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The Iliad of Homer
 Book Two
The Dream,
the Test,
and the Boiotia or List of Ships

J. M. Wilcox

Now all the other gods and men, the horsepowered car-fighters,
 were pounding their ears through the night, but sweet sleep did not
 possess and seduce Skyboss Zeus,
 for he to be sure was spinning a plan in the looping lobes and girding
 folds of his brain how to honor Akhilleus Man of Pain,
 and immobilize many by the ships of the Akhaioi.
 And this scheme seemed best to him in his storm-slamming mind:
 to send Agamemnon son of Atreus a poisonous dream.
 So he spoke and addressed the dream with syllable-bubbles, words
 winged:
 'Beat it! Take off! You dream of death! Go to the quick ships of the
 Akhaioi.
 When you reach the hut of Agamemnon son of Atreus
 tell him absolutely everything exactly as I command.
 Charge him to harness the hair-streaming Akhaioi
 in a rush; for now he may take the steamrollered manholed wide-wayed
 city
 of the Trojans, for the immortals who dwell in Olympian homes

are no longer split in decision, polarized, for Sky Queen Here, supplicating,
 bent all their plastic minds, and troubles are bolted to Trojans.'

Thus he spoke, and the dream took off when it heard the command;
 and quickly it came to the high-speed ships of the Akhaioi,
 and whooshed to Agamemnon son of Atreus, and it found him
 popped, hushed in his hut, and over him gushed celestial sleep.
 And it stood erect above his head, resembling son of Neleus
 Nestor, whom Agamemnon esteemed supreme above all knowers of
 things.

Shamming his shape, the divine dream spoke to him:

'You're asleep, son of battle-minded horse-taming firehead Atreus;
 it is not right for a man with a plan to sleep through the cycle of night,
 to whom hosts have been charged, to whom to boot so many objects of
 care are crushing.

Now quick! Get my drift! For to you I am sent as a messenger from
 Skyhead Zeus,

who, though far away, cares for and pities you deeply.

He commands you to metal out the hair-streaming Akhaioi
 in a rush; for now you may take the wide-wayed manholed steamroller-
 ed city

of the Trojans, for the immortals who dwell in Olympian homes
 are no longer split in decision, polarized, for Sky Queen Here, supplicating,
 bent all their flexible minds, and sorrows are snapped on Trojans

by Cobalt Zeus. Now keep this eye-shut shade in your mind,— don't let
 it fade — and don't let oblivion

latch on to you, when honey-hearted trickle-sparkle sleep lets you go.'

So the dream spoke and slipped out of sight, and left him there spinning things in his rushing mind that were not to be put into action. For he truly thought he could take and tear the city of Priam the King that day,—

what a fool! what a blockhead!— since he knew not what twisty tactics Zigzag Zeus was plotting;

for still he had plans to inflict pain upon and make moan both Trojans and Danaoi in the course of brutal battles.

Then he woke up, breaking out of sleep, with the voice of a god agush in his ears.

So he sat upright and slipped on a soft frock,

lovely and lately-woven, hot off the loom, and he threw on a coat in a swirl;

and under his oil-sleek feet he bound beautiful sassy sandals,

and then around his shoulders tossed his chest-belted sword with silver-headed rivets;

and he grabbed the generational power-baton, ever indestructable; with this he walked along the ships of the copper-coated Akhaioi.

Then Eos, Goddess of Dawn, finger-painted color-cracked charm-toned, broke the sky and shot to tall Olumpos, unleashing and mouthing light to Star-Tangled Zeus and the other celestials;

but Agamemnon Stabilizer ordered the glass-voiced clear-toned harbin-gers

to invoke the hair-streaming Akhaioi to the place of formation;

they invoked, and the men assembled quite quickly.

And Agamemnon first made the council of soul-supreme senior commanders sit down
by the ship of Nestor, the king from Gatetown, Pulos-born;
after he called them together in a huddle, he welded a solid fisted plan:
'Listen, my friends. A divine dream came to me in my sleep
through the interterminal night; and it closely resembled
marvelous Nestor — a dead ringer! — quite tightly in form and size and
build.

And it stood above my head and spoke to me thus:

'You're asleep, son of war-absorbed horse-taming firehead Atreus;
it is not right for a man with a plan to sleep through the cycle of night,
to whom hosts have been charged, to whom to boot so many objects of
care are crushing;

Now quick! Get my drift! For to you I am sent as a messenger from
Skyhead Zeus,

who, though far away, cares for and pities you deeply.

He commands you to metal out the hair-streaming Akhaioi
in a rush; for now you may take the wide-paved manholed steamroller-
ed city

of the Trojans. The immortals who dwell in Olympian homes
are no longer oscillating; for Here Sky Queen, supplicating,
bent all their flexible minds, and sorrows are soldered to Trojans
by Top-Bleached Zeus. Now keep this eye-shut shade in your mind —
don't let it fade.' So the dream

spoke and vanished on wings, and sweet sleep released me.

So let's go, to see if perhaps we can metal out sons of the Akhaioi;

but first I shall give them a verbal test, a standard procedure,
and shall urge them to flee in their ships with rows of many beam-
locking rowing-benches,
but you go where they go and backkeep and block them with words
from every direction.'

Speaking thus he then sat down, and among them arose
Nestor, who was king of sandy Pulos, Gatetown.
With a mind full of truth he addressed them and spoke:
'Friends, leaders and guardians of the Argeioi, the people who gleam,
if any other of the Akhaioi relayed this dream,
we might deem it a lie and turn away like dream-rejectors.
But the man who saw it boasts to be best by far of the Akhaioi.
Come now, to see if perhaps we can metal out sons of the Akhaioi.'

Thus he spoke and led a line from the council,
and the kings with their proppy power-sticks stood up and obeyed
the shepherd of the battle-people; and the forces were mobilizing.
As bumbles of bees, bunchy and gushy, rumble and bolt
from a hollow rock, coming nonstop in fresh waves,
and they fly in racemes over blossoms of spring;
in huddles they hover, some flitter, some flutter, some zig, some zag;
so, many platoons from the ships and the huts
marched along the big beach, troops on-the-go,
to the people-meeting place; and Ossa, Rumor, flag-girl of Indigo Zeus,
blew in a blaze
through their heads, stirring them up to step on it, and the men assem-
bled.

And the place to assemble was jumbled, and the earth hurt; she was
groaning below

as the people were sitting down, creating a racket. And nine
shouting heralds were trying to bridle them, so perhaps
they might can the clatter, and listen to sky-suckled kings.

And the troops sat down quickly, parked in their places,
capping their clacking. And King Agamemnon stood up,
bearing the baton which Red-Hot Hephaistos fire-and-tonged.

Sparky Hephaistos gave it to King Zeus son of Kronos,
but then Zeus gave it to Diaktor, Go-Between, a.k.a. Argeiphontes,
Eye-Creature-Killer,

and King Hermes gave it to the steed-beater Pelops, Ash Face;
then Pelops, Ash Face, gave it in turn to Atreus, shepherd of the people,
and Atreus on death-brink left it to Thuestes, lamb-loaded,
and Thuestes in turn left it to Agamemnon Adamant to bear,
to rule many isles and all of Argos, Land of Sparkles.

He leaned on the proppy utile imperial stick and spoke a few words to
the Argeioi, the Men of Light:

‘Friends, Danaan warriors, Red-Mouth Ares’ satellites, battleers,
Zeus son of Kronos superbly entangles me in cumbrous folly,
— implacable beast!— who before now promised me and nodded too, a
definite index,

that I would return to my home, after I pulverized well-walled Ilios;
but now he calculates black tricks, and commands me
to go to Luminous Argos infamous,— with a tainted rep!— having lost
many men.

Thus perhaps it seems probable that this turn of events is agreeable to
high-powered Zeus,

who blasted the heads and blew the tops off of many cities,
and still will continue to blast and blow tower-crowns, for his force is
supreme.

Now this to be sure is a shameful affair even for men of the future to
hear,

that futilely such a platoon, so fine a platoon of Akhaioi
clashed in bootless battles and fought in hollow wars
against fewer men; and not yet has an end at all appeared, no battle-
tunnel terminal light.

For even if we should be willing, both Akhaioi and Trojans,
to cut a solid oath with red jets of sacrifice, both be counted,
if the Trojans enhomed at firesides should group together,
and we Akhaioi be marshaled in sets of ten,
and each group of ten choose one of the Trojans to ladle our wine,
many a set would lack a man to ladle wine.

To such a degree do I deem there are so many more Akhaian fighters
than Trojans who dwell in the city; but scads of allies are here to be had
from many cities, men who shake the spear and bang the shield,
who knock me off course and keep me at bay in a baffle, and do not
allow me though burning for blood

to turn into shambles the well-peopled city of Ilios.

Indeed nine cycles of marvelous Zeus of the tilted stars have turned,
and now the ships' timber is rotten, planks soggy, and cables of broom
decomposed;

but I deem both our wives and our word-lacking children
are sitting in our roomy homes waiting to receive us, but our task,
as it is, remains intact, mission unaccomplished, the sake for which we
have come here.

Let's go, just as I say, let's all obey, let us acquiesce.
Let's flee with our ships to our dear birthland,
for the taking is no longer doable of wide-paved manholed steamroller-
ed Troy.'

So he spoke, and he flamed the heated hearts in their breasts,
fire filling the mass of men, as many as did not hear the council.
And the crush was set in motion like the long and swelling waves of the
sea,
the surging Cycladic Ikarian Sea, which Red-Exploding Euros, East
Wind, or Notos, South Wind,
has fired, shot in a rush from the clouds of Blue-Suffused Zeus.
But just as when Dark-Layered Zephuros, West Wind, comes and
brushes a deep cool cornfield,
boisterous, propelling, and it totters with corn-ears nodding,
thus was the sum of assembled men shifted, and they zipped
to the ships with a shout, and from under their feet a cloud of dust
lifted and loomed; and they exhorted each other
to aim for and cling to and drag the ships down to the sparkling sea,
and they cleared out the runways, the ship-tugging trenches, and
whoops went up to the sky
in the scramble for home, and they started to rip out the props from
under the ships.

Then the Argeioi, the Men of Light, might have swung their return,
fighters of fate,
had not Here Sky Queen spoken a word to laossoous Athene the
people-propeller — popsparks! :

‘O my stars, child of Zeus of the snakehead-goatshield, Atrutone
Unrub-Downable!

Truly thus will the Argeioi, the Men of Light, flee to their dear
birthland,

make a break for the boats, homebound, upon the broad back of the
sea?

And a reason to boast they would leave to Priam and Trojans,
the prize of Argive Helen, Light-Carved, the sake for whom many
Akhaioi

perished in Troy, far from their dear birthland.

Now go through the squads of the copper-coped Akhaioi.

With your special mild words bar and block each man,
and do not let them drag down their double-curved oar-spinning salt-
swinging ships to the sea.’

Thus she spoke, nor did Athene disobey, goddess of the tourmaline
eyes;

in a dart and a dash she descended the peaks of Olumpos,
and quickly she came to the fast corvettes of the Akhaioi.

And so she found Odusseus Hated Man, peer of Indigo Zeus in counsel,
just standing. He was not reaching for his well-decked black ship with
beautiful oar-banks,

since sorrow and pain came to his heart, squeezing his soul;
and standing near, Athene of the tourmaline eyes addressed him:

‘Zeus-Produced son of Laertes the Ant Man, dodgy Odusseus,
thus will you tumble on your ships with many locking rowing-benches,
homebound indeed, and flee to your precious birthland?

And would you leave to Priam and Trojans their reason to boast,

the prize of Argive Helen, Light-Carved, the sake for whom many
 Akhaioi
 perished in Troy, far from their precious birthland?
 Now go through the troops of the Akhaioi, and do not dawdle any
 longer,
 and with your special mild words bar and block each man,
 and do not let them drag down their twin-turned oar-spinning salt-
 swinging ships to the sea.'

So she spoke, and he perceived the voice of the goddess speaking,
 and she fired his feet, and he cast off his brooch-blinking cloak which
 the herald
 picked up, the Ithakan Eurubates, Wide-Stepper, who was attending
 him.
 But he himself came face-to-face with Agamemnon son of Atreus
 and received from him the baton of his fathers, imperishable forever.
 With it he went down by the ships through the troops of the bronze-
 coated Akhaioi.

Now whomever he would meet who was king or chieftain,
 he would stand by his side and enmesh him with delicate words:
 'Good buddy, it's not right that I try to scare you as if you were lacking
 backbone,
 but you yourself sit down and make the other men sit down.
 For still you don't know clearly what the mind of the son of Atreus is
 crystallizing.
 This is only a test, but soon he will pink and pock the sons of the
 Akhaioi.

Did not we all hear what he said in the council?

Be on guard, for bile-batter-whipped he may do something bad to the
sons of the Akhaioi;
supreme is the storm-breaking dendrite-snapping mind of sky-jelled
kings,
royal esteem is from Blue-Face Zeus, and Zeus, camp-counselor, loves
them.'

But whatever common man he would meet and see shouting for the
ships,
he would tap and bop with his proppy baton, and batter with words:
'Good buddy, sit still, stop trembling, have no fear, and listen to the
words of others
who are better than you, for you are unwarlike, weak and wanky,
and never are weighed in battle or counted in counsel — you don't cut
ice!

No way shall we Akhaioi all be kings here.

Too many chiefs, multiple powerheads, is not a good thing. Let there be
one who commands,
one king, to whom the child of crooked-counseling Kronos, Circle-
Maker,
gave the big stick and its cognate powers, so he may deliberate for his
men.'

Thus he was poisoning his power, engaging the companies as tour-
inspector, and they shot back
in turn to the meeting place from their ships and huts
with a clashy rumble, as when a swell of the poluphloisbous sound-

abounding undulating soft-splashing hard-pounding sea
roars on the long-sonic shore, and the deep explodes with a dashy
tumble.

The others sat down suddenly and remained in their places;
only Thersites of the tireless tongue, Rash Man, continued to clack and
prattle
with babble and drool and a hurl and a whirl of idle alinear words,
not in sequential order,— who knew well how to nettle and quarrel with
kings —

but whatever seemed to him to be jocular to the Argeioi, the Luminous
People.

And he was the most despicable man who came into the shadows of
Troy's towers,
ugly with a capital U: O-shaped legs, one foot lame, shamle-gaited, and
a hunchback
with two humpy shoulders pinning his chest ; on top of that
a pointy sugar-loaf head, and spare hair, a snatch of stubble, grew in a
bloom upon it.

And he was starkly hated by Akhilleus Man of Pain and Odusseus
Disdained,

for he would bicker and scrap in a tiff with those two; now, again,
shrieking and braying

at sparkling Agamemnon he sputtered sharp abuses. And so, with him,
the Akhaioi

were intensely incensed and waxy and vexed in their blood-boiled wild
hearts.

But squawking nonstop he croaked and barked at Agamemnon Ada-

mant:

‘Son of Atreus, indeed what again are you griping about and what do you crave?’

Your sloping huts are crammed with bronze, and many curvilinear women,

select delectables, are in your huts, which we Akhaioi give you first, whenever we crush and crack a city.

Can it be you still need gold too, which some faceless soldier of the horse-busting Trojans will bring from Troy as a price for his son, whom I bound and dragged away, or some other stripe of the Akhaioi; or do you crave a young girl, so you can mingle in love, and whom you yourself apart can possess? It doesn’t look good

for the one who is captain to cause trouble for the sons of the Akhaioi.

You pushovers! Base shame-balls! Akhaian squaws! Men no longer!

Let’s saddle up and go home with our ships, and let this cookie here in Troytown digest his impressive prizes, so then he may know whether we too would give him a hand when it got hot, or not, he who just now dishonored Akhilleus, a man far better than he; for he took with a snatch his prize assumed and keeps it.

Indeed no rage thrashes and kicks at Akhilleus’ heart, but he lets this go;

or else, Atreides, this were your last outrageous disgrace,’

So spoke Thersites, Rash Man, scolding Agamemnon Adamant, shepherd of the host;

and quickly bright Odusseus Abominated came beside him,

and looking bleakly and obliquely he reamed him out with hard words:

‘Babbling Thersites, though you can utter syllable bubbles, crystal

tones,
 quell your tongue, and don't be single-keen to quarrel with kings.
 For I deem there is no other mortal baser than you,
 of the many who came with the sons of Atreus into the shadows of
 Troy's towers;
 so, you had better not soapbox and mouth the word, 'kings',
 and you had better not flame them with blame and hope for home.
 We don't know clearly in any degree, up to this point, how these things
 will be,
 whether we, the sons of the Akhaioi, shall return, plus or minus battle-
 crowns.
 In this mode, strafing nonstop, taking up space, you heckle and hatchet
 Agamemnon son of Atreus, shepherd of chevrons, because the Danaan
 warriors
 give him many things, oodles of boodle, raze-dazzle; and you with a
 sneer slice his heart.
 But I will tell you something up front, and what I say will be fulfilled:
 if I find you again acting like a brainless belly-voiced dummy, just like
 now,
 then no more may the head of Odusseus be attached to his shoulders,
 and no more may I be called the father of Telemakhos Far-Fighter,
 if I don't take you and strip off your clothes,
 your brooch-twinkling cloak and tunic of rings which screen your pubis,
 and toss you as you blubber and plore to the ships,
 after driving you out of the meeting place with demoting thrashes and
 blows.'

Thus he spoke, and with his baton he bopped his back and shoulders;

and Thersites, Rash Man, doubled up, body bending, and a blooming
tear fell from him;
and a bleeding swelling bruise welled on his back
below the staff of gold. Then he sat down, and he was scared,
bursting in pain, and looking helpless he wiped away the tear.
And though in distress, the Danaoi mocked him, cackle-coated, and
laughed up a storm;
and thus someone turning an eye to his neighbor would say:
'O my stars, Odusseus has done a good job, performing well, many a
time indeed,
both introducing solid counsel and mobilizing for battle, helming out;
but now this deed by far is the best he has ever done among the Argeioi,
well-executed,
blocking this epesbolic word-chucking worm from taking the floor.
His too-hardy pumped-up heart, I deem, won't prompt him again
to quarrel with kings, smearing and soiling words entooling.'

Thus spoke the crush of corpsmen, and Odusseus the city-buster
stood up holding the booster baton; and beside him Athene of the
battleship eyes,
resembling a sacred herald, bid the host to hush,
so the sons of the Akhaioi, both proximal and distal, unified,
could hear his mouth-made words and consider his wishful plan.
With a mind full of truth he addressed the assembly and spoke to them:
'Son of Atreus, now truly, O king, the Akhaioi hanker to make you
the most marred and debased among all speech-endowed mortals,
nor will they fulfill the pledge which they forged and proponed
on their way here while marching in waves from steed-feeding Argos,

Land of Light,

vowing to you to decimate well-walled Ilios, before heading for home.
For just like young children or widow women
they wail and moan to each other, craving to go back home.
Indeed there is double trouble too to return sorrow-saturated;
for he who remains even one month away from his wife
with his ship of many benches, deck-yoking, feels sad, washed in
anguish, he whom
winter storms and whirlicanes and whippy seas hit and hammer;
but for us remaining here, burns and turns the ninth revolving
cycle; therefore, I am not abashed the Akhaioi
are glassy-eyed beside their curvy keels; but even so
it is shameful indeed to stay so long and go back bare, spoiless,
empty-handed.

Be tough, my friends, and stick it out for a while, so we can learn
whether Purpling Kalkhas clearly and truly sees the unseen or not.
For indeed we do know this well in our hearts, and you are all
witnesses,
whom the death-bringing doomy ones have not displaced and dragged
off.

It seems like yesterday or the day before, when ships of Akhaioi
were grouping in Aulis, Wind-Blown, about to bring luck-lack to Priam
and Trojans;
and we were around the spring, down along the high holy molar altars,
offering impeccable firepools, oxen-rings, to the permanent people,
beneath a beautiful broad-leaved oriental plane-tree, from which
flowed glittering water.

There a striking sky-sign appeared: a gleaming snake, blood-kill-red on

the back,
grisly, lurid, which the Olympion himself propelled into the light,
shot from under the steep altar-steps and flashed to the leafy oriental
plane-tree.

And there were nesting sparrowettes, inchoative chirping birdies,
on the highest branch, crouching under fusive lavish leaves,
eight little nippers, and the mother who bore the hatch was number
nine.

Then the serpent swallowed them squeaking, gobbled them cheeping
piteously,
and the mother flittered and fluttered, wailing for her precious babies;
and looming in a vertical coil the snake snatched her by the wing
shrieking, enringing.

But when he had smacked his lips and snacked the hatch and the
mother to boot,
the god who drew the snake to the light drew him out of the light
invisible;

for the son of crooked-crafting Kronos turned him to stone,
and we who stood by, taking it in, marveled at such a chain of events.

So when the strange and terrible wonders came into the bull-bleeding
fires of the gods,
invading immolations, then Purpling Kalkhas subito spoke sparks from
the gods:

‘Why in the world have you hushed, heavy-haired Akhaioi?
Zeus the inducer showed us this great marvel, cobra-dazzle,
late-created, late-fulfilled, whose echoing glory will never be killed.
Just as this serpent chomped bird-babies and bird-mother to boot,
eight little nippers, and the mother who bore the hatch the ninth

sparrow unspared,
 so shall we bash heads in the shadows of Troy for so many years,
 but in the tenth we shall take down the wide-paved manholed steamrol-
 lered town.'

Thus spoke Kalkhas of the purple mind; now indeed all this is being
 fulfilled.

But come now, all you remainders, you shin-guarded Akhaioi,
 stay right where you are, until we take down the fabulous city of
 Priam.'

Thus he spoke, and the Argeioi, the Men of Light, shouted and
 boomed, and the ships enringing
 rang with a terrible roar, echo-clashing, beneath the cheers of the
 Akhaioi,

commending the mouth-made words of divine Odusseus.

And Nestor the Gerenian charioteer talked to them too:

'O my stars, you are holding assembly resembling indeed
 wordless toddlers, to whom warlike deeds are not at all objects of care.
 How thus will our oaths and bound bonds turn out for us?

Indeed let the plans and counsels of men enlace and vanish in fire,
 the unmingled waterless wine for the gods and hardy handshakes, which
 we trusted;

in vain do we scrap and tussle with words, nor can we find
 a single solution, though we have been here a long time.

Son of Atreus,— you can still do it! — just as before with an unshaken
 will,

lead the Argeioi, the Men of Light, through the space of brutal battles,
 — but let these conk out, kick in, the one or two of the Akhaioi

who make clandestine separate plans, for they will produce no effect —
before we aim for Argos, Land of Light, until we know
if the promise of Zeus of the stone-turning-goatshield is a lie or not.
For I affirm the high-powered son of Kronos nodded yes
on the day when the Argeioi, the Bright People, boarded their high-
speed ships,
bringing butchery and liquidating doom to the Trojans;
by lobbing lightning on the right he exhibited seasonable goddess-spun
celestial signs.

Thus let no one barrel and burn for home,
until he has cuddled and saddled the wife of a Trojan,
and has settled accounts, imbursed for his struggles and sighs for the
sake of Helen.

But if anyone wishes abundantly to push for home,
let him snag and cling to his black ship of beautiful oar-banks, well-
decked,
so in sight of the others he may bump into death and the battering fist
of doom.

But, O king, you yourself ponder well and heed another;
whatever word I may utter will not be jettisoned — you can count on
that, buddy!

Separate the men into tribes, by clans, Agamemnon,
so clan can succor clan, and tribe boost tribe.

And if you do this thus and the Akhaioi heed you,
then you will know who of the chiefs lacks back, and who of the hosts,
and who is plucky, for they will project their force by fighting; —
clanshine! —

and if you don't lap up the city, you will know if it's due to the will of

the gods, wonder-sonic sky-tonic,
or the panic and fear of the men and their folly and silly behavior in
war.'

Then responding to him spoke King Agamemnon Adamant:
'Indeed once again, old man, you eloquently conquer-talk the sons of the
Akhaioi.

Father Zeus and Headborn Athene and Apollo Dominator!

I wish I had ten such counsellors who link-think, connect the dots,
among Akhaioi;

thus would the city of Priam the King quickly bow and buckle,
clobbered and clubbed, tangled and taken by dint of our hands.

But son of Kronos, Zeus of the snakehead-goatshield, loads me down
with woes;

he flings me among feckless conflicts, uncrossed quarrels.

For indeed Akhilleus and I fought over a girl

with polar syllables, and I was the first to blow up;

but if ever, to be sure, we deliberate with single purpose, then no more
will there be a shelving, a shove-back of bone-wreck and blood-ick for
the Trojans, no, not in the least.

But now put on your eating caps and dig in, so we can crack heads,
battle-mingle, meld with Blood-Mouth Ares.

Let every man hone and spark the pole of his spear, and sling well his
bullhide metal-plated tassel-tossing dragon-spinning shield,

and feed well his chow-chumbling quick-hooved horses,

and inspect, eye-circle, his well-built car and focus on war,

so all day long we can be broken up in abominable battle, sifted by
Body-Shaking Ares.

For no time-out will be called for us, no, not a comma,
if the coming of night doesn't sift and dissolve the passion and might of
the men.

The leather shading-man-around shield-strap across the chest of every
soldier
will reek with rills of sweat, and round the pole of his two-part spear
his peplous hand will sag,
and his horse will sweat, heat-attacked, tugging the well-waxed war-
car.

But whom I should see preferring to linger apart from the battle,
shirking shock of action, next to the curve-keeled ships, soon for him,
lacking knack,
it won't be an option to ward off or dodge wild dogs and rabid birds.'

Thus he spoke, and the Argeioi whooped and rumbled like a wave
that scrapes
a sky-high cape when Notos, South Wind, a hot wet sirocco, comes
propelling
against a crag protruding, which waves of pounding wind-combinations
never leave, when they high-hurl from all sides, bound around every-
where.

Thus they rose in a rush and shot in a scatter to ships,
and made smoky fires in slopy cabanas, and mopped up meals.
And in succession each to each they sacrificed to the everlast gods,
pitching prayers to duck death and avoid the moil of Bone-Cracking
Battle, the tug and toil of Blood-Oozing War.
But Agamemnon king of men sacrificed a fat and holy
five-year bull to the high-powered son of Kronos,

and called the battle-chiefs, the best of the body of Akhaioi:
 Nestor first and Timber-Tough Idomeneus the king,
 and then the two Aiantes, the great Salaminian and the lesser Lokrian,
 and son of Tudeus,
 and in turn Odusseus Abominated sixth, equal in craft to Sky-Pop Zeus.
 And self-propelled People-Repeller Menelaus good at the war-whoop
 came to him,
 for he knew in his heart how his brother was lost in distress.
 And they stood round the bull and scooped up sprinkling barley-grains,
 and praying, Chief Agamemnon spoke among them:
 ‘Most glorious exceptional Zeus, black-cloud-clad, dweller of the sparky
 air,
 grant the sun not set or twilight come upon us
 until I have kicked out and knocked down the parquet-kissing carbon-
 smeared ceiling-beam
 of Priam the King, and charred his doors with hall-filled fire, orange
 unforming,
 and ripped Hektor’s tunic, ring-chinkling, snug round his chest,
 ribboned by bronze, spearhead-tattered, and may many comrades about
 him
 tumble to earth, fall on their face and bite the dust, take turf — teeth-
 tunnels!’

Thus he spoke, but not so soon did son of Kronos fulfill his wish,
 yet he accepted holy sacrifices, but compounded troubles unturning
 too-too much.
 And when they had prayed and sprinkled and flung the dribbling grains,
 first they drew back the heads of the sheep — necks turned to the sky

— and sliced their throats and flayed them,
and cut out the thighs and wrapped them with a double layer of smoky
ready-made fat and placed raw pieces of sliced flesh upon them.
And then they burned these up on split laths of leafless fire-wood,
and piercing with spits the internal organs held them over the kindled
fire of Anvil-Clanging Hephaistos.

But when the thighs were burned and consumed and the organs were
eaten,

they cut up and pierced the remaining parts with airborne spits
and roasted everything carefully and pulled off the pieces.

Then after they had stopped their toil and made the meal ready,
they feasted, nor did their appetites lack any component or part of the
well-balanced meal.

Now when food and drink dropped in desire,

then Nestor the Gerenian charioteer began to speak to them:

‘Most glorious son of Atreus, Agamemnon master of men,
let us now no longer babble or huddle here, nor let us still stall any more
or postpone or reject the work which indeed the god puts in our palms.
It’s time for action. Let the sacred heralds of the metal-coated Akhaioi
make their proclamation and round up the companies among the ships,
and let us go systematically, men of many voices, through the staggered
camp-fires of the Akhaioi

so we can fire and fuel more quickly pole-punching spear-pushing
battle, bronze-banging silver-clashing war.’

Thus he spoke, and Agamemnon king of men did not disobey.
He bid the clear-toned sugar-sonic sacred heralds subito
to call to the suck of war the hair-streaming Akhaioi.

They aired their proclamation and the men assembled on the double.
 So Dis-gelled kings, encircling son of Atreus, brisk and regrouping,
 were rushing, sifting the host, and green-eyed Athene was in their midst,
 bearing the metallic gorgonic super-precious battle-cape, ageless and
 deathless,

from which a hundred solid-gold edgy tassels dangle and toss in the air,
 all well-woven, twine-tight, and each worth a hundred screw-horn oxen.
 With this she twinkled and zoomed through the troops of Akhaioi
 sparking their movement ; and she fused force, shot volts relayed
 nonstop in each heart to dash bodies, bash heads, to battle and clash.
 Then to them instantly war became sweeter than aiming for home
 in their scoopy scrubbed ships, reaching their precious womb-soil.

Even as annihilating fire burns up and blanks out a forest unbounded
 on mountain-peaks, and from afar a gleam is seen,
 thus from the sacred-sounding brushed bronze of mobilizing men
 a dazzle and twinkle shot through the high-sparking air to the top of the
 sky.

And as the many flights of winged birds,
 wild geese or wading cranes or doulikhodeirous long-necked swans,
 on the Asian water-meadows around the flowing Kaustrian streams,
 zig and zag in swooping formation, delighting in their glorious wings,
 shrieking as they tumble through the air, and the water-meadows shrill
 and echo;

thus many tribes of men were gushing from their ships and huts
 into the cumbent Skamandrian plain ; and the earth
 rumbled and clanged tonical under feet of men and hooves of horses.

And they lined up and stood in the flowery moist Skamandrian meadow,
numberless, like teeming leaves and blowing blooms in the season of spring.

Like the many tribes of bunchy bombinating flies which straggle through the shepherd's stable, orbit-like, in springtime, when squirting milk drenches splashing buckets, so, so many long-haired Akhaioi facing the Trojans stood on the plain, burning to shatter and dash them to pieces.

And even as goat-rangers easily separate scattered and speckled flocks of goats, when they mingle and graze in a pasture, so did the leaders marshal the men here and there to go into battle, to quest for combat, and King Agamemnon among them,
looking like Zeus with thunderbolt-diadem in eye-hue and head-shape, like Ares in waist, and Poseidon in chest.
Even as a bull is prominent by far above all the drove of oxen, for he outshines, outcrowns the other clumpy cattle; thus did Zeus make son of Atreus candescent that day, undimming, remarkable among many, supreme among soldiers.

Tell me now, bathukolpous deep-shaped dress-falling breast-tumbling Burning Dreaming Muses, who dwell in Olympian homes — for you are goddesses, you are here and everywhere and know all things,
but we only hear buzz and rumors and know not anything —

relay through me who were the leaders and commanders of the Danaoi.
 For I could not mouth or name the main body of men,
 not if I had ten tongues and ten mouths
 and an unbroken waverless voice, not if the heart in my body were
 bronze,
 if the Burning Dreaming Olympiadic Muses, daughters of Zeus of the
 snakehead-goatshield,
 would not recall how many came under the shadows of Ilios' towers.
 In turn I will tell of armada admirals, captains of ships, and the ships
 in their fleets.

Peneleos and Leitos commanded the Boiotoi, the Cattle People,
 and Arkesilaos and Prothoenor and Klonios,
 who inhabited Hurie and rocky Aulis, wind-blown fire-crying,
 and rushy Skhoinos and Skolos and shinny Eteonos of many mountain
 shoulders,
 Thespeia and silver Graia and eurukhorous Mukalessos of wide and
 circular dancing spaces,
 and who lived around Harma of the war-cars and Eilesion and Eruthrai
 of the red air,
 and who held Eleon and Hule, Woodtown, and Peteon,
 tower-teeming Okalee and Medeon, the well-built citadel,
 Kopai and circuit-walled Eutresis and jitters-darting-dove-abounding
 Thisbe,
 and who composed Koroneia, Curvetown, and grassy Haliartos,
 and who held Plataia and who dwelled in Glisas,
 and who held low-based Hupothebai, the well-built citadel,
 and holy Ogkhestos, the bright Posideian grove,

and who held grape-jamming Arne, and who held Mideia
and super-sacred Nisa and Anthedon on the seaboard.
Of these there came fifty ships, and on board of each
went a hundred and twenty young Boiotian men.

And those who dwelled in Aspledon and Argonautic Minyan Or-
khomenos —
Askalaphos and Ialmenos, sons of Blood-Mouth Ares, led these,
whom Astuokhe, City-Protector, the honored maiden, bore in the palace
of Aktor, Leader of Men, son of Azeus, to powerful Red-Eyed Ares,
after going to her upper chamber, and he lay beside her in secret.
And with these thirty hollow ships were lined up.

But Skhedios, Hand-To-Hand, and Epistrophos, Turn-Around, com-
manded the Phokians,
sons of mighty-souled Iphitos, son of Naubolos, Ship-Thrower,
who held Kugarissos and cliffy rocky dragon-flaming Putho
and super-sacred Krisa and Daulis and dancy Panopeus,
and who dwelled about Anemoreaia, Windy City, and Huampolis,
and who lived by the bright river Kephisos,
and who held Lilaia, City of Desire, by the streams of Kephisos.
And together with these forty black ships followed.
The chiefs as monitors marshalled the ranks of the Phokians,
and geared up hardby the Boiotoi, the Cattle People, on the left.

And swift Aias son of Oileus, Trooper, led the mobile light-armed
Lokroi,
Aias the less, in no way as great as strapping Telamonian Aias,

but minor by far. He was small — linothorexic, special-armored, flax-clad —

but surpassed with the spear the whole Hellene host and the Akhaioi. These dwelled in Kunos and Opoeis, Figtown, and Kalliaros and Bessa, Dingtownt, and Skarphe and lovely Augeiai, Beamtown, and Tarphe, Shrubtown, and Thronion, Bloomtown, round the streams of Boagrius, Wild-Bullhide-Shield.

And together with Aias forty black ships of the Lokroi who dwell across holy Euboia followed.

And the tribal Abantians, power-blasters, who held Euboia and Khalkis of the copper-mines and Eiretria and grape-bursting Histiaia

and Kerinthos-by-the-sea and the steep citadel of Dion, Bright Flat-Top, and who held Karustos and who dwelled in Stura, the Place of Woodpeckers —

Elephenor in turn, playmate of Ares, Red-Mouth War, commanded these,

son of Khalkodon, captain of the mighty-souled Abantians.

And together with him the swift Abantians followed, wearing their hair long in the back,

spearmen burning with thrusting ashen spears

to shatter breastplates wrapping the chests of the enemies, fire-breathing destroyers.

And together with him followed forty black ships.

And those who held Athenai, the well-built fortified city, land of big-hearted Erekhtheus, Smasher, whom Athene

daughter of Zeus reared, but the grain-giving cool dark earth bore;
and she set him down in Athenai, in her own rich shrine;
and there the young Athenian men, as the years roll on,
appease him with favoring bulls and rams;
these, in turn, Menestheus, Permanent Man, son of Peteos, led.
And there was no man on earth like him at all
who could marshall war-cars and shield-wielders;
Only Nestor could match him, for he was older.
And together with him followed fifty black ships.

And Aias led twelve ships from Salamis,
and he set them where the heavy infantry of the Athenaiοi stood in
battle-array.

And these held Argos, Glowtown, and high-walled Kyklopean Tiruns,
Hermione and Asine, containing deep curve of cove,
Troizen and Eiones and vine-teeming tendril-twisting Apollonian
Epidauros,
and the young Akhaian men who possessed Aigina and Mases —
these, in turn, Diomedes of the flesh-creeping war-whoop, Sky-Guarded,
and Sthenelos, precious son of well-known Kapaneus, led.
And with them came a third, Eurualos, Wide Threshing-Floor, a godlike
man,
son of King Mekisteus, Tall Man, son of Talaos, Toughy,
but Diomedes of the blood-freezing battle-scream, Sky-Informed, led
the whole team.
And together with these followed eighty black ships.

And those who held Mukenai, the well-built city,
 and wealthy Korinthos and well-built Kleonai, Fametown,
 and dwelled in Orneiai and lovely Araithuree
 and Sikuon, from where Adrestos, Last-Man-Standing, Theban Seven
 head, first ruled,
 and those who held Huperesie and steep Gonoessa
 and Pellene and dwelled about Poseidonian Aigion, Wavetown,
 and throughout the whole of Aigialon, Wave Sector, and around wide
 Poseidonian Helike, Turntown —
 King Agamemnon son of Atreus led a hundred of these ships.
 And with him followed the most by far indeed and the best
 of the corps, and among them he himself donned his burnished bronze,
 exulting, peacocking, and like a spotlight outshone all the warriors,
 for he was the best, and led the most by far of the corps.

And those who held hollow ravine-gashed Lakedaimon,
 and Pharis and Sparte, Scattertown, and dove-huddling Messe,
 and dwelled in Bruseiai and lovely Augeiai, Raytown,
 and who held Apollonian Amuklai and Helos, Low-River-Ground, a
 seaside city,
 and who held Laas and dwelled around Oitulos —
 Aggy's brother Menny, Resister of Men, master of the menacing
 war-shout,
 led these with sixty ships, and they were equipped apart from the other
 men.
 And he himself went among them, relying on his spirit-rushing spirit-
 pushing zeal,
 sparking them warward, and he in his heart was burning like a blow-

torch

to get revenge for his internal storms and wails and sighs over Helen.

And those who dwelled in Pulos, the City of Gates, and lovely Arene
and Thruon, Rushtown, the ford of Alpheios, and well-peopled Aipu,

Steepy,

and lived in Kuparisseeis and Amphigeneia,

and Pteleon and Helos, Low-River-Ground, and Dorion, and where the

Burning Dreaming Muses

encountered Thamuris the Thrakian and brought to an end his singing
career,

on his way from Oikhalie, from the house of Eurutos the Oikhalian;

for, boasting he promised to vanquish all comers, were the Muses
themselves

to sing counter to him, daughters of Zeus of the gorgonic goatshield;

but they, enraged, dismembered him, shut him down, and took away

his celestial-sounding sky-tonic voice and blacked out his harp knack —

Nestor the Gerenian horseman led these men in turn,

and ninety hollow ships advanced with him in single file.

And those who held Arkadie below steep Kullene, Crooked Mountain,
beside the Aiputian bone-mound, home of the hand-to-hand fighters,

who dwelled in Pheneos and sheep-dotted fruit-scented Orkhomenos

and Rhipe, Swinging Wind, and Stratie, Armytown, and windy Enispe,

Telltown,

and held Tegee and lovely Mantinee,

and held Stumphelos and dwelled in Parrhasie —

son of Agkaios led these, King Agapenor, Lover of Manliness,

with sixty ships; and many Arkadian men embarked
 on each ship, battle-sharp, shaped and trained for fighting.
 For Agamemnon himself, king of men, gave them well-decked
 oar-spinning ships with cosmic banky rowing-benches to cross the
 wine-toned deep,
 son of Atreus, for naval matters were not their concern.

And those who dwelled in Bouprasion and bright Elis,
 as much as Hurmine and Mursinos, Myrtle-town, way-out-there,
 and Petre Olenie, Elbow Rock, and Alesion enshut —
 these in turn had four leaders, and ten quick ships
 followed each one, and many Epeioi embarked on these.
 Amphimakhos, Swivel Fighter, and Thalpios, Heater, led some of them,
 grandsons of Aktor, Leader of Men, and sons, one of Kteatos, the other
 of Eurutos;
 and son of Amarugkeus, Sparkler, dynamic Diores, led some,
 and godlike Poluxeinos, Host of Many Guests, led the fourth contin-
 gent,
 son of King Agasthenes, Too-Robust, son of Augeias, Crown of Beams.

And those from Doulikhion, Stretch-Beach, and the holy islands
 of Ekхинаes, the dwellers beyond the sea, facing Elis —
 Meges, equal of Ares, Red-Mouth War, led these in turn,
 son of Phuleus, whom the horseman Phuleus, precious to Zeus, bore,
 who onced moved to Doulikhion, Stretch-Beach, provoked by his father.
 And together with him followed forty black ships.

And Odusseus Abominated led the spirit-rushing mighty-souled Ke-

phallenians,
who held Ithake and einosiphullous leaf-shaking tone-teeming tree-
popping shimmy-green Neritos, Mighty Mountain,
and dwelled in Krokuleia and rugged Aigilips, Goat-Departed,
and who held Zakunthos and who dwelled around Samos,
and who held the mainland and dwelled in the facing parts and places
beyond —
Odusseus Abominated led these, equal of Blue-Shot Zeus in counsel.
And with him followed twelve miltopareiiic ocher-coated red-cheeked
sea-kissing ships.

And Thoas, Nimble, son of Andraimon, led the Aitoloi,
who dwelled in Pleuron, sun-and-moon-striped, and Olenos, Elbowtown,
and Pulene
and sea-pressing watertight Khalkis of the copper-mines and rocky
Kaludon;
for the sons of big-hearted Oineus were no longer around,
nor was Oineus himself still alive, and Meleagros of the yellow hair had
died.
So all things were charged to Thoas, Nimble, to govern the Aitoloi.
And together with him followed forty black ships.

And spear-famed Idomeneus, Timber-Tough, led the Kretans,
who held Knosos and ring-walled Gortus,
Luktos and Miletos and chalk-white Lukastos
and Phaistos and Rhutios, well-peopled cities,
and others who dwelled around Krete of a hundred cities.
Spear-famed Idomeneus, Timber-Tough, led these,

and Meriones, equal to man-mashing Eualios Battle-Head.
And together with these followed eighty black ships.

And Tlepolemos son of Herakles, brave and mighty,
led from Rhodos, Rose-Aroma-Rama, nine ships of the elevated
Rhodioi, the Rose People,
who dwelled around Rhodos, Rose-Aroma-Rama, marshalled in three
divisions,
in Lindos and Ielusos and chalk-white Kameiros.
Spear-famed Tlepolemos led these,
whom Astuokheia, City-Redeemer, bore to mighty Herakles,
whom he led out of Ephura from the river Selleeis,
after wiping out many cities of brisk Dis-gelled men.
But as soon as Tlepolemos grew up in the well-built halls,
he killed the dear maternal uncle of his own father,
Likumnios, child of Ares Body-Monger, who was then getting old.
So he quickly built ships, and he gathered many people
and took off escaping over the sea; for the other sons
and grandsons of mighty Herakles threatened him.
But he came to Rhodos, Rose-Exploding, water-wandering, pressed with
pain;
and his people settled in three divisions by tribes, and they were loved
by Luminous Zeus, who governs gods and men,
and son of Kronos gushed wonderful god-tinkling atom-tapping wealth
upon them.

Nireus in turn led three well-balanced ships from Sume,
Nireus son of Aglaie, Splendor, and King Kharops, Glad Eyes,

Nireus, who was the most beautiful man who came below the shadows
of Ilios
of all the Danaoi, after the untainted son of Peleus.
But he was vacuous, a pushover, and few people followed him.

And those who held Nisuros and Krapathos and Kasos
and Kos, the city of Eurupulos, Wide Gates, and the Kaludnai islands —
Pheidippos, Sparing Horse, and Antiphos in turn led these,
the two sons of King Thessalos, son of Herakles.
And with them thirty hollow ships were lined up.

Now in turn as many as dwelled in Pelasgic Argos, Glowtown,
and who lived in Alos and Alope and Trekhis, Ruggedtown,
and who held Phthie and Hellas of the beautiful women, kalligunaikous,
and were called Murmidons, Ant People, and Hellenes and Akhaioi —
Akhilleus Man of Pain in turn was leader of the fifty ships of these men.
But they did not turn their minds to out-of-tune pain-dyed war,
for there was no one to lead them into the ranks, mobilized formations,
the line of battle.

For light-emitting tarsal-sparking Akhilleus lay idle by the ships,
enraged over well-loaded Briseis, the girl with the beautiful hair,
whom he had taken out of Lurnessos after hard toil,
after he strangled and crushed Lurnessos and the walls of seven-gated
Thebe,
and body-slammed Munes and Epistrophos, Face-About, spear-burners,
sons of King Euenos, son of Selepos.
Akhilleus Man of Pain lay idle in grief for her, but soon he would be
compelled to erect himself.

And those who held Phulake, Guardtown, and flower-flowing Pur-
 asos,
 cut-up parceled sacred precinct of Demeter Germinator, Cereal Queen,
 and Iton, mother of sheep and goats and cattle,
 and wave-squeezing blue-embracing cave-carved Antron-by-the-sea and
 grass-bedded Pteleon, Looming Elms —
 warheader Protesilaos Beach-Leaper-People-Leader led these in turn
 while still alive, but by now the black earth had pulled him down.
 And his wife to boot, amphidruphous, cheek-gashed nail-slashed, had
 been left in Phulake, Guardtown,
 and his home half-built half-established, but a Dardanian man killed
 him
 as he leaped from a ship, the first beachheader of the Akhaioi.
 Nor I say were these leaderless, though to be sure they lacked and
 missed their leader;
 but Podarkes, Hot Rod, offspring of Ares, Red-Mouth War, marshaled
 them,
 son of Phulakos Protector's son, flock-stocked herd-rolling Iphiklos,
 brothered to big-hearted Protesilaos Beach-Leaper-People-Leader,
 a younger bearer of war-tools; but the fighter, battloid Protesilaos
 Beach-Leaper-People-Leader,
 was the older brother and better-battled, better-braced. Yet the host not
 at all
 lacked a leader, though, to be sure, they missed a good man lost.
 And together with him followed forty black ships.

And those who dwelled in Pherai beside the gushed marsh, Lake
 Boibe,

in Boibe and Glaphurai, Scrapetown, and well-built Iaolkos, Argonaut-
assembling —
the precious child of Admetos, Untamed, led these, eleven ships,
Eumelos, Sheep-Flush-Goat-Lush, whom Alkestis, among women un-
dimmed,
shapeliest of the daughters of Pelias, Ash-Face, bore to Admetos,
Untamed.

And those who dwelled in Methone and Thaumakie, City of Marvels,
and held Meliboia and rugged Olizon —
Philoktetes, Lover of Things, well-skilled with the target-aiming
many-pieced bow,
led these, seven ships; and fifty rowers embarked on each ship,
dexterous with the bead-drawing bow, robust and well-trained for
shield-clashing.
But Philoktetes, Lover of Things, lay on an island, pressed with potent
pain,
on super-sacred volcanic Lemnos, where the sons of the Akhaioi left
him
drained by an ugly torn wound from the fang of a mind-destroying
brain-eating water-snake.
He lay there racked with pain; but soon the Argeioi, the Sparkle People,
beside their ships
would turn their minds to King Philoktetes, Lover of Things.
Nor were these men leaderless, though to be sure they lacked and
missed their leader;
but Medon, Guardian, marshaled them, the illegitimate son of Oileus,
Trooper,

whom Rhene, Lambsy, bore to Oileus, Trooper, city-reamer.

And those who held Trikke, medicine-god center, and rocky Ithome, and who held Oikhalie, city of Oikhalian Eurutos — the two sons of Asklepios led these in turn, good healing surgeons, Podaleirios and Makhaon. And with them thirty hollow ships were lined up.

And those who held Ormenion, and Hupereie Krene, Elevated Fountain, and who held Asterion, and the white peaks of chalky gypsum-jammed Titanos — Eurupulos, Wide Gates, the splendid son of Euaimon, led these. And together with him followed forty black ships.

And those who held Argissa and dwelled in Gurtone, Orthe, Erecttown, and Elone and the white city of Oloosson — Polupoites, robust in battle, led these in turn, son of Peirithoos, whom immortal Zeus generated, whom glorious Hippodameia, Horse Tamer, bore to Peirithoos on the day when he paid back the shaggy wild beasts, the Pricklers, and pushed them off Pelion, Mud-Slider, and nudged them and shogged them to the Aithikians; not alone, but with him to be sure was Leonteus, child of Blood-Splashed Ares, son of earth-pounded Kaineus' son, high-hearted spirit-rushing Koronos, Curvy Eyes. And together with them followed forty black ships.

And Gouneus led from Kuphos, Stooping Humpback, twenty-two ships,
and with him followed the Enienians and the Peraiboi, robust in battle,
who set up their dwellings around snow-locked oracular Dodone,
and who occupied cut and broken plowland around lovely Titaessos,
which propels into Peneios its kallirrhoous beautiful-flowing water;
but this does not mingle with Peneios of the bubble-tumbling silver
whirlpools, argurodinous,
for it flows autonomous on top of it pendulous, incompatible, repelling
like olive-oil,
because it's a broken streamette of the water of subterranean Stux,
Abominated, the fearful object of vows.

And Prothoos, Prepacer, son of Tenthredon, led the Magnetians,
who dwelled around Peneios and leaf-shaking rainbow-booming air-
cooled shimmy-shadowed
Pelion, Mud-Slider. Swift Prothoos, Prepacer, commanded these,
and together with him followed forty black ships.

These then were the leaders and lords of the Danaoi.
Who was best of the bunch, outbeaming all, — tell me, Muse of fire and
dreams —
best of the fighters and horses, who trailed as a team the sons of Atreus.

The mares of the grandson of Pheres were the cream of the breed by
far,
which Eumelos, Hoof-Oofy-Goat-Lush, drove — jet-winged, quick as
birds,

same of mane, equal-colored twin-textured, same of age, with level-flush plumb-sheer backs.

Apollo of the silver bow, argurotoxic, target-pumper, reared these in Pereie,

both suckling mares, bringing the fugitive fear and panic of Ares of the red-striped face.

Strapping Telamonian Aias was in turn the best of the men by far, while Akhilleus Man of Pain was spitting fire, rage-tight, foamed to a frenzy, for he was the best of the best,

and the horses to boot, which used to carry the stainless son of Peleus. But he lay idle among the crumple-beaked arc-like sea-piercing sea-beyond ships

sucked in a cyclone of rage over Agamemnon Adamant, shepherd of the people,

son of Atreus; but his people beside the breakers and sea-surf were enjoying casting the tossed stone discus and the glancing goat-hunting spear

and aiming oriental bows and arrows; and each of their horses beside his own well-bound war-car,

feeding on tight-head lotus and marsh-meadow river-low marsh-nourished parsley,

stood idle; and the war-cars, well-screened dust-protected fist-clenched, lie still among the sloping huts

of their masters. But the men, missing their leader, precious to Gore-Sloshing Ares,

were roaming here and there throughout the camp, a virtual drone-zone, nor did they attempt to fix bayonets.

And so they marched as if all the ground were disseminating and
consumed by fire;
and the earth groaned below, as below blue-hued thunder-gamboling
Zeus
in a flare-up, when he thongs and stripes the earth around slow-burning
shoulder-smoldering Tuphoeus, Smoky,
in the land of the lightning-blasted Arimoi, where they say lies the lair
and the bed of gaseous Tuphoeus;
thus the earth moaned and keened beneath their feet
as they marched; and quickly quite they crossed the plain, coming to the
other side.

And a messenger who moved like the wind, podenemous, air-powered
foot-blown molecule-cooled Iris, Rainbow Girl,
came to the Trojans from Zeus of the snakehead-goatshield with a
painful message;
and they were holding assembly at Priam's gate,
all gathered, all cohesive, both young cadets and old chiefs.
And airstream Iris, Rainbow Girl, quick to the feet, stood tight and
spoke to them;
and her voice unseen vividly seemed like that of Polites, Man of the
City, son of Priam the King,
who, like a searchlight, stood as look-out for the Trojans, counting on
his quick feet,
on top of the tomb, the mound of rocks, of aetatic Aisuetes,
waiting for the Akhaioi to storm and attack in a shock and a crack
from their ships.
Assuming his shape, airstream Iris, Rainbow Girl, quick to the feet,

spoke to Priam the King:

'Chief, ever inseparable mouthed words perpetual are precious to you, as before in time of peace, but now unbending unshrinking war is stirring.

Indeed a number of times I have stepped into battles of men, but never have I seen such a large and impressive army; for truly resembling teeming leaves or crumbling sand they are coming over the plain toward the city with minds battle-flaming.

Hektor, to you above all do I hand down commands, and do exactly as I say;

for there are many allies throughout the great city of Priam the King, and assorted tongues among the scattered speckled men; let each captain signal to those whom indeed he commands, and let him lead the line after marshaling his co-citizens.'

Thus she spoke, and Hektor did not at all fail to recognize the voice of the goddess, and quickly broke up the assembly, and rushed to arms, battle-priming war-gear; all gates were opened, and the battle-people bolted out, both ambulateers and charioteers, and the sound of many rumbles arose.

Now there is a certain steep mound in front of the city far out on the plain, run-aroundable with a ring of space, which indeed men call Batieia, Brambling-Wild-Raspberries, but the deathless ethereals call the cairn of frisky skippy Murine the

Amazon.

Then and there the Trojans and their allies dissolved their troops into elemental groups.

The great koruthaiolous Hektor of the hue-changing ray-pinging metal-bright helmet commanded the Trojans, son of Priam the King; and together with him to be sure were the best and the biggest battalions metallated out, spear-burning shield-banging battle-bright.

The valorous son of Agkhises in turn led the Dardanioi, Aineias, whom sparkling Aphrodite, Sea-Foamed-Sea-Formed, the white goddess of love, bore to Agkhises, goddess bedding human on the shinny spurs of Ide, Timber Mountain. He was not alone. Together with him to be sure were the two sons of Antenor, Arkhelokhos, Ambush-Header, and Akamas, Tireless, well-skilled in hand-to-hand and sundry battle tactics.

And those who dwelled in Zeleia beneath the base, the shady foot, of Ide, Timber Mountain, rich men, who drink the dark water of Aisepos, the Trojans — the splendid son of Lukaon led these in turn, Pandaros, to whom Apollo Unmaker in person gave the bead-drawing bow to boot.

And those who held Adresteia, Inescapable, and the land of Apaisos, and held Pitueie and the steep mountain of Tereia —

Adrestos and Amphios of the loom-spun blue-petaled-flax-bound flex-tight breastplate led them,
 the two sons of Perkosian Merops, Word-Carver, who beyond all people could articulate oracular rage, and would not allow his sons to march into man-waning war. But him the two did not obey at all; for the goddesses of black death, queens of doom, were guiding them.

And those who dwelled around Perkote and Praktios, and held Sestos and Abudos and bright Arisbe — son of Hurtakos, Asios, leader of men, a fruit-tree supreme in a row of fruit-trees, led these in turn,
 Asios son of Hurtakos, whom fiery and stupendous horses bore from Arisbe, from the drinking river Selleeis.

And Hippothoos, Running Horse, led the tribe of the Pelasgoi, spear-burners,
 those who dwelled in soft-soiled super-lumpy fortified Larisa; both Hippothoos, Running Horse, and Pulaios, Gate Man, buds of Red-Painted Ares, led these,
 two sons of Pelasgian Lethos, Oblivious, son of Teutamos.

But Akamas, Tireless, and Peiroos the warrior led the Threikians, as many as the mighty-flowing Sea of Helle enbars.

And Euphemos, Sound of Skyshine, was captain of the Kikonian spearmen,
 son of Keas' son, Dis-gelled sky-suckled Troizenos.

But Puraikhmes, Flaming Spear, led the Paionians, endowed with bows encurved,
from far away out of Amudon, from Axios, Precious, wide-flowing,
Axios, Precious, from which the most beautiful water spreads over the
fusive earth.

And Pulaimenes, Raging-at-the-Gates, shaggy of heart, led the Paphlagonians, the Sea Roarers,
out of the land of the Enetoi, the Pin People, race-source of wild mules.
These held Kutoros and dwelled around circumfused Sesamos
and around Parthenios Potamos, Virgin River, in glorious quarters,
and Kromna and Aigialos, Wavetown, and elevated Eruthinoi, City of
Red Light.

But Odios and Epistrophos, Twisty, led the Halizonians, the Salt-Sashed-Sea-Bracers,
from far away out of Alube, birthplace of white metal, source of silver,
mines galore.

And Khromis, Crash, and Ennomos, Upright, the bird-ranger, led the chichi Musoi.
But he did not block the black queens of doom with bird-flights or
bird-screams,
but was worked over and cut down by the hands of the high-speed son
of Aiakos Man of Sighs
in the drinking river, where Akhilleus hacked up nonstop Trojans and
non-Trojans alike.

Phorkus in turn and godlike Askanios led the Phrugians
from far away out of Askanie, and burned to fight in combat.

Mesthles in turn and Antiphos headed the Meionians,
two sons of Talaimenes, whom the nymph of the Gugaian Lagoon bore
in her pool,
and who led the Meionians, born under Tmolos Mountain.

Nastes in turn led the babasonic alien-sounding Karians,
who held Miletos and akritophullous leaf-blending color-continuous
Phthires Mountain, packed with tiny pine-cones,
and the streams of looping Maiandros and the steep peaks of Mukale.
So the team of Amphimakhos, Circle Fighter, and Nastes led these,
Nastes and Amphimakhos, Circle Fighter, the lovely children of
Nomion.

And Nastes came to the war jingling in gold like a girl, hairclips tight
and twinkling,
— unsyllabled glasshead — but the yellow metal to be sure did not ward
off at all a sore and deplorable downfall;
for he was worked over and cut down by the hands of the high-speed
son of Aiakos Man of Sighs
in the drinking river, and Akhilleus Man of Pain, with burning-battle-
teeming war's-wildfire-filling mind, carried away the chinkling gold.

And Sarpedon and stainless Glaukos, Silver-Seeming, led the Lukioi,
the Glowing Wolf People
from far away out of Lukia, Flaming Wolfstown, from bubble-swirling
whirlpooling Xanthos, Yellow River.

NOTE

This translation of ‘Book II’ of Homer’s *Iliad* is intended for the nonclassicist as well as the classicist. Like my translation of ‘Book I’ (see **‘THE ILIAD OF HOMER, BOOK I, THE PLAGUE AND THE RAGE.’** *Walpurgis*. Kokugakuin University, 2000, 25-52), ‘Book II’ is treated as an autonomous poem, to be enjoyed for its ebullient multitude yet brilliant coordination of sound, rhythm and image. The continuum of the story alone exhibits an unparalleled propulsion. Whereas ‘Book I’ focuses on the rage of Akhilleus and the plague of Apollo, ‘Book II’ revolves around the dream of Agamemnon, the test of the soldiers and the list of ships.

In Plato’s *Republic*, Sokrates, in a discussion of ‘dikaiosúnē’ (justice), responding to Polemarkhos, uses the images of shield and lyre. He arrives at the ironic conclusion that when these two objects are to be guarded and unused, justice is useful, but when used, justice is useless, for in the latter case, the hoplitikal and mousikal arts would be more useful. In ‘Book II’ of the *Iliad*, we don’t see too much of the shield (in fact, there are no battle scenes), but we can hear the lyre, for Homer’s music permeates the poem and perforates the soul. In the *Poetics*, Aristotle talks about three elements of poetry as mimetic art: rhuthmós (a flowing), lógos (a speaking), and harmonía (a fastening). Although all three are woven into the patchwork quilt of the *Iliad* as whole, there seems to be a special conceptual correspondence with the themes in ‘Book II’, for the ‘Dream’, as it were, flows from the divine to the human realm, the ‘Test’ involves much discussion or the speaking of many men, and the ‘Ship-List’ is fastened together by its numerous contingents.

One can see this ‘flow’ and ‘fastening’ in the art of the ‘mad artist’, Hokusai. In his wood block print, ‘View From Umesawa in Sagami Province’, a work of his blue group, from the series, *Fugaku Sanjū-Rokkei*, the pink-tinged Yamato-e style mist seems to have a dreamlike fluid quality, balanced by the chainlike structure of the blue- and green-hue-suffused mountains.