Incorporeal Heroes

Incorporeal Heroes:
The Origins of Homeric Images

By

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CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

FOREWORD

Leo Klejn is an Analyst. That is to say, in contrast to Unitarians, who stress the role of an individual creative genius, he believes that the *Iliad* was composed by joining together previously separate poems of different origins. Moreover, he does not believe that there ever was such a war as that described in the *Iliad*. Rather, he believes that – as has often happened – an epic turned what was in fact a defeat into a victory.

However, the reality of the Trojan War is not the main focus of this book – that is the subject of a much larger book, as yet untranslated, *The Anatomy of the Iliad* (1998). The main focus of the present work is upon the heroes of the *Iliad*.

One by one all the main heroes of this epic are examined with the aim of discovering their origins: to establish if they represent real historical figures or whether they are artistic inventions. Both ideas are considered but ultimately rejected. In their place Klejn offers a third alternative: he argues that the prototypes of the heroes existed previously in Greek cults. They were local cult heroes, protectors with influence over certain spheres of life, in the manner of Christian saints. In these cults Achilles was a protector of the sea, the guardian of ships; Nestor was a cult healer associated with the god of the physician Asclepius; Odysseus was a fortune-teller; and so on.

Furthermore, Klejn claims to have established the sequence in which these heroes entered the epic. He makes use of the fact that in every folklore tradition epithets exhibit a tendency to become codified into standard formulas. The proportion of these standard formulas, in relation to more general epithets, can serve as indication of the longevity of the hero's existence within the epic. Accordingly, the most ancient are Helen, her lover Alexander (Paris), and Ajax; Achilles and Hector come later; then Priam and Patroclus; and finally Aeneas and Pandarus. Moreover, the parallelism within the *Iliad* (Troy – Ilios; Scamander – Xanthos; Paris – Alexander) coincides with differences in the distribution of epithets. Klejn claims that by careful study of how particular names are accompanied by particular epithets it is possible to discern within the *Iliad* six previously independent components.

Klejn is fully aware that his view of the *Iliad* is unfashionable. In some respects, as he himself admits, his views are similar to those of German

scholars of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Yet, while Klejn is familiar with opposing arguments, his own argument has not previously been heard in the west; for this is the first time that any of his works on the *Iliad* has been translated.

In the West Klejn is better known as an archaeological theorist and historian of archaeology rather than for his interest in the composition of the *Iliad*. However, this interest is not completely unrelated to his interest in archaeology, for the present work grew from his study of the Bronze Age of Europe – for many years he gave a course of lectures on the Bronze Age of Europe at Leningrad University. And, indeed, in Klejn's work there is some resemblance between the disentangling of the different components of the *Iliad* and the identification of archaeological strata.

The present translation of *Incorporeal Heroes* is of the book as it was first published, in St. Petersburg, in 1994. As such the book is intended not just for professional scholars but for all readers of the *Iliad*. Whilst Klejn is of course aware that Homeric scholarship has continued to develop since the book's original publication, he has seen no reason to alter the fundamental theses of the book.

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PART I:

INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

1. THE ILIAD AND THE HOMERIC PROBLEM

It is with the *Iliad* that European literature begins. And Homer's world lives on in contemporary culture; we still hear the names of Helen the Fair, and Paris, Achilles, Odysseus the Wanderer, old Nestor and the inseparable Ajaxes. Each of the basic European languages has a number of poetical translations of the *Iliad* from ancient Greek (in Russian the three most important are those of N. Gnedich, N. Minsky and V. Veresaev). (In English the poetic translations of Chapman and Pope are well known.) However . . .

More than a hundred years ago a famous philologist U. Wilamowitz wrote: "Homer nowadays is not a much-read poet any more . . . Even the linguists mostly know him only as well as the pious know the Bible". A hundred years have passed but Homer has not become any more widely read (though his books are often published). So it may not be entirely otiose to remind the reader of the background and contents of the *Iliad*.

All the gods gathered to participate in the wedding ceremony of a Northern Greek king Peleus and a sea goddess Thetis, but the goddess of discord Eris had been forgotten. Eris, in her wrath, threw the goddesses an apple, an apple inscribed "for the fairest one" – "the Apple of Discord". The three principal goddesses began to argue as to who was the most beautiful. Alexander (*alias* Paris), son of the Trojan king Priam, was charged with the task of passing judgement. To win the judge over, each of the goddesses promised him rewards: Hera promised him power and wealth, Athena promised wisdom and military successes, and the goddess of love, Aphrodite, promised him the love of the most beautiful woman in the world. Paris declared Aphrodite to be the winner and, in keeping with her word, she initiated a most ardent love between Paris and the beautiful Helen, the wife of his host, the Spartan king Menelaus.

The lovers ran away to Troy (which is also named Ilios in the poem), and king Menelaus appealed for help to the kings of other Greek states who were his relatives, neighbours and friends. A large host gathered to avenge the offender and those who concealed him, the inhabitants of Troy (subjects of king Priam). Priam, in turn, appealed to his allies from all over Asia Minor and the Danube basin.

Fig. 1-1 Participants in the Trojan War, according to the epic

The coalition of the Achaeans (as the Greeks were called at that time) was headed by Menelaus' older brother, the king of gold-rich Mycenae, Agamemnon. He was joined by many famous heroes: the invincible Achilles (son of the goddess Thetis and Peleus, the king of the small northern kingdom of Phthia); the no less victorious Diomedes (the king of Argos in southern Argolis); the cunning Odysseus (king of the island of Ithaca); mighty Ajax (king of the island of Salamis); his namesake swift Ajax of Locris; old Nestor (king of Pylos); and others. Among the heroes we find not only kings but also their comrades-in-arms, for example: Achilles' friend and devotee Patroclus; and the old tutor Phoenix. The host of Trojans and their allies were headed by Hector, the brother of Paris; the most distinguished of the alien heroes were Aeneas, king of the Dardanians, and Sarpedon, king of the Lycians.

The Achaean coalition came in ships to the straits between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea and besieged the nearby city of Troy. The war lasted for 10 years . . . but this is only the background to the main story of the *Iliad*. These events were the subject of another poem, the Cyprian songs or the *Cypria*, but they constitute the essential background to understanding what takes place in the *Iliad*. The plot of the *Iliad* does not begin at the start of the war but relates the events of only 9 days of the 10th year of the war.

The Iliad tells us that a quarrel took place between the two main figures of the Achaean coalition – the strongest hero of the Greeks, Achilles, and the leader of the entire coalition, Agamemnon. The quarrel was over the spoils of war. Initially, Chryseis, the daughter of a priest of Apollo, had fallen to the share of Agamemnon, but Apollo grew wrathful and the maiden had to be returned to her father. Agamemnon then coveted Briseis (the daughter of Briseus) who had originally fallen to the share of Achilles. Agamemnon abducted her. Deeply offended, Achilles then refused to take part in the battles. The Achaeans began to suffer defeats. But when the Trojans drove the Greeks to their very ships, Achilles could no longer bear it. He agreed to allow his friend Patroclus to head the army and repulse the attacks of the Trojans. Then, after Patroclus was killed by Hector, Achilles' inactivity (nowadays we would say "strike") was brought to an end. He was fired by the desire to avenge his *bel ami*'s death. Besides, Agamemnon had repented and returned the maiden to him. In short, Achilles returned to battle, routed the Trojans, and killed Hector. The unfortunate father of Hector, Priam, then came personally to the enemy camp and begged Achilles to return the body. The poem ends with the burial of Patroclus and Hector. However other events of the Trojan War and its end – Achilles' death, the fall of Troy and the return of the

Greeks – were described in the other poems of the Trojan cycle: the *Aethiopis*, the *Little Iliad*, *Iliou persis* ('Sack of Troy'), *Nostoi* (Returns), and the *Odyssey*.

We will repeatedly return to these events separately but it is worth remembering their interrelations and sequence.

Having stated the fact that Homer is not much read, Wilamowitz added: "But the Homeric problem is popular." The Homeric problem arose a hundred years before Wilamowitz and has troubled scholars ever since – even now, a hundred years after Wilamowitz. The problem is the question of how the poem was created: does it have a single author, Homer, who also created the *Odyssey*, or do these poems perhaps belong to different poets, even a number of groups of folk singers, who created the poem over a considerable time.

The problem arose owing to the fact that the poem is extremely complicated and sometimes knotty (it is not by chance that it is not widely read). There are many contradictions and sharp twists in the plot, which are explained only by miracles and celestial intervention. That is to say, both the logic of events and their reality are problematic. In fact we can talk of two problems. The first is whether the poem has one author or whether it came step by step into being by the effort of many creators and compilers; and the second is whether the events described in the poem really happened, and, if so, when.

The first problem was formulated by L'Abbé d'Aubignac (mid-17th century), Giambattista Vico (17th-18th centuries) and F. A. Wolf (late 18th century). Following the work of the latter, Homeric scholars divided between 'analysts' who partitioned the poem, and 'unitarians', who championed the one and indivisible Homer. The two groups have been at loggerheads ever since. In the nineteenth century the scales were in favour of the analysts but then discord resulted from the construction of a number of mutually incompatible versions of the step-by-step creation of the poem. The discord between the analysts led to the predominance of the unitarians in the 20th century.

In the late 1920s the brilliant American M. Parry proved that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are works of oral poetic tradition. It is only in this kind of creation that the same phrases are so often repeated, that epithets are so tightly linked to names, etc. It might have been thought that this conclusion lent more weight to the analysts' theory but, on the other hand, the same conclusion allowed unitarians to explain the imperfections and contradictions of the poem – as the work of one illiterate blind singer.

So-called neo-analysts have appeared in the course of the recent decades. Being convinced of Homer's authorship (and being in this sense unitarians) they nonetheless began to find in the *Iliad* elements of the plot transferred from the Cyclic poems (‘kyklikos’ means cyclic in ancient Greek), which were previously thought to be later than Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. Neo-analysts do not dispute that the snatches of the Cyclic poems that have reached us were the latest to appear, but they consider them to represent later re-workings of very ancient songs. Neo-analysts think that Homer borrowed so much from these ancient songs, that, in fact, he cannot be credited as sole creator.

Thus, analysts' and unitarians' points of view have drawn closer together. Unitarians grant a large role to folklore sources and the use of various contributions, while analysts admit significant reworking and unification on the part of the compiler. If both components are present – creative work and compilation – it is a very difficult business as to whether the narrator should be considered the author or a compiler and re-maker, and, correspondingly, whether to attribute the authorship to one poet or to many.

As for myself, I am really more inclined to the analysts’ side, rather than the Unitarians’ or neo-analysts’ side, for many reasons. For example, I am very interested in the strange duplication of names in the *Iliad*: Paris is at the same time Alexander, Troy is Ilios, the river Xanthus is also the river Scamander, and the Achaeans are also named Danaans and Argives. The way in which these synonyms are dispersed within the songs of the *Iliad* is not arbitrary – there are definite groups. And these groups are connected with different plot lines enabling us to identify contributions from different origins. But these conclusions are expounded in another of my books (*The Anatomy of the Iliad*) published in 1998 in Russian, and in articles, ‘Narody Asii I Afriki’ and ‘Vestnik Drevney Istorii’.

In this book, I am primarily concerned with another issue, the reality and historicity of the events and heroes of the *Iliad*. A naive belief in the historicity of everything told by the ancient Greek poet(s) (singular or plural) was replaced by the more sceptical attitude of European scholars of the nineteenth century, who were developing an allegorical concept of mythology, on the basis, in particular, of ‘meteorological’ theory. In this theory, mythical and folklore plots were regarded as allegorical representations of eternal topics: the struggle between Light and Darkness, Winter and Summer, Day and Night, Thunder and Sun, Sun and Moon, etc.

A revived trust in Homer coincided with a general break with idealistic concepts and a trend towards realism in the last three decades of the

nineteenth century. In particular, the 'history school' sought prototypes of plots in historic reality. Faith in Homer was especially stimulated by the dramatic excavations of Schliemann in Asia Minor and Greece (1870-1890) – the discovery of Ilios and Mycenae and the corroboration of many facts from the *Iliad* with archaeological evidence: the bronze weapons of heroes, the gold of Mycenae, and the mighty walls of Ilios. Subsequent excavations by Blegen at Ilios confirmed the traditional date of the Trojan War, i.e. the 13th century BC. It was to this century that American scholars attributed the layer that showed signs of fire and destruction. The recent excavations directed by Manfred Korfmann in the late twentieth century discovered a large city around the citadel excavated by Schliemann and Blegen and confirmed in the main the established chronology.

But if so, then the author(s) of the *Iliad*, who lived in the 8th-7th centuries BC, according to contemporary estimations, was separated from the events he described, from the fall of Troy-Ilios, by 5 centuries – a time boulder of half a millennium! – so one should not expect a clear and exact transcription of events. Those were the centuries when the Greeks as yet had no written language: the previous syllabic script had already perished and the new alphabet had not yet been borrowed from the Phoenicians. So, the only vehicle for the transfer of information about the war of the 13th century was oral tradition, which, as is well known, is comparable to a malfunctioning telephone line. The inevitable lapses of memory were filled by the creative fantasies of the singer and his predecessors.

But the faith in the might of oral tradition, in its ability to preserve much from the distant past, was supported by the discoveries of M. Nilsson. In the first half of the twentieth century, while studying ancient Greek mythology, Nilsson noted that the centres around which mythology and epic cycles formed themselves, the nests of myth and legendary dynasties, coincide with real archeologically proven centres of the Mycenaean (Achaean) age and that many details of mythology are confirmed by the archaeological remains of this very time, i.e. of the Bronze Age. There were even some enthusiasts who were eager to treat the actual events of the epic in this way (T.W. Allen, W. Burr, L. Myres, T. Webster, D. L. Page and others).

Indeed, it was only in Mycenaean age that Greek warriors used helmets that were entirely covered with boars' tusks. Such a helmet was both described in the *Iliad* and found in tombs and in pictures of 17th-11th centuries BC. Moreover, it was only in the Mycenaean age that Greek artisans inlaid bronze handicrafts with noble metals (gold and silver). However, such coincidences are not very numerous.

Fig. 1-2 Warrior wearing a helmet (with boars' tusks). Bone plate from the island of Delos (late XVI – early XIII century BC)

The deciphering of Cretan-Mycenaean script (an achievement of the mid twentieth century) together with archaeology has shown that Homer (or the authors of the Homeric poems) had absolutely no idea about what Mycenaean society was really like. Mycenaean kings lived in huge frescoed palaces and were held sacred, like gods incarnate. They performed ablutions in baths; they wore seal rings. When they died they were buried in splendid shaft graves and *tholos* tombs. There is nothing of the kind in the *Iliad* or the *Odyssey*. Homeric kings hardly differed from their vassals and warriors – they themselves kept house on their estates and tilled their gardens, and their sons were shepherds, merchants and warriors. After toil and battle Homer's heroes washed themselves in washbasins. As for their burial rites, they were cremated and the cremation urn was placed under a *tumulus* (burial mound) – this was common for Greeks of the time of the author (or authors) of the Homeric poems, i.e. in the 8th-7th centuries BC, and in the immediately preceding period. The

heroes of these poems prayed in temples in front of full-length statues of the gods – Mycenaean society did not know such statues, but they were very common in the Greece of Homeric times and later. So Homer, or the singers who constituted this person, knew and depicted the reality that surrounded them in the 8th-7th centuries, to some extent modifying it according to idealistic views of what the life of ancient heroes might have looked like.

So what grounds do we have to believe the reality and authenticity of the events depicted in the *Iliad* – the deeds of Achilles in the Trojan War, to say nothing of the war itself? More and more specialists have of late come to consider it to be a piece of fiction, myself included (see my afterword to A. Krawczuk's book *The Trojan War*, Moscow, 1990 and my popular essays in the magazine *Znanie-Sila*, 1985, no. 3 and 1986, no. 7). But what historical kernel underlies this poetic picture and has there ever been any at all? In other words, what kind of historic source is the *Iliad* – does it tell us anything of the events of the 13th century, which constitute its plot (more or less distorted), or only of the cultural background and ideas of the 8th-7th and maybe also the 9th centuries which led to the formation of the plot?

A close study of the images of the *Iliad* – a search for the possible prototypes and sources – can help us solve this problem.

2. THE PROBLEM AND THE METHODOLOGY

No contemporary novel is as densely populated as the *Iliad*. Hundreds of heroes are named in it and even in the foreground there are no less than a dozen persons. Not all of them are absolutely necessary for the development of the plot and not every one of them bears a distinguishing characteristic; however, the poem is amazingly polyphonic, strikingly so considering its age. Several explanations have been proposed to account for this dense population and this polyphonic character. Some have seen these traits as evidence of the genius of the narrator who, in his grand design, transcended his own time. Others are more inclined to credit historical reality with all its complexities, which is seemingly depicted in the poem. Yet others see these traits as evidence of the step-by-step formation of the epic incorporating the contributions of many different singers.

It is useful to here distinguish between the two principal approaches to the study of the *Iliad* and its heroes: the aesthetic (or literary critical) and the historical-linguistic one.

Taking the former approach, scholars have attempted to match the images to the ideas of the poet (or poets); to grasp the set of images as a system; to understand the psychology of the protagonists, and the extent to which they typify certain ideals. In order to account for the incoherence of the plot, the contradictions in the text, etc., these researchers – they are usually unitarians – have also turned to the history of the poem's formation, but generally speaking this is not their subject.

By contrast the latter approach takes the history of the poem's formation – discovering who its author (or authors) may have been and what its sources are – to be of vital importance. The main aim of this approach is to clarify how real life was mirrored in the poem and its images and, if possible, to see the realities of a certain epoch in the details of the poem. Do real historical facts form the basis of the plot or were its events invented, and, if so, then by whom, when and what for? Can we see real historic figures reflected in the poem's heroes, and if so, then to what extent – or maybe their origins are quite different: gods, pseudo-genealogical figures, etc.?

The two approaches are interrelated. It is hard to take the second approach without respect for the data obtained by the first. However

without solving the focal problem of the second approach one runs the risk of committing a gross error when working within the parameters of the first – for, to make a long story short, one can overlook different strata of the poem in the focus upon a single entity, within a single epoch; images of different origin may be mistaken for works of a single author; and twists in the plot which reflect different origins may be mistaken for intentional twists in the plot.

The second approach seems to me the more promising.

In a popular book *The Trojan War* by A. Krawczuk (Poland) all the material is grouped around certain of Homer's heroes: Agamemnon, Achilles, Helen, etc. But Krawczuk was more interested in the role of heroes of the Homeric Trojan War (i.e. of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*) than in other poems of the Trojan cycle (the Cyclic poems) which are now considered to be more ancient than Homer's poems. He was also interested in the fate of these figures in subsequent works of poets, playwrights and ancient historians. Nonetheless, he made some digressions into the date of the work and the origins of images; and for the most part he traced them to real facts and figures of the Trojan War, the latter being for him a historical event of the XIII century BC.

However, I am sceptical both of this and of Homer's personal authorship (I have already noted that the incremental formation of Homer's epic seems to me more likely): I am more attracted to the analysis of the deep roots of the poem's images in life and art, literature and folklore. My aim is to find out, by excavation below the surface of the Homeric poems, how the system of images and persons, which we find in the *Iliad*, arose. As for the main heroes, it would be desirable to find out if each hero was invented by the poet-singer (or singers) especially for the *Iliad* in the course of its creation, or if these figures already existed in some of its sources, and, if so, then if each hero had a real prototype in life or lived only in people's minds, or maybe arose from other reasons.

In the course of the previous two centuries an array of different methods were developed in order to solve these problems.

First, one can ask whether a given figure is organic to the system of images of the poem itself – if it constitutes a natural part of its structure. Researchers usually pay more attention to the composition symmetry of the Homeric epic, i.e. the symmetry of the plot. But the system of images also has its own logic and symmetry, so its order, or, rather, breaches of it can tell us something about how it arose. The analysis of doubles, i.e. figures with the same functions, also belongs here.

Second, it is worth asking with what twists of the plot a given hero is most involved (to the extent that he seems integral to them) and what is

the place of these twists in the plot as a whole – are they necessary to it or not. The analysis of disparity in the images, when the image has different characteristics in different turns of the plot (this can be the result of a confluence of different versions of the image within originally different plots) also belongs to this method. This method was used by many analysts, e.g. E. Meyer, U. Wilamowitz, and others.

Third, a rich harvest can be gathered by comparison with the plots and images of other works. This method was used by D. Mülder, R. Carpenter, B.L. Webster, and others.

Fourth, there is a well-honed technique for distinguishing heroes created especially for the *Iliad* from heroes taken from other poems of the Trojan cycle. The former take part in the war after events described in the *Iliad* have already begun, i.e. in the tenth year of the war, and meet their deaths by the end of the poem. They do not exist outside the frame of the *Iliad*, i.e. not in those poems that were created earlier and which depicted earlier and later events. As for the heroes who already existed before the *Iliad*, they are extensively represented in the poems that are termed Ante-Homerica (or Ante-Iliaca) and Post-Homerica (or Post-Iliaca). W. Kullmann achieved much using this method.

Fifth, it is natural to try to check the historical reality or unreality of events and images, by studying historic documents. This method was used by P. Kretschmer and later by H. Güterbock.

Sixth, it is necessary to trace the cults of the given hero, via: notable places associated with his name; his role in the genealogy of tribes and kinship groups; local legends and myths. Their contents and localization of the most ancient associations can tell us something about the origin of the hero's image and its contexts. This method was used with great success by Otfried Müller, H. Usener, and E. Bethe.

Seventh, it is undoubtedly necessary to find out what the name of the hero can tell us – if it is a Greek name, and if not, then where does it comes from, and when and how did it come to appear in the Greek language? However complicated the last task might seem, this method is by now well developed. P. Kretschmer, J. van Leeuwen, G. von Kamptz, and many others, have worked in this field.

Eighth, it is possible to ascertain the relative antiquity of a hero in folklore if his name is consistently equipped with certain epithets (formulas). In oral poetic tradition and, in particular, in epics, it is very typical to consistently use (i.e. to repeatedly use) the same epithets. In its development, oral poetic tradition creates for itself a more and more organized and crystallized system of stereotypical poetic expressions – a sort of a store of ready forms – and operates with them in the way a

language usually does with words. This practice facilitates improvisation in oral folklore. Among these expressions there are formulas, consisting of a name and an adjoining epithet. The older the name in folklore, the more standardised will be its epithet and the more often will it be used. For the Greek epos this system was seriously investigated by M. Parry, the possibility of determining the relative age of the names by this means was suggested by D. Page, and I myself have used this method in practice and verified its results.

Ninth, one can gain some information from the extent to which the hero's patronymic is attached to his name, i.e. how often they are used together. This can show us how ancient is the connection between two heroes, be it father and son or two brothers.

Tenth, it is possible to analyse genealogical structures within the epic, i.e. to find out how they were created, what parts are later insertions, etc.

So, as you can see, a researcher can use a number of different techniques.

I have made use of the work of many of my predecessors while working in this field. This being intended as a popular book, it is impossible to give all the necessary references, but I would like to mention at the very beginning: the absence of references does not necessarily mean that the idea is my own. However, even an attempt to give all the references could not protect me against slips and embarrassment, for literature in the Homeric studies is immense and it might always happen that the ideas that seemed new to me were already formulated long ago. But specialists will undoubtedly evaluate the extent of the originality (if any) of my work or, at least, the extent to which it diverges from the standard ideas of our time. For the benefit of other readers, I shall try to attribute where appropriate the opinions and discoveries of renowned scholars (though without claiming to give a comprehensive picture) and I shall also mention here and there my own contribution.

Let us begin our survey with the two main heroes of the Trojan epic – Paris and Helen the Fair, who was abducted by him – as it was because of them that the Trojan War broke out. Next we will study the army leaders of both sides (Achaean and Trojan) – Agamemnon and Hector. Then we will turn to the main Achaean hero, Achilles, and those Achaean heroes who fought alongside him – Ajax, Diomedes, and Odysseus. After that, we will study the chiefs within the Trojan coalition, Priam and Aeneas; and then, next to old king Priam we will place the aged Achaean sages Nestor and Phoenix. Next to Aeneas, the leader of the allied Dardanians, we will place Patroclus who at one time led the Myrmidons, and also the Lycian heroes Sarpedon and Pandarus (allies of the Trojans). (However, I shall

occasionally venture to change this order in order to make our comparisons more convenient).

PART II:

ESSAYS ABOUT HEROES

1. PARIS

Every educated person knows the meaning of the expression "The Apple of Discord" and knows that "The Judgment of Paris" was the *casus belli* of the Trojan War. But in the *Iliad*, Paris does not appear very often – he plays only a minor role in the plot of the poem. The main conflict takes place first between Achilles and Agamemnon; and then between Achilles and Hector; and, at the end of the poem, relations between Achilles and Priam take centre stage (in their reconciliation over Hector's body). Paris sometimes takes part in these events but always as a secondary hero – his part seems to be of little importance. The plot develops without his efforts.

But Paris appears in the *Iliad* from the very beginning and what is more, he appears as a 'ready-made' personality, for he has already been a hero of other songs of the Trojan cycle. In the Trojan cycle as a whole he is one of the principal heroes: it was owing to his misdemeanour (the abduction of king Menelaus' wife) that the Trojan War began. And according to the oracle's prediction, the war cannot end until his death. *The Iliad* does not let the hero's image slip our minds: it tells us (in book III) how he tried to solve the whole problem once and for all by single combat with Menelaus.

Paris abducted Menelaus' wife at the instigation of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, and with her help. Aphrodite promised (and gave) him the love of Helen, the most beautiful woman in the world, in reward for his help in winning the competition between the three goddesses – Hera, Athena, and Aphrodite. This was all described in the *Cypria* – the first part of the Trojan epic. The whole *Iliad* is permeated with Hera's and Athena's hostility towards Paris and all the Trojans. In song XXIV of the *Iliad* the cause of this hostility is made explicit, i.e. the judgment of Paris. In the course of excavating the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta, a comb was found depicting the judgement: bearded Paris is holding an apple which he has to hand to the most beautiful of the goddesses. Its date, c.620BC, coincides with the time of the *Iliad*'s composition. But if we bear in mind that many parts of the Trojan cycle (the so-called Cyclic poems), are, according to the opinion of neo-analysts, more ancient than the *Iliad* itself, then we must acknowledge that the myth itself may be even more deeply rooted. A certain role in adding details to the myth was played by the Callistea – the annual beauty competition, which took place in Hera's sanctuary on Lesbos. L. Preller and C. Robert in their *Greek*

Mythology (early 20th century) characterise these festivals as "the embryo of the tale of the judgment of Paris".

Fig. 2-1 The judgment of Paris. Detail of bone comb from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta (ca. 620 BC)

The image of Paris was formed before the *Iliad* was created, a fact that is witnessed in the *Iliad* by traces of his earlier existence in a somewhat different character. He had not always been the same as he was in the *Iliad*. There he was an effeminate, and sometimes cowardly, extravagant rake – Aphrodite's pet. But this is a kind of veneer by which he is contrasted to Hector and by which his offence against his motherland is emphasised – for the sake of his own enjoyment he violated the laws of hospitality and the sanctity of wedlock, and brought war and siege upon Troy. But as E. Bethe noted, in song XI, fighting side by side with Hector, Paris is shown as a strong hero. He wounded three very important enemies: Diomedes, Machaon, and Eurypylus, and finally it was Paris who killed Achilles – the *Iliad* reminds us several times of this destiny.

It should be mentioned, though, that he engages his enemies not by spear or sword, as an ideal hero should, but by bow and arrow, which for Homer is a weapon of lower rank: the bow is a mean kind of weapon – it engages enemies not in brave face-to-face combat, but from undercover (let us recall the insidious shot by Pandarus and the auxiliary role played by Teucer the Bowman). This appraisal reflects the aristocracy's opinion – they despised and hated the effective weapon of commoners, to which

many noble warriors fell without honour. In the Lelantian war at the end of the 8th century, both sides even made a treaty banning long-distance weapons. All fighting should be hand-to-hand (Strabo, X, 1, 12; Plutarch, *Theseus*, 6). But the ancient heroic myths did not evaluate the bow this way. The ancient heroes are bowmen – Heracles, Eurytus, and of those closer in time to the Trojan War we can name Odysseus and Philoctetes, to say nothing of Apollo himself.

Helen's abduction does not seem to have always been a thing for which Paris was blamed: in the epoch of colonisation, adventures and raids – when moral attitudes were those of conquerors, which did not differ that much from those of robbers – the abduction of the most beautiful woman in the world was a heroic deed, and the man who was able accomplish it was a great hero. This was noted long ago by H. Usener. Indeed, the greatest Athenian hero, Theseus, was another abductor. Song VI of the *Iliad* contains the story of the "wrath" of Paris – the wrath he feels towards the Trojans. It is similar to the wrath, which inflamed Achilles against the Achaeans, or of Meleager against the Aetolians. Paris was wrathful, for some of the Trojans proposed to return Helen to her first husband Menelaus, in order that Troy should avoid war and siege. Paris agreed only to pay ransom, but refused to return Helen and, being offended, refused to take part in battle, just like Achilles. We should mention that this proposal of the Trojans and the refusal of Paris are given in song VII, after his "wrath" in song VI, but the singer knew in advance about these events. There is no other explanation of his "wrath". And it was only a great hero of Achilles' or Meleager's stature who had the right to such wrath.

The name of the hero reveals something of his earlier status.

We are used to naming the abductor of Helen the Fair as 'Prince Paris', but in fact he has two names in the *Iliad*, which are used alternately: Paris and Alexander. What is more, he is named Alexander four times more often than Paris. The name Paris began to be used on equal terms with the name Alexander only in the later epos, in imitation of the Homeric epic by Quintus of Smyrna and other authors. In our own times this person retained in practice just the one name, Paris. But from the dynamics of the name ratio, it is obvious that before the *Iliad* this person had usually been named Alexander. In the *Cypria*, judging by its rendering by Proclus (the original has not reached us), there is only Alexander. So, the name 'Alexander' appeared in the epos earlier, and 'Paris' later.

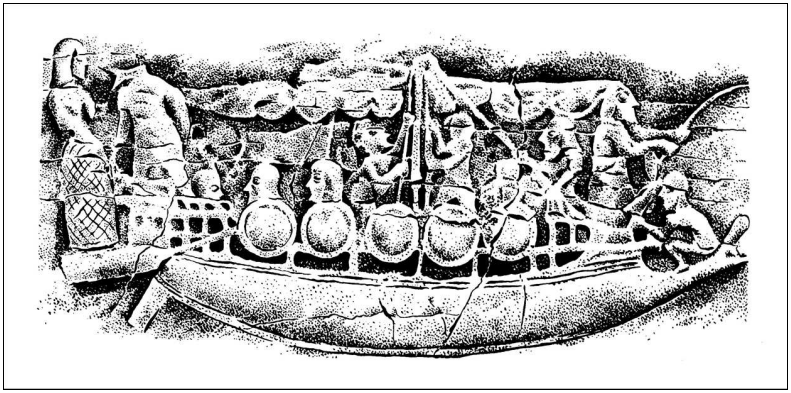

Fig. 2-2 The crime of Paris: the abduction of Helen. Detail of bone plaque from the sanctuary of Artemis Orthia in Sparta (ca. 620 BC)

I made an attempt to check this succession, this correlation between age and name, by quantifying the extent to which each of the names is accompanied by constant epithets. For, as has already been said, heroic epic (as a genre of oral poetic tradition) is characterised by the presence of rigid 'formulae' – clichés, consisting invariably of a noun and an epithet. The older the text, the more such stock phrases it contains. The earlier the name appears in the epic, the more firmly it is embedded into formulaic verse and adorned with constant epithets (so as to build stereotyped formulas). The network of epithets form concentrations. Calculations show that the name Alexander is in 47% of cases used with constant epithets (i.e. formulas) (compared with: Hector – 41%, Achilles – 40%, Priam – 32%, Patroclus – 23%, Aeneas – 18%) while for Paris the ratio is 0, i.e. this name is never used with constant epithets (formulas).

Alexander is a Greek name meaning 'averting from men' (in the sense of 'defender of people'). Now things become clearer: this proud name reflects the hero's early status. But what came first – status or name – or were they always associated? This problem is to be solved on other grounds.

The name Paris was not in use in Greek society and we cannot explain it in terms of Greek roots. Researchers have supposed it to be Illyrian or Thracian and compared it with the Sanskrit 'para' ('the best'). The Thracian 'Poris' means 'young man', 'fighter'. Titus Livius (40. 4.4) mentions an Aenean (a young man from Thrace) bearing this name. And in the South Thracian dialect it would have been pronounced as 'Paris'. There is a related word in Greek: 'poris' means "cub", 'thuoparis' means "degenerate",

"black sheep of the family". This could have something to do with the distinguishing characteristic of the unhappy prince.

So researchers speculated that the Balkan tribes' invasion of the Troad led to the importation of Thracian and related Phrygian names and myths, and that the formation of mixed Greek-Thracian or Greek-Phrygian nobility led to the heroes of Greek myths finding new names and to blending of old and new heroes from different myths and legends. This was the opinion of Tomashek, Brandenstein, P. Kretschmer *et al*.

But it was L. Malten who formulated a more simple and, to my mind, more plausible supposition, which has since been forgotten: Paris was the eponym (the founder, whose name was taken to signify a town, people, etc.) of the town of Parion on the northern shore of the Troad. There are many figures of this kind in the epic: Cebriones is the eponym of the town of Cebrene; Asius – the eponym of the town of Assos; Aeneas – the eponym of the tribe of Aeneans or of the town of Aenius; Dardanus – the eponym of the town of Dardania or of the Dardanian people. It seems that Paris was supposed to be the founder of Parion, but in fact the town was founded by colonists from the island of Paros in the 7th century and originally Parius or Paria, son or grandson of Demeter, the main goddess of the island, had been recognised as its founder.

But when a dispute – as to whom Parion should belong – arose between the authorities of Paros, Miletus and Erythra, opposition also arose to the idea that Parion had been founded by Parius from Paros. A new explanation was given for the founding of the town – Paris (or Parid if we take another rendering of this name) became the founder instead of Parius. This fictitious figure was given a suitable genealogy and biography such as related him to an ancient king of Troad. Paris was included as among the sons of old king Priam and then identified with Alexander. Etruscan evidence confirms this theory: the Etruscans borrowed the images from the epos and myths of the Greeks at a very early date. It is therefore no surprise that Etruscan pictures and portrayals inscribed 'Alexander' and 'Paris' identify two different persons: Alexander, with three goddesses (passing his 'judgment') is portrayed on mirrors; while the warrior Paris appears on burial stones and urns.

But why did Paris merge so deeply with Alexander, the lover of Helen? Maybe some role was played by the main cults of the town of Parion (which naturally found a reflection in the character of the eponym). The main gods of Parion were Priapus, the god of fertility and virility, and Eros, the god of love. Both cults came to Parion from Paros.

On the subject of the quantitative characteristics of the name Alexander in the *Iliad*, there is one highly significant statistic: in terms of