VIII 266-329	Teukros, hiding, can only hit Hektor's driver
XI 369-398	Paris hits Diomedes in the foot when hiding behind a tomb stone
XI 504-507	Paris hits Machaon, the physician, in the right shoulder with an arrow
XI 581-585	Paris hits Eurypylos in the thigh with an arrow
XII 370-372	Pandion carries the bow of Teukros into the heat of the battle
XII 387-391	Teukros injures Glaukos in the arm with an arrow
XIII 581-600	The arrow of Helenos bounces off on Menelaos
XIII 643-659	Meriones shoots an arrow when Harpalion turns his back on him
XIII 712-722	The Lokrians shoot their arrows, both hidden and from behind

XV 436-452	Teukros stands next to Aias and shoots an arrow in the neck of Kleitos
XV 458-489	Teukros cannot kill Hektor and returns behind the ranks
XVI 786-805	Apollo wounds Patroklos, approaching from behind and covered up
Aithiopis	Paris shoots the heel of Achilleus and kills him with the help of Apollo
Little Iliad	Philoctetes follows Odysseus and Diomedes into the battle

Featured sample passages

When the Greeks came under pressure during the fight around the rampart, one Aias, the son of Telamon, spoke to the other Aias:

> *"Aias, now you two, yourself and strong Lykomedes, must stand your ground and urge on the Danaäns to fight strongly. I am going over there to meet the attack, and afterward I will come back soon, when I have beaten them back from the others." So speaking Telamonian Aias went away, and with him went Teukros, his brother by the same father, and following them was Pandion, who carried the curved bow for Teukros.*
> *(Iliad XII 366-372)*

The modest role of Pandion is remarkable. This is probably because Teukros had become the foremost Greek archer. As a result, Teukros is no longer suited to fill the role of the cowardly, pathetic follower, because all known Greek fighters have become big heroes. Therefore, the unknown Pandion matches the typical scene of the cowardly archer as the third character.

Discussion of the typical scene

The most important representative of the archetype of the cowardly archer is undoubtedly Paris, who killed Achilleus by shooting an arrow in his heel. It is also striking that even the god of archery, Apollo, shows this lack of bravery, especially during the attack on Patroklos. But in the typical scene of the cowardly archer, we discover two other relatives who are much like Paris: Pandaros and Pandion. Because these two have more letters in common in their name, "Paris" is probably a corruption of "Pandaros."

The typical scenes of the warrior in need and the helper, the warrior who blames his companion, and the cowardly archer are often intertwined. They also go together in a natural way: a messenger goes looking for a rescuer, and with a reproach, he turns to an archer who kept himself far from the battle.

The withheld honor gift

Core of the typical scene

Precious gifts are promised in exchange for a brave act of war.

Full description of the typical scene

A warrior is about to complete a great act of war. For this, he expects a substantial honor gift from the clan chief, such as horses or a chariot. The clan chief promises this honor gift and swears a solemn oath.

The warrior goes into battle before he has received his honor gift. The warrior is very displeased with this. Tragically enough, the warrior even dies in battle, or if he survives, he does not yet receive the honor gift. Then, he decides to stop fighting. Eventually, when the clan chief sees his mistake, he solemnly hands over the honor gift.

List of passages

This typical scene of the withheld honor gift can be found in the following passages:

I 121-129	Achilleus promises Agamemnon many women after the fall of Troy
I 172-246	Agamemnon is taking Briseis away from Achilleus
V 639-651	Laomedon withholds the promised horses from Herakles
VIII 281-291	Agamemnon promises Teukros horses or a woman
IX 114-161	Agamemnon solemnly promises many gifts to Achilleus
X 303-332	Hektor promises Dolon the horses of Achilleus
XI 717-721	Neleus hides the horses and chariot for Nestor
XIII 363-382	Priam promises his daughter, Kassandra, to Othryoneus
XIII 459-469	Priam does not grant Aineias enough honor

XVII 229-236	Hektor promises half of the ransom for the corpse of Patroklos
XIX 243-281	Agamemnon hands over his gifts with a solemn oath
XXIII 179-183	Achilleus solemnly presents the promised offerings to the dead Patroklos
XXIII 532-565	Achilleus keeps the promised horse behind for Antilochos

Featured sample passages

In the middle of the night, when the Greeks were locked up in their ship camp and the Trojans spent the night in the field, Hektor hatched a plan:

> *Nor did Hektor either permit the high-hearted Trojans to sleep, but had called together in a group all of their great men, those who were the leaders of Troy and their men of deliberation. Summoning these he compacted before them his close counsel: "Who would take upon him this work and bring it to fulfillment for a huge price? The reward will be one that will suffice him; for I will give a chariot and two strong-necked horses who are the finest of all beside the fast ships of the Achaians to him who has the daring, winning honor for himself also, to go close to the swift-running ships and find out for us whether the swift ships are guarded, as they were before this, or whether now the Achaians who are beaten under our hands are planning flight among themselves, and no longer are willing to guard them by night, now that stark weariness has broken them."*
> *(Iliad X 299-312)*

Dolon was willing to complete this mission but only under the condition that Hektor solemnly promised to give him the horses and chariot of Achilleus:

> *Hektor took the staff in his hand, and swore to him: "Let Zeus, loud-thundering lord of Hera, now be my witness himself, that no other man of the Trojans shall mount these horses, since I say they shall be utterly yours, and your glory." He spoke, and swore to*

an empty oath, and stirred the man onward.
(Iliad X 328-332)

Not much later, Dolon fell into the hands of Diomedes and Odysseus, who mercilessly killed him. He was never able to enjoy his honor gift.

Discussion of the typical scene

The story of the Iliad is, of course, about the gifts that Agamemnon promises Achilleus and about Briseis, the girl who Agamemnon withheld from Achilleus. The whole cycle of the stories of the Trojan War shows us the two variants (handing over the gifts or not) of this typical scene: Achilleus receives the gifts during a solemn handing over, but eventually, he dies without having enjoyed his gifts.

Several of Hektor's incentives to rob valuables probably also stem from this typical scene. In Iliad VIII 184-197, Hektor encouraged his horses to capture the precious weapons of Nestor and Diomedes, reminding them of the delicious food they have always received. In Iliad XVII 485-490, Hektor urges Aineias to steal the divine horses of Achilleus. This makes us suspect that Hektor has evolved in the oral tradition from this typical scene as a man who tries to incite his men with cunning material deals. The promise to Dolon in Iliad X illustrates this very well.

The resentful warrior

Core of the typical scene

A resentful warrior refuses to take part in the fight.

Full description of the typical scene

A warrior is angry for some reason and nurses a grudge. He refrains from the fight and isolates himself in loneliness, even refraining from sexual intercourse. Only a woman can touch the heart of the warrior.

The companions of the resentful warrior are under heavy pressure. Several companions and relatives try to persuade the warrior to join the battle but without success. Eventually, a woman tries to persuade him. The warrior

then gives up his resentment and again participates in the battle and in sexual intercourse.

List of passages

This typical scene of the resentful warrior can be found in the following passages:

I 348-367	Achilleus isolates himself and speaks to Thetis
I 488-492	Achilleus refrains from the battle
I 495-531	Thetis begs Zeus, who was secluded, for help in the battle
III 389-448	Aphrodite convinces the resentful Helen to sleep with Paris
VI 160-162	Anteia asks Bellerophon to sleep with her
VI 325-341	Hektor reproaches Paris for angrily isolating himself
VIII 457-468	Athene and Hera keep themselves away from the battle
IX 162-181	Envoys go with gifts to Achilleus to appease him
IX 448-470	Resentment, sex, supplications, and seclusion in the youth of Phoinix
IX 529-599	Meleager has a grudge, but Kleopatra persuades him to fight
XIII 455-473	Aineias grudges, but Deiphobos persuades him to fight
XIV 292-314	Hera unites lovers who have secluded themselves resentfully
XVI 1-63	Patroklos persuades Achilleus to give up his resentment
XVIII 70-116	Thetis comes to comfort Achilleus
XIX 303-312	Greeks beg for Achilleus, who had angrily isolated himself, to eat
XXIII 35-53	The Greek kings once again beg Achilleus
XXIII 425-441	Menelaos stays behind, holding a grudge with Antilochos
XXIV 126-140	Thetis urges Achilleus to sleep with a woman again
Little Iliad	Aias isolates himself resentfully after he does not get a honor gift

Featured sample passages

In Iliad VIII, Zeus forbade the other gods to participate in the battle. Since then, he remained completely isolated from the other gods on Ida. From that

position, he controlled the fight. It is then that Hera came in to seduce him:

> *But Hera light-footed made her way to the peak of Gargaros on towering Ida. And Zeus who gathers the clouds saw her, and when he saw her desire was a mist about his close heart as much as on that time they first went to bed together and lay in love, and their dear parents knew nothing of it. He stood before her and called her by name and spoke to her: "Hera, what is your desire that you come down here from Olympos? And your horses are not here, nor your chariot, which you would ride in."*
>
> *Then with false lying purpose the lady Hera answered him: "I am going to the ends of the generous earth, on a visit to Okeanos, whence the gods have risen, and Tethys our mother, who brought me up kindly in their own house, and cared for me. I shall go to visit these, and resolve their division of discord, since now for a long time they have stayed apart from each other and from the bed of love, since rancor has entered their feelings. In the foothills by Ida of the waters are standing my horses, who will carry me over hard land and water. Only now I have come down here from Olympos for your sake so you will not be angry with me afterward, if I have gone silently to the house of deep-running Okeanos." Then in turn Zeus who gathers the clouds answered her: "Hera, there will be a time afterward when you can go there as well. But now let us go to bed and turn to lovemaking."*
> *(Iliad XIV 292-314)*

Soon, the two gods made love and were enveloped in a golden cloud. Hera succeeded in letting Zeus lose control of the battle. At the same time, Zeus gave up his resentful isolation.

Discussion of the typical scene

Achilleus' resentment is the main theme of the Iliad, and the Greek word for resentment (mènin) is also the very first word in the text. In this theme of resentment, the bards of the Beta-tradition find a suitable argument to support the somewhat more general theme of the warrior who does not fight.

The erotic component in this typical scene does not seem to be explained quite so easily at first glance. Probably, resentful isolation in the bedroom is a driving factor behind this. The isolation from the battle is then continued in isolation from a woman. The couples Paris and Helen, Meleager and Kleopatra, Zeus and Hera, and Achilleus and Briseis are four clear examples of this type of evolution. We also see Patroklos filling the role of a woman who must persuade the warrior although there is no question of an openly erotic relationship between Achilleus and Patroklos in the Iliad. The erotic component is nevertheless deeply rooted in this typical scene, as is evident from the examples mentioned above.

Because of the erotic component, some passages of this typical scene have probably become popular and have evolved much more over time. This applies in particular to the Paris and Helen passage in Iliad III and to the Zeus and Hera passage in Iliad XIV. These scenes will therefore be discussed in more detail in the next chapter.

This brings us to the last typical scene: fame for the father. This typical scene is clearly much more popular than the others. We find the most examples of it, so much so that this typical scene can also best be reconstructed as a separate story.

Fame for the father

Core of the typical scene

A son makes his father proud with brave deeds but dies in battle.

Full description of the typical scene

The godfather of a powerful clan regularly fights with his neighbors. He has a son who is too young for the fight but who is in training in the art of war. During the war, the young son takes care of the wounded fighters. Yet the son wants to participate in the real fight. The father keeps the son at home and hides his weapons and chariot to prevent his son from secretly going to war.

When the day arrives when the son fights for the first time, the father is worried. The father predicts the death of his son and their failure of the battle. He discourages his son from fighting too far ahead of their army and urges him not to fight against the enemy's greatest hero. He urges the son to return to his father's country (or homeland). He even promises him beautiful

gifts and a woman and swears a solemn oath. Finally, the father lends his own weapons and horses to his son.

The son goes into battle as a chariot warrior. He gains great fame in the front lines and kills many enemies. Eventually, he meets the greatest hero of the enemy on the battlefield. He challenges this greatest enemy to a duel. They both talk about their fathers and boast about their descent. Then, they start the duel.

The son is killed in the duel. His companions fight for his corpse, but they cannot bring it back to camp. The father is in deep mourning and goes to the stronghold of the enemy with a large ransom to buy the corpse of his son so that a funeral can be held.

List of passages

This typical scene of fame for the father can be found in the following passages:

I 11-23	The story starts with a father who offers a large ransom
I 413-427	Thetis predicts the death of Achilleus and tells him not to fight
II 830-834	Merops advises his sons Adrastos and Amphios not to fight
III 396-436	Helen discusses the duel between Paris and Menelaos
IV 168-182	Agamemnon laments the inglorious death of Menelaos
IV 301-305	Nestor asks his chariot warriors not to fight in front
IV 405-418	Diomedes tries to acquire as much fame as his father
V 121-132	Athene forbids Diomedes to fight against the gods
V 148-158	Sons die, including Polyidos, the son of a seer
V 197-204	Pandaros left his horses at home despite the advice of his father
V 799-813	Athene compares the fame of Diomedes with that of his father
VI 119-151	Glaukos and Diomedes go into a duel and discuss their origin
VI 405-446	Andromache dissuades Hektor from fighting on the battlefield
VII 107-119	Agamemnon dissuades Menelaos from fighting against Hektor
VIII 1-40	Zeus forbids the other gods to fight on the battlefield.

VIII 137-144	Nestor advises Diomedes not to fight against Hektor
VIII 278-291	Teukros acquires fame for his father
IX 410-418	Achilleus talks about his mother's predictions
IX 453-486	Phoinix escapes secretly after a curse given by his father
IX 556-564	Kleopatra brings fame and sadness to her parents
XI 714-721	Neleus prohibits Nestor from fighting and hides his chariot
XI 764-789	Nestor sends Patroklos into the war and reminds him of his father
XI 828-848	Patroklos nurses a wound as long as he is not allowed to fight
XIII 459-469	Aineias tries to acquire fame for his educator
XIII 643-672	Pylaimenes and seer Polyidos lose their sons
XIV 9-11	Nestor lent his shield to his son, Thrasymedes
XIV 64-134	Agamemnon discourages Odysseus and Diomedes from fighting.
XV 115-142	Athene prohibits Ares from fighting because of his son.
XVI 1-41	Achilleus approves Patroklos in competing with Achilleus' weapons
XVI 80-100	Achilleus gives Patroklos advice for the fight.
XVI 837-842	Hektor remembers the dying Patroklos about the advice of Achilleus
XVII 651-656	Aias asks Menelaos to stop the fight
XVII 377-383	Nestor asks his sons to stay in the rear
XVII 468-473	Alkimedon advises Automedon not to go ahead alone.
XVII 685-693	Menelaos asks Antilochos to leave the battlefield
XVIII 134-137	Thetis asks Achilleus not to fight yet
XVIII 324-333	Achilleus promises Menoitios a return with great fame
XIX 291-301	Briseis wants to legally marry Achilleus in his homeland
XIX 309-422	Xanthos predicts Achilleus will die
XX 192-240	Achilleus and Aineias praise their lineage before a duel.
XX 407-414	Polydoros, who fought in front of the lines, is killed by Achilleus
XXI 34-51	Lykaon fights after a secret escape
XXI 83-110	Lykaon and Achilleus discuss their fate and descent.
XXII 33-47	Priam begs Hektor not to fight outside the ramparts
XXIII 333-336	Nestor tells his son Antilochos where he has to turn
XXIII 425-429	Menelaos asks Antilochos to stay behind him.

XXIV 384-400	Priam hears about the fame of Hektor.
XXIV 486-595	Achilleus meets Priam and returns the corpse of Hektor.
Little Iliad	Odysseus gives Neoptolemos the armor of his father
Od. IV 184-187	Menelaos and Peisistratos beweep the death of Antilochos

Featured sample passages

The old Nestor talked about his own youth and how his father Neleus was concerned about him when he first went into battle. Nestor went secretly on foot:

> *It was no hesitant host she assembled in Pylos but people straining hard toward the battle. Now Neleus would not let me be armed among them, and had hidden away my horses because he thought I was not yet skilled in the work of warfare. Even so I was preeminent among our own horsemen though I went on foot; since thus Athene guided the battle.*
> *(Iliad XI 715-720)*

A similar example on the Trojan side can be found with the beautiful Polydoros. He was one of the many victims of Achilleus during his long triumphant raid:

> *Next he went with the spear after godlike Polydoros, Priam's son, whom his father would not let go into battle because he was youngest born of all his sons to him, and also the most beloved, and in speed of his feet outpassed all the others. But now, in his young thoughtlessness and display of his running he swept among the champions until thus he destroyed his dear life.*
> *(Iliad XX 407-412)*

Discussion of the typical scene

The largest number of typical scenes in the Beta-tradition focuses on the father–son theme. This theme is clearly addressed in both the Iliad and the

Trojan cycle. The death of Patroklos in the Iliad follows directly from this father–son theme: Achilleus, the father figure, forbids Patroklos, the son, from fighting; Patroklos remains unemployed or plays a caregiver role; Patroklos begs Achilleus to go into battle; he achieves great fame and finally dies to the great distress of Achilleus. The name of Patroklos consists of the Greek words "patros" and "kleos," which mean "father" and "fame," respectively. "Patroklos" therefore means "fame for the father."

The death of Achilleus, which occurs later in the Trojan cycle, is also part of this theme. This is why Achilleus in the Iliad so often claims that he had promised his old father, Peleus, to return to his homeland alive.

When selecting these passages, the hidden roles, such as those of Menelaos and Antilochos, have also been taken into account. This duo is very common in the typical scenes. As far as fame for the father is concerned, Meneloas usually takes the paternal role and Antilochos that of the son.

Interesting literary-historical conclusions

The discovery of the seven highly developed typical scenes gives rise to a series of interesting conclusions. The following findings are all related to these seven typical scenes of the Beta-tradition:

- A city with ramparts and a ditch, a phenomenon that does not fit in with Greece or the area around Troy, is part of a typical scene.
- Here and there, chariots have been transformed into ships as the story was told over the ages.
- The famous catalogue of ships, which resembles a Mykenaian archive, is only part of a typical scene of the Beta-tradition.
- Several typical scenes are fused together.
- The name of Paris, who started the Trojan War by stealing Helen, appears to be a corruption of the Lycian Pandaros and the Greek Pandion.
- The lost texts of the Aethiopis and the Little Iliad are also formed by the Beta-tradition and its typical scenes.
- Even in Iliad X, which many experts regard as an unauthentic addition to the Iliad, we find the typical scene of the withheld honor gift.

- Hidden relationships between main characters are revealed in the typical scenes.

All in all, these discoveries show that the Beta-tradition is an age-old oral tradition and that, presumably, a purely orally transmitted Iliad may be that old. This search for the very old will continue in the next chapter. The typical scenes will be used to show that some passages in the Iliad are older than they seem to be at first glance.

Chapter 7

Signposts of the very oldest

The typical scenes from the previous chapter show the very oldest layer of the Iliad. They can form the basis of some of the longer parts of the Iliad, such as one or more chapters. But they are also incorporated into shorter passages. This is especially true of popular passages, such as bedroom scenes, which often contain the characteristics of different typical scenes. This indicates that these passages have a long track record.

In this chapter, four passages from the Iliad will first be discussed in detail. The analyses will show that the passages are much older than what one would, on the basis of a comparative linguistic analysis of the Ionic verses, suspect. This is followed by two reconstructions of a non-Greek, European Ur-Iliad. This is done first through the thematic typical scenes and then through the progressive typical scenes of the Beta-tradition.

The first passage to be discussed is Iliad VI, in which Hektor tours through Troy while his fighters still fight on the battlefield.

Iliad VI

In Iliad VI, we see a smooth succession of four typical scenes that have probably become intertwined long before the final phases of the Iliad. This particular architecture starts with the Trojans getting into trouble just before the ramparts of Troy. The ramparts are connected to the scene of gathering up the army for the fight, and being in trouble is connected with the scene of the warrior in need and the helper. In this case Paris, who was inside the ramparts of Troy, is the rescuing helper.

These two scenes are easily intertwined by the fact that the captain who is gathering up the army for the fight is also supposed to enter the stronghold and ask for the help of the gods. After all, we also see this in the behavior of Priam (Iliad III) and Achilleus (Iliad XVI) after they have gathered up their armies. Entering the stronghold is then the ideal moment to also find the rescuing helper and ask him for help.

As mentioned earlier, the scene of the warrior in need and the helper has also become connected to that of the cowardly archer, which probably can be explained by the fact that it is usually the coward who hides and who can therefore still serve as a rescuing helper. Furthermore, this mixing is often accompanied by the typical scene of the warrior who blames his companion.

Thus, we see in Iliad VI that the Trojans first form a front under the leadership of Hektor. Hektor then enters the walls of Troy to beg the gods for assistance. He then seeks Paris, who was occupied with his bow and urges him to fight, reproaching Paris while doing so. Together, they return to the battle, and they beat back the Greeks. This architecture is also surrounded by duels, in which case the duel between Glaukos and Diomedes also fits well with the father–son theme. Iliad VI becomes almost entirely a display of the typical scenes of the Beta-tradition in the claims Paris makes stating that it was not out of resentment toward the Trojan people that he kept out of battle, but out of grief, and that Helen had already tried to persuade him with soft words to join the fight. In this, we recognize the typical scene of the resentful warrior.

The funeral games for Patroklos

Toward the end of the Iliad, in the funeral games for Patroklos, we see a remarkable display of themes found in the Beta-tradition. However, this passage has the characteristics of the Ionian Epsilon-tradition in many ways. It is likely that it was not produced until late in the tradition of the Iliad. In any case, Antilochos, Menelaos, Achilleus, and Nestor behave in several ways that fit with the typical scenes of the Beta-tradition during the horse racing competition but not during the other games. This is further underlined by the fact that Antilochos and Menelaos also often appear, alone or as a duo, in other typical scenes.

Before the contest, Nestor takes his son Antilochos aside and explains to him exactly where to turn his horses and his chariot, just like a father who cares about his son going into battle would do for this type of typical scene.

During the race, it is Menelaos who warns Antilochos not to pass him, much like in the father–son scene where a young man is advised not to fight in the foremost ranks. When Antilochos passes him, Menelaos shouts he will have to swear an oath. This also fits with the father–son theme. Menelaos judged that the road was too narrow to pass him and remained resentful behind, which shows the typical scene of the resentful warrior. At the award ceremony, Achilleus donated the prize of Antilochos to Eumelos out of pity because of the misfortune that his yoke was broken. Antilochos protests, to which Achilleus gives a different prize to Eumelos. In this section, we thus recognize the typical scenes of fame for the father, the resentful warrior, and the withheld honor gift.

Apparently, the Iliad does not originate completely from the Beta-tradition. The typical scenes in the funeral games of Iliad XXIII do not form a framework from which the chapter grew later on. These typical scenes are more superficially present than, for example, in Iliad VI. Therefore, it is likely that the funeral games, especially the games other than the horse race, are younger than most parts of the Iliad.

The Meleager story

In Iliad IX, a story is told in a short digression, in which we also see a mix of typical scenes: it is the ancient story about Meleager, which also played an important role in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. The Meleager story has strong similarities with the story of Achilleus and Patroklos.

Let me briefly outline the story first: Oineus, the father of Meleager and the king of Kalydon, had forgotten to make a sacrifice to the goddess Artemis. This is why the goddess sent a huge wild boar to the orchards of Kalydon. Meleager could beat the wild boar with the help of the Kouretes, but he could not prevent a battle between the Kouretes and the Kalydonians over the fleece of the boar. This started the war for Kalydon. As long as Meleager fought, the Kouretes fared badly and could not stand outside the ramparts of the city. But anger seized Meleager because of a quarrel with his mother. She had cursed him because he had killed her brother. So Meleager stopped fighting. He decided to settle with his lawful wife, the beautiful Kleopatra.

His friends, his relatives, and priests tried to persuade him to fight, offering the promise of many gifts. His father and, eventually, his mother also begged him to help in the fight. They promised him that he could choose

a large piece of land in the most fertile plain of Kalydon. Still, Meleager continued to sit and did not even let them enter his bedroom. They could not persuade him until the Kouretes finally climbed the rampart and set fire to the city. Even Meleager's room was hit by javelins. Then his wife, Kleopatra, persuaded Meleager to fight. He went into battle with his shining weapons and saved the Kalydonians from destruction. He did not receive his gifts, but he saved the Kalydonians.

This story clearly has strong similarities with the Iliad through the same mixing of the following major themes: the resentful warrior, fame for the father, the warrior in need and the helper, and the promised gifts that the warrior cannot enjoy. Meleager is always the main actor of these typical scenes.

Just like the name "Patro-klos," the name "Kleo-patra" also refers to the father–son theme. We find the explanation of the name Kleopatra, fame for the father, in a digression within the digression:

> *Kleopatra the lovely, daughter of sweet-stepping Marpessa, child of Euenos, and Idas, who was the strongest of all men upon earth in his time; for he even took up the bow to face the King's onset, Phoibos Apollo, for the sake of the sweet-stepping maiden; a girl her father and honored mother had named in their palace Alkyone, sea-bird, as a by-name, since for her sake her mother with the sorrow-laden cry of a sea-bird wept because far-reaching Phoibos Apollo had taken her.*
> *(Iliad IX 556-564)*

Here, it is Idas, the father, who gains fame in a fight for his daughter. The theme of the archer is thus also included in the short digression although the cowardice is emphasized here by means of its opposite: the bravery of Idas.

Besides the four thematic typical scenes, the Meleager story also contains a mix of the father–son theme (father–daughter here) because of the fame and the sadness being mixed with the theme of the cowardly archer. And therein, it contains an interesting correspondence with another important story in the Trojan cycle: the kidnapping of Helen by the archer Paris and the fame that Menelaos gained by getting her back.

The Paris and Helen passage

The fact that Helen's kidnapping has its origins in the themes of the Beta-tradition is confirmed by the direct duel between Menelaos and Paris in Iliad III and the bedroom scene that follows (Iliad III 351-447).

Halfway through the duel between Menelaos and Paris, Paris is taken away in a cloud by the goddess Aphrodite and placed in his bedroom. Then, Aphrodite goes to Helen and asks her to join Paris. Helen argues with Aphrodite and asks her if she intends to take her even further away from her homeland. She refuses to join Paris. To Aphrodite, she says:

> *Go yourself and sit beside him, abandon the gods' way, turn your feet back never again to the path of Olympos but stay with him forever, and suffer for him, and look after him until he makes you his wedded wife, or makes you his slave girl.*
> *(Iliad III 406-409)*

With threats, Aphrodite convinces her, and when Helen sees Paris, she contradicts herself in her advice to Paris:

> *There was a time before now you boasted that you were better than warlike Menelaos, in spear and hand and your own strength. Go forth now and challenge warlike Menelaos once again to fight you in combat. But no: I advise you rather to let it be, and fight no longer with fair-haired Menelaos, strength against strength in single combat recklessly. You might very well go down before his spear.*
> *(Iliad III 430-436)*

Paris follows this second advice and instead of fighting, he makes love with Helen.

In this scene, we see the same four themes of the Beta-tradition again, which are present in all sorts of ways. *Fame for the father* is seen in Helen wanting to return to her homeland, in her suggestion to Aphrodite to guard Paris (so that he would not go to battle), in her suggestion to become Paris's wife (the honor gift after the battle), in her advice to Paris not to fight (like the

father who gives advice to the son), and in the fame that Menelaos would have achieved with his victory over Paris. *The resentful warrior* is seen in the aversion of Helen toward Paris and Aphrodite, in the incitements of Aphrodite to Helen to give up that resentment, and in the seclusion of Paris in the bedroom during the battle. *The warrior in need and the helper* is seen in Helen as a messenger urging Paris to the fight. *The cowardly archer*, finally, is seen in Paris, the archer who is too cowardly to fight Menelaos.

Therefore, the bedroom scene with Paris and Helen has strong similarities with the story about Kleopatra and Meleager. Both passages must be much older than what we find in the Iliad. A bedroom scene with main characters such as Paris and Helen would understandably have been popular during the whole Iliadic tradition. This explains the intense mixture of typical scenes of the Beta-tradition in such passages.

A thematic Ur-Iliad: Achilleus and Patroklos

In the story of Achilleus and Patroklos, as it is told in the Iliad, we find all seven highly developed typical scenes. Therefore, it is interesting to reconstruct the story here. This brings us to a thematic Ur-Iliad: the contours of a story in which all the themes of the Beta-tradition are incorporated and which is much older than the text that originated in the Ionian Epsilon-tradition. The events in Iliad XVI are central to this. Almost all the typical scenes come together in this chapter, especially in the conversation between Achilleus and Patroklos.

The idea of an Ur-Iliad was once popular among analysts such as Hermann (1832) and Lachmann (1874); their reasons for presenting an Ur-Iliad, however, are clearly different from those suggested for the theory found in this book. Hermann and Lachmann wanted to explain the exceptionally large length of the Iliad on the one hand and the fragmented character of the Iliad on the other hand. Regarding the exceptionally large length and the fragmented nature of the Iliad, according to my theory, the Iliad has been systematically expanded with all kinds of material from various oral traditions for centuries, in addition to including all the possible themes. In exposing the narrative Delta-tradition, it will indeed be shown that a long, fragmented Iliad does not exclude the parallel existence of shorter stories.

Let us tell the story of the thematic Ur-Iliad as follows: Agamemnon and Achilleus have a heated quarrel. The mighty captain of the Greek

army deprives Achilleus of his honor gift, the slave girl Briseis. This is why Achilleus refrains from fighting. Patroklos, his bosom friend who was trained with him by Phoinix, is prohibited by Achilleus from fighting. Therefore, Patroklos remains behind the battle scene, where he helps to take care of the wounded Greeks.

The Greeks are being beaten without Achilleus. The Trojans have settled just outside the rampart around the Greek camp. They threaten to burn the Greek ships. Hence, Agamemnon offers many honor gifts to Achilleus so that he would give up his anger. But Achilleus stubbornly refuses these gifts.

The Greeks are even closer to total defeat. Eventually, when the first ship is set on fire by the Trojans, Patroklos rushes to Achilleus' tent. There, he begs Achilleus to be allowed to go into battle himself. He accuses Achilleus of not fighting and asks him to give up his grudge.

Achilleus still refuses to fight, but he allows Patroklos to fight using Achilleus' own armor. He urges Patroklos to drive the Trojans away from the ships, but he forbids him to fight with the brave Trojans and gain great fame. He must leave the battle away from the ships to others.

Achilleus and Patroklos change armor. Then, they gather up Achilleus' men for the fight. Achilleus passes by the army, after which he prays to the gods in his tent. Patroklos leads the army forward as their captain.

The Trojans are beaten back by Patroklos, and the Greeks rejoice. But Patroklos ignores the advice of Achilleus and continues to pursue the Trojans up to the ramparts of Troy, gaining great fame by killing numerous Trojans. There, he is, however, beaten by the archery god Apollo, who approached him from behind. Hektor finally kills Patroklos.

An awful fight arises around the corpse of Patroklos. A chain of different messengers is sent to the ships to report the news to Achilleus. When Achilleus hears about the death of Patroklos, he gives up his grudge and goes to kill Hektor.

Agamemnon solemnly hands over the promised gifts to Achilleus. But Achilleus does not care because he knows he will die in battle before he can enjoy the gifts. After the delivery of the gifts, Achilleus joins the battle and takes revenge by killing Hektor.

These are the highly developed typical scenes that we can find in the Iliad. Especially, fame for the father is nicely illustrated in this story. Patroklos, who takes the role of the son, must beg Achilleus, taking the role of the father, to be allowed to fight. The father discourages the son from fighting

too far ahead, but the son does not listen and dies in a duel with the bravest enemy fighter.

Now, it is left up to the reader to find the six remaining typical scenes in the above story. The death of Achilleus by the arrow of Paris, which occurs outside the Iliad, further adds to the scenes of the cowardly archer and the withheld honor gift.

A progressive Ur-Iliad: Thirty-one typical Beta-scenes

Although thematic typical scenes can occur frequently and at any place in the poem, progressive typical scenes are bound to a certain place in the poem. Gathering up the army for the fight logically happens at the beginning, while selling a corpse for ransom is at the end. The search for an Ur-liad—the very oldest core of the Iliad—can also be seen as looking for progressive typical scenes. We must remember that the Beta-bard needed both thematic and progressive typical scenes to be able to shape his story.

There are sufficient progressive typical scenes that belong to the Beta-tradition and that possibly go back to a non-Greek European region of origin. The following thirty-one progressive typical scenes are divided across the twenty-four chapters of the Iliad:

1. The cause (of the story or the war): Iliad I
2. Collecting the troops: Iliad II
3. The enumeration of the armed forces: Iliad II
4. The encounter with the hostile army: Iliad III
5. The duel between the protagonists: Iliad III
6. Gathering up the armies for the fight: Iliad IV
7. The total battle in the open plain: Iliad IV
8. Pursuit scenes that glorify a hero: Iliad V
9. A duel between the greatest heroes: Iliad VII
10. The supreme god who takes control of the battle: Iliad VIII
11. The flight of the warriors inside the ramparts: Iliad VIII

12. The surprise attack from the besieged stronghold: Iliad VIII
13. The nightly meeting: Iliad IX
14. The nightly creep action: Iliad X
15. Gathering up the fighters before the stronghold: Iliad XI
16. The attack of the enemy on the ramparts of the stronghold: Iliad XII
17. The total battle for the stronghold: Iliad XIII
18. The supreme deity who is deceived: Iliad XIV
19. The turn of the battle chances: Iliad XIV
20. The supreme god who controls the battle again: Iliad XV
21. The first fire in the living area: Iliad XV
22. The flight of the enemy to their stronghold: Iliad XVI
23. The death of the important hero: Iliad XVI
24. The battle for the corpse of the important hero: Iliad XVII
25. The description of the honor gifts: Iliad XVIII
26. The handing over of the honor gifts: Iliad XIX
27. The victory over the fleeing enemy: Iliad XX
28. All gods in action: Iliad XXI
29. The death of the important enemy hero: Iliad XXII
30. The burning and burial of the important hero: Iliad XXIII
31. Selling the corpse for ransom: Iliad XXIV

This is a series of progressive typical scenes that can be used in almost every story of the Beta-tradition. Some of the progressive typical scenes are present in several places in the Iliad, such as gathering up the army for the fight, the battle, the turn of the battle, and the pursuit scenes. Others are spread over several chapters, such as the description of Achilleus' armor.

A similar progression of the events in the Iliad probably existed for centuries before the Iliad was written down. The more narrative content was provided by the previously discussed themes of the Beta-tradition. So it does not seem absurd to say that the Iliad as a whole comes from a non-Greek European tradition, where it may have had an even longer history of development than the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and been distributed over a much larger area.

A question still remains: how does the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition relate to the Beta-tradition, and to what extent have they mixed together? This is what the next chapter covers.

Chapter 8

Differences and similarities with the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition

We have now seen that the Beta-tradition is an ancient oral tradition from which the entire Iliad has evolved over time. But there is another oral tradition that can claim such an old age: the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Thus, both oral traditions may have existed on Greek soil for hundreds of years at the same time, the result of which is the mixing and mutual influence of stories such as the Iliad. The current book about the Beta-tradition is a sequel to *The Alpha-tradition: On the Origin of Greek Stories*. In it, the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition is described as an imaginative oral tradition dating back to the early Mykenaian civilization. In this chapter, the most important characteristics of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition are repeated. Then, the differences and similarities between the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition are discussed.

The characteristics of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition

The earliest source of inspiration for the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition was probably a mafia world (see *The Alpha-tradition: On the Origin of Greek Stories*, chapter 6). That world might have originated from a mixture of Greek-speaking Indo-Europeans coming from the north and the indigenous tribes in Greece. Through a thorough power policy, the first Greeks worked themselves up to the highest levels of nobility. Such a mafia world is characterized by fierce feuds, often within one's own family. The aim is to gain and

then retain as much power and wealth as possible. The strategically located fortresses in mountainous Greece provide the ideal stage for this.

Many stories within the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition describe the endless intrigues that unfold as a result of the tense relationships within the same family. The blood revenge—the inevitable revenge after a murder—continues to haunt the characters. Menelaos was certainly not the only one who got into trouble because of an unfaithful woman. His brother, Agamemnon, was even killed at the hands of his own wife Klytaimnestra and her lover Aigisthos. Oidipous, the man who killed his own father and married his mother, later cursed his twin sons, Eteokles and Polyneikes. Still later, when he learned about his terrible deeds, he stuck out his own eyes and went into exile.

Other heroes had to complete a challenging task. Everyone knows of Odysseus and Herakles, the heroes who endured a whole series of trials. While Eurystheus was safe on the throne in Mykenai, he had Herakles travel around the world to complete twelve trials. Yet the gods are the ones who are ultimately pulling the strings. Herakles had the goddess Hera as his archenemy, and Odysseus the sea god Poseidon. Perseus, who rode the winged horse Pegasus, was also the plaything of higher powers.

Two primal stories have been formed by the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition: the king story and the hero story. The first, the king story, is focused around a city and a king who loses his power. The king story sprung up around the cities of Ithaca, Mykenai, Thebes, and Troy. In short, during his absence, the king is deceived by his entourage members who were left behind. On his return, the king collects allies from elsewhere to recapture the city. Yet the battle is a great difficulty. Many years pass before the king, or his son, finally regains the throne. The central theme of the king story is loyalty versus the unfaithfulness of the traitors who stayed behind.

The hero story focuses on a single hero or in some cases around a pair. Kastor and Polydeukes are a clear example of a pair who always act together. Characteristic of the hero story is that the hero, despite his good lineage, still has an unhappy childhood. As an adult, the hero makes a name for himself thanks to his exceptional deeds. Then, he leads a royal life but eventually ends up unhappy.

The Iliad is peppered with digressions in which the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition is clearly present. The digressions, together accounting for about ten percent of the total Iliad, often reflect the oldest variations of the stories of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. These passages can be recognized by their Alpha-characteristics. A list of forty-nine Alpha-characteristics forms a

blueprint of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Examples include “kings,” “the hero who alone defeats an entire army,” “exiles,” “unsuccessful marriages,” and “cunning ambushes.”

In the book about the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, a whole series of oral characteristics have also been gathered that originate from the East, specifically the area from Israel to India. Some examples are “twins,” “snakes,” “exotic locations,” “horses and drivers,” “fabulous monsters,” and “the man who fights the gods.” The influence of the East is great, but it disappears when searching for the core of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. That core appears to be free of influence from the East.

Thanks to the discovery of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, it is possible to sketch a hypothetical development of many of the stories over time. This development dates back to the heyday of the Mykenaian Empire, many hundreds of years before the formation of the Iliad. An important observation is that the story about Ithaka, as it is depicted in the Odyssee, is much older than the story about Troy. In the story about Ithaka, we can recognize the king story in its clearest form. The story about Troy, on the other hand, steals Ithaka’s main characters, in particular Odysseus and Agamemnon, from older stories. Moreover, the Thebans are notoriously absent in the story of Troy. This creates the suspicion that Troy has taken over the role of Thebes as the city that was besieged by a large Greek coalition.

In the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, the members of a family do not live in harmony. Oidipous, the man who killed his father and married his mother, is the best example of this. These difficult family relationships can be found in almost all hero stories and in the king stories as well. Another peculiarity in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition is splitting the heroes into two generations: the heroes of the past and the heroes of today. All these matters, including the wars and feuds of Ithaca, Thebes and Mykenai, the tense family relations, and the division of the heroic realm, are older than the Trojan cycle. The story of Troy is an aggregation of several other stories that are much older.

Assigning an age to these stories and oral characteristics remains tricky. Yet there seem to be two oral characteristics that can help show the way: “Troy” and “seafaring.” Together with the series of Oriental oral characteristics, these two oral characteristics seem to point to everything that is relatively young. The stories that have strong ties with these characteristics are probably not older than the Dark Ages in Greece, a maximum of four hundred years before the creation of the Iliad in the eighth century BC.

The mix with the Beta-tradition

The Beta-tradition has a special relationship with the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. The descriptions of both show that they are clearly different, but a detailed study of the Iliad shows that both oral traditions have become intimately intertwined. This mix is shown the best in the pieces of background information that the bard gives about unknown fighters. This is what we read about with Krethon and Orsilochos:

> *Now Aineias killed two great men of the Danaäns, the sons of Diokles, Orsilochos and Krethon, men whose father dwelt in Phere the strong-founded, rich in substance, and his generation was of the river Alpheios, who flows wide through the country of the Pylians, and who got a son, Ortilochos, to be lord over many men, but the son of Ortilochos was high-hearted Diokles; and to Diokles in his turn were two twin sons born, Orsilochos and Krethon, both well skilled in all fighting.*
> *(Iliad V 540-548)*

The many proper names, the descent of the gods, and the rich, mighty kings are all oral characteristics of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Numerous such digressions can be found in the fighting passages in the Iliad. It is precisely in these digressions that we also find the information about the bastard sons who are raised by a godfather. At least, we must assume that the battle passages in the Iliad have been told by bards who mastered both the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition and that these bards have mixed both traditions into the digressions about the warriors.

In the digressions that are typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, we find the same mixing. Such a digression is found in the monologue of the old Nestor about the death of the club bearing Areïthoös:

> *Lykourgos killed this man by craft, not strength, for he met him in the narrow pass of the way, where the iron club served not to parry destruction, for Lykourgos, too quick with a stab beneath it, pinned him through the middle with the spear, so he went down backward to the ground; and he stripped the armor brazen Ares*

had given him.
(Iliad VII 142-146)

The armor is being robbed, just like in the Beta-tradition, but the geographical conditions—the narrow pass—are those of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. In other such Alpha-passages, we see that farmers, who protect their herds of cattle, form lines and fight with spears (Iliad XI 673-674). Or we can see how Nestor not only robs the herds of the Epeians, but also the horses of their chariots (Iliad XI 746-748). The robbery of cattle or horses is typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, while chariots and fighting in lines belong more with the Beta-tradition.

In the next passage, we can see how an oral characteristic of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition—the flight after a murder—is combined with an oral characteristic of the Beta-tradition—the adoption of a bastard son. In a dream, the spirit of the dead Patroklos begs the sleeping Achilleus to bury him near Achilleus:

Do not have my bones laid apart from yours, Achilleus, but with them, just as we grew up together in your house, when Menoitios brought me there from Opous, when I was little, and into your house, by reason of a baneful manslaying, on that day when I killed the son of Amphidamas. I was a child only, nor intended it, but was angered over a dice game. There the rider Peleus took me into his own house, and brought me carefully up, and named me to be your henchman.
(Iliad XXIII 83-90)

Patroklos has already committed a murder as a child, even before he became a bastard son! As always found in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, Patroklos had to move because of this murder. This scenario, in which a warrior is raised and cared for at a young age in a palace, perfectly fits both the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition. For the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, it is usually a royal child who is left behind somewhere at a young age usually because—according to an oracle—he would later cause evil. The king's child is then found by someone and brought up nevertheless. Some examples are Oidipous, Orestes, and Paris. In the Beta-tradition, the

story is about a bastard son who is raised as a warrior from an early age. In the Iliad, we find different formulations. For the Trojan Simoeisios, we read:

> *But he could not render again the care of his dear parents; he was short-lived, beaten down beneath the spear of high-hearted Aias.*
> *(Iliad IV 478-479)*

For the Greek Teukros, we clearly have the characteristics of the Beta-tradition:

> *Telamonian Teukros, dear heart, O lord of your people, strike so; thus you may be a light given to the Danaäns, and to Telamon your father, who cherished you when you were little, and, bastard as you were, looked after you in his own house. Bring him into glory, though he is far away.*
> *(Iliad VIII 281-285)*

With a similar wording for Hera, however, we are again in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition:

> *I am going to the ends of the generous earth, on a visit to Okeanos, whence the gods have risen, and Tethys our mother, who brought me up kindly in their own house, and cared for me.*
> *(Iliad XIV 301-303)*

We also read about the upbringing of Hephaistos in a digression that is typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition (Iliad XVIII 394-408). Therefore, it is not clear whether the upbringing and care in a palace is a formulation that fits the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition or the Beta-tradition. Indeed, the formulation fits into both traditions.

There are even more similarities between the Alpha- and Beta-traditions. The whole system of godfathers, bastard sons, and combat teachers in the Beta-tradition can be compared with the system of kings, heroes, and counselors in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. The fortified strongholds in which they live and the wars between themselves fit in both traditions. It is difficult to determine into which tradition the famous “city devastators” best belong. In both traditions, we have heroism, family feuds, armies, and murder.

Artificial transformations

Are the Alpha- and Beta-traditions really different? Or are the points of contact that of two random epic, oral traditions? In any case, the characteristics of both oral traditions often are at odds with each other. This has given rise to a number of sometimes artificial transformations:

- The allies (typical of the Beta-tradition) become peoples with a remarkable feature (typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition), such as the Paionians with their curved bows (Iliad II 848).
- Warriors without much meaning, sometimes even foot soldiers, such as Pandaros, or bastard sons, such as Teukros, become kings (Iliad VIII 281-284).
- Bastard sons who are included in a clan have a life history in which they had to flee because they killed a man, like Patroklos (Iliad XXIII 84-90).
- A combat teacher recruited by a godfather becomes the hero who is crowned a new king by an older king, such as Phoinix (Iliad IX 479-484).
- Descriptions and additional information about warriors, such as their status, their past, or their motivations for fighting, become descriptions with data that include place names and genealogical descent, for example, the leaders in the catalogue of ships (Iliad II 494-759) and Simoeisios (Iliad IV 474-478).
- Combat teachers who train the sons in the clan become counselors who accompany the king's son to the battle, such as Phoinix (Iliad IX 438-443).

The fact that both traditions are different is also evident from the ways they have been handed down over time. We hardly find the Beta-tradition outside the Iliad, and in the Iliad, it is always mixed to a certain extent with the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. The Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, on the other hand, is clearly reflected in the Odyssey, the Theban cycle, and in the plays by Aeschyles, Sophokles, and Euripides. The major themes of the Beta-tradition cannot be found in these works.

The joint protagonists

Remarkable are also the special relations that the main characters of the Iliad have in the typical scenes of the Beta-tradition. Menelaos and Antilochos, for example, form a duo that constantly fights together, just like Odysseus and Diomedes. Nestor also often is found in the typical scenes and often has a paternal role over Diomedes or Antilochos. In the Iliad, Nestor is officially the father of Antilochos, but this is possibly a fact that has developed only over the course of time. Agamemnon appears in a paternal role toward Menelaos, Diomedes, and Odysseus.

Of all these characters, we met Agamemnon, Menelaos, Nestor, and Odysseus in the discussion of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. Agamemnon and Menelaos, as a twin pair, Nestor as the old hero with the many stories, and Odysseus as the wandering hero. They all live in powerful palaces in the Peloponnese, the southern peninsula of Greece. The relationships these characters have within the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition do not correspond with the relationships they carry in the Beta-tradition. Presumably, at a certain point in history, long before the final stages of the Iliad, the main characters of these two oral traditions merged into a single collection of main characters.

For Menelaos and Agamemnon, we can find a point of contact on the basis of which they are unified. The Menelaos in the Beta-tradition gained fame in a duel with the cowardly archer Paris (or Pandaros), and on that basis, he was combined with the character of Menelaos in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, who won fame by conquering his wife, Helen, back. Agamemnon, a paternal warrior or a clan chief in the Beta-tradition, then became the Agamemnon who was the brother and expedition leader in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition. For Nestor, we find agreement in the paternal role he has in the Beta-tradition and the role of the old, wise hero of the early generation of heroes in the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition.

This concludes the comparison between the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition. The next chapter describes a theory that explains why we find the non-Greek Beta-tradition in Greece. This theory simultaneously provides an answer to a series of interesting historical issues, such as the entry of the Greek Dark Ages, the relocations of the Dorians, and the attacks of the Sea Peoples.

Chapter 9

The Sea Peoples and a Central European ideology

The purpose of this chapter is to provide an explanation of how the Beta-tradition might have ended up in Greece. This will be done through a separated historical theory about prehistoric Europe and the Dark Ages in Greece. Both the presented argumentation for the existence and origin of the Beta-tradition and the argument for the historical theory are supposed to be sufficiently strong in and of themselves. So even if we did not find any connections between Greece and non-Greek Europe, we still have to assume the non-Greek origin of the Beta-tradition based on the arguments that have already been presented. Nevertheless, it will be demonstrated that such links were indeed there.

In finding the Beta-tradition in Greece, it should be noted first that other northern, non-Greek elements began to emerge in Greece around the fall of the Mykenaian Empire. These elements are shown in the following three facts: bronze weapons from the Danube region (the so-called bronzes from the north), the adaptation of Mykenaian weapons to northern weapons, and Mykenaian imitations of northern pottery. Anyone who wants to offer an explanation for this, however, must also answer a series of important and much-discussed issues that are closely linked: the fall of the Mykenaian Empire, the fall of the Hittite Empire (including a successful attack on Troy), the Dark Ages in Greece, the attacks of the peoples appointed by the Egyptians as Sea Peoples, the relocations of the Sea Peoples, and the relocation of the Dorians within Greece. In this chapter, therefore, an overarching theory will be presented that offers an answer to all these issues. Although the main goal

is to further substantiate the origins of the Beta-tradition, it is nice to shed some light on the revolutions related to the Sea Peoples.

The key to these issues comes in examining a series of less well-known phenomena in non-Greek Europe that involve the many centrifugal revolutions that start from Central Europe, the fusion of the Urnfield and Tumulus cultures, and the simplifying, austere fusion of all kinds of art and production techniques. These European phenomena are, however, much more difficult to integrate into an overarching theory. Because no type of writing was used in non-Greek Europe and because that region is so much further away from the well-datable Egyptian dynasties than Greece, it is difficult to see the forest for the trees in the available archeological findings. The temptation then is to explain the findings via normal evolutions rather than as revolutions.

Yet there are sufficient indications to support the following basic hypothesis: a warlike, expansive ideology has developed in an overpopulated Central Europe after the fusion of the Tumulus and the Urnfield people. This ideology made a particularly ambitious plan to tackle the problem of overpopulation and to spread its own culture across the earth through an incessant series of crusades in all directions. These crusades have been documented by the Egyptians as the attacks of the Sea Peoples: they overthrew the Mykenaian and Hittite empires and heralded the Dark Ages in Greece.

In this chapter, the following five archeologically traceable aspects of the Central European crusades are discussed successively: alliances and mercenary contracts, aid that was provided in warfare against old enemies, the power centers that were overthrown, population migrations that were promised or enforced to regions further away from Central Europe, and cultural and material habits that were fused innovatively in a simplifying, planned economy.

A thorough investigation into the Sea Peoples' revolutions was done by Nancy Sandars (1978). Her work will serve as a reference for what we discuss in the Mediterranean area. For the archeological phenomena that are exclusively related to non-Greek Europe, Siegfried De Laet (1967) serves as the reference.

The alliances and mercenary contracts

The alliances and mercenary contracts formed a first step in the strategy of the Central European ideologists. These contracts were concluded with regions that would later fall prey to the bellicosity of the Central Europeans.

The intention of this first step was to let allies move to even more remote regions, thereby freeing up places for the migrations of peoples closer to Central Europe.

In Greece, such alliances are underpinned by the appearance of bronze weapons that were previously only manufactured in non-Greek Europe. Sandars (1978, p. 88) concludes from the Mykenaian context in which the type IIa sword is found, it had to have come from mercenaries from Eastern Europe. In any case, these "bronzes from the north" appear well before the fall of the Mykenaian Empire, so a period of alliances between the Mykenaians and peoples who were closer to Central Europe is very plausible. According to Snodgrass (1974), the free trade of the IIa sword is also a possibility, but Sandars notes that this cannot explain the large numbers of the swords, nor the turbulent period in which they were found.

Help with warfare against old enemies

In the eastern basin of the Mediterranean at around 1220 BC, power lay with the great empires: the Egyptian Empire, the Hettite Empire, and the Mykenaian Empire. The Egyptian Empire was especially powerful and hence a formidable enemy for many smaller nations. The fact that these smaller nations grouped together twice, around 1220 BC and in 1186 BC, with the help of the Mykenaians, but without the help of the Hittites, deserves a special explanation. The ideological crusades from Central Europe can offer an explanation here. Apparently, it was easy to apply a divide-and-conquer strategy because the Egyptians twice reported attacks in which numerous peoples, the so-called Sea Peoples, went into war against Egypt. This even raises the question of whether such attacks could ever take place without an external catalyst because the balance of power at that time made these types of attacks madness. It is therefore no surprise that the Sea Peoples were effortlessly beaten by the Egyptian army. The outcome was disastrous for all the Sea Peoples living in the Mediterranean.

The fall of the power centers

Despite the failures in Egypt, the empires of the Mykenaians and the Hittites were effectively defeated by a lack of coordination during the rapid attacks that took place in 1186 BC. A devastation layer in Troy can also be dated to

1186 BC. Without an external factor such as a crusade from Central Europe, it is difficult to explain the simultaneous fall of the kingdoms of the Mykenaians and the Hittites, a conquest of Troy, and the emergence of a coalition of Sea Peoples in Egypt. There is no good reason to explain each of these events in a completely different way. In particular, we must resist the temptation to seek too much truth in the Greek stories about the fall of Troy.

Promised and enforced migrations

From the report that the Egyptians made about the first attack of the Sea Peoples at around 1220 BC, it appears that the Lybians carried with them their entire possessions so that they could permanently settle in the fertile Nile delta. To the extent that the Sea Peoples described by the Egyptians can be identified, it seems that these peoples spread and resettled within the Mediterranean after the attacks. The relocations of the Dorians from the north of Greece to the south also fit well within the same pattern of population movements that were planned or provoked from Central Europe.

Yet the migrations of the peoples in the Mediterranean are only a part of the total picture. The following is a quote from the introduction to the Late Bronze Age cultures in Europe by De Laet (1967):

> *While the periods of the Early and Middle Bronze Age were periods of relative calm and stability, the Late Bronze Age in Europe is characterized by large population movements that will continue until the beginning of the Iron Age. In the same period, the Mediterranean world is going through a crisis. This manifests itself in wars, invasions and political upheavals. Troy is occupied by Achaians (Mykenaians), the Hittite kingdom is overthrown, Egypt is attacked by the "Sea Peoples", in Greece, finally, the Doric raids put an end to the Mykenaian culture. It cannot be ruled out that all these events are related and that population movements in Europe known as the migrations of the "Urnfield Peoples" are due to the same causes that caused the revolution in the Mediterranean world. These causes, however, remain obscure.*
> *(De Laet, 1967, p. 126)*

De Laet notes that climate change as a cause has never been established in the Subboreal period in which these crises occurred. An expansive, long-term ideology established by political and/or religious leaders in an overpopulated area *can* explain all these crises in the same way. This means that we can designate a single migration that was the mother of all these migrations, such as the relocation of a group of Urnfield tribes in the middle of an area usually ruled by Tumulus tribes. According to the chronology of De Laet, this must be the Riegsee group that occupied a part of Bavaria between Munich and the Alps and that possibly came from Hungary. Given that it was in this area that the first merging took place between the funeral habits of burial mounds and urn fields, we can imagine a solemn reconciliation process must have taken place. This reconciliation process may ultimately have resulted in an expansive ideology, of which systematically organized population movements were a part.

In any case, we see that the practice of burning corpses and putting the ash into urns began to spread in at least five different directions: in the direction of Catalonia in Spain, in the direction of the Netherlands via the Rhine, in the direction of the already related Lausitz culture in Poland, in the direction of the Balkans, and on the other side of the Alps in the direction of Italy. In most of these regions, people had the habit of defending the settlements with a rampart of wood, stones, and earth and then building a ditch around these ramparts.

However, dating one or more migrations or crusades remains difficult in prehistoric Europe. The very first crusade, if detectable, is masked by later migrations. But perhaps, we can still find a written account of the horrors of this turbulent period. In the Iliad, there is a wisdom, which is one that might be a reflection of this process of rapid crusades followed by slower migrations. The old Phoinix says the following to Achilleus in an attempt to persuade him to the fight:

> *For there are also the spirits of Prayer, the daughters of great Zeus, and they are lame of their feet, and wrinkled, and cast their eyes sidelong, who toil on their way left far behind by the spirit of Ruin: but she, Ruin, is strong and sound on her feet, and therefore far outruns all Prayers, and wins into every country to force men astray; and the Prayers follow as healers after her. If a man venerates these daughters of Zeus as they draw near, such a man they bring great advantage, and hear his entreaty; but if a man*

> *shall deny them, and stubbornly with a harsh word refuse, they go to Zeus, son of Kronos, in supplication that Ruin may overtake this man, that he be hurt, and punished.*
> *(Iliad IX 502-512)*

This gives us the idea of a planned migration of people in which the fighting men—the strong, rapid Ruin—raced forward and were followed by the lame, wrinkled Prayer—the women, children, and old men. Zeus is not on Olympos here but rather on Mont Blanc in the Alps.

A simplifying planned economy

Because of these organized population movements, the perceived problem of overpopulation in Central Europe could have been shifted to regions much farther away. At the same time, by forming mixed practices, these groups could also hold onto the relative sacredness of their own cultural practices. This means that the conquered regions could partly hold onto their own culture but were also forced to integrate other aspects into their culture. Especially in metal and ceramics production, these mixtures are clearly archeologically traceable. We can assume a similar mix for the oral traditions as well.

Yet the expanding ideology was dominant with respect to the austerity of the art objects. Often, we see how advanced art techniques that were particularly beautiful and high quality had to conform to much more primitive, more austere forms. The materialism of the Mykenaians was probably a thorn in the side of the ideologists of Central Europe. However, this materialism did not immediately come to an end. The Mykenaian motifs (spirals, birds, and half-timbered decorations) and the shape of the Mykenaian vases were taken over by the Philistines (one of the Sea Peoples) but in a matte version instead of a shiny one (Sandars 1978, p. 160). In this way, each culture was honored to a certain extent during the earliest invasions, but in the end, the more austere practices gained the upper hand, especially in the areas closer to Central Europe after the later invasions. This explains the great contrast between the Greek Dark Ages and the blossoming of the Mykenaian Empire that preceded it.

The ideology may also have crept into the Iliad and the Odyssey, at least as far as the more austere materialism is concerned. As mentioned in

the subsection of "Mykenaian, didactic anatopisms" in chapter 3, we find in the Iliad and the Odyssey a number of mentions of the materialistic culture of the Mykenaians, but each time, this comes with a striking, negative tone. Therefore, it is not far-fetched to regard these negative tones as expressions of the Central European ideology. It also explains why the ideologists have not adopted the art of writing of the Mykenaians to govern their empire. Probably, they regarded the oral tradition as a sufficiently powerful instrument to lay down their laws through time, so the oral tradition became part of the methodical ideology from the beginning.

In this chapter we have gone over the theory that explains the presence of the Beta-tradition in Greece. In the next and final chapter, conclusions about the Beta-tradition are drawn.

Chapter 10

Conclusions

In this book, we have discussed the Beta-tradition, an oral tradition that is amply present in the Iliad. It can be recognized by forty-five oral characteristics, including seven highly developed typical scenes.

Like the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, for Greek mythology, the Beta-tradition is a tradition of origin. Presumably, both traditions have been handed down for hundreds of years up to a millennium although they originate from different regions. Whereas the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition developed exclusively on Greek soil, the Beta-tradition developed largely in non-Greek Europe. Only during the Greek Dark Ages, when the Greeks came under the influence of a Central European ideology, was the Beta-tradition introduced in Greece.

An important argument for not seeking the origin of the Beta-tradition in the Mykenaian Empire is that the rulers in the Mykenaian fortresses did not fight each other. Although they were particularly bellicose, they fought their enemies together overseas. Yet the Beta-tradition must have its origin in a hostility generally only found between clans, as seen in Scotland up until a few centuries ago. The fighting must have been small-scale, and the fighters knew each other's names and origins. Those who behaved bravely in such battles were later sung about by bards.

A central element that is outlined in detail in the Beta-tradition is the chariot. It served as an expensive means of transport with which the enemy could be bluffed and with which the status of the noble captain could be emphasized. On meeting the enemy, however, the nobleman jumped off the chariot to duel on foot. Just before this duel, the nobles tried to bluff each other by giving their pedigree and their solid upbringing as a warrior. The oral characteristics and the typical scenes of the Beta-tradition give such an

accurate picture of this situation that it can only be seen as originating in an already existing warrior culture. However, this picture does not fit with the Mykenaian use of the chariot, where many chariots, like for the Hittites and the Egyptians, were used as an attack weapon to overrun the enemy.

Another element of this warrior culture is the clan as a family structure. A godfather, the head of the clan, ensured that he had as many sons as possible with his lawful wife and his many concubines. He even brought up bastard sons within the ramparts of his stronghold to gather even more militant sons around him. In raising many sons, he was assisted by a combat teacher who taught the sons everything about battle, from taking care of wounds to throwing a spear. Daughters could serve to bind sons-in-law, who had to swear an oath of allegiance for the daughter's hand. This is how clans grew into powerful bulwarks full of warriors. We cannot hold the fantasy of the bards responsible for this aspect of the Beta-tradition either. Instead, we must look for it in the European Bronze Age.

Whereas the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition shows characteristics of the Sicilian mafia, the culture behind the Beta-tradition is more like that of the Celtic and Scottish clans—they fought each other in bloody wars on the battlefield. However, we should not be too strict about this separation between the cultures behind these two traditions. The robbing of cattle, typical of the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, was also a custom of the Scottish clans. On the other hand, the godfather with his many sons can also be found in the Sicilian mafia.

The Mykenaian Alpha-tradition and the Beta-tradition must have developed in parallel on Greek soil during the Greek Dark Ages. The Beta-tradition never goes far from the battlefield in its narratives, while the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition has developed in a much more imaginative way. Both traditions partly use the same concepts, but they give them different names. The ruler in the stronghold, his eldest son, and the mentor who trains the son are three concepts that we find in both traditions. They are the godfather, his bravest son, and the combat teacher in the Beta-tradition. Yet the Mykenaian Alpha- and Beta-traditions are sometimes thoroughly mixed. This has given rise to a series of artificial transformations, such as the combat teacher Phoinix who was made king by his boss Peleus.

The Iliad handed over to us has its many predecessors in the Beta-tradition. The whole story, with the exception of the funeral games for Patroklos, is of the Beta-tradition, colored here and there by other oral tradi-

tions. In particular, the popular passages are strongly anchored in the Ionian Epsilon-tradition in which the Iliad reached its final stage. But the actions of the gods and their interventions on the battlefield are characteristic of the Beta-tradition. This also means that the main lines of the story and the themes come from the Beta-tradition.

Six highly developed typical scenes are important themes of the Beta-tradition: the warrior in need and the helper; the warrior who blames his companion; the cowardly archer; the withheld honor gift; the resentful warrior; and fame for the father. Their discovery leads to a series of new insights about the Iliad.

A seventh typical scene is gathering up the army for the fight. It is not a thematic typical scene but rather a progressive typical scene that helps to progress the story. It has nevertheless developed strongly over time. The catalogue of ships, whose origin has always been a point of discussion, has grown organically from the typical scene for gathering up the army for the fight. The number of ships for each regiment must have first been the number of chariots.

Another new insight is about the ditch before the rampart that the Greeks built. This too is part of the typical scene for gathering up the army for the fight. This indicates that there must once have been numerous stories in which the ditch surrounded a defended stronghold. This is one of the main arguments when justifying the search for the origin of the Beta-tradition in non-Greek Europe—the Greek fortresses were never surrounded by a ditch.

Another, almost equally strong, argument for an origin far north of Greece is the funeral practice. In the Iliad, we read that corpses were burned, the remains were placed in an urn, and the urn was then buried under a burial mound. This perfectly matches the practices regarding the funeral in the empire of the Central European ideologists. The Mykenaians did not burn their corpses and instead had them placed in so-called shaft graves. With this, we have three strong arguments for a non-Greek, European origin of the Beta-tradition: the manner of fighting, the rampart of earth and wood with a ditch, and the funeral habits.

Some names also appear to be connected with the Beta-tradition, such as that of Ares, Eris, and Iris, along with the name Paris, which is a corruption of Pandaros and Pandion. Patroklos means “fame for the father.” These names, respectively, appear in the typical scenes for gathering up the army for the fight (Ares, Eris, and Iris), the cowardly archer (Paris, Pandaros, and Pandion), and fame for the father (Patroklos).

Finally, the most strongly developed typical scenes are also signposts of the very oldest layers that can be found in the Iliad. Chapters, as well as shorter passages and digressions, often show a fingerprint of these typical scenes; they are parts of the Iliad that have grown organically over time, making the typical scenes ultimately difficult to recognize. By uncovering them, we get a look into the past of the Iliad. We can assume that these passages always had the same mixture of typical scenes.

An example of this is Iliad VI. In it, Hektor first gathers up his troops and then enters the city of Troy to make sacrifices and seek out Paris. He reproaches Paris and then takes him along to the fiercest part of the battle. In this, we recognize the typical scenes of gathering up the army for the fight, the warrior who blames his companion, the warrior in need and the helper, and the cowardly archer. The way in which these scenes interlock is probably very old.

Also in these more popular passages, such as in the bedroom scenes, the typical scenes are deployed as themes. In the conversation between Helen and Aphrodite, the goddess of love, we recognize four. In the seclusion of Zeus, who was visited by his wife Hera, we recognize the typical scene of the resentful warrior. For some reason, that typical scene has become mixed with an erotic theme. The fact that even the erotic scenes stem from the Beta-tradition is the clearest proof that the Iliad as a whole is mainly a poem of the Beta-tradition, and its very composition has saved the Beta-tradition from oblivion.

Finally, the theory that explains how the Beta-tradition ended up in Greece also yields a series of other interesting historical conclusions. Troy, like the Mykenaian palaces, was overthrown by Central European warriors who had been applying a divide-and-conquer strategy for a generation in the eastern basin of the Mediterranean. By initially offering themselves as allies and mercenaries of the Mykenaian rulers, they were able to infiltrate into Greece to eventually administer a final blow. The empire of the Hittites also fell. One of the objectives of the Central European ideologists was to organize population movements away from Central Europe to create more living space in their overcrowded home regions. This also explains the relocation of the Dorians to the south of Greece.

To conclude this book, we can now look forward to the Aeolian Gamma-tradition, which is discussed in the next book in the series. Like the Mykenaian Alpha-tradition, the Aeolian Gamma-tradition is clearly present in the Iliad but does not actually build the plot sequence. Importantly, this tradition turns out to be the origin for many Roman stories.

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The Homeric texts

A significant part of this research revolves around the translatable content of the Iliad. The following translation has played a central role:

Homerus Ilias & Odyssee, translated by M.A. Schwartz, Amsterdam: Athenaeum–Polak & Van Gennep, 1993.

The following translation has been used for all passages of the Iliad and the Odyssey included in this book:

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Detailed studies of certain passages are possible in an online edition in Greek (http://www.perseus.tufts.edu).

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Homer. Ilias – Odyssee, Deutsch von Johann Heinrich Voss, Köln: Parkland, 2003.

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List of Figures

Overview of the Beta-passages

Although the Beta-tradition has formed the entire Iliad, and has become mixed with other oral traditions, it is still found to be the least distorted in the following passages:

II 438 - 786	Agamemnon orders the Greek army behind their leaders
II 808 - 877	The Trojans also join behind their leaders
III 1 - 32	Paris and Menelaos step ahead
III 324 - 382	Paris and Menelaos fight a duel
IV 220 - 544	The armies gather themselves up, go ahead, and clash
V 1 - 366	Diomedes kills many Trojans and also Pandaros
V 458 - 717	The Greeks are oppressed by Hektor
V 778 - 866	Diomedes leads the Greeks into battle
VI 1 - 129	The Trojans flee from the Greeks
VII 1 - 23	The Trojans kill some Greeks
VII 202 - 274	Aias and Hektor fight each other in a duel
VIII 78 - 129	Diomedes helps Nestor to flee
VIII 212 - 349	The Greeks hold on by the ditch and the rampart
IX 529 - 599	The battle for Kalydon
XI 1 - 90	The armies are preparing by the ditch and the rampart
XI 91 - 283	Agamemnon kills many Trojans
XI 284 - 597	The Greeks are injured and have to retreat
XI 670 - 760	Nestor talks about the battle against the Epeians
XII 40 - 126	The Trojans are preparing by the ditch
XII 127 - 199	The two Lapiths fight before the gate of the rampart
XII 251 - 471	The Trojans break the rampart of the Greeks
XIII 43 - 722	Poseidon leads the Greeks into battle
XIV 363 - 522	The Greeks hit back the Trojans
XV 254 - 746	The Trojans hit back the Greeks
XVI 129 - 232	The Myrmidons get ready for the fight
XVI 254 - 430	The Myrmidons hit back the Trojans
XVI 462 - 867	Sarpedon and Patroklos are killed

XVII 1 - 761	Battle for the corpse of Patroklos
XVIII 148 - 164	Battle for the corpse of Patroklos
XIX 351 - 424	Achilles arms himself
XX 31 - 75	The gods gather themselves up along the ditch and the rampart
XX 75 - 353	Achilles and Aeneas duel
XX 354 - 503	Achilles kills many Trojans
XXI 114 - 210	Achilles kills Trojans in the river
XXI 385 - 504	The gods are fighting among each other

In the Odyssey we cannot find the Beta-tradition, except in the fight with the suitors in Ithaca:

XXII 1 - 125	Odysseus kills the main suitors and arms himself
XXII 205 - 309	Odysseus kills the suitors and spares only a few

Books already published

De Mykeense Alpha-traditie
De Alpha-traditie: oorsprong der Griekse verhalen (2017)

The Mykenaian Alpha-tradition
The Alpha-tradition: on the origin of Greek stories (2018)

De Europese Beta-traditie
De Beta-traditie: oorsprong van de Ilias (2019)

Overview of the Beta-characteristics

1. The battle scene
2. The gruesome injuries
3. The chariots
4. Progressive typical scenes
5. Thematic typical scenes
6. The intervention of the gods
7. The duels
8. The clan system
9. The combat psychology
10. The fixed formulas
11. The duo of brave warriors
12. Robbing the armor, the horses, or a corpse
13. The godfathers and the bastard sons
14. The direction of Zeus
15. The fight for a corpse
16. The highborn champions
17. The chase and the flight
18. The triumphant raid of a single hero
19. Bluff, scorn, and reproach
20. The warrior who does not fight
21. The shiny light around the great hero
22. The blood revenge
23. The sons-in-law
24. The rampart and the ditch
25. The allies
26. Background information for every warrior

27. Ares, Eris, and Iris
28. The combat teacher
29. The fame for posterity
30. Incineration, urns, and burial mounds
31. The corpse that remains for dogs and birds
32. Chariot warriors and infantry
33. Huge crowds of warriors
34. The worried wife waiting at home
35. The care for a wounded warrior
36. One or two heroes who withstand alone
37. The driver who should watch the horses
38. Precious weapons
39. Gathering up the army for the fight
40. The warrior in need and the helper
41. The warrior who blames his companion
42. The cowardly archer
43. The withheld honor gift
44. The resentful warrior
45. Fame for the father