

### §13. The Shield of Achilles



Lasses and lads, light-hearted in merriment, on it he moulded . . .

– *Odyssey 18:567*

The last half of Id 18, the part after nightfall, is a study in simultaneity. The Trojans confer (243-314), the Greeks mourn Patroclus (314-367),<sup>1</sup> Hephaestus replaces Achilles' armor. That the Iliad is a poem of war, many have noticed. But here and there, it is also a poem of peace. The question is, what is the status of those peace pieces? We find that they are later additions, meant to adjust the text to the sensibilities of a later generation of listeners. There are three places where the Peace motif is especially visible. They are one long passage in the Making of the Shield part of Id 18, and all of books 23 and 24. We here take up the Shield passage, and in the next chapter, will move on to the other two.

If the Shield is an interpolation, we expect it to differ from the other parts, of the chapter, and the other parts should be, or should be at least more nearly, stylistically compatible. Here is the crosstable:

18a. 1-147	(134)	Death of Patroclus; Thetis (less 39-51, 13 lines)
18b. 148-242	(95)	Patroclus' body brought into camp. Night falls.
18c. 243-314	(72)	Trojan assembly
18d. 314-367	(51)	Mourning for Patroclus (less 336-337, 2 lines)
18e. 368-480	(122)	Making of the armor (plus 609-617, 9 lines)
18f. 481-608	(128)	*Interpolation: peaceful design on Achilles' shield.

<i>Iliad</i>	<i>18a</i>	<i>18b</i>	<i>18c</i>	<i>18d</i>	<i>18e</i>	<i>18f</i>
<i>18a</i>	~	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00
<i>18b</i>	0-00	~	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00
<i>18c</i>	0-00	0-00	~	0-00	0-00	0-00
<i>18d</i>	0-00	0-00	0-00	~	0-00	0-00
<i>18e</i>	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00	~	0-00
<i>18f</i>	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00	0-00	~

Text

<sup>1</sup>Less 336-337, one of two places where the human sacrifice of Id 23 is prepared.