

§1. Prolegomena

To understand a phenomenon, we have to know not only what it is,
but also how it came into being.

– Franz Boas

This book presents the results of a study of the Homeric corpus, based on the philological evidence,¹ with special attention to the musical aspects of these performance texts. The units of public performance process are at first units or “modules” of about half an hour, growing to concert occasions nearer an hour. Their content at first reflects the warrior ethos of early post-Mycenaean times. Later come the more pacific sensibilities of the re-emerging world of the polis.

It is widely agreed that the work of “Homer” is far from primitive, but rests on a long previous tradition of which it is the culmination and not the origin.² In our present Iliad, it is easy to detect material both earlier and later than the tenth year of the war, in which Homer’s “Menis,” his tale of Achilles, is set:

- In Iliad 3:146-244, Helen, from the walls of Troy, identifies the principal Greek warriors, as they are lined up for the duel between Menelaos and Paris. That they were unknown in Troy after nine years of war is not a tenable proposition. This was more likely written to describe the *first* year of the war.

We can also find something unmistakably *later* than the tenth year:

- In Iliad 2:51-443 (393 lines), the men are offered the choice of war or return home, producing a mass rush for the ships. In persuading them to return, Odysseus calls himself “father of Telemachus.” In the tenth year of the war, Telemachus was ten years old. He will be nothing to boast of until the end of the Odyssey, where, at twenty, he aids his father in slaying the suitors.³

This last we must deduct from Homer’s work as he originally composed it. Homer, then, made use of pre-existing material, apparently having to do with the Trojan War, and others later expanded his work. To these three stages, we must add a fourth: the Odyssey, the little sister of the Iliad, intimately aware of the older Iliad, but with a distinctively feminine touch, and explicitly adopting different moral assumptions; a different idea of what society is about.

¹Philology (or “higher criticism”) in the sense here meant addresses the growth and interactions of texts, not in one little corner of antiquity, but in all. For a brief refresher, see Brooks and Wright **Primer**.

²Including some who disagree on other matters: George Wilkins **Growth** (1885) 45, “The poems are the poetic growth of a long period of time;” Gilbert Murray **Rise** (2ed 1911) 116, “. . . both, as they stand, are the products of a long process of development;” C M Bowra **Tradition** (1930) 2, “a single poet working on given material in a manner dictated by a tradition of which he was the inheritor;” M L West **Iliad** (2014) 3-4, “must have been the product of a long tradition of oral poetry.”

³The other “father of Telemachus” line is 4:354; with it go 4:329-337 and 339-364, total, 35 lines. (An original Menestheus rebuke has been overlaid by this Odysseus one).

That the Odyssey is later than the Iliad, no one doubts.⁴ The Iliad has no moral system, save martial prowess and personal honor. The Odyssey moves not by might, but by right: it states at the outset that people's troubles are not caused by the gods, but by their own misdeeds, such as a legal system might judge and redress. The Iliad lives by its ships; the Odyssey is a world of palaces and hot baths. Achilles and the others are kings; Odysseus uses maids and menials to help him overcome his enemies. The Iliad is headlong, telling of battle after battle; the Odyssey is leisurely, full of disguise and deception, with hidden identities ending in climactic revelations. The Iliad with its detailed description of wounds is nothing if not grim. The Odyssey's perils are partly bedtime stories. It also finds time for a lighter tone. Thus, Iliad readers who weary of prolix Nestor will enjoy Od 4:209-214, where Telemachus will do anything save endure another evening of the old man's rememberings. Whether the feminine sensibility of the Odyssey implies a female *author*, who can say? But we will be referring to that author with the pronouns "she" and "her."

Writing. Wolf thought that a long poem like the Iliad is impossible without writing. That underrates the capacity of musicians, ancient and modern, to create and recall without the aid of writing. To this we shall return. But it does seem that the great innovation in post-Mycenaean Greece was not writing as such, but writing *which distinguished consonants and vowels*, as is relevant to the scansion of the hexameter line, and whose earliest uses are *associated with hexameter lines*.⁵ This affects, not the date of the *composition* of the material, but of the *organization* of new and old material into a repertoire. Then the date *of that organization* can be placed not long before c730, the date of the oldest inscription which includes that alphabet, simply written out in order.⁶

Tempo. These are performance pieces, and performers must make a living. Remunerative performances need audiences. And once gathered, how long will an audience remain? On market days, only briefly. On special hosted occasions, doubtless longer. To relate our texts to those occasions, we first need to know, how long does it take to deliver one hexameter line?

A sufficient answer was given on 1 Dec 1912 at the Royal Opera House in Berlin, when a 412-line abridgement of Odyssey 17 took 40 minutes, just 6 seconds per line.⁷ We will adopt that figure. It is a convenient one: if we divide the line count of any passage by 10, we get the performance time in minutes. The Iliad (15,693 lines), would thus require 1,569 minutes, or 26 hours.

⁴Burkert **Song** 249 notes that though we do not know the literary context of the Iliad, we *do* know that of the Odyssey: *it is the Iliad*. Strasburger **Sociology** 65 contrasts the two value systems: "the Iliad emphasizes honor, the Odyssey poet . . . property."

⁵Wade-Gery **Poet** 12-14.

⁶Kirk **Songs** plate 6a, "late Geometric jug, from the Dipylon cemetery at Athens."

⁷Drerup **Fünfte** 49f. That rate corresponds to the median human heartbeat.

As Gilbert Murray has well remarked, the Iliad as a whole is simply unperformable.⁸ It is not a “poem” in the usual sense; it is a repertoire of performable poems. The concept of a *repertoire* rather than a *poem* offers new possibilities of understanding, and these are followed out in the present book.

On the musical side, our proposal is: (1) There were two modules for performance, one lasting a little less than half an hour, and the other somewhat under an hour; these we will identify in our first three chapters. (2) The present lengths of Iliadic and Odyssean books can be seen as fitting that pattern when we remove what can be identified as later interpolations. And finally, (3) The Homeric corpus with its 24-book pattern, uses the 24-letter alphabet as a formal principle, and is original, rather than arbitrarily imposed by later editors. For this last proposition, there is no hard primary evidence either way, and we must rely on the plausibility of the rest of our proposal. Does it work?

Interpolations. Can they, in fact, be recognized? We take as a sample the problem of the duals in Id 9:182-204, describing the journey of *three* envoys (Odysseus, Aias, Phoinix). Many ingenuities have been offered to explain the duals, none of them convincing. Griffin **Iliad IX** 51-53 judges that ingenuity has failed, and that eliminating Phoinix is “the most likely” [answer], but adds, “we cannot simply remove Phoinix from the text as we now have it.”

Oh yes we can. The passages in question are 9:168 (the original has been overwritten), 223 (ditto), 426-429, the 432-622 speech and reply, 658-668, and 690-692, or 211 lines. Eliminating Phoenix will help us to understand Homer. Here are the line lengths of the Iliad books as we now have them:

01 611	05 909	09 713	13 837	17 761	21 611
02 877	06 529	10 579	14 522	18 609	22 515
03 461	07 482	11 848	15 746	19 424	23 897
04 544	08 565	12 471	16 867	20 503	24 804

Some books are twice as long as others. But minus interpolations already noted, we see the longer Iliad books becoming *a little more like the shorter ones*.

01 611	05 909	09 502	13 837	17 761	21 611
02 484	06 529	10 579	14 522	18 609	22 515
03 461	07 482	11 848	15 746	19 424	23 897
04 506	08 565	12 471	16 867	20 503	24 804

It remains to show that this program can be plausibly carried out on the rest of both the Iliad and the Odyssey. This we undertake to do. For a summary of our conclusions as to interpolations, and the effect of their removal on book length, see the respective Interpolation listings at the end of the book, pages 172 (Iliad) and 173 (Odyssey), where these results are cumulated.

⁸Murray **Rise** (2ed 1911) 209, “No audience could endure it, no bard could perform it, in one stretch.” This was before the Berlin 1912 performance, so Murray’s sense of performance time was not based on that, but probably on Murray’s own readings.

Also famous is the problem, not of the duals, but of *the whole* of Iliad 9, which has been claimed to be a later addition.⁹ The issue here is not a puzzle about a few verbs, but the later addition of *an entire book* to the previous Iliad. We consider Iliad 9 to be integral to the plot of the Menis. We argue thus:

In **Id 1**, Agamemnon enrages Achilles by taking his beloved Briseis. Achilles refuses to fight, and Thetis asks Zeus to give the Trojans victory until the Greeks make amends. The Menis plot reappears in **Id 8**, as Zeus aids the Trojans. In **Id 9**, appeal is made to Achilles, offering him lavish gifts to return. Achilles angrily and extravagantly refuses.

It comes down to this: Was Briseis included in Agamemnon's offer? There are conflicting signs. Here is Agamemnon instructing Odysseus, in 9:131-134:

Then will I give seven women, well-skilled in handiwork matchless,
Lesbians, whom, when that man himself took Lesbos the well-built,
I chose out for myself, as beyond all women in beauty.

All shall be his, and the damsel besides, whereof I despoiled him,
Daughter of Briseus; yea, with an oath full mighty I swear it,
Never her couch I ascended or converse held with the damsel,
Never in sooth, as a man, in the manner of men and of women.

All these things shall be his forthwith. . . .

And as repeated almost verbatim by Odysseus to Achilles, at 9:270-277:

Then he will give seven women, well-skilled in handiwork matchless,
Lesbians, whom, when thou thyself took Lesbos, the well-built,
He chose out for himself, as beyond all women in beauty.

All shall be thine, and the damsel besides whereof he despoiled thee,
daughter of Briseus; yea, with an oath full mighty he swears it,
never her couch he ascended, or converse held with the damsel;
never, forsooth, O king, in the manner of men and of women.

All these things shall be thine forthwith . . .

So far the Embassy. But in 16:84-86, Achilles' charge to Patroclus, we have this equally clear implication that she had *not* been included:

Fall thou mightily on them, lest they with their fire destructive
burn our ships and deprive us of our desired returning.

Hearken thou now, as I put in thy mind the sum of my bidding,
that thou for me may'st win from all of the Danaans lasting
honor and glory, and they that surpassingly beautiful maiden
send back again me and bestow splendid gifts in addition:

Drive them away from the ships, and come back. But if there shall grant thee
Hera's loud-thundering husband glory to win for thine own self,
do not without me yearn to engage in war with the Trojans . . .

Either the first two or the third might have been interpolated, as we show by indenting the relevant passages in the above quotes. One of the two *must* be; poets do not, on their own, produce such blatant contradictions. But which?

⁹Leaf **Companion** 29-31, 41-42, and 170-173, following earlier statements.

Mure eliminated the latter.¹⁰ But it is the former pair that cause the trouble. If they are removed, Achilles' reaction in Id 9 makes sense, and so does his advice to Patroclus in Id 16. It is not *women* Achilles wants, that idea of Agamemnon's was highly offensive. Achilles wants *the one woman he loves*.

The Menis, throughout, is about personal feeling. Achilles' first feeling centers on Briseis. But after Patroclus' death, revenge becomes his only feeling. Agamemnon's apology, and his return of Briseis, *are no longer the point*. How do we know? Here is 19:56-62, as Achilles speaks to apologetic Agamemnon:

Atreus' son, was it truly for both of us any the better,
better for thee and for me, when we in anguish of spirit
both spent our fury in soul-consuming strife for a damsel?
Would that Artemis then at the ships with an arrow had slain her,
that same day I destroyed Lyrnessus, and won me the maiden.
Then had not bitten the boundless earth so many Achaeans
under the foeman's hands, because I was fuming with anger.

The first Rage of Achilles is spent,¹¹ *Briseis vanishes*, and the story plays out along warrior-ethos lines. Perhaps someone later dolled up Iliad 9 by adding Briseis to Agamemnon's offer, to make Achilles' rejection of the gifts seem *even more irrational*. Iliad 9, which is organic in the Menis, should be retained.

Poetry

What is poetry? We answer, poetry is heightened speech. Why heightened? Ultimately, to put one in closer touch with the higher beings, to make them propitiatory offerings, or gain access to their wisdom. Gods may be summoned by invocation, as in the opening of the Iliad, or wisdom can be offered *by* them, as with the Sirens of the Odyssey. In all these, a singer, not a speaker, is the intermediary. An ancestral chant, or a healer's charm, must not only be verbally correct to be efficacious,¹² they must also be delivered in an appropriately special form of language.

It has been asked, was Homer an oral poet? The question has no meaning. Of course he was. So was Edna St Vincent Millay;¹³ so was Carl Sandburg;¹⁴ so is every unknown hopeful giving a reading tomorrow in the local bookstore.

¹⁰For Mure, see Geddes **Problem** 41.

¹¹For the importance of the transformation, see also Schein **Mortal** 35 and 128.

¹²Densmore **Chippewa** 95 [in a tradition where more personal songs may vary widely on repetition], "A repetition of this song was secured from the same singer after a lapse of several months. The second rendition was identical with the first, beginning on the same tone and showing faulty intonation on the same tones."

¹³For first-hand reports of her public readings across the country, see her Letters.

¹⁴One of the present authors attended a performance at which Sandburg, strumming his guitar, admitted "I can't fish it up" – and went on to the next item on the program. He got a big hand at the end, perhaps partly out of sympathy for fading powers.

Memory and Improvisation

Those who performed the Homeric texts not only spoke in poetry, they were musicians. They *sang* their lines. And how did they remember all they sang?

Musicians' powers of memory, both in antiquity and now, are formidable. George Szell was vacationing in Switzerland. He was bored. John Browning was summering in Switzerland. He was bored. Szell agreed to give him lessons. In Browning's words,¹⁵

. . . And then he would sit down and play quartets on the piano . . . He had an encyclopedic memory . . . He could isolate on the piano the viola part for a Schubert or Mozart quartet that he hadn't thought of in twenty years.

Everything he has played *is still there*, to be called forth at need. Or a whim.

So far memory; now consider memorization. Allegri's Miserere was so esteemed that it was kept secret, performed only at Easter in the Papal Chapel. But young Mozart, after hearing *one performance*, wrote down the whole thing – not a song, but a 13-minute piece in five parts. So might one rhapsode have heard another's version of some episode, *and internalized it at that hearing*.

Memory and improvisation are complementary skills. In a Mozart piano concerto, soloist and orchestra have to play what is written. Then the orchestra stops playing, and the soloist improvises alone, on the themes of the movement. It's all hers. What is *she* going to make, of those familiar themes?

For the interplay between the familiar and the new, we may turn to China, where such performance traditions are still alive, and to a tale lately told:¹⁶

Once upon a time, a skilled performer was engaged by a Chinese tavern to recite a favorite story for its patrons. He had just begun, when he was called away for a family funeral. He asked a colleague to fill in for him. The colleague said, Sure, how far have you got? On his return, two weeks later, the first asked, Where are you now? His colleague had improvised for those two weeks, and the story, as such, *was just where the first reciter had left it*.

So yes, the text is fixed. People come to the tavern to hear it well performed. But *it can also be improvised*, should the need to do so suddenly arise.

Not that all custodians of oral tradition need be improvisors as well. A song, or a repertoire, can be fixed rather than fluid. Consider Victoria Howard, who recorded her huge repertoire of Clackamas Chinook myths for Melville Jacobs. She had learned them from her grandmother or her mother-in-law. She was a recipient, not a maker. In one long piece, she lost her way at one point, and could not finish. Later, she recalled one more paragraph, but still not the end.¹⁷

¹⁵Dubal **Reflections** 120.

¹⁶Katherine Stevens, personal communication, c1960.

¹⁷Jacobs **Clackamas** 1/179; see also 1/142 and 156. She might cite *other versions* of a song (1/60, 79, and 80), but never replaced her own lost version with any other.

Date

All this concerns relative chronology: earlier and later. What about *absolute* chronology? Were the Trojan War passages composed (1) by eyewitnesses to the fall of Troy, circa 1200? Or (2) later, but based on true historical memory, the unforgotten Mycenaean cultural heritage? Or (3) were they made up to *provide* a cultural memory, when precise memories of Mycenae had dimmed?¹⁸ Though the hexameter medium, and even some of its phrases, are clearly old,¹⁸ the first two options cannot be maintained. The specific Homer, and its immediate Trojan War precedent, can only date from post-Mycenaean times.

The evidence for Homeric knowledge of Mycenae (options 1 and 2) consists entirely of objects. The strange boar's-tusk helmet worn by Dolon in Id 10⁹ has been recovered by archaeology. Such a helmet might have been still above ground in Homer's time, or been unearthed by a farmer's plowing. So also the famed gold of the Mycenaean cities, some of whose fortresses still survived: an acropolis on this or that hill, when all below had been devastated. The Greeks of post-Mycenaean times were still living in the ruins of their cities. Chariot wheels, of which the cities had kept precise inventories? Or chariots, of which whole examples doubtless survived as well? No problem.

But then we come to chariot *warfare*. It is the assumption, not only of every passage in Homer's *Menis*, but also of every passage in what seems to be the earlier Trojan War material, that the chariot is used to deliver a warrior to the field, after which he dismounts and fights on foot. This "taxi" concept is absurd; it would cause anyone at all familiar with Egyptian or Hittite chariot warfare to roll on the floor in uncontrollable merriment. The "taxi" concept must date from a time so long after Mycenae that all memory of actual Mycenaean warfare had been lost. Homer and the rest were Dark Age poets, imagining the past as best they could, with any artifacts at their disposal.

Did Helen of Troy exist? Was there a Judgement of Paris? The Trojan War stories accept the Helen idea, as well they might; it gives the war a socially presentable motive. But the *Menis* speaks chiefly of raids up and down the coast. It has little but booty in view,²⁰ and it culminates in the death of Hector. Helen is not mentioned in Id 1, only as an example of beauty in 9:140 and 282, and so on. The supposed Judgement of Paris is not alluded to until 24:25-30, and even that passage has long been recognized as problematic.²¹

¹⁸West *Meter* 233f.

¹⁹Accepting Id 10, for a moment, as Homeric; but see §13.

²⁰So Achilles himself; see Id 1:125, 152f, and 163f.

²¹Says Lattimore *Iliad* 24n2, "The way out is to follow an ancient grammarian and declare these lines an interpolation. That way madness lies." And where may sanity lie? We would say, in recognizing all of Id 24, and with it Id 23, as later additions; see §15.

The way is then open for an alternative understanding of the Trojan War. Mycenaean pottery is found at Troy, so the two were definitely in contact. Commercial contact. Troy was strategically situated; it controlled the narrow entrance to the Black Sea and its ports. Those Biblically acquainted will remember the wealth of Marcion's Sinope, which was based on trade. One commercially ambitious Greek city could not attack strategic Troy, but how about a *collective* enterprise? The Catalogue is a record of a gathering of ships from different cities, for some unstated purpose. It might be a witness to a temporary alliance, which in later memory became an emblem of the Greek unity ideal (never achieved in real political terms). That this national myth later received supernatural embellishment, and acquired a "just" and not a merely crass motive, would not be the first time in history such things have happened, a mundane enterprise being retrospectively justified, and indeed ennobled.

The Homeric Guild

The Homeric and pre-Homeric poems were written in Ionia, where settlers came soon after the destruction of Mycenaean culture by the Dorian incursion. The Ionian colonists would have maintained contact with their home cities, Sparta or Athens. There emerged a tradition of songs of the Trojan War, with its center at Chios, its territory including Colophon and Smyrna. The guild members were at some point known as "Homeridae," after the founder (or, as we think, the reorganizer) of the whole tradition.²² Like any guild, it imposed discipline. The reorganization of the Trojan songs as the new Menis doubtless had guild support. So also the later infiltration of the Iliad by the Odyssey, the other repertoire which the guild sponsored. At some point, or rather at two, the whole Homeric corpus was returned to mainland Greece; first to Sparta, under the aegis of Lycurgos, and later, to Athens in the time of Pisistratus, whose son Hipparchus is said to have arranged the incorporation of the Iliad into the Panathenaea festival, organized by Pisistratus himself in 566. The novelty there was not the Iliad, which was already known at Sparta and elsewhere, but its presentation *as a whole*, and *in the proper narrative order*.²³ The impossibility of full performance noted by Murray had actually come into being.

This was a stunt, meant to capture the attention of the rest of Greece, and in effect, to claim ownership of the Homeric tradition. It was hugely successful. Athens became the custodian of Homer, and thus also of the pan-Greek idea enshrined in Homer. And the Athenian book trade, not long after, multiplied the copies used by students who learned, not only Greek history, but Greek culture in general (§17-18), from Homer. That Athenian text is still our Homer.

²²Or as it were, "sons of Homer," but fictive kinship is the basic convention for what are really non-kin associations; compare the Biblical "sons of Korah."

²³This was the key provision, for which see the Platonic dialogue Hipparchus.

Stylistic Difference

To the standard philological ways of working with texts, we add a test of stylistic difference, called BIRD.²⁴ It asks, of two passages, are they enough alike to belong to the same narrative? Are they so different that they must be from different sources? Except that it is based on common connectives, which do not *carry* message, but *articulate* message,²⁵ we will not tell how it works. What matters is not *how* it works, but *if* it works. In languages in which it has been tested (English, Chinese, Biblical and Homeric Greek, Hebrew) we find these difference (D) levels to recur, and to be often of interpretive value:

- **Low** (0·00 to 0·50). Associated with continuous narrative. The author may be thinking of his own previous remark, or of a passage by someone else. Odysseus' appeal in Id 9 is closely related (D = 0·48) to Achilles' reply.²⁶ We emphasize that *intentional imitation* can also produce a Low relationship.
- **Normal** (0·51 to 0·75). Nondistinctive; the common style. A separate episode in one writers' narrative, or, as likely, something by another writer.
- **High** (0·76-0·99). Less likely to be related; perhaps an author interrupting himself, like Paul in 2 Corinthians denying that he burdens the community. Or the two passages may simply be unrelated.
- **Extreme** (1·00 and up). Cannot derive from the same author or guild. Revelation, written in "Biblical" or more exactly "Septuagintal" prose, differs to this degree from all other texts in the New Testament canon.

These D numbers can be cited *as* numbers, or given as a table, with several passages compared to each other. For Odysseus' appeal and Achilles' reply in Iliad 9, we might quote the D number (0·48, or Low, and thus closely related), or give a table like this one, where closely similar passages are shaded:²⁷

<i>Iliad 9</i>	<i>Odys</i>	<i>Ach</i>
Words:	593	923
<i>Odys</i>	~	0·48
<i>Ach</i>	0·48	~

Any statistical procedure is subject to static, or simple inadequacy. But we find that the BIRD test can sometimes give a sense of what a poet "had in mind" – the previous passage, or something earlier (as when a sermon reverts, at its end, to its beginning). Speeches in the same genre (appeal, denunciation) may also show up, in BIRD results, as stylistically close.

²⁴An acronym of **B**rooks **I**ndex of **R**hetorical **D**ifference.

²⁵For the specifics, see Brooks **C**hinese.

²⁶The pairing of sayings is common in these texts; dialogue, or the QA pattern, are more frequent than pronouncements in isolation.

²⁷Passages below the 90-word recommended size limit are especially liable to false positives; these entries are always asterisked* in this book, as a caution to readers.

Let us spend just three more minutes on Iliad 9. The scene opens thus:

- 9a. 1-88 (88 lines) { Setting the Watch
 9b. 89-181 (93 lines) { Consultation of the Leaders

<i>Iliad</i>	9a	9b
Words:	624	655
9a	~	0:39
9b	0:39	~

At $D = 0.39$, the relation is Low level, appropriate to their narrative continuity.

Pairing, between a question and its answer, or their equivalent, is common in ancient texts. With the Iliad 9 speeches, we have three possible pairs:

- 9d. 225-306 (82 lines) { Appeal of Odysseus
 9e. 307-431 (125 lines) { Achilles' Reply to Odysseus
 9f. 432-605 (173 lines) { Appeal of Phoinix
 9g. 606-622 (17 lines) { Achilles' Reply to Phoinix
 9h. 623-642 (20 lines) { Speech of Aias
 9i. 643-655 (13 lines) { *Achilles' Reply to Aias

The BIRD table for these six speeches is:

<i>Iliad</i>	9d	9e	9f	9g	9h	9i*
Words	592	923	1231	136	143	87
9d	~	0.48	0.68	0.69	0.70	0.69
9e	0.48	~	0.56	0.75	0.60	0.61
9f	0.68	0.56	~	0.70	0.51	0.59
9g	0.69	0.75	0.70	~	0.52	0.70
9h	0.70	0.60	0.51	0.52	~	0.51
9i*	0.69	0.61	0.59	0.70	0.54	~

Odysseus' speech and Achilles' reply are closely related ($D = 0.48$); that of Aias and Achilles' reply, almost as close ($D = 0.51$). But the speeches of Phoinix and Achilles are toward the high end of the Normal range ($D = 0.70$). Whoever so nicely matched the other two pairs is unlikely to have treated the Phoinix pair differently. To that extent, the test agrees with other evidence for the later addition of Phoinix. We will meet Phoinix again, one last time, in §11.

So much by way of orientation, and now we are ready to begin the book.

We start with evidence for performances, asking how long they lasted, and noting some conventions of the tradition as seen in the Iliad (§1-17). We then look at Homer's monumental reworking of that tradition, his "Menis" (§18-30). Finally (§32-51), we consider the Iliad's perky little sister, the Odyssey. An Epilegomena (§52), by way of retrospect, brings our book to its close.