

The Mitoses of Akhilleus (2007)

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Summary

In her article Achilles Lord of Scythia, Gloria Pinney argues that Akhilleus was sometimes depicted as a barbarian from the far north in the art of archaic Greece. In support of this, she cites the archaic poet Alkaios as well as the unusually strong cult of Akhilleus in the colonies of the northern Black Sea (6th century B.C.E.). Why Akhilleus has such a strong connection to the far north has thus far remained problematic. I propose, however, that it arises from Akhilleus’ hypostatic relation to the youthful god Apollo, who migrated to the land of the Hyperboreans on an annual basis.

Observing that Skythian attire correlated with social rank in archaic Greek art, Askold Ivantchik attempts to discredit Pinney's claim and deny that the depiction of Skythians ever represented ethnicity. A number of factors, however, including the designation of the ephebes of Elis as "Skythians," conspire to show that ethnic groups could correlate with age groups and social groups in the spheres of cult and mythology: the one does not exclude the other. Ivantchik's objections, moreover, can be reconciled with Pinney's findings by my rationale for Akhilleus' strong ties to Skythia.

Accordingly, the expansion of the Greeks' northern horizon from the northern Aegean to the northern shores of the Black Sea enabled the northward transfer of the powerful cult and post-mortem existence of Akhilleus in the Hellespont—also known as the Borysthenes (Hesykhios and Stephanos Of Byzantion)—to the Skythian Borysthenes (modern Dniepr), which also inherited its alternate name.

The Iliadic evidence for a paradisiacal island at the northern ends of the earth is consistent with this interpretation. In Book 13, for instance, the eyes of Zeus travel north to the land of the Abioi, who I contend must be Hyperboreans. Significant details about the funeral of Patroklos support the notion that the Thracian winds took the *psukhe* of Akhilleus' therapon to Leuke in the north just as Thetis snatched her son from the pyre. The association of Thrace with the northern edges of the world is borne out by the subtle allusion in Book 5 to "the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace," which the *Kypria* located by the streams of the river Ocean.

It is my contention that even the *Iliad* knew of the tradition according to which Akhilleus was a northern barbarian. In order to assess the evidence, it is necessary, however, to acknowledge the process of dissimilation whereby doubles of Akhilleus were differentiated from the hero in terms of their persona, and yet exhibited certain idiosyncrasies that are suggestive of a common identity.

In the case of the Paionian Asteropaios (Book 21), the strongest indication that the *Iliad* understood him as a northern Akhilleus in the strict sense of the word is the paronomasia involving the name Πηλεγόνοϋ, which is morphologically, grammatically and semantically analyzable as "the son of Peleus." The *Iliad* subtly yet cogently portrays his native Paionia as the mythical land of the Hyperboreans.

Akhilleus has no greater enemy than himself: only Asteropaios, who comes from the ends of the earth like Memnon in the *Aithiopsis*, manages to shed his blood. Only Apollo, his divine counterpart, manages to kill him. Specific clues in the confrontation of the two heroes by the river Xanthos and the funerary contest between Aias and Diomedes suggest that the death of Asteropaios by Akhilleus amounts to a suicide: by killing Asteropaios, Akhilleus kills himself.

I “Achilles, Lord of Scythia”

In her groundbreaking study *Achilles Lord of Scythia*,¹ Gloria Ferrari Pinney pointed out that Akhilleus²—the greatest Greek hero of ancient epic—was sometimes depicted in archaic Greek art as a foreigner from the far north: in two instances at least, Akhilleus himself wears a half-Skythian, half-Thracian accoutrement³ while many vase depictions of the period show him accompanied by men clad in Skythian attire. Temporarily leaving aside Askold Ivantchik’s objections to Pinney’s arguments,⁴ an unmistakable literary confirmation of the artistic evidence is attested by a fragment of the archaic poet Alkaios: Ἀχιλλεύς ὁ τὰς Σκυθίικας μέδεις.⁵ A later echo of the hero’s connection to Skythia may be found in Lykophron’s *Alexandra* (200-201) in which Akhilleus is described as “pacing the Skythian land in grief for some five years yearning for his bride [Iphigeneia]” (Χὼ μὲν πατήσει χῶρον αἰάζων Σκύθην, /εἰς πέντε που πλειῶνας ἰμείρων λέχους).

On a cultic level, ancient inscriptions show that Akhilleus was worshipped as a hero or even a god⁶ in the area of the Euxine Sea where the Skythians surrounded the outcropping Greek colonies. Valeriya Kozlovskaya indicates that a sanctuary of Akhilleus dating to the 6th century B.C.E. at Beykush in the modern continental Ukraine has even been uncovered.⁷ Herodotos was the first to mention the existence of a race course of Akhilleus (τὸν Ἀχιλλήϊον δρόμον) located near the mouth of the Dniepr river.⁸ Archeological evidence for his cult is also well attested at Olbia and on the island of Leuke (6th century B.C.E.), where Akhilleus was said to live in an immortal state after his demise at Troy.⁹ That the island of Leuke should be perceived as an integral part of Skythia is suggested not only by the fact that the two

¹ Pinney 1983:127-46. I thank Corey Brennan for reading my original paper and giving me his valuable feedback.

² The spelling convention used here, departing from the more traditional Latin spelling, aims at reproducing as faithfully as possible the letters of the original Greek. /kh/ is preferred to /ch/ for letter chi to show that the consonant has the same point of articulation as kappa in ancient Greek, with the addition of aspiration.

³ Pinney 1983:139; also Pinney 2003:41-43.

⁴ Ivantchik 2005 & 2006. I thank Valeriya Kozlovskaya for bringing Ivantchik’s work to my attention.

⁵ Lobel & Page 1955. 273:354 (Z 31).

⁶ See Hommel 1980.

⁷ Kozlovskaya 2007:114. Ph.D dissertation, Bryn Mawr, Department of Classical and Near Eastern Archaeology.

⁸ Herodotos 4.55

⁹ Also attested in Pindar, *Nemean Odes* 4.49.

historically identifiable islands of Leuke are located at the mouths of both the Istros¹⁰ and Borysthenes¹¹ rivers but also because Leuke is sometimes confused with the aforementioned Race Course of Akhilleus.¹²

Insofar as Leuke is mentioned in the *Aithiopsis*, one may infer that the earliest literary evidence for the presence of Akhilleus in Skythia antedates Alkaios' own lifetime: although our summary of the *Aithiopsis* does not ascertain that the Leuke to which Akhilleus was transported after his death was located off the coast of Skythia, it is reasonable to believe that such was the case in light of Iphigeneia's parallel conveyance to the land of the Taurians (Skythia) in the *Kypria*.¹³

¹⁰ Pausanias, *Description of Greece* 3.19.11.

¹¹ Strabo, *Geography* 7.3.16.

¹² Euripides, *Iphigeneia in Tauris* 435.

¹³ Euripides is not the only author who associates Iphigeneia with Akhilleus. The mythical bond between Akhilleus and Iphigeneia was such that Lykophron and the historian Douris claimed that Neoptolemos was their son (Gantz 1996:588). Besides Lykophron quoted above, Antoninus Liberalis 27, quoting Nikander, has Akhilleus marry Iphigeneia on his island of Leuke. Because Hesiod's *Catalogue of Women* calls the one sacrificed at Aulis Iphimedeia and says that she was turned into Hekate after her death (fragment 23a.17 M-W), one can consider Ibykos' account of the post-mortem marriage of Akhilleus to Medea on the Elysian Plain to be an early representative of this tradition (scholiast on Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika* 4.814). As A.V. Zaikov points out (2004:78), "according to Pindar Thetis took Achilles to Elysium (*Olympian Ode* 2.79-80), but in another passage the same poet says that Achilles has ἐν δ' Εὐξεινῶ πελάγει φαεινὰν Ἀχιλλεύς νᾶσον· a 'radiant island in the Euxine sea' (*Nemean Ode* 4.49-50). This makes it obvious that Pindar identified Elysium with Leuce, a small island in the north-western Black Sea near the mouth of the Danube...Pliny explicitly notes that it was also known as the Island of the Blessed (eadem Leuce [insula] et Macaron appellata: HN 4.93)." Erwin Rohde adds that the scholion on Harmodios: *Carmina Popularia* fragment 10 Bergk concurs with Pliny's statement (2000:564). In point of fact, even the *Iliad* may have alluded to Akhilleus' marriage to Iphigeneia when Agamemnon promises to give three of his daughters in marriage to Akhilleus, one of whom is named Iphianassa, which is Iphigeneia's name in Lucretius' *De Rerum Natura* (lines 80-101). One can see that Iphi-anassa = (Iphi)-medeia = Iphi-geneia. The early existence of the figure of Iphigeneia is demonstrated by a protoattic krater fragment dating to 650-630 B.C.E. on which Iphigeneia's sacrifice is shown (Boston, Museum of Fine Arts 6.67.650-630. *LIMC*, "Iphigeneia," no. 2). A variant of the myth involves the marriage on Leuke of Akhilleus to Helen, who according to Stesikhoros and Nikander was Iphigeneia's mother (Pausanias 3.19.11 and Philostratos 10.32-40). The earliest evidence for the couple of Akhilleus and Helen on Leuke is a 4th century B.C.E. Etruscan mirror showing Helen on Leuke with Akhilleus (Rebuffat-Emmanuel 1976:214).

Alkaios' line Ἀχιλλεύς ὁ τὰς Σκυθίικας μέδεις is not unlike a number of subsequent inscriptions found on Leuke, e.g. Ἀχιλλῆι Λευκῆι μεδέοντι, as Hildebrecht Hommel noted (1980: 9). In the Roman period, the hero was hailed as *Pontarkhes* or *Pontarkhos*.¹⁴ Despite the fact that the cult of Akhilleus occurs throughout Greece, it is most concentrated on the northern shores of the Black Sea, i.e. Skythia.¹⁵

A number of hypotheses have been put forward to account for Akhilleus' surprising association with the Skythians. Guy Hedreen opines that it may be related to the antithetical status in the *Aithiopsis* of the protagonists Memnon, king of the Ethiopians, and Akhilleus, foremost warrior among the Greeks: by opposition to Memnon, who is associated with the extreme south of the globe, Akhilleus is mechanically associated with the far north of the globe, traditionally associated with the land of the Skythians.¹⁶ Although there may be some truth¹⁷ to Hedreen's hypothesis, it is unlikely to be the primary reason for Akhilleus' northern connection because the earliest texts in which the location of the land of the Ethiopians is specified, i.e. the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, locate it in the extreme east and west of the world,

¹⁴ Erciyas 2005:106 and Ustinova 1999.

¹⁵ "All the known sites of cult activity in honor of the hero in the Euxine fall within the boundaries of Scythia, which stretched from the Istros river to the Cimmerian Bosphoros" (Hedreen 1991: 324).

¹⁶ Hedreen, 1991:313-330.

¹⁷ I agree that the connection of Akhilleus with Leuke and Skythia arises from the belief that he spent his post-mortem existence at the ends of the earth, as evidenced by Pindar's and Pliny's equation of Leuke with the Elysian Plain or the Isles of the Blessed (see n13 above), both of which were located at the ends of the earth (*Odyssey* 4.563 and *Works and Days* 168: *peirata gaies*) by the banks of the river Ocean. I also agree that Skythia did represent the northern end of the known world. I do not believe, however, that Akhilleus' connection with the far north was a result of Memnon's antithetical connection to the land of the Aithiopes. Akhilleus' northern connection stood on its own and must have gone back to the Bronze Age if my theory is correct (see "Akhilleus and Apollo" below). The land of the Aithiopes and Leuke may have originally been the same whereas Akhilleus and Memnon arose from the same prototype, both having originally been, in all likelihood, the sons of the Indo-European goddess **Ausos* (see n193 below), from which Thetis was derived. While I agree that the gradual association of Aithiopia with Africa and the south may have been influenced by Akhilleus' antithetical connection to the north, it had no effect on Akhilleus' primordial connection to the far north: rather, it was a result of it. We must bear in mind, however, that this dissimilatory process was never consummated, since Memnon was often said to have come from the Far East (Aiskhylos and Herodotos). The similarities between (1) the hero Pandaros in the *Iliad* who leads a contingent from the river Aisepos (*Iliad* 4.91), (2) the heroes Aisepos and Pedasos sons of the water nymph Abarbarea (*Iliad* 6.21) and (3) the tomb of Memnon by the banks of the Aisepos river (Quintus of Smyrna, 2.549) might suggest that Memnon's earlier connection was to the East.

where the sun rises and sets, not the extreme south.¹⁸ Furthermore, the earliest vase depictions of Memnon fighting against Akhilleus portray him with Caucasian features not Black features, as in later art.¹⁹

Akhilleus and Apollo

I propose an alternative explanation for Akhilleus' connection with the far north: his hypostatic relation to Apollo. Endorsed by Gregory Nagy²⁰ and Pura Nieto Hernandez,²¹ Walter Burkert avers (1985: 147):

¹⁸ *Odyssey* 4.84-86: ἀλλ' ὁ μὲν Αἰθίοπας μετεκίαθε τηλόθ' ἔόντας / Αἰθίοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαΐαται, ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν / οἱ μὲν δυσομένου Ὑπερίονος, οἱ δ' ἀνιόντος.

¹⁹ Even Burgess (with Pinney) who subscribes to Hedreen's theory admits that "Memnon in early art is not depicted as an African, but at times his retinue is" (2004:159). Burgess' choice of the idiom "at times" should be carefully heeded: many a commentator on the ethnic differences between Memnon and his Ethiopian retinue tends to forget that this opposition is not at all consistent. The etymology of *Aith-i-opes*, connected with *aitho* 'to blaze' has been misinterpreted to justify the etymology 'with burned faces' → with black faces (as in Pokorny 1994). Although the notion of fire may lead to the color black, the relation is not at all necessary. I would argue that it developed only in the late archaic period. By way of analogy, while the Indo-European root **bhel* 'to be bright' does give rise to *black* in English, it evolves to the antonym *blanc* in French, 'white', *phalos* in Greek 'white' (Hesychios), the name of the country *Bela-rus* 'White Russia' as well as the English *blaze*, including a *blaze horse* (a horse with a *white* head (cf Athanassakis 2002:1-4). If Nagy (1992:198) is correct about the etymology of *anthropos*—the generic term for 'human being'—which he analyzes as "the one with ember faces," (cf *anthrax*), *Aithiops* would constitute a generic semantic parallel to *anthropos*, and would thus have nothing to do with race, but rather with the mythical origin of mankind from fire. An amusing opposition and juxtaposition of the historical Ethiopians with the mythical Ethiopians occurs in Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: the king and queen of the Ethiopians, who are black, give rise to a white daughter with blonde hair, i.e. Kharikleia, because the queen was looking at a picture of Andromeda—legendary princess of the Ethiopians saved by Perseus—while she and her husband were making love. This kind of story suggests that the Ethiopians of Greek mythology, unlike the historical Ethiopians with whom the Greeks gradually came into contact, were originally not conceived of as Blacks from Africa.

²⁰ Nagy 2005:88: "He [Akhilleus] is antagonistic to the god Apollo, to whom he bears an uncanny resemblance."

²¹ Nieto 1997: this author uncovered a number of striking similarities between the son of Peleus and the son of Leto, which are both structural (e.g. the epic begins with the *menis* of both Akhilleus and Apollo against the same man—Agamemnon—for the abduction of a woman) and incidental (e.g. the simile in which Akhilleus is compared to a dolphin when he pursues the Trojans in the river Xanthos is the animal into which Apollo transforms himself in his "Homeric" hymn, hence the epithet Apollo *Delphinios*).

Achilles also dies by the arrow of Apollo; but here, as with Artemis and Iphigeneia, a near identity of god and victim is at play; it is Achilles the youth, with hair unshorn and still unmarried, who falls to the youthful god.

Before proceeding further with the special relation tying Akhilleus to Apollo, I must make a statement of methodology: in agreement with Jonathan Burgess (2001: 46), I posit that “art and literature throughout antiquity, no matter how late,²² may contain some pre-Homeric myth. How much is traditional and how much is invented is the question facing any scholar.” The pertinence of any ancient author’s own lifetime to the origins of his text can only be a *terminus ad quem*: the inspiration for the text may be no later than the writer’s own day and age, but the period at which a text is written says nothing of how far back in the past its inspiration may reach. It therefore behooves the philologist to disentangle the historical strata in any late text in order to assess which ones are recent and which ones may precede the author’s own lifetime by many decades or even many centuries: this task is especially important when it comes to the relatively conservative genres of ancient epic and mythology. The works of Willcock, Mueller, Brillante, Mondi and Slatkin have shown that post-Homeric material can be instrumental to reconstituting pre-Homeric traditions.²³ For instance, we owe much of what we know about the non-Homeric Trojan Cycle, e.g. *Kypria*, *Aithiopsis*, etc., to Pseudo-Apollodoros (2nd century C.E.) and Photios (9th century C.E. quoting Proklos from the 5th or 2nd century C.E.). And yet, it has been well established, thanks to sporadic confirmation from earlier literature, and abundant corroboration from archaic art,²⁴ that these late-attested accounts have to a great extent preserved traditions going back to the archaic period and beyond.²⁵

²² Italics mine.

²³ Burgess 2001:46. For example, in the *Heroikos* from the 3rd century C.E., we are told that Helen never went to Troy. It might be tempting to dismiss Philostratos’ claim as a late invention in light of Helen’s presence at Troy in the *Iliad*. Nonetheless, both Herodotos and the early archaic poet Stesikhoros agree with the *Heroikos*. The great antiquity of this tradition is evidenced by parallels between Stesikhoros’ version (according to which it was an *eidolon* of Helen that went to Troy, not Helen herself) and the Vedic myth of *Saranyu*, widely recognized as originating from the same Indo-European name and myth as Helen (cf Larsson & Kristiansen, *ibid.* or Doniger 1999) and probably the same root as Helen, the latter stemming from **S(w)elen-a* and *Saranyu* from **Selen-yu*.

²⁴ See *LIMC*.

²⁵ Reversely, artistic evidence for the 8th century or 7th century existence of the *Iliad* is lacking. Kannicht (1982:85) admitted, despite his expectations to the contrary, that the *Iliad* is “virtually neglected by seventh-century art.” Burgess 2001:55. Even though Burgess admits that artistic evidence does not necessarily correlate with the actual popularity of a given myth, one cannot ignore the fact that non-Homeric epic from the Trojan Cycle is considerably more popular in the archaic period than the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Contrary to the traditional claim that the main body of the *Iliad* (or *Odyssey*) was “written” as early as the 8th century B.C.E., I agree with Sealey,

With all these things in mind, we may now return to my hypothesis that Akhilleus' connection with the far north arises from his hypostatic relation to Apollo who traveled to the land of the Hyperboreans on an annual basis. It is well-known that every winter, Apollo migrated to the far north. As Thomas Larsson and Kristian Kristiansen explain:

The Delphic Apollo had strong northern links with the solar deity of the Baltic, from where amber came. He travelled on his white swans to the Hyperborean of the cold North during winter. This is a mythological relic of the economic role of the central and north European periphery during the Bronze Age. On numerous metal items swans carried the sun, materialising the common myth of the sun-god, which according to Herodotus (IV, 32-6) was brought to Delos by Hyperborean maidens in at least two missions.²⁶

One of the earliest allusions to Apollo's connection to Skythia and the far north may be a fragment of Eumelos of Korinth according to whom Borysthenis was a daughter of Apollo.²⁷ It is important to note that the ancients' understanding of geography was generally vague, particularly in the realm of mythology where the geographical domains of various peoples,

Jensen, Ballabriga, Stanley, Seaford, Cook, Nagy (cited in Burgess 2001:211) and Burgess that "the evidence supports the argument for a long Homeric compositional tradition leading to fixation of texts [the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*] only in the sixth century" by means of the Peisistratid recension (Burgess 2001:52). Thus, if one is to appeal to chronological authority, one must attach equal importance to archaic Greek art as well as the other archaic poets: in agreement with all the aforementioned critics, I must take exception to the *communis opinio* that the artists and poets of the archaic period are "Homer's junior partners".

²⁶ Larsson & Kristiansen 2005:44. Let it be clear that, in agreement with Larsson and Kristiansen, I categorically reject the widely accepted claim advanced by Wilamowitz and Fontenrose that Apollo was originally *not* connected with the sun: on the contrary, most of Apollo's most fundamental features (e.g. bow and arrow, cf. Timotheos, fragment 800 PMG) and titles (e.g. *Phoibos*) can be seen as inherently solar. The oft-quoted counterargument that Helios and Apollo were separate figures in the *Iliad* is baseless: religions and mythologies from other cultures, such as from Egypt where the Sun god Ra and the Morning Sun god Horus (equated with Apollo in Herodotus 2.144) were distinct divinities, show that several sun gods could coexist within the same pantheon. The possibility of dissimilating Helios from other solar deities is illustrated by the distinction made in Hesiod's *Theogony* between Helios and Hyperion: almost everywhere else in Greek literature, Hyperion ("he who goes above") is simply an allonym or epithet of the sun. For an advanced discussion, see Hermann 1836 & 1837; see also Larsson & Kristiansen, *supra*; Quirke 2001.

²⁷ fragment 17. (Kinkel) quoted by Robert Drews 1976:19. The exact geographical identity of this Borysthenes—putative father to Borysthenis—is ambivalent, however. Tzetzes writes on Hesiod's *Works and Days* 23: "But Eumelos of Korinthos says there are three Mousai, daughters of Apollon: Kephiso, Apollonis, and Borysthenis" (translation: M.L. West, *Greek Epic Fragments*). Hesykhios informs us that there were *two* Borysthenes, (1) the Hellespont and (2) the river in Skythia. See my discussion *infra* "The Hellespont and the Borysthenes."

when located in the same direction, were subject to metonymic overlap. The potential fusion of Skythia with the land of the Hyperboreans is made manifest in Pindar's *Olympic Ode*. Predicting the destruction of Troy by the Aiakids, Apollo departs to the land of the Istros river (Ξάνθον ἤπειγεν καὶ Ἀμαζόνας εὐίππους καὶ ἐς Ἴστρον ἐλαύνων: 8.47). This departure to Istros located in Skythian territory is typically understood as his migration to the land of the Hyperboreans. Dawson William Turner's and Abraham Moore's commentary (1852: 217) on this passage is very informative and unwittingly corroborative of my argument:

Apollo's visit to the Ister (Danube) was no doubt to see the Hyperboreans. What connection there was in Pindar's mind between these descendants of Æacus, Apollo, and the Hyperboreans, does not appear. They are, however, singularly combined in a story in Pausanias (Lib. i. c. 4); who informs us, that, when the Gauls attacked the Phocians, meditating the plunder of the Delphic Temple of Apollo, the figures of Pyrrhus the son of Achilles and of two Hyperboreans, called Hyperochus and Amadocus, appeared in full armour in the battle for the Phocians, and struck the greatest terror into the invading army.

Akhilleus' hypostatic relation to Apollo can account for the connection between the Aiakids, the Hyperboreans and Apollo, which Turner and Moore were able to perceive without understanding why. Thus, Akhilleus "sacrificed to Kalliope asking for musical skill and mastery of poetic composition,"²⁸ according to Protesilaos in the *Heroikos* (45.7). In the *Iliad*, as Nieto points out, Apollo and Akhilleus are the only ones who play the lyre.²⁹ Hedreen remarks that "there are few significant differences between the inscribed dedications to Achilles Pontarches and those to Apollo Prostates...the patrons of the Olbian generals and the agoranomoi."³⁰ Just as Apollo sent a plague on the Akhaians for Agamemnon's theft of Khryseis, Akhilleus sent red blights and fogs upon the grainfields of Thessaly for destruction of their agricultural produce in retaliation for the Thessalians' neglect of his cult at Troy (*Heroikos* 53.19). In conformity with Apollo's identity as a healer god, I would also point to an adjectival derivative of Akhilleus' own name: one of the meanings of *akhilleios*³¹ is "yarrow", known as *achillea millefolium* in modern botany. Just as Apollo healed Glaukos' arm wound by stopping the flow of his blood in

²⁸ Translation provided here and *infra* by Aitken & Maclean 2003.

²⁹ Nieto 1997:31.

³⁰ Hedreen 1991:315.

³¹ Liddell & Scott s.v. *akhilleios*.

the *Iliad* (16.527), the plant of Akhilleus was used on ancient battlefields to stop the flow of blood and heal wounds.³²

In support of the argument that the Skythian Akhilleus of archaic Greek art and literature is a hypostasis of the youthful god Apollo, a fascinating entry in Photios' *Lexikon* states that the age group of the *ephebes*—traditionally connected with Apollo—were called Skythians (!) in Elis: Συνέφηβος; ὁ μετὰ τινος τῶν ἡλικιωτῶν ἐφηβεύσας τοὺς δὲ ἐφήβους, Ἕλεῖοι μὲν Σκύθας καλοῦσιν.³³ One may regard the ephebes of Elis, called “Skythians,” as the missing link between the annual migration to the far north of the youthful god and Skythian Akhilleus. As can be inferred from Pliny's *Historia Naturalis*, the son of Peleus epitomized the ephebe like his divine counterpart Apollo:

*Togatae effigies antiquitus ita dicabantur. Placere et nudae tenentes hastam ab epheborum e gymnasiis exemplaribus, quas Achilleas uocant.*³⁴

Accordingly, Pinney is right to conclude that the depiction of Akhilleus as lord of the Skythians is a loose and synecdochic characterization which also associates him with other tribes north of Greece, e.g. the Thracians and the Kimmerians: it is reasonable to suppose that Akhilleus and his men were analogized to the tribes of the north in general, whether they had been the Kimmerians and/or Thracians of the 8th century B.C.E. (at the time when according to the most conservative estimates the major compositional period of the *Iliad* began), or whether they had been the Skythians who came into contact with the Greeks a little later.³⁵ It is significant, for instance, that Akhilleus wears a half-Skythian, half-Thracian garb on an amphora.³⁶ On another artifact, a red-figure vase, Akhilleus in pursuit of Troilos is depicted with Thracian boots and mantle, as well as a Skythian cap.³⁷ We will later see the importance of interpreting Akhilleus' northern apparel loosely.

³² Roberts 2003:88, cf the famous Attic Red Figure Kylix by the Sosias painter depicting Akhilleus tending the wounded Patroklos.

³³ Quoted by Nagy 1990:71.

³⁴ Pliny, *Historia Naturalis*, 34.18, quoted by Pinney 1983:139.

³⁵ Pinney 1983:137: “it is unlikely that vase-painters intended to portray different historical populations at different times. I think that they meant to show the nomads of the north, and did so with the means at their disposal, which around 530 B.C.E., included some notion of the attire and looks of real Scythians.”

³⁶ Pinney 1983:139.

³⁷ Pinney 2003:42.

Skythians in archaic Greek art

Noticing that the vast majority of archers in archaic Greek art are dressed as Skythians irrespective of ethnicity (some are Greek like Parthenopaios, one of the Seven against Thebes; others as foreigners, e.g. Paris), Ivantchik has attempted to rebut the claim that Skythian attire had anything to do with the representation of actual Skythians: rather, Skythian attire in archaic Greek art were indicators of function and social hierarchy: it is, he says, solely associated with archers and secondary characters of unheroic status accompanying hoplites. He goes so far as to claim that “the figure of the ‘scythoid’ archer is based on impressions stemming from contacts not with real Scythians, but with the Median and later the Achaemenid army. The Greeks came up against the Median army for the first time apparently in the course of the war between Lydia and the Medes in the 580s B.C.E.”³⁸

While some of Ivantchik’s observations are very insightful and valuable to this discussion, his conclusions are wanting. First, his allegation that the inspiration for the Skythian accoutrement arose from contact with the Medes or the northern mercenaries enlisted in their army, rather than from contact with the tribes directly north of Greece, e.g. Kimmerians first, then Skythians, is compromised by the François Vase whose date of about 570 B.C.E. is too close to the war between Lydia and the Medes to be ascribed to this kind of influence. On this famous vase painted by Kleitias, an archer named *Kimerios* takes part in the Kalydonian boar hunt. For this artist to depict an archer as a Kimmerian, it is very likely that it would have taken more than ten years for this northern tribe to develop their reputation for archery to such a degree that Kleitias would have wanted to include one of them in a highly traditional mythological scene.³⁹

To account for the depiction of Greek archers and military subalterns as Skythians in archaic Greek art, it is best to turn to the “Skythians” of Elis, whom Ivantchik completely ignores. It is not enough to adduce the Skythians’ reputation as splendid archers to explain away the designation of the ephebes from Elis as Skythians. Ivantchik himself points out that “naked youths—probably Athenian ephebes—are often depicted wearing ‘Scythian’ caps and armed with *pelte* shields.”⁴⁰ Such depictions of naked youths—devoid of bows and arrows—as

³⁸ Ivantchik 2006:244.

³⁹ Ivantchik’s alternate explanation for the presence of this *Kimerios*, is a man of straw (2006:221): pointing out that Greek citizens—with no connections to Barbarians—could bear ethnonyms without implying any relation to their actual ethnicity, he never provides any real explanation why *Kimerios* on the François vase bears his name. He seems to imply, perhaps, that it is just a random Greek name. Given the mythological context of the scene, his explanation is unacceptable (if it is not lacking).

⁴⁰ Ivantchik 2006:231.

Skythians show that it is myopic to seek to explain the depiction of Greek archers as Skythians solely in relation to their reputation as archers: one must admit the overarching connection to the youthful god Apollo, who was associated with Skythia both through his identity as the archer god⁴¹ and his annual migration to the far north.⁴² As a final note, a not insignificant proportion of Skythian archers and Skythian attendants of Greek (or Trojan) hoplites in archaic Greek art are beardless, thus suggesting a correlation with youth.

What is more, the frequently attested symbolic use of ethnic gear to represent military or social status (i.e. archers and military subalterns) does not mean that the Greeks of the time had severed psychological ties between the non-ethnic military class wearing said ethnic gear and the actual ethnic group itself. On the contrary, the sociological use of ethnic clothing is possible (in the initial stages at least) only if the literal, non-symbolic designation is well-known. Surely, painters could not portray Greek archers as Skythians if actual Skythians were not famous for being archers. That such stylized Skythians were modeled after real Skythians is shown by their idiosyncratic goatee (not full beards such as Greek adults normally grew).

Furthermore, the black-and-white distinction Ivantchik attempts to make between an ethnic group and a social group has little relevance to epic and mythological scenes in which ethnic groups may correlate with certain age groups or even gender groups, and historical accuracy in general is an extraneous matter. Just as young males were under the tutelage of Apollo, and hence could be associated with the nations from the north, so were young females under the tutelage of Artemis, and hence could be associated with semi-mythical nations from the north and east: the all-female nation of the Amazons or Iphigeneia's transformation into Artemis after her death and/or migration to Skythia (Tauris) are illustrative of the internationalization of Greek age groups and gender.⁴³

⁴¹ The case of Abaris, who was said to possess an arrow of Apollo on which he flew from Hyperborea to Greece exemplifies the metonymic relation between the land of the Hyperboreans and the land of the Skythians: while earlier accounts (Pindar, Herodotos and Plato), portray him as a Hyperborean shaman, later accounts (Iamblikhos and Suidas) say he was a Skythian who wrote the *Skythian Oracles* (see Bridgman, 2005:92, 118).

⁴² Besides Pindar's *Olympian Ode*, in Herodotos' account (4.33.1) the first land through which the Hyperboreans convey their offerings wrapped in straw to Delos is Skythia.

⁴³ For the connection between unmarried Greek maidens, Amazons and Artemis see Blok 1995:313-4: "The clearest example of these preoccupations is probably the rape of Antiope by Theseus. Antiope, who was no doubt a virgin before the rape, does not want to associate with Theseus. She is snatched from the circle of her fellow Amazons like a girl in a country dance. Euripides has incorporated this undesired defloration and pregnancy in his *Hippolytus*, where the hero only wants to recognise Artemis. His mother, the Amazon, and Artemis form a unit in contrast to that formed by the [gune] Phaidra and Aphrodite." See also Anagnostou-Laoutides 2005:28.

No wonder that “the first depictions [of ethnic Skythians], in which a reflection of historical events can be found, only appear at the time of the Persian wars.”⁴⁴ This particular aspect of the author’s argument is a red herring because the events of the Trojan Cycle were extensively divorced from history at any rate, no matter whether they contained historical kernels. Ivantchik acknowledges himself that the gear and names of the Trojans are generally indistinguishable from the Greeks and that archaic Greek art perpetrates numerous anachronisms in their depictions of epic heroes. Ivantchik’s expectations of a purely historical representation of Skythians in archaic Greek art *à la* Thoukydides are therefore misguided.

In the world of epic and mythology, “literal” Skythians and “symbolic” Skythians may blend in and out of each other and even overlap. Ivantchik is wrong to conclude that the possibility of depicting Greek ephebes or archers as Skythians precludes Akhilleus—the hypostasis of Apollo—from being imagined as the leader of an army of literal Skythians hailing from the far north. The two do not exclude each other, far from it. Despite the fact that Skythians are shown fighting on both the Greek and Trojan sides on many scenes of the Trojan war, it is significant that the only two times that Ivantchik mentions Skythian archers in his 74-page article appearing alongside Akhilleus (to protect his body) are instances in which the counterpart archers of the Trojans are not depicted as Skythians.⁴⁵ This asymmetry suggests that these two different painters did have ethnicity in mind and that they literally meant to portray Akhilleus as a Skythian warlord from the far north surrounded by his Skythian men.

Moreover, Ivantchik’s account of Akhilleus’ therapon⁴⁶ Patroklos dressed as a Skythian archer with a hoplite armor on the famous Sosias cup fails to convince: according to his rule, Skythian archers in the archaic period always represent status and never ethnicity (which in actuality are not incompatible with one another as we saw above). Normally, the status of archers and hoplites cannot be superimposed on one another, the one representing an inferior rank, the other a superior rank: an archer cannot be a hoplite and vice versa. And yet, on this cup Patroklos carries a Skythian quiver (with an arrow lying next to him), has a Skythian mustache and at the same time wears the armor of a hoplite. Stiffly opposed to any “Skythoid” analysis, Ivantchik can only offer a schizoid exegesis for this anomaly: Patroklos’ Skythian appearance, he says, denotes his inferior (unheroic) status; his hoplite armor denotes his

⁴⁴ Ivantchik 2006:201.

⁴⁵ Ivantchik 2006:225.

⁴⁶ *Therapon* is a loanword from an Anatolian language, which originally designated a ‘ritual substitute’, a meaning which applies to Patroklos’ status vis-à-vis Akhilleus (see Nagy 1979:292-293).

heroic (superior) status.⁴⁷ One may object why the artist would want to send the viewer such contradictory signals.

While our understanding of archaic Greek art is substantially advanced by Ivantchik's observation about the general correlation between Skythian archers and status (age or rank), it is best to view all three of these non-random exceptions involving Akhilleus' men and his therapon as indicators of ethnic identity.⁴⁸ Even if the interpretation of these three examples remained disputed, one would still have to deal with the two paintings that show Akhilleus himself—no underling by any standard—wearing Skythian and Thracian gear.⁴⁹

Irrespective of how symbolic the name or the attire of the Skythians may have generally been in ancient Greece, the cult of Akhilleus in continental Skythia,⁵⁰ Olbia and Leuke attested as early as the 6th century B.C.E. demonstrates that this symbolism cannot be dissociated from its concrete, tangible aspects (ethnic Skythians). Moreover, the literary testimonies of Alkaios, Lykophron and others⁵¹ are undeniable, not to mention the evidence that can be drawn from a cross comparison of the *Kypria*, the *Aithiopsis*, the *Catalogue of Women*

⁴⁷ Ivantchik 2006:230.

⁴⁸ Again, within the context of Greek cult, Greek epic and Greek mythology, where the opposition between ethnic and social identity is not categorical.

⁴⁹ See n3 above.

⁵⁰ This cult of Akhilleus may have been so strong in the far north that the actual Skythians of the area, through contact with the Greeks, may have begun to appropriate the hero as one of their own. For instance, a gorytos found in the 4th century B.C.E. royal burial of a Skythian king at Chertomlyk in the Ukraine—a hundred miles inland north of the Black Sea—shows scenes from the life of Akhilleus: on one of the friezes, young Akhilleus “is given a bow of the Scythian composite type” (Jacobson 1995:227). Esther Jacobson took note of other Skythian idiosyncrasies in the frieze that are indicative of a culturally mixed piece of art (Jacobson 1995:227-229). A 4th century B.C.E. pendant found at Bolshaya Bliznitsa depicts Thetis carrying the armor of Akhilleus (Jacobson 1995:89-90). Just as the Romans adopted the Trojan Aineias as their national hero, ancestor and first king, endowing him in the process with an increasing number of Roman traits, it is possible that the semi-Hellenized Skythians were increasingly persuaded by their Greek neighbors that Akhilleus was their true lord. Their kings, accordingly, may have begun to use his image as an emblem of kingship, if the frieze depicting the life of Akhilleus in a royal Skythian tomb is indeed more than a random trinket.

⁵¹ Pinney also mentions (1983:145) Pomponius Mela, *Chorographia*, C. Frick ed. (Leipzig 1980) II.5, 28-29; and Dictys, *Ephemeris belli Troiani* 1.22.

and Ibykos.⁵² A fragment of Sophokles quoted by Hesykhios (507) should put the last nail in the coffin: Ἀχιλλείων· Σοφοκλῆς Σκύθαις Ἀχιλλείων.

// The Iliad's conception of the Far North

The Translation of Patroklos to Leuke in the *Iliad*

I would go so far as to contend that the earliest evidence for Akhilleus' post-mortem link to Leuke in the far north is embedded in the *Iliad* itself. My argument is that Thetis' explicit snatching of her son from the funerary pyre in the *Aithiopsis* is prefigured by the winds' implicit snatching of Patroklos' soul to Leuke in the *Iliad*.

Echoing *Odyssey* 11.467 where Odysseus finds Akhilleus, Patroklos, Antilokhos and Aias together in Hades, Pausanias 3.19.11-13 recounts an alternate legend told by the Krotonians according to whom their semi-legendary general Leonymos saw these heroes on Leuke at the mouth of the Istros together with Lokrian Aias and Helen. The latter—Akhilleus' bride—told the general to tell Stesikhoros (7th-6th centuries B.C.E.) that his blindness was caused by her anger. Although Arrian is silent about the other heroes' presence there, he confirms that the cult of Patroklos was historically well-established on the island of Leuke:

καὶ ἀνάκειται καὶ ἐπιγράμματα, τὰ μὲν Ῥωμαϊκῶς τὰ δὲ Ἑλληνικῶς πεποιημένα ἐν ἄλλῳ καὶ ἄλλῳ μέτρῳ, ἔπαινοι τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως, ἔστιν δὲ ἅ καὶ τοῦ Πατρόκλου· καὶ γὰρ καὶ τὸν Πάτροκλον τιμῶσιν σὺν τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ.⁵³

The seed for the idea that the Iliadic Patroklos was ultimately bound for a better place after his death than Hades, despite clear statements to the contrary such as *Iliad* 23.75-76, was planted by Gregory Nagy. Although he does not expressly advance the argument that the Iliadic Patroklos too was translated to a paradisiacal realm after his death,⁵⁴ he does draw attention to a network of parallels between the funeral of Patroklos and that of righteous men in the Indic tradition destined to a blissful afterlife. In his chapter “Patroklos, Concepts of Afterlife and the Indic Triple Fire,” Nagy showed that the cremation of the hero's body—combined with the loss of his μένος ἢ ὄ at his death (*Iliad* 24.6), the uniqueness of his name (“he who has the glory of the *pateres* or *ancestors*”) and the similarities between hero cult and his funeral—parallel the

⁵² See n13 above.

⁵³ Arrian, *Circumnavigation of the Euxine Sea*, 21.2-3. The historian goes on to say that both Akhilleus and Patroklos appeared to visitors in their dreams (23.2-3).

⁵⁴ Nagy 1992.

departure at sunrise of the manas (μένος) and asu (ήϋ) of righteous men from their body to the eternally luminous third sky, which is the abode of the *pitrs* “ancestors.”⁵⁵

Although the *Iliad* de-emphasized the notion of human immortality (other than through *kleos*) and played up the mortality of most heroes for the sake of pathos, one should not be surprised that a work of such subtle complexity could also betray intimations of alternate traditions of the afterlife. Elsewhere, Nagy does indicate that the placement of Akhilleus’ and Patroklos’ bones in the golden amphora which Dionysos (Stesikhoros fragment 234P) had given Thetis (*Iliad* 23.91-92) betokens “the promise of an ultimate immortality in store for the hero of the *Iliad*.”⁵⁶ I would add that the redundant emphasis on the white color of Patroklos’ bones (ὄστέα λευκὰ) at *Iliad* 23.252 accords with the golden material of the amphora one line below (χρυσέην φιάλην) in which his bones and those of Akhilleus will be deposited. By virtue of sympathetic magic, the immortalizing quality of the golden amphora and the immortalizing quality of the white bones⁵⁷ resonate with the immortalizing quality of the White island.

Just as cremation enables the souls of righteous men in the Indic tradition to ascend at dawn to a land of pure sunlight⁵⁸ reserved to the *pitrs*, it is my contention that the cremation of *Patro*-klees enables his *psukhe* or *menos* to depart to Leuke (cognate with *lux*⁵⁹) at dawn.

⁵⁵ Nagy 1992:85-121.

⁵⁶ Nagy 1979:209. Although Dionysos suffers death (at the hands of Perseus, the Titans, etc.), he always comes back to life. The *Iliad* does not state that Thetis’ golden amphora was given her by Dionysos but any contemporary listener aware of this connection would have caught the subtlety of this datum.

⁵⁷ For the association of white bones with immortality, see Jean-Pierre Vernant’s commentary on Prometheus 2001:52 (English translation): “In the beast or the human, the white bones are the thing that is truly precious, that is nonmortal, that does not die; bones do not decay, they form the architecture of the body. The flesh disintegrates, decomposes, but the skeleton represents permanence; what is inedible in the animal is what is not mortal, what is immutable--what therefore comes closest to the divine. For the people who invented these stories, the bones are all the more important because they contain the marrow, that substance the Greeks saw as linked both to the brain and to the semen. The marrow represents an animal’s continuing vital force down through the generations.”

⁵⁸ Nagy 1990:112.

⁵⁹ Cf Pindar (*Nemean Ode* 4.49-50) who calls Leuke “the shining island of Akhilleus” (φαεννὰν Ἀχιλεὺς νᾶσον).

Let us now examine the evidence. Curiously, not all the winds are needed to burn the pyre of Patroklos: only two out of four, the Boreas and the Zephyr, i.e. the winds traditionally associated with Thrace (*Iliad* 9.5), the land located north of Greece:

βορέης καὶ Ζέφυρος, τῷ τε Θρήκηθεν ἄητον

After Iris' intercession, the Thracian winds blow all night and consume the corpse of Akhilleus' therapon. At the first appearance of the morning star (*Iliad* 23.226), their mission is accomplished. The two winds then return home:

Ἦμος δ' ἑωσφόρος εἴσι φόως ἑρέων ἐπὶ γαῖαν,
ὄν τε μέτα κροκόπεπλος ὑπεῖρ ἄλα κίδναται ἠώς,
τῆμος πυρκαϊῆ ἔμαραίνετο, παύσατο δὲ φλόξ,
οἱ δ' ἄνεμοι πάλιν αὖτις ἔβαν οἴκον δὲ νέεσθαι
Θρηΐκιον κατὰ πόντον

It is remarkable that the sea over which the Boreas and the Zephyr return home is the northernmost sea ever referenced in the *Iliad*. As Ivantchik points out,⁶⁰ “the author of the *Iliad* still considers Thrace as the northernmost part⁶¹, where he thinks Boreas lives: I 5; Ψ 200, 229-230, cf. Hesiod *Works and Days* 553.” This notion is very important because the Greeks believed that the Isles of the Blessed (*Works and Days* 168), the Elysian Plain (*Odyssey* 4.563) and most pertinently the land of the Hyperboreans (*Catalogue of Women*) were located at the edges of the world.⁶² In our next section, “The Boreas and the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace,” we will attempt to demonstrate that the northern part of Thrace where the Thracian winds return was indeed conceived of as abutting on the northern ends of the world.

The connection in Homeric epic between fire, the breath of life and the use of the winds as conveyors to the ends of the world support the conclusion that the *anemoi's* burning of Patroklos' pyre enabled the release of his *anima* which at dawn accompanied them to the northernmost sea where they (all) returned home = Leuke. Nagy cites *Rig-Veda* 10.16.3 in

⁶⁰ Ivantchik 2005:77-80. Translation: Ekaterina Kovrigina.

⁶¹ This geographical model seems to be true in most of the *Iliad*. Paionia too is mentioned but its latitude is not much different from that of Thrace (the former is to the northwest of Greece, the latter to the northeast). In book 13, nevertheless, we are given a highly revealing alternate model, where lands beyond Thrace are described (see *infra*).

⁶² The *Catalogue of Women* associates amber with the land of the Hyperboreans. For an assessment of the location of the land of the Hyperboreans at the end of the world, see *infra* “The Boreas and the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace.”

reference to the *manas* of righteous men⁶³ in the Indic tradition, but one could equally apply it to the funeral of Patroklos:

May the eye go to the sun and the breath (= ψυχή) to the wind.

In all of extant Homeric poetry,⁶⁴ it is highly significant that only the Boreas and the Zephyr bring back to life (never the Euros and Notos), the very same winds that kindle the pyre of Patroklos. After Pelagon—a figure to whom we shall return later—pulls out of Sarpedon’s thigh the ash spear Tlepolemos had hurled at him, the pain causes the Lycian hero to *ex-spire* (τὸν δ’ ἔλιπε ψυχή, κατὰ δ’ ὀφθαλμῶν κέχυτ’ ἀχλύς: *Iliad* 5.696). But then the blast of the Boreas brings him back to life (αὐτίς δ’ ἐμπνύνθη, περὶ δὲ πνοιῆ Βορέας ζώγρει ἐπιπνεύουσα). The same is true of the Zephyr in the *Odyssey* at 4.567-568, whereupon Nagy comments: “the earth-encircling river Okeanos makes the Wind Zephyros blow so as to reanimate mortals.”⁶⁵

Evidence for the use of the winds as conveyors is not lacking⁶⁶, nor even in their quality as abductors to paradisiacal lands at the ends of the world. Ganymede, for instance, is taken to the Elysian Plain by a gust of wind (*Hymn to Aphrodite* 208). Of prime relevance to Patroklos’ funeral is a lost tragedy of Sophokles summarized by Strabo 7.3.1:

εἶ τινα Σοφοκλῆς τραγωδεῖ περὶ τῆς Ὀρειθυίας λέγων ὡς ἀναρπαγεῖσα ὑπὸ Βορέου κομισθεῖη „ὕπέρ τε πόντον πάντ’ ἐπ’ ἔσχατα χθονὸς νυκτός τε πηγὰς οὐρανοῦ τ’ ἀναπτυχάς, Φοίβου παλαιὸν κῆπον”

Sophokles, when in his role as a tragic poet he speaks of Oreithyia, tells how she was snatched up by Boreas and carried over the whole sea to the ends of the earth and to the sources of night and to the unfoldings of heaven and to the ancient garden of Phoibos.⁶⁷

The similarities with the funeral of Patroklos are striking: the same wind is involved (the Boreas); the barriers of the sea and of the night are overcome; the pure light of the far north awaits the abductee at the end of the journey (in the case of Patroklos, it coincides with the

⁶³ Nagy 1990:363.

⁶⁴ I have not found any evidence of the Euros and the Notos ever bringing anybody back to life in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

⁶⁵ ἀλλ’ αἰεὶ ζεφύροιο λιγὸν πνεῖοντος ἀήτας / Ὀκεανὸς ἀνήσιν ἀναψύχειν ἀνθρώπους. See Nagy 1979:167-168. It is no coincidence that Akhilleus’ immortal horses were the sons of the Zephyr.

⁶⁶ For examples, see Nagy 1979:193-196.

⁶⁷ Translation: Horace L. Jones (Loeb).

morning star and dawn). Like Leuke, it would appear that the land of the Hyperboreans was imagined as an island in the far north.⁶⁸

It is very easy to superimpose the funeral of Akhilleus on that of his surrogate to reveal another common feature: just as the winds and the Boreas snatch (ἀναρπαγείσα in Sophokles' fragment, cf the name of the Harpies⁶⁹), so does Thetis snatch her son from the pyre to take him to Leuke:

ἐκ τῆς πυρᾶς ἡ Θέτις ἀναρπάσασα τὸν παῖδα εἰς τὴν Λευκὴν νῆσον διακομίζει⁷⁰

What is explicit in the funeral of Akhilleus is implicit in the funeral of Patroklos: the Boreas and the Zephyr take the *psukhe* of Patroklos with them.

The context of the two winds returning home (οἶκον δὲ νέεσθαι: *Iliad* 23.229) over the Thracian Sea at dawn (κροκόπεπλος...ἠώς) is of great consequence. The economy of the *Iliad* highlights the unique significance of this moment by spelling out the name of the morning star (ἔωσφόρος εἴσι φόως ἐρέων ἐπὶ γαῖαν: *Iliad* 23.226) for the first and last time in all of the twenty four books of the *Iliad*.⁷¹ The *Odyssey* employs the same strategy: in the epic whose central theme is *nostos*, Odysseus (*Odyssey* 13.93)—like his son Telemakhos (*Odyssey* 15.493)—achieves his *nostos* at dawn:

εὐτ' ἀστήρ ὑπερέσχε φαάντατος, ὅς τε μάλιστα
ἔρχεται ἀγγέλλων φάος Ἴουζ ἠριγενείης,
τῆμος δὴ νήσω προσεπίλνατο ποντοπόρος νηῦς.

Nowhere else in the *Odyssey* does the poet ever mention the morning star.⁷² The singular and inseparable co-occurrence of the morning star with the theme of *nostos* in the two most

⁶⁸ Diodoros of Sicily, *The Library* 2.47.4.

⁶⁹ Nagy 1979:194-195, 209-210.

⁷⁰ Proklos' summary of the *Aithiopsis* (199-200) in Photios.

⁷¹ Prendergast & Marzullo 1962.

⁷² Dunbar & Marzullo, 1962. One might consider the reference to the island of *Asteris* in the *Odyssey* to be another allusion to the morning star if indeed it owes its name to the morning star. I thank Douglas Frame for referring me to Robert Brittlestone's hypothesis (2005:152) that the island of *Asteris* where the suitors lie in wait for Telemakhos' return from Sparte (*Odyssey* 4.846) may have once been the easternmost peninsula of the modern island of Kefalonia. Having determined that the former island of *Asteris* was aligned with the direction of the Morning Star / Evening Star (the planet Venus) from the viewpoint of Kefalonia, Brittlestone posits that the former island of *Asteris* owes its name to the morning star. While I believe that a cosmological component

successful epics of Greek literature is one of the highest testaments to the findings of Douglas Frame on the correlation of *nostos* with light: return to life and light.⁷³ The Indo-European background for this connection between *nostos* and the morning star is shown by the traditional connection between the *Nasatyas* (root **nes*)—the Vedic counterparts of the *Dioskouroi*—and the morning star.⁷⁴ It would appear that the *Dioskouroi* themselves perpetuated the connection between *nostos* and the morning star in the Greco-Roman world.⁷⁵

It would be a tremendous waste to the economy of the *Iliad* if the return of the Boreas and the Zephyr to the Thracian Sea and beyond were all that was meant by οἶκον δὲ νέεσθαι (*Iliad* 23.229): only if the Thracian winds take Patroklos home, i.e. to the φαεινὴν Ἀχιλεὺς νᾶσον⁷⁶ in the far north, does the investment in the collocation of the morning star with *nostos* make any sense. Just as the *Odyssey* takes the pains of singling out the morning star to signal the *nostos* of its hero Odysseus,⁷⁷ the *Iliad* takes the pains of singling out the same star to signal the vicarious *nostos* of its hero Akhilleus by means of the funeral of Patroklos. What

unrelated to real geography influences the presentation of Ithake in the *Odyssey* at 9.21-26, I find Brittlestone's hypothesis very seductive. If proven correct, this indirect allusion to the morning star, while hardly undermining the single reference to the morning star in the *Odyssey*, would further bolster my argument about the inherent connection between the morning star and *nostos* in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*: *Asteris* is an excellent location whence to prevent Telemakhos' *nostos*—which will eventually occur *at dawn* (*Odyssey* 15.493)—because the island is itself a symbol of *nostos*.

⁷³ Frame 1978.

⁷⁴ The *Nasatyas* were also known as the *Aśvins*, see Frame 1978:150-162 and Larsson & Kristiansen 2005:264.

⁷⁵ In Statius' *Silvae* 4.6, Castor is apparently identified with the morning star: “sermo hilaesque ioci brumaleme absumere noctem suaserunt mollemque oculis expellere somnum, donec ab Elysiis prospexit sedibus alter Castor et hesternas risit Tithonia mensas.” It is therefore likely that even in the Archaic and Classical periods the life and death of the *Dioskouroi* on alternate days (*Odyssey* 11.300-304) referred primarily to the morning and evening star, the absence of any direct evidence notwithstanding. Surely, this cannot refer to the *Dioskouroi*'s association with Elmo's fire, as it does not appear to sailors on a *regular* basis every other day. Alkaios' description of the *Tyndarids* as *phaos pherontes* in fragment 34a is not very far from the Greek *phaosphoros*, “the morning star”. The impermanent deaths of the *Dioskouroi* are therefore likely to represent the daily disappearance of the morning star or evening star, and by extension the daily alternation of the daylight and the night. That being the case, the *Dioskouroi* too, also known as *Soteres*, would perpetuate the link between *nostos* and the morning star in the Greco-Roman world.

⁷⁶ Pindar (*Nemean Ode* 4.49-50) calls Leuke “the shining island of Akhilleus” (φαεινὴν Ἀχιλεὺς νᾶσον).

⁷⁷ See n83 above.

Richard Martin says about the singular usage of *kleos apthiton* in the *Iliad* is applicable to the singular reference to the morning star in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*:

The phrase has been labeled by other scholars a chance innovation, because it occurs only here in Homeric poetry and employs the adjective as a predicate, with *estai*... The single attestation of the phrase, in this case, can actually be the best proof that *kleos apthiton* is not an accident of composition. Instead, the phrase is used just once at the most important moment in the most important speech of the *Iliad* and I believe it is used knowingly, as an heirloom from the poet's word-hoard.⁷⁸

It is very telling that the time at which Patroklos is arguably translated to the far north by the Thracian winds corresponds to the time at which Akhilleus attempts to bring Patroklos back to life by dragging Hektor's corpse around his mound: at dawn (ἠὼς ὅτε δῖα φανήη). This can be inferred from a collation of *Iliad* 24.415 with 24.551 where Akhilleus admits to Priam that his grief for his son—which amounts to a confession about his grief for the loss of Patroklos—will not bring him back to life (οὐδέ μιν ἀνστήσεις).

Furthermore, this implicit theme of Patroklos' morning abduction is reinforced by Dawn's role as an archetypal abductress: Priam's own brother Tithonos, Orion, Phaethon and Kephalos were all seized by the goddess whom Hesiod calls the mother of the winds.⁷⁹

The Boreas and the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace

The origination of the Zephyr in Thrace may surprise but it is what the *Iliad* states in books 5 and 23. Towards the end of our section, "The feast of the Thracian Winds versus the feast of the Aithiopes," we will attempt to explain why the Western Wind is associated with the North but for the time being, the focus will be on his logical northern partner the Boreas, whose participation in the translation of Patroklos is paramount. To substantiate this abduction claim, we must investigate the relation between the Boreas, Leuke and the land of the Hyper-boreans both of which were located in the far north towards the ends of the earth. That Akhilleus' Leuke was conceived of at the northern ends of the earth is shown by Pindar, a scholiast on Harmodios and Pliny: the former equates Leuke with the Elysian Plain, the last two with the Isles of the Blessed.⁸⁰ Both paradises were imagined at the ends of the earth by the river Ocean (Nagy 1979).

⁷⁸ Martin 1989:182-183.

⁷⁹ *Theogony* 378: ...ἠὼς ἀνέμους τέκε...See also Boedeker 1974.

⁸⁰ See n13 above.

If the Boreas returns home, as Homer says he does in book 23, and takes Patroklos with him, his home must be imagined in Leuke or the land of the Hyperboreans. As we saw earlier, the Boreas is an abductor. The abduction by Boreas of Oreithyia—daughter of Erekhtheus king of Athens—to the far north was also recounted by Simonides, who says that she took her

ἐπὶ τὴν Σαρπηδονίαν πέτρᾶν τῆς Θράκης⁸¹

where she gave birth to the twins Zetes and Kalais.⁸² The triple collocation of the Boreas, Pelagon and Sarpedon in the foregoing passage (*Iliad* 5.694-699) in which Pelagon (eponym of the Pelagones⁸³, a people who dwelled in the territory of the modern Republic of Macedonia, i.e. in the north) and the Boreas (the Northern Wind) heal the wounded Sarpedon constitutes a Homeric riddle, the answer to which is the Sarpedonian rock of Thrace!

The close parallel between the Athenian earth-born king Erikhthonios (inventor of the four-horse chariot⁸⁴ and identified at *Iliad* 2.546-551 with the earth-born Athenian king Erekhtheus—father to Oreithyia abducted by the Boreas) and the Dardanian king Erikhthonios (wealthy owner of three thousand mares⁸⁵ impregnated by the Boreas: *Iliad* 20.215-241) maximizes the probability of this interpretation. For additional evidence supporting this allusion, see infra “The visual voyage of Zeus” and “The northernmost river in the *Iliad*: the Axios.”

That Sarpedon’s rock in Thrace was conceived of at the ends of the earth is shown by a fragment of the *Kypria*, which states that “Sarpedon” was “a rocky island in deep-eddying Okeanos.”⁸⁶ This is in complete agreement with Sophokles’ lost tragedy which makes the

⁸¹ Scholia to Apollonios of Rhodes 1.211-215C; Boedeker & Sider 2001:14.

⁸² *Catalogue of Women* fragment 42 = Scholiast on Apollonios of Rhodes, *Argonautika* 2.297; Pindar *Pythian Ode* 4.

⁸³ Benseler (1959, s.v. *Pelagon* and *Pelegon*) and Tomaschek (1980:17) point out that the name of Asteropaios’ father (*Iliad* 21.159), i.e. *Pelegon*, was likely a modification of the eponym *Pelagon*, whose people the *Pelagones* lived to the west of the ancient Paionians. They do not seem to have noticed, nevertheless, that Sarpedon’s healer *Pelagon* too alludes to this northern people. Kirk 1995:127 does pick up on the connection (“Sarpedon’s friend Pelagon—he has a tribal name, Illyrian in origin”) but assumes that this Pelagon is “Lycian.”

⁸⁴ *Parian chronicle* (263 B.C.E.); Pseudo-Eratosthenes, *Katasterismoi* 1.13; Vergil, *Georgics* 3.113-14; Hyginus, *Astronomica* 2.13.

⁸⁵ For the analogy of maidens to mares, see Alkman’s *Partheneion* and Anastasia-Erasmia Peponi’s commentary (2004).

⁸⁶ fragment 21, see Hugh G. Evelyn-White, *Hesiod, The Homeric Hymns and Homericica*, 1914.

Boreas take Oreithyia to the ancient garden of Phoibos (Φοίβου παλαιὸν κήπον), i.e. the Land of the Hyperboreans, also located at the ends of the earth. We may thus see how the northern boundary of Thrace—to which the Boreas returns at dawn—was conceptualized as the northern end of the world abutting on the river Ocean.

In agreement with Leuke's location and that of the Sarpedonian rock of Thrace, a Hesiodic fragment locates the land of the Hyperboreans in a region where amber is to be found by “the streams of deep-flowing Eridanos.”⁸⁷ Nagy demonstrated⁸⁸ that the Eridanos, whose name compares with the Dawn's fixed epithet *Erigeneia*,⁸⁹ could be equated with the world-encircling Ocean, adducing the myth of Phaethon and the *uaria lectio* of Akhilleus' immortal horses being conceived *para rhoon Eridanoio* instead of *para rhoon Okeanoio* (*Iliad* 16.149-151). As a slight variant on his analysis, one could consider the Eridanos to be the northern part of the world-encircling Ocean, in which case this *uaria lectio* concerning the birthplace of Akhilleus' horses would constitute yet an additional piece of evidence linking Akhilleus to the far north. It would appear that the name of Akhilleus' horse *Balios* was a loanword from the northern tribe of the Illyrians (Athanasakis 2002: 1-4). In ancient Athens, the local Eridanos river issued from the Mountain of the Year (Mount *Lykabettos*⁹⁰) and flowed north of the city from east to west. One could consider this to be a microcosmic model for the cosmic Eridanos of the far north.

Erwin Rohde was correct to propose that Akhilleus' island was at first an imaginary place near the ends of the earth.⁹¹ The very fact that two Leukes have been identified—at the mouths of both the Istros and the Borysthenes—proves him right. In all likelihood, other

⁸⁷ fragment 40a; Oxyrhynchus Papyri 1358 fragment 2, Evelyn-White 1914; cf Apollonios of Rhodes (4.594) and Philostratos (*Imagines* 1.11). Vergil *Georgics* i. 482 and Ovid *Metamorphoses* ii. 324 locate the Eridanos by a region where amber is to be found. They also call the Eridanos the king of rivers.

⁸⁸ Nagy 1973:149-161.

⁸⁹ The Dawn always rose from the cosmic river. Nagy 1990:246: “a detail about Phaethon's mother *Eos* 'the Dawn' becomes especially significant. Homeric *Eos* has a fixed epithet *eri-geneia* 'early-generated' (or 'early-generating') that is exclusively hers (e.g. *Odyssey* ii 1). This epithet is built on what survives as the old locative adverb *eri* 'early', and Homeric diction actually preserves *eri* in collocation with *eos* 'dawn' (xix 320). This form *eri-geneia* is comparable to *Eridanos*, the first part of which is likewise built on *eri*; the second part *-danos* seems to mean 'dew' or 'fluid' (cf. Indic *danu-* 'fuilid, dew').”

⁹⁰ Haudry 1987:118 quoting V.I. Georgiev, *Introduction to the Study of the Indo-European Languages*, p. 182; Lukabattos “Jahres-berg”, de lukabas, -antos, “année”. For disclaimer on Haudry, see n159 below.

⁹¹ Pinney 1983:133.

paradisiacal Leukes must have also existed, including perhaps on the *leuke akte* located in Thrace,⁹² provided that they were situated near the northern end of the world on the mental map of the ancient Greek.

Pace Ivantchik, it is not clear whether the Iliadic conception of the world included or excluded Skythia and the Black Sea from what is called “Thrace” and the “Thracian sea⁹³.” The *Iliad* mentions the Alybes⁹⁴ who lived near the future city of Trapezous as well as several rivers that empty into the Black Sea (e.g. Aisepos and Sangarios). On the other hand, the *Iliad* never names or describes a northern sea that differs from the Thracian sea, as Classical Greek does (e.g. the Euxine or the Pontos). Because the eastern shores of Thrace abutted on the Black Sea, it is possible that the poet of the *Iliad* did consider the Black Sea to be a part or an extension of the Thracian Sea: Xenophon did call Bithynia “Thrace in Asia” (*Anabasis* 6.4.1-2). A long time after the Black Sea was colonized, Sophokles speaks of the “Thracian wave” (Θρηάκιον κλύδωνα) as though he meant “the Black Sea”⁹⁵ (unless he conceptualized the northern Aegean as the northern end of the world⁹⁶). What matters, in any case, is the conception of an imaginary northern end of the world: the larger the map, the farther north Leuke will be placed. The smaller the map, the closer Leuke will be to northern Greece.

The Hellespont and the Borysthene

There is indirect evidence, in fact, that even Akhilleus’ tomb at (or near⁹⁷) Sigeion at the tip of the Hellespont located north of Troy may have once been identified as Leuke. An extraordinary entry in Hesychios’ lexicon indicates:

⁹² Herodotos 7.25 names an area of Thrace *Leuke Akte*, which matches Euripides’ designation of Akhilleus’ abode at *Iphigeneia among the Taurians* 436: *leukan aktan*. Like his cult in Skythia, Akhileus’ cult was concentrated in the northern Aegean more than in any other part of Greece.

⁹³ Ivantchik 2005:77-80: “the Greeks established contacts with Skythia quite late, in the post-homeric period” (translation: Ekaterina Kovrigina). Larsson & Kristiansen refute this view in their 2005 book. The beginning of Book 13 is aware of Skythia.

⁹⁴ *Iliad* 2.857. See Wheeler 1854:281.

⁹⁵ Meineck & Woodruff 2000:9.

⁹⁶ In a personal communication to me, Paul Woodruff wrote: “The contrast in the passage [*Oidipous Tyrannos*, line 197] appears to be between the two far off and foreign seas—Atlantic and Euxine, as Jebb and other commentators have taken it.”

⁹⁷ Burgess’s point is well taken:

http://www.chs.harvard.edu/activities_events.sec/conferences.ssp/homerizon_abstract_burgess.pg

Βορυσθένης: ὁ Ἑλλήσποντος. ἔστι δὲ καὶ ποταμός.

Stephanos of Byzantion too provides the same definitions.⁹⁸ It is a remarkable coincidence that the name of the Borysthenes—either the river in Skythia or the Hellespont itself—is home to the two largest cult centers of Akhilleus in the ancient world. Surely, a special bond tying Akhilleus to the “Borysthenes” must exist.

In all likelihood, the name of the Skythian river was named after the Hellespontine Borysthenes and not the other way around. A transfer northward appears to have occurred, comparable to the transfer northward of the Khersonesos from Thrace to Tauris. The Greek phonology of the river’s name suggests so and reveals, moreover, an amazing meaning, i.e. the might of the Boreas (Bory⁹⁹-/Boreas). For want of being ascertainable etymologically, the perception of the Borysthenes a.k.a. Hellespont as the “river of the Northern Wind” is evidenced by the existence of a wind called the Ἑλλησποντίας which Benseler’s lexicon defines as follows:

Der vom Hellespont herwehende... oder auch Boreas genannte kalte Nordostwind, welcher aus den russischen Steppen über den Pontus und Thracien streicht, Hereas 7, 188, Aristoteles probl. 2. 56, Theophrastus De vent. § 62.

This is consistent with Heinrich Schliemann’s field observations of the winds of Hellespont.¹⁰⁰ Likewise, the Northern wind is dominant near the mouth of the Skythian Borysthenes as well, along with the Western Wind.¹⁰¹ It is noteworthy that the Hellespontine Borysthenes and the Skythian Borysthenes are united by the direction of the flow of their stream from the

⁹⁸ *Ethnika*, s.v. *Borysthenes*: Βορυσθένης,... καὶ ὁ Ἑλλήσποντος πρὸ τῆς Ἑλλης ἐκαλεῖτο.

⁹⁹ Pokorny (1994:477) tentatively submits Hesykhian *baru-es* (*dendra*) as a cognate of *Boreas* (**gworeas* = originally “mountain” [of the north]), cf *deiros* (**gwerios*) “hill.” The model of *arduus* “high, steep” in Latin versus the cognate French mountain range of the *Ardennes* of Celtic origin suggests that it is possible. *Baru-es* might thus be an example of a potential -u stem supporting the existence of **Borus* qua *Boreas*.

¹⁰⁰ “Here comes in another circumstance which must not be underrated, namely, the direction and force of the wind. I may cite two observations which I consider to be sufficiently certain. One is the motion of the sand at the citadel of Koum Kaleh, which proves the predominance of an easterly or north-easterly direction of the wind, in accordance with the direction and current of the Hellespont. The other is the position of the trees on Rhoeteum and on the lower section of the Plain. The trunks of all these trees (Valonea oaks) are uniformly inclined towards the west-south-west. This is in accordance with Maclaren's statement that the wind formerly called *Ventus Hellespontinus* blows for at least ten months in the year down the Hellespont.” Schliemann 1880:87.

¹⁰¹ This information comes to me via a personal communication from my translator of Ivantchik’s article Ekaterina Kovrigina who lives in the southern Ukraine.

northeast southward. Furthermore, both channels are connected with the northernmost ends of the known world in their respective contexts and time periods: relevant to the *Iliad*, the sea beyond the Hellespontine Borysthenes, i.e. the Sea of Marmara, is located as far north as the Thracian Sea, if not slightly further to the north¹⁰². Similarly, when the northern shores of the Black Sea were colonized, the Borysthenes river there too became the northernmost river known to the Greeks: it too flows down from the far north, north of the Black sea itself.

Having documented that the Boreas blows down the Hellespont and that it could be perceived as a river, Charles Maclaren noted in his dissertation that "the tumulus of Achilles was not inland, but on the banks of the Hellespont, near its mouth, and visible from the sea."¹⁰³ The same is true of Akhilleus' two other Leukes in Skythia: they are both located at the mouths of rivers,¹⁰⁴ the Borysthenes and the Istros.

Akhilleus' tumulus was visible from afar (τηλεφανής ἐκ ποντόφιν ἀνδράσιν: *Odyssey* 24.83). It is significant that the oldest lighthouse ever mentioned in the Greek world (7th century B.C.¹⁰⁵), was located on the very spot where Akhilleus' immortal bones lay buried, as though his tomb acted as a light of salvation. Likewise, Arrian reports that Akhilleus functioned as a epichoric *dioskouros*—traditionally associated with beacons of salvation, Saint Elmo's fire and the morning star—on the island of Leuke at the mouth of the Skythian

¹⁰² In the *Iliad*, there is the possibility that the term *Hellespontos* subsumed the Sea of Marmara. At 24.543ff, Akhilleus reminds Priam:

καὶ σὲ γέρον τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀκούομεν ὄλβιον εἶναι·
 ὅσσον Λέσβος ἄνω Μάκαρος ἔδος ἐντὸς ἐέργει
 καὶ Φρυγίῃ καθύπερθε καὶ Ἑλλήσποντος ἀπείρων,

Apeiron in this text is ambiguous but it is possible that the Sea of Marmara was the unbounded northern part of the Hellespont, given the reference to "Phrygia above" on the same line (alternately, *apeiron* could refer to the Hellespont's being surrounded by two seas north and south or even to the inclusion of the Thracian Sea in the Hellespont). Benseler indicates that *he Hellespontia* meant Phrygia on the Hellespont (Strabo 12.534).

¹⁰³ Maclaren, 1822.

¹⁰⁴ The proximity of Leuke to the mouth of the Istros is emphasized by Lykophron, who locates the island "by the outflowing of the marshy waters of the Celtic stream" (Κέλτρου πρὸς ἐκβολαῖσι λιμναίων ποτῶν: *Alexandra* 189; translation Mair - Loeb).

¹⁰⁵ According to the archaic poet Leskhos, Yust 1952:86.

Borysthenes (οἱ δὲ καὶ ὕπαρ λέγουσιν φανῆναί σφισιν ἐπὶ τοῦ ἴστοῦ ἢ ἐπ' ἄκρου τοῦ κέρως τὸν Ἀχιλλέα, καθάπερ τοὺς Διοσκόρους¹⁰⁶).

The connection or perceived connection of the Boreas also known as the *Hellespontias* with the Hellespontine Borysthenes and the Skythian Borysthenes is important to appreciate because they are the post-mortem homes of Akhilleus: when the Thracian winds return home, they are headed towards the hero's future mound near the mouth of the Hellespont and even towards Λευκή at the mouth of the Skythian Borysthenes. The hero's wraith could sometimes be sighted at both locations.¹⁰⁷ Just as the Zephyr reanimates mortals on the Elysian Plain and the Boreas reanimates Sarpedon in the northernmost reaches of Thrace, it is very tempting to surmise that the *might of the Boreas* (= *Hellespontias*) was thought to reanimate the *menos* of this spectral Akhilleus every time it blew down his abode at the mouth of the *Bory-sthenes* a few miles north of Troy.

Conversely, the connection of Akhilleus' *psukhe* to the Boreas is evidenced by Akhilleus' refusal to grant the Akhaians the favorable winds they need to return to Greece from Troy (οὐ γὰρ ἴησ' οὐρίους πνοὰς θεός¹⁰⁸) if Polyxena is not sacrificed to him. Because his refusal occurs when the Akhaians are stranded on the shores of the Thracian Khersonesos, one can deduce that the wra(i)th of Akhilleus controlled the *might of the Boreas*: its north to south blast was crucial to the homeward journey of the Akhaians.

“Under the Blast of the aithre-born Boreas”

Insofar as the northern fringes of Thrace were imagined as extending to the northern edges of the world,¹⁰⁹ the Boreas' exclusive epithet *aithregenes* (*Iliad* 15.171 and 19.358) gains especial significance. It is difficult to allege that it is a natural property of the winds to originate in “the bright sky” (αἴθρη) because one would then need to explain why none of the other three winds ever share this epithet with the Boreas. To say that αἴθρηγενέος (Βορέας) is due to the ability

¹⁰⁶ Arrian, *Circumnavigation of the Euxine Sea*, 23.1-2

¹⁰⁷ For the Hellespont, see *Kypria*; Euripides, *Hekabe* 35-44, 220-224, 534-540; *Trojan Women* 39-40; Philostratos, *Apollonios of Tyana*, 4.15f; also *Heroikos*. For Skythian Leuke, see Arrian, *Circumnavigation of the Euxine Sea*, 22-23.

¹⁰⁸ Euripides, *Hekabe* 900.

¹⁰⁹ Bridgman 2005:28 “Homer conceptualized Boreas as blowing from Thrace, perhaps from Mount Haemus, as later source material bears out (Homer, *Iliad* 9.4-7, 23.229-230). Thus, logically, the Hyperboreans lived somewhere to the north of Thrace, maybe at the sources of the Ister, where Pindar later locates them, or in the lands of the Scythians, where Hesiod places them.”

of the northern wind to clear up the sky is problematic as well because that is not what *-genes* primarily means.¹¹⁰

I propose instead that the Boreas owes its Iliadic epithet *aithregenes* to its origination in the Land of the Hyper-boreans where the sky is always clear and luminous¹¹¹ (αἴθρη), as is typical of lands at the ends of the earth.¹¹² What is more, one may take into account the statement made by Diodoros of Sicily that the land of the Hyperboreans was nearer to the heavenly bodies than other lands.¹¹³ This would help to explain why Atlas, a tall titan though he was, was able to hold up the axis of heaven at the ends of the earth, including the land of the Hyperboreans.¹¹⁴ The ancient garden of *Phoibos* may have been conceived of as almost merging with the clear, bright sky.

Additionally, Homer's strong proclivity for paronomasia¹¹⁵ pleads in favor of construing the word ῥιπῆς “blast” in the larger formulaic line (ψυχρῆ) ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς αἰθρηγενέος Βορέαο (*Iliad* 15.171 and 19.358) as a *double entendre* subsuming the mythical mountain in the far north, Alkman's Ῥίπας or Kallimakhos' Ῥιπαίου οὐρεος, whence proceeded the blast of the Boreas,

¹¹⁰ Sometimes, the Boreas actually does the opposite and is associated with an overcast sky (*Odyssey* 14.475). In the *Odyssey*, it is true that the Boreas' derivative epithet *aithregenetes* (5.296), modeled perhaps after the Zephyr's epithet *argestes*¹¹⁰, was reinterpreted as “creating the clear, bright sky” but that is not the seemingly earlier form and meaning attested in the *Iliad*.

¹¹¹ This can be inferred *a contrario* from Pindar when he speaks of “the famed land that lay behind cold Boreas of bleak and frozen breath” (translation Conway, Pindar *Olympian Ode* 3.31: τὰν μεθέπων ἴδε καὶ κείναν χθόνα πνοιαῖς ὄπιθεν Βορέα ψυχροῦ). The very fact that the land of the Hyperboreans was known as the garden of *Phoibos* suggests that its sky was always *phoibos*. In Greek, the notions of purity and brightness are inextricably linked, hence the ambivalence of *katharos* and *phoibos*, both of which mean either “pure” or “luminous”, e.g. οἰκεῖν ἐν τῷ καθαρῷ “to live in the bright sunshine” (Plato's *Republic* 520d; translation: Liddell & Scott) or ἐν καθαρῷ, ὅθι κύματ' ἐπ' ἠϊόνος κλύζεσκον (*Iliad* 23.61).

¹¹² οὐ νιφετός, οὐτ' ἄρ χερμιῶν πολὺς οὔτε ποτ' ὄμβρος (= the Elysian Plain, *Odyssey* 4.566).

¹¹³ τὴν σελήνην ἐκ ταύτης τῆς νήσου [τῶν Ὑπερβορέων] φαίνεσθαι παντελῶς ὀλίγον ἀπέχουσιν τῆς γῆς; Diodoros of Sicily, *The Library* 2.47.4.

¹¹⁴ Apollodoros, *The Library* 2.114.

¹¹⁵ Louden 125:27-46. See also Reece 2001, 122:465-470. In a personal communication, the latter author also recommended the following works: Sulzberger: les noms propres chez Homère et dans la mythologie grecque,” *Revue des Etudes Grecques* 39 (1926) 385-447; L.P. Rank, *Etymologiseering en verwante Verschijnselen bij Homerus* (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1951). [pp. 35-73].

and beyond which lay the ancient garden of Phoibos. Henry d'Arbois de Jubainville (1889) was the first modern scholar to detect this instance of Homeric word play between the noun ῥιπῆς and the mythical Ῥίπας.¹¹⁶

The paronomasia inherent in ὑπὸ ῥιπῆς αἰθρηγενέος Βορέας is borne out by the etymologies of *Boreas* and *Oreithyia* as the “Mountain¹¹⁷ [Wind]” and the “Mountain Runner” respectively. The blast of this Cosmic Mountain is likely to owe its inspiration to three factors, the first two being a prerequisite of the last one. First, trade with the far north, which had been extensive since the Bronze Age,¹¹⁸ is likely to have led to the seminal legend that transformed “the countries of the midnight sun” into “the countries of the perpetual sun.” Second, the migratory pattern of swans and other birds on a north to south axis led to the belief that the sun had its home in one of the two opposite poles, including the far north: the flight of such birds southward to Greece and Anatolia in the cold season was interpreted as a sign that they were the emissaries of the sun who resided in the far north (κύκνων μὲν τῶν Ῥιπαίων τῶν ἐν τοῖς Ὑπερβορείοις¹¹⁹). Third, any *local* mountain situated north (**boreas*) of a given area could be thought to contain a cave (hence Alkman’s *sternon*) whence the chill wind arose (*rhipe* = *Rhipai*), and beyond which the land was wind-free. It is a mistake to believe that the mythologization of a local mountain into a Cosmic Mountain is a diachronic process, from

¹¹⁶ Though rejected by Bridgman 2005, D'Arbois de Jubainville's observation has been endorsed by J.D.P. Bolton (*Aristeas of Proconnesus*, Oxford University Press, 1962). In Alkman, we find (Page fragment 90): Ῥίπας, ὄρος ἀνθέων ὕλαι, / νυκτὸς μελαίνας στέρνων. The liminality of Alkman's Ῥίπαι is evidenced by the contrast between νυκτὸς μελαίνας and ὄρος ἀνθέων, which is associated with light (cf the verb ἀνθέω in the sense of “shine”). Also Sophokles *Oidipous at Kolonos* 1248: αἰ δ' ἐννυχιάν ἀπὸ Ῥιπᾶν; Hippokrates: ὄρεσι τοῖσι Ῥιπαίοισιν ὄθεν ὁ βορέης πνέει (Cuno 1872:296); Kallimakhos *Aitia* 186.9 speaks of the Hyperboreans sending offerings to Apollo at Delos from the Rhipaian mountains; Ailian, *On Animals* 11.10: κύκνων μὲν τῶν Ῥιπαίων τῶν ἐν τοῖς Ὑπερβορείοις, ἐπεὶ λατρεύουσι τῷ Διὸς καὶ Λητοῦς. Bichler 2000:38 “*Das Rhipäische Gebirge war das sagenhafte nördlichste Gebirge, von nächtlichem Dunkel und Kälte erfüllt. Seine erste Bezeugung bietet Alkman (F 162 Calame). Bei Hellanikos ist es der Wohnsitz der Hyperboreer; FGrHist 4 F 187 b.*” See also Smith 1852 s.v. Rhipaei Montes.

¹¹⁷ For the sense development, Smith 1857:710 cites the name of the wind that blows from beyond the Alps to the Mediterranean shores of Italy and France: *la Tramontane* (“[the northern wind] beyond the mountains”). Benseleer indicates that several mountains in Greece were named *Boreas*. Cognates of *Boreas* (earlier **Gworeas*) are the Greek *deiros* “hill” (**gwerios*), Old Church Slavonic *gora* “mountain” and Sanskrit *giri* “mountain”. See Pokorny 1994:477 s.v. 3. *guer-*, *guor-*

¹¹⁸ Larsson and Kristiansen 2005.

¹¹⁹ Ailian, *On Animals* 11.10.

which the *Iliad* might have been immune: Mircea Eliade has shown that all mountains, no matter how local they were, were potentially regarded as cosmic mountains.¹²⁰

The connection between the wind of the Northern Mountain and the land of the Hyperboreans would help to explain why the priests of Apollo among the Hyperboreans were the Βορέου καὶ Χιόνης υἱεῖς, according to Hekataios of Abdera.¹²¹

The Visual Voyage of Zeus to the Land of the Hyperboreans

The idea of a northern boundary of the world is critical to this investigation because it is the final destination of the Boreas. If the Boreas and his Thracian partner the Zephyr take Patroklos with them, they take him to this final destination. The purpose of this section is to prove that the *Iliad* did conceptualize a Leuke-like paradise located at the northern end of the world. My ultimate purpose is to bolster my contention that the home to which the Thracian winds return is this paradise.

Even though Thrace comes across as the northern end of the world in much of the *Iliad*,¹²² the beginning of Book 13 presents us with a different picture. Seemingly weary of the constant fighting among the Greeks and the Trojans, Zeus turns his shiny eyes (ὄσσε φαεινῶ: 13.3) away from Troy, and towards a series of nations: first Thrace (13.4), second “Mysia” (13.5), third the land of the Hippemolgoi and lastly the land of the Abioi. Richard Janko made the case that the visual voyage of Zeus takes him further and further north at each step of the way. The first (and only) problem he deals with is Mysia. One would expect it to be located south of Thrace, not north of it but Janko clarifies that Mysia also referred to the modern territory of Bulgaria.¹²³ The name of the third nation exemplifies Homer’s proclivity for

¹²⁰ Eliade: 1991:6-16.

¹²¹ Quoted by Ailian, *On Animals* 11.1. Diodoros of Sicily says that the kings of the Hyperboreans were the *Boreadaí* (*History* 2.47.6).

¹²² In books 5 and 21, the Boreas and the Zephyr originate in Thrace. In book 5, the resuscitation of Sarpedon brings to mind the Sarpedonian rock of Thrace which the *Kypria* indicates was located at the ends of the world by the river Okeanos. Furthermore, the new arrival of king Rhesos and his Thracian army in book 10 is structurally similar to the arrival of the Paionian hero Asteropaios, who has been in Troy for eleven days when he faces off with Akhilleus: Rhesos and Asteropaios are both superlative warriors, potential *phaoi* to the Trojans. Whereas the Thracian Sea of Rhesos is the northernmost sea ever described in the *Iliad*, the Axios River of Asteropaios is the northernmost river ever described in the *Iliad*.

¹²³ “The Musoi are a branch of the race who stayed in Bulgaria when their kinsmen entered Anatolia (so Posidonius frag. 277a Edelstein-Kidd, in Strabo 7.295f.). Perhaps known to the Assyrians as the Muški (cf. MacQueen, the Hittites 1547-7), they were later called Moesi, whence the Roman province of Moesia. In the Trojan

etymologizations: the *Hippemolgoi* presumably milk mares and are consumers of milk¹²⁴ (γλακτοφάγων: 13.6). They can readily be equated with the nomadic Kimmerians¹²⁵ or the nomadic Skythians whom the *Catalogue of Women* 150.15 calls Σκύθας ἰππημολγούς.¹²⁶ The position of the Abioi at the end of the list indicates that they are the northernmost people.

This geographical superlative correlates with an ethical superlative since they are also defined as δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων. (1) Their juxtaposition to the etymologized Hippe-molgoi, (2) the ancient correlation between nonviolence (*a-bie*) and justice (cf the *Odyssey's* Phaiakians) and (3) their epithet δικαιοτάτων ἀνθρώπων should incline us towards the view that their name is etymologized, at least in part, as the *Nonviolent* nation (*A-bioi*).¹²⁷ At the same time, their juxtaposition to the nomadic Hippemolgoi suggests another type of metonymy: the *A-bioi* can also be construed as those “with no (settled) livelihood, i.e. nomads.”¹²⁸ This interpretation agrees with the assertion made by Philostephanos, Herodian, Stephanos of Byzantion and Eustathios¹²⁹ that the Abioi were a Skythian tribe. If both the Hippemolgoi and the Abioi were Skythian, then Nikanor’s statement that δικαιοτάτων at *Iliad* 13.6 applies to all the tribes upon whom Zeus cast his gaze¹³⁰ would dovetail Herodotos’ report (4.23) whereby a third Skythian tribe, i.e. the Argippaioi, are a people “against whom no one does injustice, since they are holy,

Catalogue (2.858n.), the Musoi are settled S. of the Propontis. Their presence would be anachronistic, like that of the Phruges who crossed to Asia in the Early Iron Age:” Janko 1992:43.

¹²⁴ Janko 1992:43 “the milk was no doubt coagulated, like the Tartars’ koumiss.”

¹²⁵ It is uncertain whether the Kimmerians, who appear to have been Indo-Europeans, were a Thracian tribe or an Iranian tribe like the Skythians. In any event, the Kimmerians were a nomadic people like the Skythians and had gained a reputation for being excellent archers. See Sulimirski & Taylor 2002:555.

¹²⁶ Reece 2001:465.

¹²⁷ Reece 2001:466 and Janko 1992:42.

¹²⁸ Aristarkhos understands γλακτοφάγων—located on the same line (13.6) as the Abioi—as belonging to the Abioi rather than to the Hippemolgoi. The resultant association of the Abioi with the regular consumption of dairy products does suggest a nomadic lifestyle under these northern latitudes (Janko 1992:42-43). Janko and oddly Aristarkhos who reports this interpretation reject it, which I do not.

¹²⁹ Reece 2001:467.

¹³⁰ Janko 1992:43.

nor do they make use of arms, but go around settling disputes, and they grant asylum to refugees.”¹³¹

Steve Reece convincingly argued that Homer’s love of paronomasia was such that he went so far as to remove the original gamma from the ethnonym of the Gabioi, which Aiskhylos several generations later preserved in its pristine form, as attested by fragment 196 of *Prometheus Unbound*.¹³² None of the three extant features of Homer’s Abioi are features which Aiskhylos’ Gabioi do not possess: extreme northern latitude,¹³³ dedication to peace and justice (*demon endikotaton*) and nomadism.¹³⁴ We are therefore authorized to suspect that Aiskhylos’ following description of the Gabioi is what Homer had in mind when he wrote of the Abioi:

ἔπειτα δ’ ἦξεις δῆμον ἐνδικώτατον
ἀπάντων καὶ φιλοξενώτατον,
Γαβίους, ἴν’ οὔτ’ ἄροτρον οὔτε γατόμος
τέμνει δίκηλλ’ ἄρουραν, ἀλλ’ αὐτόσποροι
γῦαι φέρουσι βίοτον ἄφθονον βροτοῖς
Then you will come to a tribe, the most just
Of all <mortals>, and the most hospitable,
The Gabioi, where neither the plow nor the earth-cutting mattock
Plows the land, but rather the self-sown
Fields bring a bounteous livelihood to mortals.¹³⁵

All of these characteristics combined are in perfect alignment with the lands at the ends of the earth, e.g the Isles of the Blessed, Skherie or the Elysian Plain: abundance of food, ease of life, absence of war and justice (either the concept on Skherie or the person in Elysium = Rhadamanthys). Because the (G)abioi are the northernmost of men, the conclusion is

¹³¹ Reece 2001:467.

¹³² Reece 2001:465-470. He ends his article with these laudable lines, from which many a classicist could benefit: “We’ve been led astray, as we often are, by our tendency to give priority to readings in those texts that happen to survive from an earlier period. But Aeschylus, though later, is not dependent on Homer here. Rather, Homer and Aeschylus are dependent on a common source. And it is Aeschylus who has retained the earlier and original form, while Homer has modified it to suit his purposes.”

¹³³ See Reece 2001: according to Philostephanos, Herodian, Stephanos of Byzantion and Eustathios, the Gabioi and the Abioi were the same people.

¹³⁴ Reece 2001:467.

¹³⁵ Reece 2001:466

inescapable that the last land to which the eyes of Zeus travel is that of the Hyperboreans where his son Apollo resides in the winter. This conclusion receives confirmation from the identification of the Skythians and their territory with the land of the Hyperboreans, as Herodotos' description of the Argippaioi seems to imply.

Hence, two other intended meanings can rightly be attributed to Homer's reasons for sacrificing the original form *Gabioi*. First, the idea that the A-bioi have a relation to βίῳ, i.e. bows, either as archers (Apollo, the Skythians and Abaris the Hyperborean) or men bereft of bows (by virtue of their nonviolence).¹³⁶ Second, the important idea that the Abioi are *rich*: the 5th century B.C.E. author Antiphon Sophista attests the adjective *abios* "rich," which combines the alpha copulative prefix and βίός "life, sustenance".¹³⁷ This meaning agrees both with Aiskhylos' description of the Gabioi (γύαι φέρουσι βίοτον ἄφθονον βροτοῖς) and Aiskhylos' description of the Hyperboreans in the *Khoephoroi*:

ταῦτα μέν, ὧ παῖ, κρείσσονα χρυσοῦ,
μεγάλης δὲ τύχης καὶ ὑπερβορέου
μείζονα φωνεῖς

Your wish is better than gold. It surpasses great good fortune, even that of the Hyperboreans.¹³⁸

Accordingly, one should be better prepared to appreciate Pindar's *Pythian Ode* 10.29-44:

ναυσὶ δ' οὔτε πεζὸς ἰών κεν εὔροις
ἐς Ἵπερβορέων ἀγῶνα θαυμαστὰν ὁδόν...
Μοῖσα δ' οὐκ ἀποδαμεῖ
τρόποις ἐπὶ σφετέροισι· παντᾶ δὲ χοροὶ παρθένων
λυρᾶν τε βοαὶ καναχαί τ' αὐλῶν δονέονται·
δάφνα τε χρυσέα κόμας ἀναδήσαν- (40)
τες εἰλαπινάζοισιν εὐφρόνως.
όσοι δ' οὔτε γῆρας οὐλόμενον κέκραται
ἱερᾶ γενεᾶ· πόνων δὲ καὶ μαχᾶν ἄτερ
οἰκέοισι φυγόντες
ὑπέρδικον Νέμεσιν.

¹³⁶ The prefix *a-* may have antithetical meanings: either a copulative (e.g. *a-koitis*) or a privative (e.g. *a-eikes*). Even the privative meaning "with no bows" can be used euphemistically to mean the opposite, cf the *Eumenides*.

¹³⁷ Chantraine 2:1999.

¹³⁸ *Khoephoroi* 372-374. Translation: Weir Smith.

But neither by sea, nor travelling by land canst thou discover the wondrous path to the assembly of the Hyperboreans...And in their habits the muse is not an alien from this nation; but everywhere choral bands of maidens, and the tones of lyres, and the sounds of flutes are agitated, and with the golden laurel having wreathed their locks they feast joyously. And neither disease nor destructive old age approaches the sacred race; but apart from toils and battles they dwell, incurring not the penalty of rigorous Nemesis.¹³⁹

We may now turn to the symbolism of Zeus' shiny eyes (ὄσσε φαεινῶ). The narrator puts the emphasis on them by beginning (ὄσσε φαεινῶ: 13.3) and ending (ὄσσε φαεινῶ: 13.7) his description of Zeus' visual journey. The clue to understanding the meaning of his shiny eyes can best be understood in relation to his focus on the land of the Hyperboreans at the expense of the Trojans and the Greeks fighting in Troy.

Much is to be gained from a comparison of his eyes to the eyes of Phoibos in Kallimakhos' *Hymn to Apollo* where the gaze of the god causes the livestock to fatten and multiply. In his commentary, Frederick Williams aptly proposes that ἤσιν Ἀπόλλων / βοσκομένης ὀφθαλμὸν ἐπήγαγεν (51-52) is "another allusion to the identification of Apollo and the sun."¹⁴⁰ Both literally and figuratively, Phoibos' luminous gaze bestows wealth on those whom he favors. Similarly, Zeus was the sunlit sky. Among myriad other factors, the kinship between Zeus (**Dyews*) and *dios* "radiant, bright" and the distinction between Zeus and the nocturnal *Ouranos asteroeis* in Hesiod's *Theogony* are indicative of the god's intrinsic identity as "the luminous day sky."¹⁴¹

Insofar as Zeus' visual migration to the land of the Hyperboreans parallels that of his son's traditional emigration every winter, one is encouraged to interpret the scene in naturalistic terms: Book 13 takes place in the dead of winter. Zeus' turning away of his gaze from Troy is an etiology for the decrease in daylight during the winter season. Instead, the Hyperboreans receive the benefits of his life-giving ὄσσε φαεινῶ, just as they enjoy the "presence" (i.e. imagined migration of the sun) of Apollo among them in the winter season: this too is an etiology for the legendary luminosity of the far north, which is coextensive with the fabulous wealth (*abioi*) of the Hyperboreans.

¹³⁹ Translation: Turner & Moore 1852:92-93.

¹⁴⁰ Frederick, 1978.52. He cites, inter alia, Aristotle *Historia Animalium* 6.19 in which it is stated that warmth and sunshine enable flocks to multiply. For the ancient conception of the sun as an eye, see Sophokles *Antigone* 104; Aristophanes *Clouds* 285.

¹⁴¹ Burkert 126:1985

It is highly probable, despite or because of its epithet *duskheimeros* in the *Iliad*,¹⁴² that Dodona's location north of Greece, and originally outside of Greece as in the *Iliad*, was related to the belief that Zeus too, like his son, migrated to the far north in the winter. The ancient claim that it was the oldest shrine of the god concurs with the discovery of Mycenaean artifacts on the site.¹⁴³ It is highly significant that Dodona was once referred to as a place among the Hyperboreans, according to scholiast A on *Iliad* 2.750 and 16.234. Timothy Bridgman, who reports this, observes that "northern lands were perceived in a rather vague, mythical way."¹⁴⁴ Cultic data on the alleged route to Delos of the Hyperboreans' offerings wrapped in straw lends credence to this belief: according to Herodotos 4.32-6, they were taken first to Dodona from Skythia before they were conveyed to the rest of Greece.¹⁴⁵ N.G.L. Hammond quotes a Hesiodic fragment which paints a somewhat fabulous picture of Dodona, not unlike the wealth (*pecunia*) of lands at the ends of the earth:

There is a land Hellopie with many crops and good meadowland, wealthy in flocks and shambling cattle; therein dwell men rich in sheep and rich in cattle, men beyond number, tribes of mortal men. And there, at its edge, a city is built, Dodona; and Zeus loved it and made it to be his oracle, prized among men¹⁴⁶.

Hammond specifies that this fragment of Hesiod is "the earliest description of the setting of Dodona." Accordingly, the resuscitation of Sarpedon under the *phegos* sacred to Zeus (ὕπ' αἰγιόχοιο Διὸς περικαλλεῖ φηγῶ: *Iliad* 5.693) at the northern edge of the world¹⁴⁷ relates, in all likelihood, to this seasonal phenomenon. Echoing the name of the tree under which Sarpedon was healed, Stephanos of Byzantion says that Zeus was called *Phegonaios*¹⁴⁸ at Dodona. Zenodotos athetized *Dodonaie* at *Iliad* 16.233 and replaced it with *Phegonaie*.¹⁴⁹ The blast of the Boreas that resurrects Sarpedon, as he is sitting under the "extremely beautiful

¹⁴² 2.750 and 16.234. Zenodotos athetizes the latter instance and replaces it with *polupidakos* (Loeb).

¹⁴³ Bridgman, 56:2005.

¹⁴⁴ Bridgman 2005.

¹⁴⁵ Also Kallimakhos, *Hymn 4 to Delos* 275-295.

¹⁴⁶ Hammond, 2002:272.

¹⁴⁷ See *supra*.

¹⁴⁸ Stephanos of Byzantion, *Ethnika*, s.v. *Dodona*.

¹⁴⁹ Loeb.

oak/chestnut¹⁵⁰ of aegis-bearing Zeus,” conjures up the image of the oracular rustling of the leaves in Hyperborean Dodona. It seems as though Homer is conflating the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace with Dodona as the location where his son Sarpedon is healed.

Moreover, the affinity between Zeus (*Zeus Xenios*¹⁵¹) and the (G)abioi (φιλοξενώτατον) in terms of their mutual concern for justice and hospitality is worth noting. Pindar's *Olympian Ode* 3.10-18 brings them together when Herakles is asked to import olive trees from the land of the Hyperboreans (by the Istros in Skythia) for the “all-hospitable grove of Zeus” (Διὸς πανδόκῳ ἄλσει). The supplemental parallel between the *phegoi* of Hyperborean Dodona and the olive trees imported from the land of the Hyperboreans points to the seasonal aspect of Zeus, thus assimilating him to the *eniautos daimon* of Mannhardt, Frazer, Harrison and Murray¹⁵²: the cycle of vegetal growth depends on the amount of light in the sky. Light here is conceived as a gift from the far north.

Whereas Zeus goes north, Poseidon goes south. At first, the god is watching the Greeks and the Trojans in Troy from Σάμου ὑληέσσης / Θρηϊκίης (13.12-13). The tmesis between Σάμου and Θρηϊκίης foregrounds the connection of the island to Thrace, which as we said represents the northern boundary of the world throughout most of the *Iliad*. Thus, the poet skillfully fuses two world maps in this scene and emphasizes the opposite directions of the two divinities.

If the removal of Zeus' luminous gaze from Troy signifies the decrease of the daylight period in the winter season, we must ask ourselves why it correlates with Poseidon's singular prominence in Book 13 where he leads the entire host of the Akhaians to battle for the first and last time in all of the *Iliad*. It so happens that the greatest festival of Poseidon took place at the winter solstice when days were the shortest. In his article Poseidon's Festival at the Winter Solstice,¹⁵³ Noel Robertson discusses at length the importance of this festival and writes:

It has scarcely been noticed that festivals of Poseidon, more than those of any other Greek deity, fall at just this time of year; yet the evidence is extensive. The month Poseideon,

¹⁵⁰ Jaroslav Levy has called into question the identification of *phegos* with the oak tree. There is no question that the oak tree was sacred to Zeus but this does not exclude the possibility that other trees were sacred to Zeus as well. See Levy 1961, 52:78-86.

¹⁵¹ Cf *Iliad* 24.570.

¹⁵² Murray 1951, 71:120-128. It is often claimed that the relevance of the *eniautos daimon* to Greek gods has been discredited but I find such allegations unconvincing and myopic.

¹⁵³ Robertson, 1984, 34:1-16.

which implies a festival Poseidea, is among the commonest of Ionian months, occurring also outside the Ionian domain.

No wonder Book 13 is a celebration of Poseidon: this time of the year when days are shortest (Zeus turns his luminous gaze away) is also the time when Greece celebrates Poseidon.

The Feast of the Aithiopes versus the Feast of the Thracian Winds

Having thus uncovered the existence of the land of the Hyperboreans in the *Iliad* as well as its relevance to the Boreas, we may now return to the funeral of Patroklos with a greater ability to make sense of the data. When Iris sets out to fetch the Thracian winds, she finds them enjoying a feast together in the house of the fierce-blowing Zephyr (ειλαπίνην δαίνυντο: 23.201). When the winds lewdly ask her to come closer (κάλεόν τέ μιν εἰς ἔκαστος) as if she were an easy flute player, she alleges that she must partake in another feast in the land of the Aithiopes by the streams of the Ocean.

The simultaneity of the two feasts sets up a parallel between Aithiopia and the house of the Zephyr and implies that the two are situated in different locations and different directions. In the *Odyssey*, the Aithiopians live in the eastern and western edges of the world (1.22-24). In the *Iliad* (16.151), the Zephyr rapes the Harpy Podarge at a lake by an indeterminate cosmic river: either the Okeanos or the Eridanos according to a *uaria lectio* pointed out by Nagy. I submitted earlier that the Eridanos, rather than being distinct from the Okeanos, came to represent its northern branch: accordingly, the distinction made in Book 23 of the *Iliad* between the house of the Zephyr and the land of the Aithiopes may suggest that the Zephyr conceived Akhilleus' immortal horses in the northern part (not the Aithiopes' western-eastern part) of the river Ocean, i.e. the Eridanos.¹⁵⁴ The Zephyr's association with Thrace (Θρήκηθεν:

¹⁵⁴ The meaning of *Akhilleion* as either "horseman," according to Aristophanes or "Skythian" according to Sophokles may suggest that the immortal horses of Akhilleus were indeed connected with the far north (Hesykhios: Ἀχιλλείων Ἴππεῦσιν Ἀριστοφάνης (819) καὶ Σοφοκλῆς Σκύθαις (fragment 507) Ἀχιλλείων). It is remarkable that horses in the *Iliad* tend to be associated with the north: the mares of king Erikhthonios, son of Dardanos, are impregnated by the Boreas: their offspring have the supernatural ability to gallop over the ears of cereal without bending them (*Iliad* 20.219-229). This Dardarian king Erikhthonios is likely related to the Athenian king Erekhtheus because he too is connected with the Boreas through his daughter Oreithyia who is abducted by the Northern Wind. Eumelos, who might have won the race, had Athena not derailed his chariot, hails from the northernmost region of Greece: Thessaly. Even Diomedes' steeds, stolen from Aineias and winners of the horse race, may be included under this northern connection if we consider the fact that Troy and Dardania are located not just east, but also north of the rest of Iliadic Greece (directly north of most of the Ionian colonies of Asia Minor). The connection of horses to the north is likely to stem from the fact that most of the pasture lands most propitious to raising horses were located in the north. The domestication of the horse originated in the Eurasian steppes. In turn, this may have strengthened the connection between horses and the sun: Apollo came from the north, and so did horses.

Iliad 9.5) and the association of the Garden of Phoibos with the Eridanos invite us to put the Iliadic house of the Zephyr towards the northern end of the world. In Philostratos' *Imagines* 1.11, the Zephyr joins the swans in mourning the death of Phaethon by the streams of the river Istros in Skythia. The Garden of the Hesperides (*hesperos*) was sometimes said to be located in the land of the Hyperboreans.¹⁵⁵ In the *Odyssey*, Odysseus' visit to the Aiaian island—located at the western end of the world (and eastern end after Odysseus returns from Hades)—follows his disastrous stopover in the land of the Laistrygonians located in the arctic regions (10.86):

ἐγγὺς γὰρ νυκτός τε καὶ ἡματός εἰσι κέλευθοι.

The confusion and fusion of the west with the north is likely to stem from their common association with darkness: the west and the north could both embody the darkness of the night and the darkness of the winter season. One can imagine “the west” (*zephyros* from *zophos* “darkness”¹⁵⁶) as descending upon the world in the winter season. Likewise, the darkness of the night, subsequent to the setting of the sun in the *west*, may be perceived as the descent of “the north” into the world (cf Alkman: ῥίπας, ὄρος ἀνθέον ὕλαι, / νυκτὸς μελαίνας στέρνον¹⁵⁷).

Like the Thracian winds, the Hyperboreans enjoy continual feasts (θαλίαις ἔμπεδον) where they succumb to their salacious impulses (Ἀπόλλων χάρει, γελᾷ θ' ὄρων ὕβριν ὀρθίαν κνωδάλων¹⁵⁸). It has never been adequately explained why the mirthful feast of the Zephyr and the Boreas intrudes upon the dismal narrative of the funeral of Patroklos. One has a *prima facie* sense of jarring inappropriateness, as the reader commiserates with the Akhaians and especially Akhilleus whose immeasurable grief is compounded by the no-show of the Boreas and the Zephyr. One may argue that it is merely an ancient *topos* meant to emphasize the contrast between the joyful existence of the immortals and the misery of mortal existence. While I agree that this *topos* constitutes a contributing factor, another more cogent explanation presents itself: like the continual feasts of the Hyperboreans and the Aithiopes, the feast of the Thracian winds prefigures the imminence of Patroklos' happy existence in the far north. One must imagine the therapon of Akhilleus harassing Iris-like wenches and feasting among the Zephyr and the Boreas.

¹⁵⁵ Apollodoros, *the Library*, 2.114 and 2.119.

¹⁵⁶ See Chantraine, s.v. *zephyros*.

¹⁵⁷ cf Alkman, Page fragment 90: ῥίπας, ὄρος ἀνθέον ὕλαι, / νυκτὸς μελαίνας στέρνον.

¹⁵⁸ Pindar, *Pythian Ode* 10. 27. Conway translates this passage as “Apollo laughs to see the rampant lewdness of those brutish beasts.”

At the end of our investigation on the implicit translation of Patroklos to Leuke in the *Iliad*, the parallels Nagy observed between the hero's funeral and the translation at dawn of the souls of righteous men to the luminous third sky in the sacred literature of ancient India gain more clarity. The existence, moreover, in ancient Indian literature of a mythical *Śveta Dvipa* seems to confirm the antiquity of Leuke¹⁵⁹ and the land of the Hyperboreans. Whereas the *Mahabharata* describes its inhabitants as moon-like in brilliancy,¹⁶⁰ Diodoros of Sicily reports the belief that τὴν σελήνην ἐκ ταύτης τῆς νήσου [τῶν Ὑπερβορέων] φαίνεσθαι παντελῶς ὀλίγον ἀπέχουσιν τῆς γῆς.¹⁶¹ Like the Abioi, the people of *Śveta Dvipa* are said to be free of sin. *Śveta Dvipa* “the White Island” is an exact translation of *Leuke Nesos*: bathing in light, it is located towards the northern confines of the world in an ocean of milk.¹⁶²

III Asteropaios, the son of Peleus

Doubling and Dissimilation: Akhilleus and Thoas of Tauris

Having thus far agreed with Pinney on the main points, it is now time to disagree with her when she says that the *Iliad* disappointingly contains no such allusions to Akhilleus' ties to the northern barbarians.¹⁶³ On the contrary, I will argue that the *Iliad* and other literary works do present us with ample evidence of Akhilleus' connection to the northern barbarians. In order to assess the evidence, it is necessary, however, to acknowledge the phenomenon of doubling and dissimilation: fully aware of Akhilleus' northern connections, the authors of the *Iliad* and of other accounts have deliberately created northern doubles of Akhilleus. In this regard, it is interesting to note that a number of Greeks believed that the Skythian Akhilleus and their own Ἑλληνικὸς Ἀχιλλεὺς were distinct individuals:

Ἄλλοι δέ φασιν ἕτερον εἶναι τοῦτον Ἀχιλλέα,
παρὰ Σκύθαις βασιλέα τῶν τόπων, ὃς ἠράσθη τε τῆς

¹⁵⁹ Jean Haudry (239:1987) was, to my knowledge, the first to notice the parallel between Leuke Nesos and Sveta Dvipa. Disclaimer: while I find a number of Haudry's linguistic and mythological observations compelling, I categorically condemn his political affiliations.

¹⁶⁰ Muir 1875:12

¹⁶¹ *Library*, 2.47.4

¹⁶² Muir 1875:12-18.

¹⁶³ Pinney 1983:137.

Ἴφιγενείας πεμφθείσης ἐκεῖ¹⁶⁴

Most commentators on this passage take it that Alkaios' line (which follows¹⁶⁵) is solely responsible for the belief in the existence of two Akhilleus, a Greek Akhilleus and a Skythian Akhilleus. Although Eustathios' text is not altogether clear whether this belief arose from Alkaios alone or rather from the cultic and subsequent literary evidence, it is preferable to understand that the latter was the main cause, and Alkaios' line the clincher. Obviously, those who believed in the distinction between the Greek Akhilleus and the Skythian Akhilleus were not ignorant of the vast non-Alkaian body of evidence linking Akhilleus to Skythia.

To be sure, there is evidence that the cultic association of Akhilleus with Skythia had given rise to the creation of a separate individual, of whom Euripides and Nikander speak. A close scrutiny of the figure of the Taurian king Thoas suggests that he was an offshoot of the figure of Akhilleus in his guise as παρὰ Σκύθαις βασιλέα. First, one will note that Thoas' position in the geste of Iphigeneia succeeds that of Akhilleus as the maiden's primary male consort after she was whisked away from Aulis. The parallelism and sequential sandwiching of the pair Thoas/Iphigeneia in Tauris (Skythia) between the pairs Akhilleus/Iphigeneia at Aulis and Akhilleus/Iphigeneia at Leuke¹⁶⁶ (Skythia) may suggest that Thoas is a stand-in for

¹⁶⁴ Eustathios, *Commentarium in Dionysii periegetae orbis descriptionem* 306, J.

¹⁶⁵ «Ὅτι ὁ Ἀχιλλέως δρόμος, ὃν οἱ Ταῦροι τὸ ἔθνος ναίουσιν, αὐλών τις ἐστὶ στενὸς ὁμοῦ καὶ δολιχὸς, καὶ κατὰ τὸν Γεωγράφον χερρόνησος ἀλιτενῆς, οἷόν τις ταινία (ἦτοι φασκία), μῆκος ὅσον χιλίων σταδίων ἐπὶ τὴν ἔω, ἀμμόδης, πλάτος δὲ δύο σταδίων τὸ μέγιστον. (5) Τοῦτον τὸν δρόμον ὁ Ἑλληνικὸς Ἀχιλλεὺς περιῆλθε μεταδιώκων τὴν τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος Ἴφιγένειαν, ἐξ Αὐλίδος ἀναρπασθεῖσαν εἰς Σκυθίαν, ὀπηνίκα ἔλαφον ἢ Ἄρτεμις εἰς θυσίαν ἀντέδωκεν: ἔνθα καὶ μείνας πολὺν χρόνον ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς, καθὰ δοκεῖ καὶ τῷ Λυκόφρονι, (10) ἀφῆκε τῷ τόπῳ τὴν ἐξ αὐτοῦ κλῆσιν. Ὅτι δὲ προκατηγγυημένη ἦν τῷ Ἀχιλλεῖ ἡ Ἴφιγένεια καθωμίληται. Ἄλλοι δὲ φασιν ἕτερον εἶναι τοῦτον Ἀχιλλέα, παρὰ Σκύθαις βασιλέα τῶν τόπων, ὃς ἠράσθη τε τῆς Ἴφιγενείας πεμφθείσης ἐκεῖ καὶ ἔμεινεν ἐπιδιώκων, ἐξ (15) οὐδ' ὁ τόπος Ἀχιλλεῖος. Οἱ δὲ τοῦτο λέγοντες παραφέρουσι μάρτυρα τὸν Ἀλκαῖον λέγοντα: «Ἀχιλλεὺς ὃς τὰς Σκυθικὰς μεδέεις.» Ἀπὸ δὲ Ἀχιλλέως καὶ ἡ Δευκὴ νῆσος ἢ μετὰ ταῦτα ῥηθησομένη Ἀχιλλεῖος ἐλέγετο νῆσος περὶ τὸν Εὐξείνου, ἔνθα φασὶν οἱ Σκύθαι (20) τὴν Ἀχιλλέως ψυχὴν διαβαίνουσαν τὰ ἑαυτῆς ἀθύρειν.

¹⁶⁶ Antoninus Liberalis 27 (quoting Nikander in the tradition of Stesikhoros): 1.) Θησέως καὶ Ἑλένης τῆς Διὸς ἐγένετο θυγάτηρ Ἴφιγένεια καὶ αὐτὴν ἐξέτρεφεν ἡ τῆς Ἑλένης ἀδελφὴ Κλυταιμῆστρα, πρὸς δὲ τὸν Ἀγαμέμνονα εἶπεν αὐτὴ τεκεῖν: ... (2.) ἐπεὶ δὲ ἡ στρατιὰ ἢ τῶν Ἀχαιῶν ὑπὸ ἀπλοίας ἐν Αὐλίδι κατείχετο, προεσήμαινον οἱ μάντις, ὅτι ἔσοιτο πλοῦς, ἐὰν Ἀρτέμιδι θύσωσι τὴν Ἴφιγένειαν. ... (3.) Ἄρτεμις δὲ ἀντὶ τῆς Ἴφιγενείας παρὰ τὸν βωμὸν ἔφηνε μόσχον, αὐτὴν δὲ προσωτάτῳ τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀπήνεγκεν εἰς τὸν Εὐξείνου λεγόμενον πόντον παρὰ Θόαντα τὸν Βορυσθένους παῖδα. καὶ τὸ μὲν ἔθνος ἐκεῖνο τῶν νομάδων ἐκάλεσε Ταύρους, ἐπεὶ ἀντὶ τῆς (5) Ἴφιγενείας παρὰ τὸν βωμὸν ἔφηνε ταῦρον, αὐτὴν δ' ἡ θεὸς Ταυροπόλον. (4.) κατὰ δὲ χρόνον ἰκούμενον ἀπόκισε

Akhilleus. Second, Thoas is the son of the Borysthenes river, at the mouth of which were found Akhilleus' own island of Leuke as well as the Akhilleios Dromos. Philostratos specifies in the *Heroikos* that Poseidon had made Leuke, in part, from the alluvial deposits of the Borysthenes.¹⁶⁷ Thoas' kingdom of Tauris is thus indistinguishable from the region dominated by the cult of Akhilleus. Third, the cult of Akhilleus and the cult of Hekate—into which Iphimedeia [Iphigeneia] was transformed after her sacrifice at Aulis according to the Hesiodic *Catalogue of Women* overlap in the Kinburn peninsula in the southern Ukraine.¹⁶⁸ Fourth, Thoas' very own name, the meaning of which is made explicit in Euripides' play (Θόας, ὃς ὠκὺν πόδα τιθεὶς ἴσον πτεροῖς / ἔς τοῦνομ' ἦλθε τόδε ποδωκείας χάριν: 32-33), readily lends itself to being one of Akhilleus' own epithets. Fifth, Thoas' bloody tradition of sacrificing foreigners parallels Akhilleus' sacrifice of twelve Trojan youths at the funeral of Patroklos¹⁶⁹ and the human sacrifices of his numerous brides, such as the aptly named Polyxena¹⁷⁰, Iphigeneia herself and

τὴν Ἰφιγένειαν εἰς τὴν Δευκὴν λεγομένην νῆσον παρὰ τὸν Ἀχιλλεῖα καὶ ἀλλάξασα ἐποίησεν αὐτὴν ἀγήρων καὶ ἀθάνατον δαίμονα καὶ ὠνόμασεν ἀντὶ τῆς Ἰφιγενείας Ὀρσιλοχίαν. ἐγένετο δὲ Ἀχιλλεῖ σύνοικος.

¹⁶⁷ *Heroikos* 54.7. The other two rivers besides the Borysthenes that contributed to the formation of Leuke were the Istros and the Thermodon. Because another Leuke (Pausanias 3.19.11) was located at the mouth of the Istros river, I hypothesize that a third Leuke may have also existed at the mouth of Thermodon river. The fact that at least 2/3 of the rivers that contributed to the formation of Leuke were situated at the mouths of rivers suggests that Akhilleus had once had a connection not just with the saltwater of the sea but also with the freshwater of the rivers. In my original paper, I argue that Akhilleus meant originally “the offspring of the Akheloios” or rather “the offspring of the akheloios”, i.e. “the offspring of the river” (in Greek poetry, the noun *akheloios* may simply mean “river”). That being the case, Akhilleus and Thoas would have yet one more feature in common, i.e. being the offspring of rivers.

¹⁶⁸ “Achilles seems to have invaded the ‘Grove of Hecate,’ for an altar to him was dredged up off Kinburn spit”: Dzikowski 1939:90-91.

¹⁶⁹ I thank my friend Adam Goldwyn for reminding me of this.

¹⁷⁰ The sacrifice of Polyxena is attested as early as 560 B.C.E. on a vase signed by Timiades. For the perception of female gender as a foreign entity, see the discussion above under “Skythians in Archaic Greek Art.” See also Rush Rehm's discussion (*Marriage to Death*, 1994) of Agamemnon's presentation of his bride Cassandra as a *xena*: not only is he alluding to Cassandra's Trojan ethnicity, but also to her quality as a *bride* who is being transferred from the household of her parents to that of her new husband. Greek brides were the *xenai* of their new household.

the female descendant of the house of Priam taken to Leuke to be a “bride” of Akhilleus¹⁷¹. Thus, Thoas can be rightly seen as a ἔτερον Ἀχιλλέα παρὰ Σκύθαις βασιλέα¹⁷².

The Northernmost River in the *Iliad*: the Axios

The rest of our discussion will now focus on Asteropaios, the man from the land situated far north of Greece, north of Macedonia itself, east of Thrace, i.e. Paionia. Just as Thrace holds the record in the *Iliad* of the northernmost sea, i.e. the Thracian Sea, Paionia holds the record of the northernmost river: of all the rivers mentioned in the *Iliad*, none flows farther north than the ancestor of Asteropaios: the Axios. Homer strategizes the uniqueness of the river’s superlative latitude by correlating it with superlative beauty (*Iliad* 2.849-50):

...ἀπ’ Ἀξιοῦ εὐρὸν ῥέοντος
Ἀξιοῦ οὐ κάλλιστον ὕδωρ ἐπικίδναται αἴαν

...From wide-flowing Axios—

Axios whose water flows the fairest over the face of the earth.¹⁷³

At *Iliad* 21.158, the same statement is made (Ἀξιοῦ, ὄς κάλλιστον ὕδωρ ἐπὶ γαῖαν ἴησιν) but this time the river’s superlative beauty tacitly connects with Asteropaios’ superlative strength¹⁷⁴ one line above (αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ γενεὴ ἐξ Ἀξιοῦ εὐρὸν ῥέοντος). In Hesiod’s *Theogony*, a total of twenty five rivers besides the Okeanos are mentioned: of these twenty five rivers, the only

¹⁷¹ Philostratos, *Heroikos* 56.7-10. The post-mortem marriage of Akhilleus with a Hekatean figure is attested as early as Ibykos (apud scholiast on Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautika* 4.814).

¹⁷² This mitotic process is not unique in Greek mythology: Paul Wathelet and Jean-Michel Renaud have likewise argued that the Thracian Diomedes notorious for his man-eating mares and the Greek Diomedes the horse thief *par excellence* in the *Iliad* and winner of the chariot race in the funerary games held in honor of Patroklos are really one and the same: “Dans l’ensemble, le fils de Tydée est présenté d’une manière favorable. Il n’en va pas de même d’un homonyme qu’Homère ne mentionne pas, mais qui est certainement ancien dans la mythologie grecque. Il s’agit d’un Diomède, fils d’Arès, roi des Bistones célèbre pour avoir entretenu des cavales anthropophages. On a souligné que le fils de Tydée était ἵππόδαμος, dompteur de chevaux, et fort lié aux chevaux et à la charrerie. L’hypothèse vraisemblable a été émise que les deux Diomède n’étaient en fait qu’un seul et même personnage.”: Renaud 1998:18.

¹⁷³ Translation: Murray (Loeb).

¹⁷⁴ Misled by such counterexamples presented by Paris and Nireus whose superlative beauties do not correlate with superlative strength (and yet Paris kills Akhilleus and Nireus kills Hiera queen of the Mysians—Penthesilea’s counterpart in the *Heroikos*), many scholars tend to underappreciate the opposite correlation: Akhilleus is the best warrior and he is also the handsomest. In the *Odyssey*, Memnon—Akhilleus’ archnemesis in the *Aithiopsis*—is the most handsome man Odysseus ever saw. When the son of Laertes goes to Hades, he sees Aias, the son of Telamon, and describes him as the most handsome Greek after Akhilleus: again, beauty parallels strength.

river described as beautiful (καλλιρέεθρον: 339) is the northernmost one, i.e. the Istros.¹⁷⁵ It is remarkable that the northernmost rivers in both the *Iliad* (the Axios) and the *Theogony* (the Istros) have the strongest affinity with beauty. I propose that the superlative beauty of the land of the Hyperboreans is responsible for this connection.

In his *Olympian Ode*, Pindar locates the fabulous land of the Hyperboreans near the banks of the Istros (3.26). Thence, Herakles introduces to Olympia the green olive, μνᾶμα τῶν Οὐλυμπία κάλλιστον ἀέθλων (3.15). The realization that the far north was an exemplar of beauty and vegetal growth confers newfound significance on the description of the tree sacred to Zeus under which Sarpedon leans as περικαλλεῖ (*Iliad* 5.693): the tree is extremely beautiful because the setting alludes to the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace, with which Hyperborean Dodona appears to have been connected. Commenting on Alkaios' epiphanic description of Apollo's return to Delphi from the land of the Hyperboreans, Bridgman writes in his book:

In order to lure Apollo away from the land of the Hyperboreans, the poet had the Delphians imitate the behavior of the Hyperboreans and had Greece become green and lush and as beautiful as the land of the Hyperboreans.¹⁷⁶

In effect, Homer presents Paion-ia—the land through which flows the northernmost as well as the most beautiful river in the *Iliad*—as the land of the Healer God Paion, i.e. the ancient garden of Phoibos.¹⁷⁷ Asteropaios is a Hyperborean!

¹⁷⁵ Two potential exceptions in the *Theogony* are the Eridanos and the Phasis: the *Catalogue of Women* associates the Eridanos with amber and the land of the Hyperboreans. The Istros itself, however, was sometimes identified with the mythical Eridanos of the Hyperboreans (Pindar, *Olympian Ode* 3.26; Philostratos, *Imagines* 1.11). The river Phasis, connected with the mythical land of Kolchis, was either identified with the northeastern shores of Anatolia facing the Black Sea or the Tanais river within the sea of Azov (see Martin West 2005:410). In the former case, the Istros is located much farther to the north than the Phasis. In the latter case, the possible identification of the Phasis with the Tanais would situate the Phasis further to the north than the Istros itself in strict geographical terms. It is uncertain, however, that Hesiod and contemporary Greek poets would have been aware of the exact latitudinal distinction between the Istros and the Tanais (presumably the Phasis), both of which were located in the northern half of the Black Sea. Hesiod too may have heard conflicting reports as to whether the Phasis was located in the Southern Black Sea or the Northern Black Sea. In doubt, he may have chosen to assign the Hyperborean quality of beauty to the Istros while at the same time giving his audience an inkling of the Phasis' comparable latitudes by sandwiching the adjective *kallirheethron* between *Istron* and *Phasin*: ...Ἴστρον καλλιρέεθρον / Φᾶσιν τε (339-340)...

¹⁷⁶ Bridgman, 2005:33.

Whereas Akhilleus’s Leuke was to be found at the mouth of this Hyperborean Istros (Lykophron 189 and Pausanias 3.19.11), Homer is likely to have etymologized the Axios as the river from the northernmost land where Atlas was reputed to hold up the axis of heaven.¹⁷⁸ Aristotle attests ἄξων as a term designating “the axis of heaven” alongside πόλος (*De Mundo* 391b.26). In the *Iliad*, Homer seems to cleverly allude to these two cosmological synonyms (πόλος and ἄξων) by connecting them with the Axios river and his offspring Asteropaios (23.560-2):

δώσω οἱ θώρηκα, τὸν Ἀστεροπαῖον ἀπηύρων
 χάλκεον, ᾧ πέρι χεῦμα φαινοῦ κασσιτέροιο
 ἀμφιδεδίνηται· πολέος δέ οἱ ἄξιός ἔσται

The collocation of *Asteropaios*, *poleos* and *axios*—indistinguishable phonetically from the Axios river whence Asteropaios traces his ancestry—superimposes a secondary meaning upon the prosaic use of the juxtaposed adjectives *poleos* and *axios*: the cosmic πόλος and ἄξων.¹⁷⁹ Nowhere else in the *Iliad* are *poleos* (or any paradigmatic variant of *polus*) and *axios* found on the same line.

This notion that Akhilleus’ most threatening adversary in the *Iliad* and *Heroikos*, i.e. Asteropaios, came from the ends of the earth parallels the homeland of Memnon, Akhilleus’ most threatening adversary in the *Aithiopsis*¹⁸⁰ and Quintus of Smyrna’s account: the son of Dawn hailed from the mythical land of the *Aithiopes* located at the ends of the earth where the Sun rises and sets.

I shall argue that the narrator of the *Iliad* intentionally portrays the Paionian hero as a double of Akhilleus, in the strict sense of the word. The key arguments provided here will arise for the most part from a collation of Akhilleus’ attributes, epithets and genealogy with those of Asteropaios. We will appreciate the value of Richardson’s observation that “special

¹⁷⁷ For the analysis of Paionia as “the land of the Healer God,” cf the pun on Asteropaios’ ancestor *Akessamenos*, “the Healer” (*Iliad* 21.142). For the equivalence of Paion and Apollo in the *Iliad* itself, despite claims to the contrary, see n213 below.

¹⁷⁸ παρ’ Ἑσπερίδων χρύσεια μῆλα κομίζειν. ταῦτα δὲ ἦν, οὐχ ὡς τινες εἶπον ἐν Λιβύῃ, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ (5) τοῦ Ἄτλαντος ἐν Ὑπερβορείοις: Apollodoros, *Library* 2.114. Frazer (1921) has cautioned against underestimating the reliability of Apollodoros as a transmitter of ancient traditions. More recently, Burgess (2001) has found that our primary source for verifiable information on the Trojan Cycle is in fact Apollodoros.

¹⁷⁹ The juxtaposition of *poleos* (or any paradigmatic variant of *polus*) and *axios* occurs nowhere else in the *Iliad*.

¹⁸⁰ For an in-depth analysis of the parallels between Akhilleus and Memnon, see Slatkin 1991.

prominence is given to his parentage.”¹⁸¹ The exceptionally malleable hermenutics of his name deploys itself in the course of his cameo: Asteropaios “the Man of Lightning,” “the son of Lightning,” “He whose spear Strikes like a Star,” and “the Star of Paion(ia).” The possibility of quadruple paronomasia packed into a single name may surprise but it has been outdone in ancient epic by the name of *Odysseus*. According to Bruce Louden (1995: 27-46) and others, word play between the hero’s name and *odussomai*, *odune*, *dusmoros*, *dustenos* and *oizus* is detectable in the *Odyssey*, let alone between *oule* and the lambda variant *Olysseus*, according to Peradotto.¹⁸² We will also explore the grammatical and semantic ambiguity of Pelegon(os) as well as the significance of Asteropaios’ (grand) parents Periboia, the river Axios and his ancestor Akessamenos.

“The mightiest of both the Achaeans and the Trojans”

According to Philostratos (*Heroikos* 48.14):

ἦν ἀνὴρ ἐκ Παιονίας ἦκων, οὗ καὶ Ὅμηρος ἐπεμνήσθη, Ἀστεροπαῖον δὲ αὐτὸν καλεῖ καὶ Ἀξιοῦ τοῦ ποταμοῦ υἱὸν καὶ δεξιὸν ἄμφω τῷ χεῖρει, μέγιστον δὲ Ἀχαιῶν τε καὶ Τρώων ὄντα τὸν Παίονα καὶ θηρίου δίκην ὁμόσε χωροῦντα ταῖς αἰχμαῖς παρήκεν Ὅμηρος τουτοῦ τοῦ λόγου.

There was a man who had come from Paionia, whom Homer also remembered. He calls him Asteropaios, a grandson of the river Axios, and ambidextrous. Although the Paionian was the mightiest of both the Achaeans and the Trojans and rushed into the spears like a wild beast, Homer disregarded this story.¹⁸³

Although Homer is silent about Asteropaios being “the mightiest¹⁸⁴ of both the Achaeans and the Trojans,” it is significant that the Paionian hero is the only man in the *Iliad* who manages to

¹⁸¹ Richardson 1993:66.

¹⁸² Peradotto, 1990:143-170. In a separate paper, The real etymology of Odysseus, I argue that the lambda variants of Odysseus’ name, e.g. *Olys(s)eus*, *Olyt(t)eus*, *Oulixeus*, are original and that the delta form attested in Homeric epic is an innovation, contrary to what one might expect. Ultimately, I parse the name *Olysseus/Odysseus* as *O-lyk-i-eus, i.e. the “Offspring of Autolykos”, whereby the prefix O- is a grammatical allomorph of Auto- (see Chantraine s.v. o-) and the suffix -i- is patronymic like *Telamon-i-os* “the offspring of Telamon”, equivalent to the suffix -ides, as in *Aiak-ides* “the offspring of Aiakos”.

¹⁸³ Translation: Maclean & Aitken, 2003:72. These scholars are justified for the translation “rushed into the spears” (χωροῦντα ταῖς αἰχμαῖς), rather than “rushed with his spears” because in contrast a few lines above Philostratos makes use of the duel to refer to Asteropaios’ hands (τῷ χεῖρει).

¹⁸⁴ Even if one were to disagree with Maclean’s and Aitken’s translation of *megistos* as “mightiest” and instead prefer “tallest”, Philostratos’ specification that Akhilleus feared for himself when he saw Asteropaios more than

wound Akhilleus. An understated hint at the incomparable strength of this man from the far north is discernible, nevertheless, in Sarpedon's choice of Asteropaios and Glaukos as his comrades to lead the contingent of the Trojan allies because οἱ γὰρ οἱ εἴσαντο διακριδὸν εἶναι ἄριστοι (*Iliad* 12.103). The phraseology used to describe the Paionian Apisaon, i.e. μετ' Ἀστεροπαῖον ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι (*Iliad* 17.352) is similar to that used to describe Ajax, ὃς ἄριστος ἔην... / τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν μετ' ἀμύμονα Πηλεΐωνα (*Odyssey* 11.469-470): the two comparisons have the effect of emphasizing the superior worth of Asteropaios and Akhilleus over other eminent fighters.

Philostratos goes on to specify that face to face with Asteropaios, Akhilleus feared for himself more than when he fought with Hektor (!) (48.16). Never does the *Iliad* say a word of Asteropaios making a single kill on the battlefield, so one may wonder how ancient of a tradition Philostratos' portrayal of the Paionian hero as a formidable warrior really is. Proof for the antiquity of his account is to be found on an ancient vase from 540 B.C.E. (National Museum of Victoria, Melbourne 1634-D4), which depicts Asteropaios in the bloody act of performing an *aristeia*.¹⁸⁵

Additional evidence for the special parallelism between Akhilleus and Asteropaios in the *Iliad* can be gathered from the parallel death of Pyraikhmes—the other leader of the Paionians—by Patroklos clad in Akhilleus' armor (*Iliad* 16.287). As Grace Macurdy observed, “It is significant that the two Paeonian princes are killed by Patroclus and Achilles respectively.”¹⁸⁶ On a formulaic level, I would add that the two Paionian leaders are both attributed the phrase ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι (16.292 and 17.352), a formula which occurs only three other times in

he feared Hektor suggests that the physical dimension of *megistos* correlates with actual strength. Akhilleus' own strength correlates with his extraordinary height. For the meaning of *megistos* as “mightiest”, see Liddell & Scott, s.v. *meγas*.

¹⁸⁵ Lowenstam 1997:29. The closest the narrator of the *Iliad* comes to describing Asteropaios in the act of fighting, outside of his encounter with Akhilleus, is at 17.358 (ἴθυσεν δὲ καὶ ὁ πρόφρων Δαναοῖσι μάχεσθαι), after Lykomedes slew his fellow Paionian companion Apisaon “shepherd of men.” The dense shields and spears around the corpse of Patroklos, however, impede him. The wrath, which Asteropaios displays in the *Iliad* for the first time, harbingers his confrontation with Akhilleus, especially if sense can be made of Lykomedes' name being the same as that of the king of Skyros: Akhilleus hid there to avoid going to war and his son Pyrrhos was born on the island, by some accounts the grandson of Lykomedes. Thus, all of the three Paionian leaders perish at the hands of the same group, i.e. Akhilleus, Lykomedes and Patroklos.

¹⁸⁶ Macurdy 1912:250.

the *Iliad*.¹⁸⁷ Moreover, as Louden noted (2006:104), the deaths of the Paionians Pyraikhmes and Asteropaios are both followed by the routs of the Trojans and their allies.

The location and timing of Pyraikhmes' death strengthen this parallelism: sent by Akhilleus to stop the Trojans from incinerating the ships of the Danaans, Patroklos slays Pyraikhmes—his very first victim in the *Iliad*—right next to the ship of Protesilaos, the very first Akhaian to die on the shores of Troy. Katherine Kretler noted an elaborate series of interconnections between the pairs Akhilleus/Patroklos and Protesilaos and his spouse. For example, Akhilleus' sister named Polydora in the *Iliad* (16.175) has the same name as Protesilaos' wife in the *Kypria* whose home is *hemi-teles* (*Iliad* 2.701) after the death of her husband. This *hemi-teles* is comparable to Protesilaos' *hemi-daes* ship (*Iliad* 16.294) next to which Pyr-aikhmes dies at the hands of Patroklos. Furthermore, Polydora is daughter to Kleopatra and Meleager who was put forward as an example for Akhilleus not to follow in Book 9 (Kleo-patra = Patro-klos). Thus, the location and timing of Pyraikhmes' death next to Protesilaos' ship enable the Paionian pair Pyraikhmes/Asteropaios to 'piggyback' the deep-seated parallelism between Patroklos/Akhilleus and Polydora/Protesilaos.¹⁸⁸

The parallelism between the pairs Akhilleus/Patroklos and Asteropaios/Pyraikhmes can also be inferred from the funerary contests held in honor of Patroklos: the first prize for the duel with spears fought between Diomedes and Aias is the sword, scabbard and belt of Asteropaios—Akhilleus' victim. The second prize is the spear, helmet and shield of Sarpedon—Patroklos' victim.

The son of Lightning and the son of Peleus

The name *Asteropa-ios*, immediately interpretable as 'the Man of Lightning,' is significant because its base form (ἄστροπή) may have traditionally been attributed to Akhilleus in Thessalian lore. Originating from Phthia, Akhilleus was of course a native of Thessaly. In Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* (3.2.4), Kalasiris recites what he claims is part of the traditional *Hymn to Thetis* sung by Thessalian maidens on the occasion of the Delphic festival:

Τὰν Θέτιν ἀείδω, χρυσοέθειρα Θέτιν,
Νηρέος ἀθανάταν εἰναλίιοιο κόραν
τὰν Διὸς ἐννεσίη Πηλέϊ γημαμένην
τὰν ἀλὸς ἀγλαΐαν ἀμετέραν Παφίην,

¹⁸⁷ Prendergast & Marzullo 1962.

¹⁸⁸ Kretler (2006) further remarks on the analogy between Akhilleus' attempt to grasp the image of Patroklos and the embraces Polydora gives to the statues of her husband. For other parallels, see the end of my section "The Star of Paionia," *infra*.

ἄ τὸν δουρομανῆ τόν τ' Ἄρεα πτολέμων (5)
 Ἑλλάδος ἀστεροπὰν ἐξέτεκεν λαγόνων
 δῖον Ἀχιλλῆα, τοῦ κλέος οὐράνιον...
 “O Thetis, I sing, golden-haired Thetis,
 Immortal daughter of sea-dwelling Nereus,
 Wedded to Peleus at the behest of Zeus,
 The splendour of the sea, our own Aphrodite;
 The hero who raged with his spear, who was an Ares in war,
 Thunderbolt of Hellas, she bore from her loins,
 Divine Achilles, whose fame reaches heaven...”¹⁸⁹

Akhilleus is called the *Asteropa* of Hellas, to use the Thessalian form in -a. Although it is technically possible for the author of the *Aithiopika* to have “made up” this hymn and artificially recreated the long alphas of the ancient Thessalian dialect, it is more likely that he excerpted it from an authentic piece of Thessalian lore whose formation antedated the dissemination of koine throughout Greece. Even if these lines were his invention, the archaic content of the hymn indicates that its inspiration and many elements of its phraseology at least were rooted in local cult.¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ Translation: Ewen Bowie 1989:228.

¹⁹⁰ For instance, the emphasis on the Thessalian origins of the goddess Thetis suggests that the contents of the hymn are based on material that withstood and ultimately preceded the forces of panhellenism (cf Euripides' *Andromakhe* in which Thetis' epichoric ties to the cults of Thessaly are conspicuous: Goldhill & Osborne 1999:45). The designation of Thetis as τὰν ἀλὸς ἀγλαΐαν ἀμετέραν Παφίην suggests that the goddess had originally been the Thessalian counterpart of Aphrodite whom the *Iliad*, with its panhellenizing tendencies, artificially split into two deities, i.e. Aphrodite and Thetis. But Aphrodite herself had strong connections to the sea, which the *Iliad* hushed, probably to keep her dissimilated from Thetis. Already in Hesiod's *Theogony*, the birth of Aphrodite from the sea provided one of the earliest hints at her marine connection. But the strongest evidence for the affinity of the Paphian goddess to the sea is rooted in fact in Greek cult, as Albert documented: throughout the coast of the Peloponnese and Magna Graecia, sailors invoked Aphrodite's protection during their sea voyages (*Le Culte de Castor et Pollux en Italie*, 1883). Ultimately, *pace* Slatkin (*The Power of Thetis*, 1995), Thetis and Aphrodite should both be seen as offshoots of the Indo-European Dawn Goddess (for Aphrodite, see Boedeker's *Aphrodite's Entry into Greek Epic*, 1974). The depiction of *Eos* on her chariot surrounded by fish and dolphins on multiple Greek vases reminds us that every day the Greeks conceived of Dawn as rising from the Okeanos. In the *Iliad*, Thetis usually rises from the sea at dawn. By identifying Thetis with Aphrodite, this hymn emphasizes an archaic aspect of the goddess which required that Heliodoros be thoroughly familiar with the highly conservative cults of Thessaly. If Heliodoros invented anything, it cohered with traditional Thessalian lore and traditional Thessalian phraseology.

The phrase Ἑλλάδος ἄστεροπᾶν is, I believe, one such relic.¹⁹¹ Applied to Akhilleus, *Asteropa* can be masculinized and expanded into the substantive *Asteropaios*, whom Protesilaos called “the mightiest of both the Achaeans and the Trojans.” Is it not surprising that this definition may also apply to Akhilleus? Assuming that Ἑλλάδος ἄστεροπᾶν was a traditional epithet of Akhilleus, it is conceivable that the name *Asteropaios* had once been his epithet. We are thus beginning to glimpse into *Asteropaios*’ identity as a mirror image of Akhilleus.

The onomastic parallel between *Asteropaios* and Akhilleus extends to their respective genealogies. The following passage is of the utmost importance. I draw attention to the grammatical ambiguity of *Pelegonos* at *Iliad* 21.141, which may be applied to either *Asteropaios*...or Akhilleus: is it a nominative singular like *Telegonos* the son of Odysseus or the name *Laogonos* (*Iliad* 20.460), or is it a genitive singular? *Iliad* 21.139-143 states:

τόφρα δὲ Πηλέος υἱὸς ἔχων δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος
 Ἄστεροπαῖω ἐπᾶλτο κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων (140)
 υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος

Πηλεγόνος at 21.141 is the very first occurrence of the name *Pelegon(os)* in the *Iliad*. From a formal standpoint, it can be construed in two ways:

First, *Pelegonos* is a nominative singular, in which case the meaning would be the son of Peleus, i.e. Akhilleus himself. When coming across this very first occurrence of the name *Pelegonos* in the *Iliad*, the ancient listener is at liberty to analyze the name in the same way as he analyzes such traditional Greek names as *Tele-gonos* “the One Born Far”, *Lao-gonos* “Born of the People” or *Theo-gonos* “son of a god.”¹⁹² In the *Aithiopika*, *Thea-genes*, which is formed with the cognate suffix *-genes*, is the name of Akhilleus’ atavistic descendant.¹⁹³ Moreover, the wealth of possibilities in expressing the designation “son of Peleus” in Homeric poetry, e.g. Πηλε-ἴδης, Πηλη-ἰάδης, or Πηλε-ῖων, psychologically conditions the reader to construing Πηλε-γόνος as yet another way of saying “the son of Peleus” when he comes across the name for the first time in the text, especially when Πηλε-γόνος is found in the same sentence in which Akhilleus is involved.

¹⁹¹ Pindar (*Isthmian* 8.37) spoke of Akhilleus as ἐναλίγκιον στεροπαῖσί τ’ ἀκμᾶν ποδῶν.

¹⁹² Other examples of names formed from *-gonos* “born”, “son”, include *Epigonos* and *Khrysogonos*. See Benseler 1959; see also Bechtel 1964:104-11.

¹⁹³ It should be clear to any reader of the *Aithiopika* that Heliodoros considered Akhilleus to be the hypostasis of Apollo: throughout the novel, Theagenes is repeatedly likened to both his forebear Akhilleus and Apollo himself. Likewise, his beloved Kharikleia compares with Artemis and Selene.

In the previous paragraph, we saw how the name Asteropaios lends itself to being parsed as *Asteropa-ios*, in the sense of “Man of Lightning.” This suffix *-ios*, however, can also be used patronymically, as in *Telamon-ios*, the standard term for “the son of Telamon” in the *Iliad*, or *Nele-ios* “the son of Neleus” (*Iliad* 23.349) or “the offspring of Neleus” (*Iliad* 23.514), which refers to Antilokhos.¹⁹⁴ Accordingly, *Asteropa-ios* can also be taken as a patronymic, i.e. “the son of Lightning¹⁹⁵” or “the offspring of Lightning.” Thus, it is especially ironic that Akhilleus boasts of his superiority over Asteropaios by pointing out that the latter is merely the offspring of a river while he himself is the offspring of Zeus (*Iliad* 21.184-194). How ludicrous a statement it is for Akhilleus to make when Asteropaios’ own name (cf *Telamonios*) may mean the son of thunderbolt-wielding Zeus! His statement is all the more ironic because nowhere else in the *Iliad* does Akhilleus boast about his descent from Zeus.

To summarize, *Pele-gonos* can be construed as “the son of Peleus” while the meanings of Asteropaios’ name (“Man of Lightning” or “Son of Lightning”) assimilate him to Akhilleus, the son of Peleus, offspring of Zeus. Accordingly, lines 21.139-140 of the *Iliad* Πηλέος υἱὸς ἔχων δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος / Ἀστεροπαίῳ ἐπᾶλτο κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων / υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος can be rendered as:

“the son of Peleus (Πηλέος υἱὸς), holding a long-shadowing spear leapt on the son of Lightning (Ἀστεροπαίῳ), the son of Peleus (Πηλεγόνος) striving to kill the son [of Lightning].”

This sentence spreads across three lines by means of two enjambments, the first one being necessary (ἔγχος / Ἀστεροπαίῳ), and the second one unperiodic¹⁹⁶ (μενεαίνων / υἱεῖ). Parsing Asteropaios as a patronymic establishes semantic and prosodic symmetry: the son of Peleus (Πηλέος υἱὸς) leaps on the son of Lightning (Ἀστεροπαίῳ), both of whom are placed at the start of consecutive lines 139 and 140. The displacement of υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος at the end of the sentence onto a line of its own separated by unperiodic enjambment creates semantic ambiguity: on the one hand, it is possible to view υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος as a syntactic unit made up of a dative and its genitive (“the son of Pelegon”), which then refers to Ἀστεροπαίῳ distantly

¹⁹⁴ Cf Aiak-ides and Akhilleus versus Atre-ides and Agamemnon.

¹⁹⁵ Moreover, the idea of “son” within Asteropaios, is reinforced by phonetic resemblance with *pais*, “child”, cf *Parthenopaios* the son of the huntress Atalanta. Barringer (2001:255): “Atalanta's son, Parthenopaios reflects her sexual ambiguity in his name, which includes parthenos (virgin).” I would add that the formation of the name Parthenopaios is itself ambiguous: it can be taken either as *Parthenope* (= “virgin-like”, also the eponymous siren of Naples) + patronymic *-ios*; or as *Parthenos* (“virgin”) + *pais* (“child”). Although the former is probably original diachronically, synchronically both are possible.

¹⁹⁶ Bakker 1990:2.

located at the start of the previous line. On the other hand, one may also view υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος as two separate signifiés in the dative and nominative respectively which together function as the second unit of a chiasmic diptych, the first unit of which is made up of Πηλέος υἱός and Ἄστεροπαίω of lines 140 and 141. υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος, i.e. υἱεῖ the son [of Lightning] (= Asteropaios) + Πηλεγόνος the son of Peleus (= Akhilleus) of line 142 are the mirror image of unit one Πηλέος υἱός (= Akhilleus) + Ἄστεροπαίω (= Asteropaios) of lines 140 and 141¹⁹⁷. Unit one begins with a periphrastic designation (Πηλέος υἱός) and ends with what is interpretable as a patronymic designation (Ἄστεροπαίω). Unit two too begins with a periphrastic designation (υἱεῖ) [of Lightning] and ends with what is interpretable as a patronymic designation, hence the chiasmic diptych:

Periphrastic Akhilleus + Patronymic Asteropaios (unit one)

Periphrastic Asteropaios + Patronymic Akhilleus (unit two)

Moreover, the fact that υἱεῖ Πηλεγόνος of line 142 immediately succeeds ἐπᾶλτο κατακτάμεναι μενεαίνων of line 141—the subject of which is Akhilleus—invites the reader to construe Πηλεγόνος as a patronymic synonym of Πηλεΐδης, Πηληϊάδης or Πηλεΐων. The beauty of this translation also brings to light the ring structure of the entire sentence, which begins with the son of Peleus (Πηλέος υἱός) and ends with the son of Peleus (Πηλεγόνος)¹⁹⁸.

At 21.152, eleven lines after the first occurrence of Πηλεγόνος (21.141), the same form Πηλεγόνος remains *prima facie* hermeneutically challenging:

τὸν πρότερος προσέειπε ποδάρκης δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς·
 τίς πόθεν εἰς ἀνδρῶν ὃ μιν ἔτλης ἀντίος ἐλθεῖν; (150)
 δυστήνων δέ τε παῖδες ἐμῷ μένει ἀντιώσι.
 Τὸν δ' αὖ Πηλεγόνος προσεφώνεε φαίδιμος υἱός·

Precisely after Akhilleus inquires about his foe's lineage, the narrator announces the latter's response by artfully placing Πηλεγόνος at the start of the line, detached by eight syllables from υἱός at the end of the line, thus allowing a nominative interpretation of Πηλεγόνος. Unlike Ἴππολόχοιο at *Iliad* 6.144 (Τὸν δ' αὖθ' Ἴππολόχοιο προσηύδα φαίδιμος υἱός) whose -οιο ending marks it off indisputably as a genitive singular, the -os ending of Pelegonos is linearly ambiguous up until the end of προσεφώνεε. Additionally, the juxtaposition of Πηλεγόνος to a question about lineage posed by Akhilleus conjures up the impressionistic reading "son of Peleus."

¹⁹⁷ Lines 140 and 141 form a unit because they are separated by a necessary enjambment.

¹⁹⁸ I thank my friend Michael Goyette for helping me rewrite this section.

The second grammatical option for analyzing Πηλεγόνος is the traditional one: it can be the genitive singular of Pelegon, i.e. “of Pelegon”, in which case υἱῆ Πηλεγόνος may be rendered as “the son of Pelegon”. At *Iliad* 21.159, the accusative Πηλεγόνα agrees with this interpretation (ὄς τέκε Πηλεγόνα κλυτὸν ἔγχεϊ). Hence, the second possibility for translating lines 139-140:

the son of Peleus (Πηλέος υἱός), holding a long-shadowing spear leapt on Asteropaios, striving to kill the son of Pelegon (Πηλεγόνος).

Nevertheless, the fact that the accusative form Πηλεγόνα occurs as many as 19 lines after 21.141 allows Πηλεγόνος to remain ambiguous till then, thus allowing the reading “son of Peleus” in the meantime. Homer’s delay tactic in disambiguating Πηλεγόνος enables the identities of Akhilleus and Asteropaios to temporarily blend.

Regardless of whether the nominative singular *Pelegonos* “the son of Peleus” and the accusative singular *Pelegona* “of Pelegon” belong to two different paradigms, their phonetics are so close as to bring “the son of Peleus” to mind either way in a situation where Akhilleus is the protagonist.

It bears noting that this type of paronomasia which involves both a shift in meaning and a shift in the grammatical function of *-os* is attested elsewhere in ancient epic by the model of the famous word play between *metis* the pronoun (“nobody”) and *metis* the noun (“cunning”) in the *Odyssey* at 9.410: even though the position of the word in the sentence makes it grammatically analyzable as the pronoun *me + tis* (εἰ μὲν δὴ μήτις σε βιάζεται οἶον ἔόντα), the context shows that the noun *metis* is also intended.

Before proceeding away from the name Pelegon(os), the existence of a people in the far north named the Pelagones must be addressed, which as I indicated earlier, were located in the territory of the modern Republic of Macedonia. It is absolutely undeniable that Homer includes this ethnonym in his game of puns: in fact, the ethnicity of the Pelagones is the only allusion which has hitherto been discerned.¹⁹⁹ Nevertheless, the manner in which Homer deploys the ethnonym in the *Iliad* prompts the view that he associated this northern people with “the son of Peleus.”

There are two figures in the *Iliad* whose names are similar or identical to the Pelagones: the aforementioned Pelegon and (ἴφθιμος) Πελάγων (*Iliad* 5.695). The latter is Sarpedon’s healer at a place which is subtly portrayed as the northern end of the world, i.e. the Sarpedonian rock of Thrace (see supra). This Pelagon is also *iphthimos* which is a fairly common

¹⁹⁹ Benseler 1964; Richardson 1993. Strabo 331 (fragment 38 and 39) connected the name of Asteropaios’ father Pelegon with the Pelagones.

epithet for heroes in the *Iliad*, but which particularly suits Akhilleus, the archetype of *bie*.²⁰⁰ All these factors combined (the far north, healing and might) prompt the view that Homer analyzed Πελ-άγων as Πηλε-γόνοϛ and analogized him to Apollo's hypostasis "the son of Peleus." When in book 5 Homer presents *Pelagon* as Sarpedon's healer, one can be fairly certain that the poet of the *Iliad* had in mind something similar to the famous scene depicted on the Sosias cup (see image below):



Akhilleus heals Patroklos who, as Gloria Pinney points out, is depicted as a Skythian. When *Pelagon*—a paronomasia on *Pelegonos*, “the son of Peleus”—heals the wounded Sarpedon (*Iliad* 5.694-699), the son of Zeus is analogized to his future slayer Patroklos.

²⁰⁰ For Akhilleus' epitome of *bie* in the *Iliad*, see Nagy 1979. The name of Akhilleus' two favorite Myrmidons after Patroklos (*Iliad* 24.574), i.e. *Alkimos* and *Automedon*, are reflective of his own identity: “the Mighty One”, and the “Self-Ruling One”. Cf Herakles' allonyms *Alkaios* and *Alkides*.

Pelagon—the eponym of the northern Pelagones—is a paronomasia on *Pele-gonos* “the son of Peleus” whereas Sarpedon brings Patroklos to mind, the former being the most important victim of the latter.

With regards to Πηλεγόνος, homeric paronomasia is even more patent: just as the poet had removed the gamma from *Gabioi* (→ *Abioi*), he turned the alpha of *Pel-a-gon*’s second syllable into an epsilon (= *Pel-e-gon*) to make it align with the epsilon or eta of all the Peleus-based patronyms, i.e. Πηλ-ε-ἴδης, Πηλ-η-ἰάδης, or Πηλ-ε-ἴων. To maximize the indistinction from these Akhilleian forms, he also chose the allomorph of the *Pelagones* with an initial eta in the first syllable (Πηλαγόνες) instead of an initial epsilon (Πελαγόνες): the *Iliad* and the rest of Greco-Roman literature attest both forms. On the other hand, the ethnonym **Pelegones* with an epsilon in the second syllable is not attested by a single author.²⁰¹ This comes close to a proof that Homer deliberately warped the name of an ethnonym for the sake of a vital pun.

Asteropaios and the Pelian Spear

There are other meaningful ways of parsing the name *Asteropaios*, which have a direct relevance to the *Iliad*. Instead of *Asteropa-* and *-ios*, one may also dissect the hero’s name into *Astero-* and *-paios*, thus spelling:

“[He whose spear] Strikes (*-paios*) like a Star (*-Astero*).”

“The Star (*-Astero*) of Paionia (*-paios*).

I will argue that both of these alternate analyses ultimately refer to Akhilleus himself.

First, the Paionian hero has an obvious affinity with spears. Being ambidextrous (*Iliad* 21.163), he can toss two spears at the same time. His unique ability to wound the son of Peleus with his spear (= the idea of the verb παίω) materializes the potentiality of his own name (*Ἀστερο-παίω*). Analyzed in this way, his name compares with that of his alter ego,²⁰² “the significantly named *Pyraichmes*, ‘Fire-spear’.”²⁰³ *Asteropaios*’ affinity with spears is also in

²⁰¹ See Benseler 1964. The authors who mention the name Πελάγων are Sappho, Aiskhylos, Euripides, the scholiast on the *Iliad* 2.494, Apollodoros, Pausanias, Plutarch, Arrian and inscriptions (see Mionnet). The authors who mention the Πελαγόνες as a people are Strabo, Livy, Pliny, Ptolemaios, and Skymnos. The authors who mention the Πηλαγόνες as a people are Kallimakhos, Hesykhios, Stephanos of Byzantion, the *Etymologicum Magnum* and the *Suda*. Not a single source ever speaks of the **Pelegones* as a people.

²⁰² See III.2) above “The mightiest of both the Achaeans and the Trojans” for the parallelism between Akhilleus/Patroklos and the Paionians *Asteropaios*/*Pyraichmes*.

²⁰³ Louden 2006:104. Lowenstam (1997:36) agrees that his name “represents the threat to the ships.”

evidence as he displays a seemingly irrational obsession with plucking out Akhilleus' spear planted in the bank of the river (*Iliad* 21.169-174). His fixation costs him his life when he then strives to break the spear, as he fails to protect himself from Akhilleus' onslaught, sword in hand. Asteropaios' attitude can only be accounted for by his belief in sympathetic magic: one can reasonably presume that he neglected the physical threat of his enemy's presence because he believed that the life of Akhilleus was tied to the integrity of his spear: by breaking it, he must have hoped that Akhilleus would die a sudden death. In support of this, Patroklos' long-shadowing spear seems to magically disintegrate when, losing the armor of Akhilleus,²⁰⁴ he is on the brink of death (*Iliad* 16.801-102: πᾶν δέ οἱ ἐν χεῖρεσσιν ἄγῃ δολιχόσκιον ἔγχος / βριθὺ μέγα στιβαρὸν κεκορυθμένον).

In truth, the Pelian ash spear was crucial to Akhilleus' own identity. Carved from a tree on Mount *Pel-ion* (hence *Pel-eus*), it was connected with Akhilleus' very own conception: Peleus and Thetis celebrated their wedding there. Passed on from Kheiron through Peleus to our Ἑλλάδος ἀστεροπᾶν, Kheiron's great-grandson, the Pelian ash spear became the weapon with which Akhilleus defined his superlative *arete*, and hence himself. The greatest glory Akhilleus derived with his spear in the *Iliad* was from the death of Hektor.²⁰⁵ Let us take a look at the simile used by Homer when Troy's best defender, the Akhaians' greatest bane, is on the verge of receiving the *coup de grâce* (22.317-21):

οἶος δ' ἀστήρ εἴσι μετ' ἀστράσι νυκτὸς ἀμολγῶ
 ἔσπερος, ὃς κάλλιστος ἐν οὐρανῶ ἴσταται ἀστήρ,
 ὡς αἰχμῆς ἀπέλαμπ' εὐήκεος, ἦν ἄρ' Ἀχιλλεύς
 πᾶλλεν δεξιτερῇ φρονέων κακὸν Ἑκτορι δίω (320)

And as the evening star that shines brighter than all others through the stillness of night, even such was the gleam of the spear which Achilles poised in his right hand, fraught with the death of noble Hector²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ We will recall as Katherine Kretlin and others have noted that “Patroklos’s death is figured as already Achilles’ death.” Kretlin, 2006:5. Citing Pucci, *Odysseus Polytropos* 169-172, she also comments: “Thetis and the Nereids mourn Patroklos as though he is Achilles.”

²⁰⁵ Louden 2006:36: “No other warrior can manage Akhilleus' Pelian ash spear, which Cheiron gave his father (16.141-44). As Shannon (83-84) points out, its use is further restricted in the opponents Akhilleus wields it against. Though using it against both Aineias and Asteropaios, he fails to strike either with it. Of all the Trojan warriors he goes up against, the ash spear, wielded only by Akhilleus, slays only Hektor.”

²⁰⁶ Translation: Samuel Butler

No other spear in the *Iliad* is ever likened to a star. At this climactic moment in his death-dealing career, the wielder of the Pelian ash spear becomes Astero-paios. For his part, the Paionian's obsession with destroying a defining aspect of his Doppelgänger also defines himself: in the *Iliad*, the ambidextrous hero is remembered as the only one whose spear ever struck (παίω) "he whose spear strikes like the evening star" (Ἄστερο-παίω = Ἀχιλλεύς).

The Star of Paion and Akessamenos

Astero-paios can also be construed as the Star of Paionia, and ultimately the Star of Apollo. In her article *The Connection of Paeon with Paeonia*, Grace Macurdy convincingly argued that the name of the Paiones is theophoric²⁰⁷: it contains that of the Healer God (Apollon) Paion. She adduces, inter alia, Maximus of Tyre who says that the historical Paionians worship the sun, and that

The Paeonian image of Helios is a little disk above a long pole. The form of Sun-worship is similar to the rite used at the Daphnephoria in the worship of Apollo, described by Proclus.

In all likelihood, the eponymous god of the Paionians stems from the same divine prototype as Apollo, many of whose cultic features originated in the north. Herodotos (4.33.5) mentions that the offerings wrapped in straw conveyed to Delos by the Hyperboreans are similar to the kind of sacrifice Paionian women make to Apollo's sister Artemis. In most of Greek literature, Paion is simply an epithet of Apollo,²⁰⁸ as embodied in the ritual cry *hie Pai(e)on*. It matters not whether Apollo and Mycenaean Paiawon²⁰⁹ may have originally been distinct, or had belonged, perhaps, to different pantheons of different peoples: for the sake of argument, even if such were the case, the similarities between the two were cogent enough that the evidence for their fusion is already embedded in the *Iliad*.²¹⁰

²⁰⁷Macurdy 1912:249-251.

²⁰⁸Ziegler 1964, s.v. Apoll.

²⁰⁹Rutherford, Ian, *The Paian: a Survey of the Genre*: <http://fds.oup.com/www.oup.co.uk/pdf/0-19-814381-8.pdf>.

²¹⁰Some scholars have argued that Paion is distinct from Apollo in the *Iliad*, citing 5.401 and 5.900. Ian Rutherford (2001) concedes, nevertheless, that Krates of Mallos and Zenodotos did not understand these two passages as any indication that Paion and Apollo were distinct gods. At *Iliad* 5.401, a god designated as Paion heals Ares; at *Iliad* 5.900, 'Paion' heals Aphrodite. There is absolutely no evidence, however, that this god Paion is distinct from Apollo, who nominally at least, is not mentioned in either scene (had Apollo been present side by side with Paion as a distinct individual, the view that Apollo and Paion were distinct in the *Iliad* would carry more weight). The most likely explanation, however, is that Paion is merely a stand-alone epithet of Apollo in his quality as a healer god. By way of illustration, there is no reason to believe that the god designated by the stand-alone epithet *Argeiphontes* in Homeric epic is distinct from Hermes. Accordingly, *Iliad* 5.401 and 5.900 cannot be adduced as

What is more, from the viewpoint of the Greeks, Paion-ia was situated north of Greece and thus belonged to the latitudes where Apollo migrated every year. Thus, *Astero-paios*, “the Star of Paionia”, is ultimately “the Star of the people of Paion” or “the Star of Apollo Paion.” The name of the Paionian hero’s (great-) grandfather *Akessamenos* “the Healer” (*Iliad* 21.142) coheres with the reading of *Astero-paios* as “the Star of Apollo.”²¹¹

We may now turn to what “the Star of Apollo” really is. “The Dog Star” or Sirius was closely associated with Apollo’s annual return:

The Delphic calendar was based on the Sirius year. This is made evident not only by an enumeration of the months, showing that the year began in high summer, but also by the myth of Apollo's annual visit in the first month, his month, *Apellaios*, which began in our July.²¹²

Apart from *Diomedes*²¹³ and significantly *Hektor*²¹⁴ (see *infra*), *Akhilleus* is the only warrior who is likened to the Dog Star in the *Iliad* (22.26):

proof that Paion is distinct from Apollo in the *Iliad*. While evidence for the distinction between Apollo and Paion in the *Iliad* is lacking, evidence for their being one and the same is much stronger: the *paean* is sung to Apollo at *Iliad* 1.473, thus equating Apollo with Paion, as Andrew Ford has recognized in a recent study (2006). Moreover, Apollo unambiguously acts as a healer god in the *Iliad* in several instances, e.g. with *Glaukos* (16.527), *Hektor* (15.262) or when the god removes the plague he had cast upon the *Akhaians*. In the worst case scenario, even the most hardened of skeptics must recognize that if *Akhilleus* and Paion were not one and the same god in the *Iliad*, contemporaries would have been acutely aware of their kinship and functional overlap (as between *Asklepios* and Apollo).

²¹¹ See previous footnote.

²¹² *Kerenyi* (1996:2005). Additional evidence for the connection between Apollo and Sirius may be found in *Apollonios of Rhodes, Argonautika* 2.498, in which Apollo sends his son *Aristaios* to help the inhabitants of *Keos* propitiate the Dog Star which was ravaging the countryside with the intense summer heat it had inflicted upon the islanders for murdering *Ikarios*. According to several inscriptions, *Aristaios* in fact was an epithet of Apollo himself (cf *Kleine Pauly*, 1964). In his *Thebaid*, *Statius* too connects the intense summer heat to both Apollo and Sirius (1.628-37).

²¹³ *Iliad* 5.5.

²¹⁴ At *Iliad* 11.62, the *oulios aster*, to which *Hektor*’s shield is compared can be construed as “the destructive star,” hence “the dog star.” This interpretation receives confirmation from the harvest simile at *Iliad* 11.67-69 (Οἶ δ’ ὥς τ’ ἀμητῆρες ἐναντίοι ἀλλήλοισιν / ὄγμον ἐλαύνωσιν ἀνδρὸς μάκαρος κατ’ ἄρουραν / πυρῶν ἢ κριθῶν τὰ δὲ δράγματα ταρφέα πίπτει) with which the dog star was also associated.

παμφαίνονθ' ὡς τ' ἀστέρ' ἐπεσσύμενον πεδίοιο,
 ὅς ῥά τ' ὀπώρης εἶσιν, ἀρίζηλοι δέ οἱ αὐγαὶ
 φαίνονται πολλοῖσι μετ' ἀστράσι νυκτὸς ἀμολγῶ,
 ὄν τε κύν' Ὀρίωνος ἐπὶ κλησὶν καλέουσι.
 λαμπρότατος μὲν ὃ γ' ἐστί, κακὸν δέ τε σῆμα τέτυκται, (30)
 καὶ τε φέρει πολλὸν πυρετὸν δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν
 as he [Akhilleus] swept across the flat land in full shining, like that star
 which comes on in the autumn and whose conspicuous brightness
 far outshines the stars that are numbered in the night's darkening,
 the star they give the name of Orion's Dog, which is brightest
 among the stars, and yet is wrought as a sign of evil
 and brings on the great fever for unfortunate mortals.²¹⁵

The destructiveness of Sirius and the summer sun are associated with Akhilleus after the death of Patroklos. After his own death, his aptly-named son *Pyrrhos*²¹⁶ spearheads the sacking and burning of Troy.

As when Hektor's shield shines like the baneful star (*Iliad* 11.62), the destructiveness of Sirius and the element of fire also typify the Trojans' intent to burn the Greek ships.²¹⁷

Greppin acknowledges this meaning (1976:181) but points out that *oulios* may also mean “of salvation” and belong to a different root (the same as the Latin *saluus*): it is attested as an epithet of Apollo, in the sense of “healthy, wholesome”. Because Apollo could also bring on the plague and his name could be etymologized as the Destructive One (cf *apollumi*), the title *oulios* could have been intentionally ambiguous. That *oulios* could have been used polysemically at 11.62 is likely, on the principle that Hektor is the protector of the Trojans (hence his name) and a *pema* to the Greeks (not unlike the reverse of Akhilleus, cf Nagy 1979:69-93).

²¹⁵ Translation: Lattimore.

²¹⁶ Nagy 1979:121-122: “One version has Pyrrhos attempting to plunder the riches of Delphi; Apollo thwarts him and brings about his death. There is an important parallel in the figure of the impious Phleguas and/or the band of plundering warriors called Phleguai, who similarly attacked or even burned down the Delphic shrine and were in some versions of the myth, destroyed by Apollo. Even the name Phleguas ‘fiery’ (from *phlego* ‘burn’) is semantically comparable to *Pyrrhos* ‘fiery red.’ Nagy further points out that the Greek root *pur* “fire”, permeates Akhilleus’ family over three generations: he himself passed himself off as *Pyrrha* in Skyros, dressed as a girl; his mother Thetis was also known as *Pyrrhaie*; his son Neoptolemos as *Pyrrhos*.

²¹⁷ Nieto Hernandez notes (1997:15) that “*Del final del canto XII al XVI, el fuego es permanentemente asociado con el intento troyano de quemar las naves, pero especialmente, con la figura de Héctor... (p16-17) En 16.122-123 finalmente, los Troyanos pegan fuego a las naves y es el momento en que Aquiles decide enviar a Patroclo al combate, vistiendo sus propias*

Asteropaios qua the Star of Paion (Sirius) is coupled with his structural therapon *Pyraikhmes* “Fire Spear”, who embodies this threat: it is no coincidence that his alter ego is the first man whom Patroklos slays by Protesilaos’ half-burnt ship, whereupon the son of Menoitios κατὰ δ’ ἔσβεσεν αἰθόμενον πῦρ (16.293). By dying at the spot where Akhilleus’ symbolic brother and original therapon Protesilaos had died²¹⁸—slain by a man with the same title as Patroklos’ future killer (*dardanos aner*²¹⁹)—Pyraikhmes becomes Akhilleus’ own therapon.

Thus, the phraseology of the *Iliad* with support from other literary sources suggests that Asteropaios’ identity as the Star of Paion is closely linked to Akhilleus. From all of the above, one can conclude that Astero-paios—the descendant of the “Healer” (*Akessamenos*) and leader of the people of the god Paion²²⁰—is, like Akhilleus, another hypostasis of the healer god

armas (127) Después de un gran éxito, al final de ese mismo canto XVI (855) Patroclo muere y, a partir de su muerte, el fuego se asocia, principal - aunque no exclusivamente en este caso - a Aquiles y al incendio de Troya.”

²¹⁸ Kretler 2006 noted that “Protesilaos acts as Akhilleus’ substitute when Thetis warns her son not to be the first to leap from his ship (Apollodoros *Epitome* 3.29.6).” She further points to a significant juxtaposition in the Catalogue of Ships: the mention of Akhilleus lying by his ships followed by Protesilaos’ catalogue entry. Besides Polydora (sister of Akhilleus, wife of Protesilaos), the two share these common features:

The theme of brotherhood: in his Catalogue entry, the late Protesilaos is replaced by his brother *Podarkes*—Akhilleus’ own epithet in the Catalogue.

The theme of resurrection: Akhilleus, we are told, will rise up again (*Iliad* 2.694). Likewise, Protesilaos will be brought back to life in numerous accounts (e.g. *Heroikos*).

²¹⁹A “*Dardanos aner*” kills both Protesilaos and Patroklos in Books 2 and 16 respectively (Kretler 2006). Nowhere else in the *Iliad* does the phrase occur. In Book 2, the identity of Protesilaos’ murderer remains unspecified (2.701). On the other hand, at *Iliad* 16.807, the *Dardanos aner* turns out to be Euphorbos (according to one source, the Dardanian who murdered Protesilaos was none other than Euphorbos). Paralleling Protesilaos’ kinship with Akhilleus, it is noteworthy that both the name and the epithet of Euphorbos’ family display the same affinity:

His father’s name *Panthous* matches the meaning of Akhilleus’ most common epithets denotative of speed (King 1987:3).

Half of the occurrences of the epithet *eummelies* in the *Iliad* “of the good ash spear” are ascribed to Euphorbos and his family (once to Panthous at 17.9, once to his sons at 17.23, once to Euphorbos at 17.59). In the *Iliad*, most occurrences of the word *melie* belong to Akhilleus, e.g. 20.277, 22.328, 16.143, 19.390, 20.322, 21.162, 21.169, 21.174 and 22.133.

²²⁰ Macurdy *ibid.* recognizes that Asteropaios’ ancestor *Akessamenos* is an allusion to Paion.

Apollo. *Astero-paios* also reflects on Akhilleus' identity as the wielder of the Pelian ash spear, which is likened to the evening star at the critical moment when the son of Peleus slays the foremost adversary of the Akhaians in the *Iliad*, i.e. Hektor.

Asteropaios, Akhilleus and the Waters

More valuable information can still be extracted from the Paionian hero's genealogy. Asteropaios' (grand²²¹-) parents are the deep-swirling river Axios and Periboia, the daughter of Akessamenos. It is noteworthy that just as Akhilleus' mother Thetis is the most preeminent daughter of Nereus and the unofficial leader of the Nereids, Asteropaios' otherwise obscure (grand-) mother Periboia is also described as the most revered / oldest (πρεσβυτάτη) daughter in her family. More significantly, Asteropaios' connection to water finds a clear counterpart in Akhilleus' mother Thetis and his grandfather Nereus, who like Proteus and Glaukos, was also known as the "Old Man of the Sea." One should note, moreover, the quasi-homophony between the initial syllables of Akh-illeus, Axios [Ak(h)-sios], and Ak-essamenos, the only distinction being the presence or absence of aspiration.²²² Ironically, after Akhilleus kills Asteropaios, he mocks his aquatic ancestry (21.184-194):

χαλεπόν τοι ἔρισθενέος Κρονίωνος
παισὶν ἐριζέμεναι ποταμοῖό περ ἐκγεγαῶτι. (185)
φῆσθα σὺ μὲν ποταμοῦ γένος ἔμμεναι εὐρὺν ῥέοντος,
αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ γενεὴν μεγάλου Διὸς εὐχομαι εἶναι.
τίκτέ μ' ἀνήρ πολλοῖσιν ἀνάσσων Μυρμιδόνεσσι Τὸν γ
Πηλεὺς Αἰακίδης ὃ δ' ἄρ' Αἰακὸς ἐκ Διὸς ἦεν.
τῷ κρείσσω μὲν Ζεὺς ποταμῶν ἀλιμυρηέντων, (190)
κρείσσω αὐτε Διὸς γενεὴ ποταμοῖο τέτυκται.
καὶ γὰρ σοὶ ποταμὸς γε πάρα μέγας, εἰ δύνатаί τι
χραιομεῖν· ἀλλ' οὐκ ἔστι Διὶ Κρονίῳ μάχεσθαι,
τῷ οὐδὲ κρείων Ἀχελῷος ἰσοφαρίζει,

²²¹ The status of Axios and Periboia as either the parents or grandparents of Asteropaios hinges on whether we take *Pelegonos* at 21.141 as a nominative singular (= Akhilleus, the son of Peleus) or a genitive singular (= [son] of Pelegon). As I attempted to demonstrate above, the narrator of the *Iliad* makes it intentionally ambiguous.

²²² Such puns on the opposition between the occurrence or absence of aspiration occur in the *Odyssey* as well when Odysseus tells his son Telemakhos (16.187-188) that he is not a 'god' (*theos*), but 'your father' (*teos pater*). Naturally, thetas in archaic and classical Greek were aspirate plosives as in the English pronunciation of the word *table*, not fricatives as they are conventionally pronounced in the Anglo-Saxon world. Taus, on the other hand, were pronounced as inaspirate plosives in archaic and classical Greek, as in the French pronunciation of the word *table*. See Allen 1987.

It is hard even for those sprung of a river
 To fight against the children of Kronos, whose strength is almighty.
 You said you were of the generation of the wide-running river,
 But I claim that I am of the generation of great Zeus.
 The man is my father who is lord over many Myrmidons,
 Peleus, Aiakos' son, but Zeus was the father of Aiakos.
 And as Zeus is stronger than rivers that run to the sea, so
 The generation of Zeus is made stronger than that of a river.
 For here is a great river beside you, if he were able
 To help; but it is not possible to fight Zeus, son of Kronos.
 Not powerful Acheloios matches his strength against Zeus²²³

In so doing, Akhilleus hushes his own maternal ancestry, which every listener knew connected him to the aquatic element. Thomas Figueira even points out that “the scholiast to *Iliad* 21.186-187 is troubled by Achilles’ vaunting of his descent from Zeus as superior to that of a river god when he is a descendant of Aigina, the daughter of the river Asopos.”²²⁴ Ironic also is the fact that the river next to which they fought is about to overwhelm Akhilleus—the offspring of Zeus—and take away his life, had it not been for Hephaistos’ intervention. The vanity of Akhilleus’ boast is further evidenced by Apollo’s encouragement to Aineias in Book 20 to face Akhilleus by reminding him that he was born of a goddess of higher rank than Akhilleus’ mother. Aphrodite is child to Zeus, while Thetis is but daughter to the old man of the sea. Despite his superior ancestry, Aineias would have lost his life, had Poseidon not intervened.

The irony of Akhilleus’ soliloquy is accentuated by his repeating over and over again the same point (at least five times!): rivers or the offspring of rivers are inferior to Zeus or the offspring of Zeus. This seemingly pointless repetition serves two purposes, however. One, to emphasize the irony of Akhilleus’ claim: the one whose aquatic ancestry is diminished, i.e. Asteropaios, bears a name which connects him directly to the ancestry that is being exalted (“the son of Lightning”). Two, the repetition culminates in what I believe is, ironically unbeknownst to Akhilleus, a self-referential statement: not even can lord Akheloios, whose name sounds ominously similar to Akhilleus’,²²⁵ contend with Zeus, the controller of Fate. The

²²³ Translation: Richmond Lattimore.

²²⁴ Figueira, p 2, “The epithet Aiakides,” unpublished article.

²²⁵ In my original paper, I argue that the original etymology of Akhilleus was the same as the Akheloios and meant “offspring of the Akheloios.” That being the case, the irony of Akhilleus’ statement would be further heightened. The interchangeability of *e*’s and *i*’s in Mycenaean Greek, e.g. *dipas* for *depas*, shows that Akhilleus may stem from Akheloios and be his hypocoristic form (cf Eurystheus versus Eurysthenes). On the strength of Zenodotos’

scales of Zeus will soon lean against the son of Peleus when the actual son of Zeus, Apollo, kills him who boasted descent from Zeus.

Akhilleus' Suicide

In a way, by killing “the son of Lightning” (*Asteropa-ios*, cf *Telamon-ios*) also known as “the son of Peleus” (*Pele-gonos*), he who boasted descent from the lightning-wielding god kills himself. We will recall that it was with his sword²²⁶ that Akhilleus had been overcome with the impulse to commit suicide at the edge of the water when he heard the news of Patroklos' death: only Antilokhos saved him from himself (*Iliad* 18.32-34). It is presumably with the very same weapon with which he had intended to commit suicide that Akhilleus slays his own double at the edge of the water: the weapon of the intended suicide and the instrument of Asteropaios' death are the same; the place of the intended suicide (the sea shore²²⁷) and the place of Asteropaios' death (the shore of the river) are almost the same. It is curious, to say the least,

athetization of *Iliad* 21.195, I propose that the cosmic river that surrounded the world had once been called the Akheloios, not the Okeanos, in the Geometric period and Bronze Age of Greece. Scholiast T on the passage says:

Τὸν γὰρ αὐτὸν Ὀκεανῶ Ἀχελῷόν φασιν

That the Akheloios and the Okeanos had once been synonymous is also confirmed by Aristarkhos, Megakleides and Pindar who uses the two words interchangeably (see Grenfell & Hunt 1899:63-79).

Okeanos was most likely a loanword from the Near East (Martin West 1988:201) which gradually displaced the native term Akheloios. In Greek poetry, the noun *akhelios* is still attested as meaning “Ocean”, “water” or “river”. As the son of Thetis, grandson of Nereus, Akhilleus may have thus meant “the offspring of the Okeanos.” I find it significant that among the numerous occurrences of the cosmic river in the *Iliad*, the only two instances in which the might of the Okeanos is explicitly mentioned are in connection with the might of Akhilleus: first, when Akhilleus vanquishes Asteropaios; second, at the end of the ekphrasis describing Akhilleus' shield (ποταμοῖο μέγα σθένος Ὀκεανοῖο: *Iliad* 18.606).

Nagy's alternate hypothesis, nevertheless, *Akhi-lawos is equally valid and is indeed deeply embedded in the structure of the *Iliad*. One need not necessarily choose between the two derivations: it is sometimes possible for names and words to have two etymologies at the same time, e.g. the paronomasia on both *Odysseus/odussomai* and *Olysseus/oule* in the *Odyssey* (see Peradotto 1990:143-170).

²²⁶ *Iliad* 18.34 speaks of Akhilleus' *sideroi*: presumably, it is a sword, not a spear, whose tips in the *Iliad* were typically made of bronze, not iron or steel.

²²⁷ Akhilleus was standing next to the ships when Antilokhos tells him of the death of Patroklos. Thetis and the Nereids emerge from the sea to comfort him on the shore.

that the name of Asteropaios' mother Periboia²²⁸ is fatally the same as that of the mother of the hero most notorious for his own suicide with a sword, by the shore: Aias.²²⁹ It is as though the insertion of Periboia into Asteropaios' genealogy functions as a clue to the occurrence of a suicide in the scene confronting Pele-ion and Pele-gonos. Perhaps the son of Peleus was only waiting for Antilokhos to leave him alone so that he could commit his symbolic suicide.

This theme of suicide is further developed at the funerary contest with spears between Aias and Diomedes held in honor of Patroklos. A meticulous analysis of the scene reveals that the ill-fated exchange of armor between Aias and Hektor is the model for the prizes Akhilleus awards Diomedes.

Before the duel begins, the son of Peleus promises Asteropaios' beautiful Thracian sword inlaid with silver to the winner (τόδε φάσγανον ἀργυρόηλον / καλὸν Θρηϊκίον: *Iliad* 23.807-808). The two warriors have hardly leapt into action and thrust their spears when the decision is made to prematurely end their combat on the pretence that the Akhaians feared for the life of Aias. Despite the fact that not a single drop of blood has been shed—which was the original condition of victory—despite the Akhaians' demand that the two second bests of the Akhaians both be given equal prizes (ἀέθλια ἴσ' ἀνελέσθαι: *Iliad* 23.823), Akhilleus decides to award the sword of Asteropaios to Diomedes. Not only that, he also gives him two extra bonuses, unstated in the original terms: the sword's scabbard and—in *cauda uenenum*—the ἔϋτμήτω τελαμῶνι (825). It is not until the very end that Akhilleus' gifts to Diomedes show their true colors: they are *cadeaux empoisonnés*. Akhilleus' immoderation and extravagant

²²⁸ Periboia is Asteropaios' mother assuming that *Pelegonos* is a nominative singular "the son of Peleus". Even otherwise, the symbolism is hardly altered if one considers Periboia to be Asteropaios' grandmother, cf the formulaic relevance of Aiakos to Akhilleus (Aiakides).

²²⁹ Periboia, name of Aias' mother according to the scholiast on *Iliad* 16.14, Xenophon *Kynegetikos*. 1.9, Pseudo-Apollodoros 3.12.7, Plutarch, *Theseus* and Pausanias 1.42.4. Janko 1993:66 cites reliable evidence that the association of Periboia with Pelegon in book 21 alludes to the perception of the Pelagones as giants, and that Periboia herself may have been perceived as a giant. His annotation, nevertheless, does not contradict my interpretation insofar as Aias' own mother Periboia may have been conceived, like her son, as a giant. Pausanias 1.35.5 relates a Mysian story of Aias' grave and huge size of his bones (in Maclean & Aitken 2002:11). In the *Heroikos* (8.1), a height of eleven cubits (over 16 feet) is attributed to Aias based on the size of his bones. Comparably, Lykophron (860) described Akhilleus as being nine cubits tall (almost 14 feet). Apollonios of Tyana (Philostratos 16) saw the ghost of Akhilleus expand before his eyes from five cubits (7.6 feet) to twelve cubits (18 feet). Quintus of Smyrna likened Akhilleus' corpse to that of the Titan Tityos (3.392). It is thus understandable why Akhilleus states that Aias' armor alone may fit him (*Iliad* 18.192-193). As Katherine Callen King concludes, "the idea that Achilles [and ergo Aias] is huge probably antedates Homer (1987:134-137)."

generosity towards Diomedes can only be accounted for by the deep-seated antipathy between the two men: Akhilleus and Diomedes were enemies.

In effect, Akhilleus' gesture bespeaks his wish that Diomedes commit suicide with the sword Asteropaios—slain by the sword of his double Akhilleus—never used. This death by sword is modeled after the death of Aias who killed himself with the sword of his adversary Hektor. One will note that the formula *σὺν κολεῶ τε φέρων καὶ ἐϋτμήτῳ τελαμῶνι* is common to both *Iliad* 23.825 and *Iliad* 7.304 which describes the confrontation between Hektor and Aias. The swords of Asteropaios and Hektor, moreover, are both described as *ἀργυρόηλον*. Akhilleus' last-moment bestowal of the well-cut strap (*ἐϋτμήτῳ τελαμῶνι*) on Diomedes is practically the same²³⁰ as the gift Aias (*Τελαμώνιος*) had given Hektor: his idiosyncratic *ζωστήρα* (7.305). According to an alternate tradition to the *Iliad* of which Homer is very likely to have known, Hektor was dragged to his death by Akhilleus with the shield strap Aias had given him.²³¹ I submit that Akhilleus' gifts to Diomedes of Asteropaios' sword and strap are intertextual reminders of the instruments with which Aias and Hektor died: Akhilleus wants the son of Tydeus dead.

Before detailing the feelings Akhilleus and Diomedes had for one another, it is useful to contrast them with the friendship tying Akhilleus to Aias: in the Embassy scene, although Aias reproves Akhilleus for his obstinacy, he appeals to his sense of comradery and friendship with the Akhaians (*κῆδιστοὶ τ' ἔμειναι καὶ φίλτατοι ὅσοι Ἀχαιοί: Iliad* 9.642), thereby implicitly appealing to their own personal friendship. The son of Peleus turns him down but not without expressing his appreciation for Aias' words (*πάντ' ἂν μοι κατὰ θυμὸν εἰσαο μῦθ' ἴσασθαι*).²³² *Heroikos* 35.3 is even more explicit about their friendship:

πρὸς δὲ Ἀχιλλέα φιλία ἦν αὐτῷ καὶ βασκαίνειν ἀλλήλοις οὔτε ἐβούλοντο οὔτε ἐπεφύκεσαν, τὰς τε λύπας, ὅποσαι περὶ τὸν Ἀχιλλέα, εἰ καὶ μὴ μικρῶν ἔνεκεν ἐγίγνοντο, πάσας ἐπράυνε τὰς μὲν ὡς ἂν ξυναλγῶν τις, τὰς δ' οἷον ἐπιπλήττων, καθημένων τε ὁμοῦ καὶ βαδιζόντων ἐπεστρέφετο ἢ Ἑλλάς ἐς ἄνδρε ὀρῶσα, οἷω μετὰ Ἡρακλέα οὔπω ἐγενέσθην.

²³⁰ *Zoster* and *telamon* are both translatable as “strap” in English. They are of course crucial to Aias' own identity, since he is the son of *Telamon*.

²³¹ Sophokles *Aias* 1031; Euripides *Andromakhe* 107-108, 399; Vergil *Aeneid* 1.483, 2.272-273, 286; Hyginus, *Fabulae* 106 (Burgess 2001:216). Burgess 2001:68: “Our sources for these variants are later than the *Iliad*, but the tradition on which they are based could be pre-Homeric. Indeed, it is often suspected that the Homeric poems suppress brutal and supernatural aspects of the tradition that follows.”

²³² If Nagy's analysis in *The Best of the Achaeans* of the use of the dual in the Embassy is correct, as I think it is, the use of the dual in reference to Phoinix and Aias, in contrast with Akhilleus' denial of Odysseus' existence, is another indicator of the friendship between the son of Peleus and the son of Telamon.

He had a friendship with Achilles, and they neither wished to malign each other nor did they stick close together. As for Achilles' sorrows, even if they did not arise on account of trivial matters, he calmed them all, some as if he were a fellow sufferer, others as if he were reproving. Hellas used to pay attention to Achilles and Ajax when they were sitting or walking together, seeing in these men such as had not been since Herakles.²³³

A famous vase painting from 550 B.C.E. shows the two playing dice together.

Unlike Aias (*Iliad* 17.640-643), Diomedes never longs for Akhilleus after he withdraws from battle and 'haughty' (*agenor* at *Iliad* 9.699) is the only predicative adjective Diomedes ever ascribes to Akhilleus in the *Iliad*. In Quintus of Smyrna's *Posthomerica*, Diomedes' latent hostility towards Akhilleus explodes when the latter kills his cousin Thersites in retaliation for ridiculing his love of Penthesileia (1.767-80):

Τυδείδης δ' ἄρα μοῦνος ἐν Ἀργείοις Ἀχιλῆϊ
χώετο θερσίταο δεδουπότος, οὔνεκ' ἄρ' αὐτοῦ
εὔχετ' ἀφ' αἵματος εἶναι...
Καί νύ κε Πηλεΐωνος ἐναντίον ἦρατο χειῖρας, (775)
εἰ μή μιν κατέρυξαν Ἀχαιῶν φέρτατοι υἱῆς
πολλὰ παρηγορόντες ὀμιλαδόν· ὡς δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν
Πηλεΐδην ἐτέρωθεν ἐρήτυον. Ἴη γὰρ ἔμελλον
ἤδη καὶ ξιφέεσσιν ἐριδμαίνειν οἱ ἄριστοι
Ἀργείων· τοὺς γάρ ῥα κακὸς χόλος ὀτρύνεσκεν.

In the chariot race, Diomedes emerges as the winner and is given the coveted first prize. But Akhilleus' public statement that Eumelos—not Diomedes—was the ἀνὴρ ὄριστος of the contest (*Iliad* 23.536) smacks of an affront to Diomedes, his alleged pity for the son of Admetos notwithstanding.²³⁴ The antipathy between the two heroes can also be inferred from Diomedes' homicidal role in drowning Palamedes, one of Akhilleus' closest friends (*Heroikos* 34). According to fragment 19 of the *Kypria*, Odysseus and Diomedes were both responsible for the death of Palamedes, on account of whom—not of Briseis—Akhilleus withdrew from battle (*Kypria* in Proklos). Surely, the son of Peleus nursed an inerasable grudge against Diomedes ever after.

²³³ Translation: Aitken & Maclean 2003:58.

²³⁴ It would have been more tactful of Akhilleus to say that Eumelos' horses were the best, rather than the man himself. By focusing on an *ad hominem* eulogy and by relativizing the victory of Diomedes, Akhilleus undermines his *time*.

Thus, the theme of suicide associated with Asteropaios lingers even after his own death when Akhilleus bestows on Diomedes his sinister sword inlaid with silver as well as his *telamon*. The death of Asteropaios—at once the “son of Peleus” (*Pele-gonos* = *Pele-ides*, *Pele-ion*, *Pele-iades*), Asteropa-ios “The Man of Lightning” (= Ἑλλάδος ἀστεροπᾶν), Asteropa-ios “The Son of Lightning” (= Akhilleus’ descent from Zeus), Astero-paios “He Whose Spear Strikes like a Star” (= the wielder of the Pelian spear), Astero-paios “The Star of Paion” (= the healer god, of whom Akhilleus is the hypostasis), Asteropaios the descendant of “the Healer” (Ake-samenos), Asteropaios the offspring of the Waters—is really the death of Akhilleus.

IV Conclusion

Gloria Pinney was right to conclude that Akhilleus was depicted as a northern barbarian in the art of archaic Greece and the poetry of the archaic poet Alkaios. Even the *Iliad* knew of this tradition. The compatibility of ethnic groups with age groups and social status defuses Ivantchik’s most fundamental objections to Pinney’s article Achilles Lord of Scythia. Why Akhilleus had such a strong connection to the far north is best accounted for by his hypostatic relation to Apollo who migrated to the northernmost land of the Hyperboreans on an annual basis.

Accordingly, the expansion of the Greeks’ northern horizon from the northern Aegean to the northern shores of the Black Sea enabled the northward transfer of the powerful cult and post-mortem abode of Akhilleus in the Hellespont—also known as the Borysthenes—to the Skythian Borysthenes, which also inherited its alternate name. The standard location of Akhilleus’ homeland in the north of Homer’s Greece (in Thessaly) is likely related.

The Iliadic evidence for a paradisiacal island at the northern ends of the earth is consistent with this interpretation. In Book 13, for instance, the eyes of Zeus travel north to the land of the Hyperboreans. Significant details about the funeral of Patroklos support the notion that the Thracian winds took the *psukhe* of Akhilleus’ therapon to Leuke just as Thetis snatched her son from the pyre. The association of Thrace with the northern edge of the world is borne out by the subtle allusion in Book 5 to the Sarpedonian Rock of Thrace, which the *Kypria* located by the streams of the river Ocean.

Pursuant to Pinney’s article, it is my contention that the *Iliad* knew of the tradition, according to which Akhilleus was depicted as a northern barbarian. In order to assess the literary evidence, it is necessary to acknowledge the process of dissimilation whereby doubles of Akhilleus were differentiated from the hero in terms of their persona, and yet exhibited certain idiosyncrasies that are suggestive of a common identity.

In the case of the Paionian hero, the strongest indication that the *Iliad* understood him as a northern Akhilleus in the strict sense of the word is the paronomasia involving the name Πηλεγόνοϛ, which is morphologically, grammatically and semantically analyzable as “the son

of Peleus.” The word play on *Pelegonos* should alert us to the semantic versatility of Asteropaios’ own name, all of whose possible meanings point to an essential aspect of his double, i.e. Akhilleus. One of them, “the son of Lightning” sustains the irony, throughout their encounter, of Akhilleus’ claim to superiority over Asteropaios through his descent from Zeus.

Once the phenomenon of dissimilation is acknowledged, a whole new vista opens up to the investigator of the Trojan Cycle. King Rhesos of Thrace should be very high on our list of other barbarian candidates from the far north to be investigated for bearing the stamp of Akhilleus.

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