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"ASPECT" IN THE SYNTAX OF THE VERB
IN THE POEMS OF HOMER:
the testing of a theory

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Paul K. Welton

PRÉCIS TO THE THESIS

In this thesis, I have restricted my study of Aspect in the verb in Homeric Greek in several ways. Firstly, I have adopted as a working hypothesis one modern account of ancient Greek Aspect, that of K.L. McKay, and have concentrated more on testing this theory against the text of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* than on theoretical argument. Secondly, I have restricted my analysis of Aspectual categories to four books - K, P, β, ω, - which represent earlier and later elements in both epics, to the extent that I have aimed to take account of all relevant examples in these books, and to supplement these from other books where the four provided too few examples for reasonable consideration.

My first chapter is mainly concerned with outlining the terminology and conceptual framework which I have employed. In it, I have tried to argue that there is in the Homeric verbal system a category called Aspect and that this category is a dominant one. I have tried to show, however, both here and throughout the remainder of the thesis, how this category is influenced by the twin factors of context and the speaker's will to become an extremely subtle instrument of expression. The second chapter contains a brief sketch of the history of theorizing on Aspectual phenomena, which I felt was needed to show what approaches to the subject were possible (without attempting to cover everything written about it, especially by twentieth-century authors). In the third chapter, I have turned my attention to the Imperfective, noting the main theoretical approaches to it, and showing how my chosen hypothesis suits the text of the four selected books, with some reference to other books. Chapters four and five apply the same procedure to the Aorist and Perfect Aspects. In chapter six I have drawn on the whole of the two epics to argue that the Future holds an anomalous position in the Homeric verbal system, retaining some of its original Modal characteristics but tending to acquire almost the status of a fourth Aspect. In the

next two chapters I have similarly used the entire text of both poems to argue that aspectual usage in the Imperative and in the Similes, respectively, is essentially the same as in the core chapters (especially three and four).

In chapter nine I have drawn attention to the interaction of Aspects in narrative passages to form patterns which give the narrative life and a certain dramatic movement, and have illustrated these in a couple of extended passages selected at random. Chapter ten summarizes my conclusions and draws attention to ideas which are crucial to the study of Aspect in ancient Greek.

Appendix I, on the comparison between the Homeric Aspectual system and those of Russian and Modern Greek, is an attempt to show that all three are basically different and that any effort to equate them leads only to distortion of each. Appendix II is a schematic representation of the forms of the Homeric verb, using the model verb λύω.

It has been my general practice to transliterate names from the Greek as precisely as possible, the main exceptions being the name Homer and those of the two poems. Also in listing examples (as distinct from citing a few for purposes of illustration), I have generally followed the pattern: K,P,β,ω.

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CHAPTER

PRINCIPLES OF ANALYSIS

Tense and Aspect

The concept of Aspect is no longer quite as unfamiliar to students of the Greek language as it once was, and most are now prepared to admit that what were traditionally called tenses expressed something more than temporal distinctions, an additional quality which is commonly called Aspect. Yet, due to the terminological and conceptual confusion which prevails even among scholars acquainted with the structure of Greek, Aspect is still sometimes defined in terms which properly belong to the sphere of tense. Consequently in defining Aspect it is also necessary to redefine tense.

We may define tense as *the speaker's view of the relation of the verbal activity¹ to a point in time*. This point is usually the time of the speech event, from which we can look either forward or backward. Thus our attention is directed into three spheres, each of which is subsumed in a tense form or series of tense forms — the past which expresses that which occurred before the moment of speaking, the present which deals with both activities taking place close enough to the moment of speaking to be regarded as synchronous with it, and, also in general statements, activities which belong to the universal time sphere and therefore can be regarded as potentially present, and the future treating activities which are intended or expected to occur after the moment of speaking. Tense defined with reference to the moment of speaking is called *Absolute tense* and is the most common in any language. But it is also possible for the speaker to view the verbal activity not directly in relation to the speech event, but in relation to another point of time, and this is called *Relative tense*. Most modern European languages, due to Latin influence, tend to make much of relative time distinctions and possess special forms to express these categories. Greek, however, is deficient in forms

expressing relative time, and simply relies on contextual factors to place events in relative temporal order.

Aspect is a rather different concept from this. Between *He read the letter* and *He was reading the letter*,² the difference is not one of tense, since both are objectively past, but one of how the activity is viewed. One example of the type of nuance which such a distinction can achieve is found in *He was reading the letter, when I came in*,³ wherein the first activity is background to the second. The verb which expresses the second activity, *I came in* presents my entry as a whole event, undivided and without reference to any particular portion of that activity — it sees the activity, as it were, from the outside. The first, on the other hand, expresses the activity as extended, in progress, again without reference to any particular point in the activity but viewing it almost internally. It is the juxtaposition of the two activities in this way which indicates that my entry occurred *during* the span of time occupied by his reading. Aspect then may be defined as *a means of intimating the speaker's view of the activity in relation to the context in which it is set*. It should be observed that, in the Indo-European languages at least, there is nothing *inherent in an activity* which makes it mandatory for the speaker to express it as extended or Punctual (or as Intention or State or in any other fashion which the language has the resources to contain). The choice is entirely the speaker's; two different speakers may view the activity in entirely different ways, and even the same speaker may view it differently at different points in the context, as, for example, in *He read the letter first ... In fact he was reading it when I came in*. Thus the most significant factor in studying Aspectual patterns is to recognize their subjectivity and admit that any work dealing with the topic must be descriptive rather than prescriptive. In many cases, it is difficult for us, separated not only by time but by the different concepts of another language, to see why a particular Aspect is used in any given set of circumstances, but this does not mean that Aspect should be discarded as a relevant concept. In every Aspectual system, the categories which may be defined seem to have a core of meaning which can be sharply characterized but which appears in each case to be surrounded by a

"field of influence" which, like a magnetic field, becomes weaker the farther one moves from the centre until it overlaps the "field of influence" of another category.

Terminology

The "field of influence" approach is, it seems to me, more valuable in describing Aspectual phenomena than the rigidly formalistic Opposition theories which some scholars employ and with which I will deal later in this chapter. A similarly more flexible approach would seem appropriate in the area of terminology. Any attempt to make linguistics into an "exact" science unfortunately appears to carry with it the creation of unwieldy systems of jargon which have the effect of either making the system being set up an esoteric one, or, one suspects, concealing the author's lack of knowledge. The necessity of setting up precise definitions is obvious (though they must not be allowed to obscure the subtlety of linguistic phenomena), but it must be done within a conceptual framework which is close to the observable "facts" and, at the same time has sufficient currency to allow debate over its postulates and conclusions. Thus, rejecting "currently fashionable systems of semosyntactic notation",⁴ I intend to limit my use of new jargon quite severely and to make use of the modified traditional terminology outlined by K.L. McKay in his *Greek Grammar for Students*.⁵ This posits a three-Aspect system with seven tenses which are confined to the Indicative Mood of those Aspects. The full Aspects are termed *Imperfective*, *Aorist* and *Perfect* and express respectively *Activity in Process*,⁶ *in Totality* and *as State*. The main tenses are the *present* and *imperfect*, which are the present and past tenses of the Imperfective Aspect, the *aorist*, which, as a tense, is largely confined to past time, and the *perfect* and *pluperfect*, covering respectively present and past time within the Perfect Aspect.⁷ In the Subjunctive, Optative and Imperative Moods temporal considerations do not exist and the forms may be used with reference to any temporal context, with Aspectual connotation alone governing the use of each form. So the system of Aspects in operation in the Homeric poems would seem to have been structured as follows:—

Imperfective (Process)		Aorist (Totality)		Perfect (State)	
Present tense	} Imperfective Indicative	Aorist tense	} Aorist Indicative	Perfect tense	} Perfect Indicative
Imperfect tense				Imperfective	
"	Optative	"	Optative	"	Optative
"	Imperative	"	Imperative	"	Imperative
"	Infinitive	"	Infinitive	"	Infinitive
"	Participle	"	Participle	"	Participle

It may be noticed that I have not mentioned the *Future* in the above table and this is because the Future is something of an anomaly within the Homeric verbal system. Originally formed from Subjunctive and Desiderative, it still shows traces of a Modal character, but in most cases its uses seem to suggest that it was a rudimentary fourth Aspect, expressing Intention;⁸ one may note in passing that it is defective in Subjunctive and Imperative while the future Optative which occurs later as a purely formal device does not appear in Homer.

The term "Imperfective" is in common use in the Slavonic languages to describe an Aspect which is largely similar to, but not entirely the same as, the Greek Imperfective, and has the advantages that it avoids the temporal associations which tend to be implicit in the word "present", that it helps draw attention to the assertion of the priority of Aspect over tense, and that it leaves the traditional term "imperfect" to its traditional use as a tense. "Perfective" is avoided because its Slavonic (and other) associations suggest a quality of completion in a two-Aspect system which would tend to confuse the Aorist-Perfect distinction. The traditional term "Aorist" is retained because in spite of the common relation of its one tense to past time it has come to be regarded as Aspectual and its meaning "unlimited" (ἀ-όριστος) seems an appropriate description of the concept expressed by this Aspect. "Perfect", as a traditional term, is retained for both Aspect and tense because the perfect tense is so prominent within the Perfect Aspect that the sort of confusion which arises when "present" is used for Aspect as well as tense is less likely, so that there is no need to introduce a new term (e.g. "Stative"). "Future" is also a traditional term which need not be changed (e.g. to "Prospective" or "Intentive") because the tense is so prominent in the Aspect, and on the whole is not likely to mislead.

Stative and Dynamic

In order to translate the basic Aspectual concepts into working patterns one must take into account a distinction which is basically lexical in character — that between *Stative* and *Dynamic*⁹ verbs, or more precisely between verbs which describe Stative activities and those which describe Dynamic activities. The distinction is almost an unconscious one and in most cases no problem arises; activities like

hold, feel (an emotion), stay are clearly Stative, while *do, move, kill* are just as obviously Dynamic, the differentiating factor being that the first class does not involve change while the second does. Some verbs in the Homeric lexicon seem to belong to one category while we translate them as if they were members of the other. This is especially the case with the so-called "denominative" verbs (*φιλέω, νικάω*, etc.) which seem to retain enough of their original nominal character to be seen by Greek eyes as Stative rather than Dynamic. When the three Aspects of Greek are applied to these two lexical types we find two distinct sets of patterns, each having variations depending on the context in which they are used. In the Imperfective the difference between the two types is minimal — a state is "going on" or an action is "going on" and the activity of the Dynamic type is drawn out to look similar to the natural Stative process. In the Aorist the opposite development occurs, with the Stative activity being turned into a complete event, similar to the Dynamic action. In certain circumstances the Imperfective of a Dynamic verb or the Aorist of a Stative verb *may* take on an ingressive nuance, but this is merely a feature of idiomatic translation and in no way integral to the Aspect. In the Perfect the difference between Stative and Dynamic is more striking, since the Perfect of the former usually differs from the Imperfective only in intensity, while the latter expresses *in a state of having done*, which in certain situations can imply responsibility. We can thus represent the system in a diagram:—

	Stative	Dynamic
Impfv	In State of ...	Durative (Inchoative)
Aor	Complexive (entry in State)	Simple action
Perf	Intensified State	State of having done (responsibility)

It is to be remembered that context always plays an important part in determining the nuances of the various interactions of Aspect and lexical type. These different nuances, such as the "iterative" and "conative" uses of the Imperfective, and the "ex-State" and "Aspectually metaphorical" uses of the Perfect will be referred to as

realizations. In other languages such realizations may be fully-fledged morphologically characterized Aspects, but in the Homeric poems, as in ancient Greek generally, they are merely context-dominated variants of the three Aspects, and they could appropriately be termed *Aktionsarten* or *Aspectoidal Categories*. From the many realizations of each Aspect and also from comparison with other Aspects in various contexts, it is possible to deduce a "fundamental idea integral to each Aspect", and this will be referred to as the *Valor* of that Aspect.¹⁰

Durative/Punctual

Other features which are basically lexical in character also often enter into the discussion of Greek Aspect, especially as in other languages, like Russian, these distinctions are morphologically part of the Aspectual system and as a consequence are most commonly used to define the Greek Aspects, even to the extent of expressing their *valores* in a two-Aspect system. One such semantic feature is the division of verbs into *Durative* and *Punctual* or rather into verbs describing activities which are durative or punctual; activities like *kill*, *launch (a missile)* are Instantaneous while those such as *be*, *sit*, *think* are Continuous. In Greek these nuances tend to insinuate themselves into the *Process/Totality* of the *Imperfective/Aorist* distinction¹¹ yet the two sets of terms are not really synonymous either in Greek or Russian since in both languages one can have "punctual" forms which refer to a situation which must last for a certain amount of time, e.g. *ἔβασίλευσε δέκα ἔτη*. A truly punctual situation, on the other hand, can have no duration *whatsoever* and so would seem incompatible with any form which expressed the activity as a Process. If, on the analogy of the *Stative/Dynamic* opposition outlined above, we were to set up in its place a distinction between Durative and Punctual verbs, we would have trouble applying it within the Greek system. In the Imperfective, Durative verbs would seem quite at home since duration is a subcategory of Process but Punctual verbs could *only* be realized as iterative, as true punctuality and Process are incompatible. If one were to define the Aorist as momentary or even in terms of such a concept as "action drawn together into a point", Punctual verbs would express simple momentary action while Durative verbs could not be realized at all because of

the contradiction between duration and point-like activity. Because the *valor* of State expressed by the Perfect automatically disqualifies true punctuality, the paradigm would be defective here too (there are no such things as punctual States, though a slightly more liberal definition of punctuality could allow Punctual verbs to be realized as ingressive or finitive), but no problem would arise with Durative verbs. Two things must be said about this scheme. Firstly, the results of applying the Greek system of three Aspects with their *valores* are more limited than the nuances we actually find in Greek and in some cases do not correspond to the Greek pattern; both these problems are better handled by the *Stative/Dynamic* distinction. Secondly, there do not seem to be any truly punctual situations, i.e. those in which there is absolutely *no* idea of the activity lasting in time, since, even when confronted with such a trope as *John reached the summit*, which Comrie quotes¹² to illustrate the punctual situation, it is still possible to say, even in English, *John was reaching the summit when he had a heart attack*, where by coincidence of Process and duration the almost imperceptible interval of time involved in reaching the summit is long enough, *and is seen by the speaker to be long enough*, to encompass the complete onset of the heart attack. In the Slavonic languages, however, examples do exist of verbs which are defective in one Aspect or another on the basis of semantic meaning and this fact may have been the stimulus for the raising of this argument for Greek.

Completion/Non completion

The second factor which often enters into discussion of the Greek Aspectual system is basically a contextual one but relies heavily on semantics. This is the distinction between *Completive* and *Non-Completive* verbs or, once again, between activities which have been or will be completed and those which are not. According to such a theory certain activities have built into them a notion that the Process which they express must eventually come to an end (*Odysseus was building a boat*) while others do not (*Odysseus was fighting*), and these are often called *Telic* and *Atelic* respectively. In some languages, this distinction is made into a *grammatical* feature, with a notion of completion added to a verbal form by flexional derivation, usually the attachment of an adverbial element; Russian and the other Slavonic

languages provide the clearest examples of this phenomenon. In the other Indo-European languages there are sporadic instances, e.g. κτείνω, ἀπέκτενω; Latin *facere, conficere*; German *essen, aufessen*, but the process is never systematized, and, while some scholars would like to see a Slavonic-type pattern, the examples remain isolated lexical items which can show up in all forms (for example ἀποκτείνω and ἀπέκτενω occur as well as ἀπέκτενω) like the comparable *give/offer*.¹³ In fact, what makes one see an activity as Telic or Atelic is the environment in which it is found and the presence in that environment of certain cues such as any object on which the activity is wrought or, on the other hand, any secondary implication that the activity was not completed — this is what causes us to translate the Imperfective of δίδωμι as *offer* though all the Greek expresses is *be in the process of giving*. Comrie's comment¹⁴ that, in combination with the Imperfective/Perfective (our Imperfective/Aorist) distinction, the semantic range of Telic verbs is reduced leads us to ask what patterns emerge if one sets up a *Telic/Atelic* distinction and then applies the three-Aspect system of Greek. In the Imperfective, Atelic verbs would simply imply that the activity was going on, while a truly Telic verb could only be used conatively or as background to another activity, as in the sentence quoted earlier, *John was reaching the summit when he had a heart attack*. An Atelic verb used in connection with an Aspect which represented the activity in Totality could only be ingressive while a Telic verb in the same circumstances would necessarily imply the successful completion of the activity. An Aspect which expressed the activity as a State would in an Atelic verb imply that the State was to be seen as an ongoing process which had not yet reached its final point, and in a Telic verb that the State is one which no longer exists. Again we find the patterns provided by this scheme too limited for the Greek system of Aspects, especially in comparison with the *Stative/Dynamic* distinction.

A related but somewhat different question is whether these categories of *Durative/inactual* and *Completed/incompleted (Telic/Atelic)* really represent the *valores* of the Imperfective and Aorist

respectively. These problems will be dealt with in the respective chapters, but the main objection to any such assumptions is that they are only valid for a two-Aspect system and in Greek one has a fully characterized third Aspect, the Perfect, which in a *Durative/Punctual* situation would have to be aligned with the Durative type and in a *Telic/Atelic* situation with the Telic type. Friedrich's attempt to subsume the Perfect under NON-DURATIVE is unconvincing, and Ruipérez' omission of it from the opposition of Durativity is at base a claim that the Perfect does not belong to the Aspectual system at all. However, while this may have been the case for Indo-European, it is reasonable to suppose that by Homeric times the three Aspects had become structurally coordinate. The second objection is that both sets of *valores* would show up in both Aspects, as in the case of durative activities expressed by Aorist forms (ἐβασύλευσε δέκα ἔτη). Then, too, the *Completed/Non-Completed* distinction necessarily involves a temporal outlook, since the activity, if it is to be seen as having been brought to a conclusion, must have taken place before the speech event, i.e. before the time sphere of "present". This may be a feasible notion if one is talking only of the Aorist Indicative, but even there there are enough examples of non-past use to be significant. Moreover to bring the idea of completion into the discussion of Aspect is, as seen earlier, necessarily to introduce consideration of the object of the verbal activity into a category which should properly be concerned with the subject. But perhaps the final argument against the assumption that either of these distinctions is basic in Greek is that neither pair is sufficiently wide to encompass all the subtle variation of realization in each Aspect, unless the terms are so defined as to lose all contact with what they are generally accepted to mean.

Oppositions

I have already in this chapter begun to emphasize two factors which will become crucial in the study of Homeric Aspect — the investigation of the context in which the forms occur and the recognition that Aspect is above all *subjective*. To admit the subjectivity of a linguistic phenomenon is not to deny the possibility of its being analysed in an objective fashion; what it does deny is

the validity of treating language as if it were completely mathematical, capable of being generated like an arithmetic with regular systems which are always valid regardless of where they are found. This approach, when carried to excess, causes its exponents to simplify language to the point where the vital factor of context becomes insignificant. A good example of this over-simplification can be found in the frequent statement¹⁵ that the Homeric present Indicative is Aspectually neutral because there is no morphologically distinct Aorist form to which one can oppose it, as is the case with the aorist and imperfect Indicative. This question will be dealt with more fully later,¹⁶ but it is enough to remark here that the opposition between aorist and imperfect Indicative only exists in narrative situations, while in timeless contexts, such as similes, the present Indicative *is* in opposition to an Aorist form, the aorist Indicative.

The basis of the view of linguistic phenomena which the theory of oppositions entails is that no entity exists alone but only gains definition through being contrasted with another entity. In this embryonic form the theory has much to recommend it, but when it is elaborated further it begins to split at the seams. Some of its assumptions do not seem to fit the study of morphology, or that of syntax, as when the Homeric Subjunctive and Optative are lumped together as elements in a gradual opposition, with the common possession of the notion of Mood (in differing degrees) as the factor which sets them apart from the Indicative, which does not have Mood.¹⁷ Ruipérez, for example, admits that in morphological oppositions, unlike phonological ones, one cannot always set up "privative" (mutually exclusive) oppositions since it is difficult to know which of two terms will be the negative¹⁸ — one could see one term as adding something to the other or the other as taking something from the one. All oppositions, according to this theory, should consist of only two members, one of which is positively characterized by a certain quality while the other is either negatively categorized by that quality, neutral as to the quality or opposed to it in a different way. Further, once one has set up a binary opposition of

the type "Ax/A" (where "A" is a semanteme¹⁹ and "x" a characterizing morpheme), one claims that the form "A" expresses both the absence of and indifference to the morpheme "x". Again the proponents of the opposition theory support their argument by referring in Greek to the category of Mood where the Indicative, it is claimed, is both indifferent to Mood and an expression of reality (*sic*) which is the opposite of Mood. This seems to be begging the question in several ways. Firstly how is the Indicative indifferent to Mood? Even if one defines the concept of Mood in these rather limited terms as the method of expressing the unreality of activities, it would seem that the Indicative *always* expresses this nuance in a negative fashion. Secondly, can it really be said that the Indicative expresses reality? Granted that in the discussion of ideas and other non-concrete areas, one will always find proponents on one side or the other of a debate, it is possible for disagreement to arise even in conversation about day-to-day "facts", as when, for example, one says, *It's a fine day today*, and someone replies, without being necessarily obdurate, *Do you really think so?*²⁰ Thus when the theoreticians are confronted with a three-term scheme, such as the Greek Modal and Aspectual systems, the theory demands that they should yoke two of the terms together and so oppose them to the other, a process which involves searching for a characteristic which differentiates one from the others. In the case of the Homeric Aspectual system this has led scholars to oppose the Perfect to the combined Imperfective-Aorist bloc (or rather, since the opposition must be binary, the basic notion behind the Imperfective-Aorist bloc). In order to make this pattern a valid one, it must be assumed that we have a binary opposition between Perfect representing State and non-Perfect representing Action, and then a further choice between Action as Process and Action as Totality. While an opposition of this sort may have existed in Indo-European, and the morphological evidence suggests it, there are some major objections to defining the Greek Aspectual system in this way. Firstly, if the choice in Greek were between State and Action, why is there no evidence that verbs which clearly expressed States, such as the verb *to be*, were constituted as morphological Perfects? Secondly, since this would align all verbs which expressed a Stative idea with the Perfect and

all verbs with Dynamic meaning with the Imperfective-Aorist bloc (a pattern which, if valid, would imply a high degree of correlation between semantic and Aspectual factors), why do these categories intersect *in Greek* so that we find Stative verbs being used in the Imperfective and the Aorist and Dynamic verbs occurring in the Perfect?²¹ Then, apart from confusing Aspectual characteristics with semantic ones, there seems to be a problem of definition with the word "action" which must, in the language of all the scholars I have read, be considered to exclude any concept of State. A better perspective is achieved if "action" in the general sense is replaced by "verbal content" or (as suggested in fn. 1) "activity". There would then be no problem in seeing a three-way contrast between Perfect expressing *the verbal content as a State*, Imperfective expressing *the verbal content as a Process*, and Aorist expressing *the verbal content as a Totality*.

An important concept in this theory is that of markedness. This complex notion seems to have been introduced into linguistic studies by the Prague school, and basically claims that in any opposition of two or more members, one is felt to be more normal and less specific than the other. However it is not necessary that each opposition have a marked and an unmarked term; both may be equally marked or the difference of markedness may be one of degree. The criteria for deciding which term is the marked one are not simply subjective but concern three basic areas — semantics, morphology and frequency. It is often the case that all these may point in the same direction but at times they conflict. The first category indicates the capacity of the unmarked term to comprehend the meaning of the marked term and so be used in its stead. This is what the Greek grammarians themselves meant when they called the Aorist the residual Aspect, i.e. it could be used, not so much to replace the Imperfective, but where there is no particular reason to use the latter. The second criterion implies that the unmarked term has (a) less morphological material and (b) more overt morphological irregularity. On the first point Greek gives no clear indication since there are as many ways of forming Imperfectives as there are of forming Aorists, though on the second point the Aorist does seem to be the unmarked term. Related to these morphological considerations is the concept of neutralization, wherein

for a particular reason the system is deficient in some form and there only exists one entity to cover the several terms of the opposition. Morphologically this form is usually close to that of the unmarked term but it may simply be the form which is semantically most appropriate. Thus if one wished to apply this distinction to the Greek present tense, one would be forced to admit that its formation on the Imperfective stem is appropriate, as its activity, if truly present, is usually to be seen as Process. Yet the most cogent objection to neutralization in the present tense is that it ignores the small but significant number of aorists used in connection with present time,²² which show that the speaker feels no compunction about using the aorist when he wishes to express an Indicative statement of Totality even in present time.

The final criterion of markedness, frequency, is a completely inadequate one. It is often assumed that the term which is the unmarked member of the opposition should be the most frequent in overall statistical count. Yet the Aspect used depends to a great extent on what the speaker wishes to say, so that in a passage of description, more Imperfectives than Aorists occur, in a passage referring to the past, the aorist will be more common than the present, and in a passage with present reference the present tense will predominate. In any case, to what extent can one accept the frequencies counted in rather specialized literary remains as truly representative of the total language of the period?

It must be understood that I do not totally abrogate the setting up of oppositions within any epistemological system; I admit that they are a valid way of examining the phenomena at hand, but I nevertheless insist that they are not the *only* way of doing so. I myself intend to make use of the concept even though I would define an opposition in more functional terms as *a set of forms whose members contrast one with another in a given situation*. So I would see the existence of oppositions as basically a contextual factor and arrange the *schemata* thus:-

Speech Situation (Usually in Present Time)

Process	Total Action	State
Present Indicative	Aorist Indicative	Perfect Indicative
Imperfective Subjunctive	Aorist Subjunctive	Perfect Subjunctive
" Optative	" Optative	" Optative
" Imperative	" Imperative	" Imperative
" Infinitive	" Infinitive	" Infinitive
" Participle	" Participle	" Participle

Narrative Situation (Usually in Past Time)

Process	Total Action	State
Imperfect Indicative	Aorist Indicative	Pluperfect Indicative
Imperfective Subjunctive	Aorist Subjunctive	Perfect Subjunctive
" Optative	" Optative	" Optative
" Infinitive	" Infinitive	" Infinitive
" Participle	" Participle	" Participle

Timeless Situation

Process	Total Action	State
Present Indicative	Aorist Indicative	Perfect Indicative
Imperfective Subjunctive	Aorist Subjunctive	Perfect Subjunctive
" Optative	" Optative	" Optative
" Infinitive	" Infinitive	" Infinitive
" Participle	" Participle	" Participle

It is clear from these patterns that in a given situation no term exists which is not opposed by at least one other term. In fact rather than talking about neutralization in the present tense, one really should be noting the isolation of narrative situations, which employ a special tense of the Imperfective and Perfect.²³ Thus the

concept of oppositions is a useful one, in the sense that one may say, for example, that in a narrative situation, the aorist tense (a subtheme of the Aorist Aspect) is opposed by the imperfect tense (a subtheme of the Imperfective Aspect) and that the way in which the two relate to each other is an aid to the definition of each.

Another objection to the opposition theory criticized above is more peripheral. The coding of Aspectual phenomena²⁴ into specifically *binary* oppositions seems aided by the fact that in the group of languages whose study first raised awareness of Aspect, the Slavonic group, the Aspectual distinctions which exist *are* thoroughly binary in nature. This has also led to the assumption that Slavonic Aspect is the only verbal category which can legitimately be called Aspect (and that therefore the Greek Aspectual system, if there is one, also must be of Slavonic type) and to the introduction in the description of Greek of infelicitous terminology, such as Perfective for Aorist, etc.

In fact linguistic comparison has always been present in the study of the Greek verbal system. The other language with which Greek has most often been compared, and always to the detriment of Greek, is Latin. Because of the predominance of Latin in Western Europe at the time of the "rediscovery" of Greek, the syntactic system of the latter was immediately perceived (and until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, still *totally* perceived) in the terms of Latin. In the works of Plautus and Terence there are still traces of the persistence of Aspectual distinctions, but by the Classical period there had developed throughout the Latin system a pattern not only of expressing absolute time but also of specifying which of two actions came first in a given temporal context. This temporal orientation in verbal forms themselves, which has been inherited by modern European languages, was largely alien to Homeric Greek. I am nowhere claiming that the Homeric language was incapable of ordering events in temporal relationship with one another, but this factor was usually handled by contextual methods, such as juxtaposition, subordination, etc. It cannot, however, always be assumed that in narrative a series of aorists will present a series of activities in the order of their

occurrence: the logic of the context may make it clear that some are simultaneous and some are in reverse order, so that the order of presentation is one of emphasis or emotional effect rather than of temporal sequence.²⁵ These questions of comparison in syntax will arise again throughout this work, but I must point out here that, apart from being simplistic in the extreme, comparativism commits the fatal error of too closely equating the syntactic systems of *different* languages. However many characteristics of syntax a language shares with its relatives or has inherited from its ancestor, it is ultimately an individual case. While comparative study of two languages may illuminate the structure of each, our understanding of the problems of any language is aided not so much by comparison with other languages as by internal study of the language itself; the problems of Homeric Greek are to be solved mainly within the framework of Homeric Greek, such comparative assistance as is necessary being drawn mainly from the rest of ancient Greek, which comes nearest in time and structure to the Homeric language. I will therefore make little use of comparativism, although I will refer to the Slavonic and Modern Greek verbal systems (as well as the Latin) in order to show how different they are from that operating in the Homeric poems.

Summary

So we may summarize this chapter by underlining several important points. Firstly, the Greek verbal forms are not mere tenses but expressions of a further relation, how the speaker views the activity in connection with its context, and this will, in spite of the objections of narrow-minded Slavists, be termed Aspect. Secondly this category of Aspect was the dominant one in the Greek verbal system, because it runs through all other categories. When one changes tense or Mood or substitutes an Infinitive or a Participle for a Mood, one does not change the Aspect; expressed differently, this means that one does not use a different form of the Infinitive or Participle for the Indicative as opposed to the Subjunctive, or for the past as against the present but one does in shifting from Imperfective to Aorist. Thirdly, the crucial factor in the study of Aspect is its subjectivity, so that it is entirely the speaker's choice which Aspect should be used in any given situation. Finally, in the interpretation of the Greek Aspectual system, one must *never* overlook the influence of the

context in the choice of Aspects. Often in this work it may be thought that the amount of text quoted is out of proportion to the point being illustrated, but sometimes not only the whole line but even the entire passage or the entire work may be relevant. In most cases also I have ignored the possibility that we are simply dealing with a formula handed down by oral traditions in which the Aspectual form remained constant when the situation changed, so that a dislocation would exist between Aspect and context. I will admit that there are several examples which seem anomalous and inexplicable in any other fashion but I think we must credit the Homeric poet(s) with enough control over the language to be able to suit the Aspect to the precise occasion. Similarly, in the light of evidence that the system of Aspectual relations which Homeric Greek had at its disposal did not change greatly for more than a millennium after Homer,²⁶ it is not surprising that there is little evidence of development in the system between the sections of the Homeric poems which appear to be respectively earlier and later compositions. Nevertheless, I have chosen for fullest treatment two books of the *Iliad* and two of the *Odyssey*, one of each generally accepted as containing earlier material and the other later material. In the discussion of similes, however, which have been shown to be relatively late, whatever the level of their setting, a comprehensive use has been made of the whole of the two epics.

It will be clear by now that I am not attempting to deduce from the Homeric texts, without reference to earlier studies of it, the Aspectual system of its language. I am rather applying to the Homeric text the theory of Aspect in ancient Greek generally which has been put forward by McKay, since this seems to me more compatible with the facts of the text itself than any of the other theories proposed in recent years, and examining in detail representative sections of the text in order to test the *prima facie* acceptability of that theory. In pointing out the weaknesses of the other theories, I do not wish to imply that there are no points to commend them. The subjectivity implicit in the choice of Aspect is such that many examples can validly be claimed as possible support for more than one interpretation, and no system of categorization of the realizations of the various Aspects can be so precise as to settle all questions with finality. The test of

acceptability, therefore, is not whether the theory can be proved to be absolutely true, but whether, making due allowance for areas of apparent ambiguity, it can offer an explanation of the text with less anomalies and contradictions than are found in its rivals.

NOTES

¹ *Activity* is used as the most general reference to a function described by a verb, contrasted with *action* and *process* as in McKay, *Grammar*, §23.1.1, fn 2. These terms will be so used throughout the work, except when quoting from other authors.

² It will be my general principle throughout this thesis to take examples from Homer where possible. However, in a chapter on general theory it has often been easier to fabricate an example which conveyed the exact nuance I wished to highlight.

³ It must be emphasized that this is only one of the many realizations of Aspectual distinctions and is not meant to become the basis of any definition such as Bakker's (in relation to Greek) *Greek Imperative*, p.27, that "the imperfect ... always has a relationship with another verbal notion, a point from which, around which or before which the speaker views the process in its perspective" or Forsyth's (in relation to Russian) *Aspect*, p.8, that a "perfective verb expresses the action as a total event summed up with reference to a single specific juncture".

⁴ Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.52.

⁵ See the Preface and §§8.1.1, 23.1 and 24.1.

⁶ See McKay, *Grammar*, §23.1.1, fn 2, and O.E.D. "Process, the fact of going on or being carried on".

⁷ In this work initial capitals will be used for Aspects and small letters for tenses, again excepting for quoted passages.

⁸ See Chapter 6.

⁹ Cf. McKay, *Grammar*, §23.1.5. I prefer *Dynamic* to McKay's *action*.

¹⁰ This term together with its plural, *valores*, is taken from the Spanish of Ruipérez, because it was convenient to avoid using an English word as a technical term and thus having to be careful about its use.

¹¹ The results of assuming that this pair was basic to the Greek Aspectual system are carried to ridiculous lengths in a thesis by Crisafulli, for example, who claims that in Punctual verbs the Aorist is somehow older, more primitive in formation than the Imperfective while in Durative verbs the reverse is true.

¹² *Aspect*, p.43. Comrie remarks, "Here there is one moment when John had not reached the summit and another when he had, with no time intervening between them. No matter how slowly one presented the film of John's mountaineering exploits, the interval between these two moments would always be zero and it would always be inappropriate to say *at this point John is reaching the summit*. Imperfective forms ... would then only have iterative meaning."

¹³ The fact that we almost always have ἀποθνήσκω and ἀπέθανον, for example, but only ever τέθνηκα seems less a vestige of a primitive Aspectual distinction than a peculiarity of this particular verb.

¹⁴ Comrie, *Aspect*, p.46.

¹⁵ By Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.105-11; Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.S13.

¹⁶ See Chapters 3 and 4.

¹⁷ So Ruipérez (*Aspectos*, p.15) quoting Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen*, p.224.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.16.

¹⁹ *Semanteme*, as distinct from *sememe*, is any significant unit of meaning.

²⁰ It is not the purpose of this thesis to deal with Mood but if one pushed this view to its conclusion one could find oneself claiming that in a language like English which has nowadays effectively only one Mood, one cannot make statements about unreal matters, offer insubstantial opinions or tell knowing untruths. So it would seem to me safer to define the concept as intimating *the speaker's view of the relations of the activity to what he sees as real* and to see the Modal system not as a binary choice between "real" and "unreal" but as a series of fields graduated as to the degree of "reality" expressed.

²¹ Note that I am not denying that a two-way contrast probably functioned in *Indo-European*, since many of the verbs which we call stative in Greek seem to have been relatively recent formations. Assuming that I.E. Aspect was not simply a semantic factor (and here we are on very tenuous ground) we would have a system:—

	Perfect	Non-Perfect
Stative	Emphatic State	Complexive
Dynamic	"Responsibility"	Simple Action

However this is *not* the case in Greek.

²² See McKay, *Grammar*, §24.4.4, and Chapter 4 below.

²³ Nor is it a case, as Comrie (*Aspect*, pp.71-3) states, of an Aspectual distinction restricted to a certain tense.

²⁴ I am here ignoring the fact that other linguistic phenomena are also coded by this school into binary oppositions, since I see phonology (which is what the theory is based on) as only marginally relevant to the study of syntax.

²⁵ See Chapters 4 and 10 below.

²⁶ McKay, *Perfect*, and an article *On the Perfect and other Aspects in Greek Non-Literary Papyri* to appear in *BICS* 27.

CHAPTER 2 HISTORY OF ASPECT THEORY

Ancient and Renaissance

It was inevitable that the scientific curiosity of the Greeks, which was produced by the material prosperity of Ionia in the sixth and fifth centuries and of Athens in the fourth century B.C. should eventually turn them to the investigation of their own language. While some observations had been made by Aristophanes and Platon, the first attempts to treat language as a system came in the work of Aristoteles who, however, did not feel the need to comment very extensively on the structure of the verbal system.¹ The earliest attempts to classify the verbal relations of Greek were made by the Hellenistic grammarian Dionysios Thrax who wrote a systematic exposition of the Greek language including, however, no treatment of syntax. This omission was remedied by the Stoics and, following them, by Apollonios Dyskolos, who elaborated a theory in which six temporal areas (χρόνου) are divided between "defined temporal areas" (χρόνου ὁρισμένοι) and "undefined temporal areas" (χρόνου ἀόριστοι). The former type is further divided into tenses of "parallel extension" (παρατακτικού) and tenses of "simultaneous termination" (συντελικού) and both types are realized in the two time spheres of "present/future" (ὁ ἐνεστώς/ὁ μέλλων) and "past" (ὁ παρεχρημένος). Apollonios' system can be represented thus:—²

	χρόνοι ὁρισμένοι		χρ. ἀόριστοι
	παρατακτικού	συντελικού	
ὁ ἐνεστώς/μέλλων	present	perfect	future
ὁ παρεχρημένος	imperfect	pluperfect	aoist

This is an interesting analysis for several reasons. Firstly one must

note the importance to the Greeks of the axis ὠρισμένος/ἀόριστος and the valuable distinction between χρόνου παρατακτικού and χρόνου συντελικού. However the main fault of the system seems to be that it designates as simply a distinction of χρόνος (time) what in fact is a distinction of an entirely different order. The nature of this distinction completely escaped the Greeks, but sporadic glimpses of its existence appear in the statements of certain scholiasts such as the commentator on Homer A600 who saw the notion of συναδικός as integral to the Aorist³ (a point also found in Phrynikhos the grammarian⁴) and the scholiast who distinguished between χρόνος and ἔργον pointing out that the imperfect is past in time but τὸ δὲ ἔργον, μετὰ παραστάσεως πέπρακται.⁵

Although the Latin verbal system is not directly relevant to this thesis, it behoves us here to mention the Roman grammarian, Varro, since his theories, based on those of Apollonios Dyskolos, profoundly influenced later thought. Varro correctly saw that his own language was different from the Greek in placing greater emphasis on temporal distinctions and consequently aligned the future with the present and past as a separate temporal sphere. The distinction between χρόνου ὠρισμένου and χρόνου ἀόριστου is unnecessary in Latin but the παρατακτικός/συντελικός dichotomy is retained, although it is translated as *infectum, having not been completed/perfectum, having been finished*. One may set out the changes made by Varro as follows:—

	<i>Infectum</i>	<i>Perfectum</i>
present	present	perfect
past	imperfect	pluperfect
future	future	future perfect

Varro seems to have consistently ignored for the purposes of theory the fact that the Latin perfect is also used for past time, and to have limited it to the present line in the diagram,⁶ thus allowing Greek categorization to overshadow the Latin. Varro's system is more pertinent to Latin than to Greek but its superficial resemblance to the two-aspect system prevailing in the Slavonic languages, especially

in its definition of the *valores* of the two categories, seems to support the views of scholars such as Kurylowicz who wish to see the primitive Indo-European, and hence the Greek, verbal system as similar to the Slavonic.

After Varro and Apollonios Dyskolos, little work of an original character was done in the ancient world, even the great work of Priscian being based on Apollonian principles. Grammars of Greek were written (e.g. by Theodosios CC4-5, Khoioboskos C6 AD) but theoretical horizons were only advanced by the Roman Macrobius who, in a work comparing the Greek verb with the Latin, made an interesting contribution to the study of Comparative Grammar.⁷ Although there is actually very little syntax in the few fragments of Macrobius which we have, he, like Varro, was aware that his own language was different from Greek and even showed some consciousness of the Greek Aspectual distinction, as in his comments on the Imperative.⁸ However, he too allowed Greek categories to dominate the Latin, as when he claimed that tense only existed in the Indicative,⁹ or that the link-up of verbal forms which with some insight he posits for Greek is also valid for Latin. The Greek Perfect, on the other hand, is seen in Latin terms, as completed and therefore belonging to the past, as in his statement on the Optative¹⁰ and his constant reference to it as "praeteritum perfectum" as against "praeteritum imperfectum" for the imperfect.¹¹ After the fall of Rome the study of Greek lapsed in the West and even in Byzantium the prevailing scholasticism produced only grammars such as that of Moskhopolos, compiled from two anonymous earlier works, which became important for the revival of Greek in the West during the Renaissance. The fall of Byzantium to the Turks saw the arrival of many Greek scholars in Italy and this movement gave impetus to a renewed interest in the Greek language. Among the first works printed in the West were the Greek grammars of Khrysaloras, Gaza and Laskaris, but they were merely compilations of formal rules and, because they were written for an audience familiar with Latin, they explained Greek in Latin terms, a process which did little to further the theoretical knowledge of the language. The sixteenth century saw the appearance in Germany of the works of Friedrich Syllburg who drew attention to the possibility that the Greek Aorist could be used for

non-past activities but failed to (systematically) pursue this insight, while in seventeenth-century Holland, Julius Caesar Scaliger produced a work which advanced the study of Latin syntax but retarded that of Greek when he formulated the distinction between absolute and relative time.

Modern

The beginnings of modern linguistics can be dated from the end of the eighteenth century when Sir William Jones published the text of a paper read to the Asiatic Society in Calcutta, an impressive compilation of material which brought Sanskrit into comparison with Greek, Latin, Germanic and Celtic and postulated that all of these could be traced back to a common ancestor. With the turn of the nineteenth century linguistic theory advanced by leaps and bounds in the comparative field with the works of Rask, Grimm and Boop, and even in the field of Greek itself, studies of syntactic questions proliferated. Among those who contri' ted to the study of the verbal structure were Reiz, Bernhardy and Madvig, but, although their classificatory work was invaluable, they found it difficult to see the language in any but the temporal terms inherited from Latin.

Soon after the middle of the century a new concept was introduced into the theoretical study of language. Georg Curtius, from his study of the Slavonic languages, came to realize that the verbal forms of Greek expressed not merely temporal distinctions but also a quality which he called *Zeitart* and defined as "die Unterschied der dauernden, momentanen und vollendeten Handlungen".¹² A direct break between Curtius and one of his most brilliant pupils, Brugmann, led to the formation of the so-called "neo-grammarians" school, among whose members can be placed Karl Verner and Ferdinand de Saussure. These scholars modified the terminology of Aspectual studies, replacing the term *Zeitart* by *Aktionsart* since the former seemed to be too strongly temporal, but they retained the habit, applied in the works of Curtius, of linking the Greek Aspectual system to that of Slavonic. Hence in French writers we find the term *Aspect* as a direct translation of the Russian *Vid* and a semantic equivalent of the German *Aktionsart*. The main fault of the neo-grammarians was that they confounded true Aspect with lexical distinctions, as when Brugmann, seeking to illustrate the

punctual/durative distinction, took as his examples the verbs *finden*, *to find/suchen*, *to seek*.¹³ Even though scholars on the Continent accepted the concept of Aspect relatively rapidly, the English-speaking world was slow to recognize the existence of the category, merely noting that in some instances the "temporal" forms were used in ways which seemed to clash with what was expected, and forcibly pigeon-holing many forms into temporal categories (as with the "gnomic" aorist). This is the position as we find it in a writer like Monro and in most conventional grammar books, but the American scholar Goodwin made some advance in drawing attention to the relations which are here termed Aspectual, even though his work remained far too temporally oriented. In the field of New Testament Greek, Moulton, a classicist with an evolutionary perspective on the language, went farther than any other English or American scholar of the period in positing an important, though not central, role for Aspect in Greek.¹⁴ However, apart from minor contributions like Bolling's article advocating the recognition of Aspect in the *teaching* of Greek,¹⁵ English-speaking countries remained largely indifferent to the concept until Continental works of importance (e.g. Chantraine, *Histoire*) and American generalizations from the study of Indian languages in the 1930s heightened awareness of its usefulness.

The twentieth century too brought a high level of discussion on questions of verbal structure in Greek. The shortcomings of the neogrammarians had been quickly recognized, but unfortunately there followed an over-reaction in the opposite direction as when Pedersen¹⁶ threw overboard the whole concept of Aspect in Indo-European and Greek linguistics, only admitting for these languages a system of tenses, but claiming that an Aspectual system arose from it, a theory still heard from time to time. For the majority of scholars the existence of a category called Aspect was proven, but, because the concept was introduced into general linguistic theory from Slavonic studies, modern studies have tended to rely heavily on the comparison of Greek with these languages, often making their acceptance into Greek of the category of Aspect dependent on how closely they feel the latter's verbal system to resemble that of the Slavonic languages. So we find Streitberg (1890) applying this criterion to Gothic and Hartmann¹⁷

using Slavonic terminology to describe the Greek system of verbal relations while Meillet,¹⁸ in describing primitive Slavonic, distorts the facts of both that language and of Greek in order to make the Aspects exactly alike in each. The identification of Aspects in different languages raised the "philosophical" question of the very nature of Aspect and its relation to other elements of the verbal structure, and led to the distinction between various types of Aspect such as Porzig's division into *Aspekt* and *Aktionsart* and E. Hermann's corresponding distinction between *objektive* and *subjektive Aktionsarten*.¹⁹

A theory which seems completely different is that of E. Koschmieder, who in his *Zeitbezug und Sprache* (1929) proposed that Aspect and tense were in reality one entity, which he called *Zeitbezug*, *Temporal Relation*. However when he elaborated his theory it was apparent that he felt the need to divide *Zeitbezug* into two categories - *Zeitstellenwert*, *Temporal position* (i.e. tense) and a category which he calls *Zeitrichtungsbezug* and which he defines in a manner very similar to the pattern of Aspects occurring in Slavonic! In the same year G. Guillaume published his *Temps et Verbe*, in which he tried to redefine *Temps* so as to cover not only what is generally meant by tense but also Aspect and Mood, and the Verbal Nouns and Adjectives as well. This idea led him to some questionable conclusions and, like other temporally based theories of verbal structure, was unable to explain satisfactorily the difference between "imperfect" and "past simple" tenses. Moreover when the concept was applied to Classical Greek, it became totally unworkable in its attempts to integrate the Aorist Subjunctive and Optative, which, if Guillaume was right, should refer to both past and future. Two works written in a more traditional vein about this time are also significant for their effect on theories of the nature of Aspect in Greek. Wackernagel, and following him, Chantraine,²⁰ saw within the history of an originally intransitive, subject-oriented Perfect, the anomalous development of a "resultative Perfect" which placed the emphasis on the object and which eventually led to the breakdown of the Perfect. Furthermore in some of their discussion of the Perfect-Aorist relationship they seem to suggest that an emphasis on the object was also characteristic of

the Aorist, so that the development of the "resultative Perfect" brought the Perfect closer to the Aorist, thus producing confusion and then loss.

At the same time in the more general field of linguistic theory a concept was being formulated by the Prague school which was eventually to reach and affect the study of Greek verbal relations. The theory that linguistic phenomena are structured into oppositions was first conceived in the field of phonology by N.S. Trubetskoï, and in 1932 Jakobson suggested that the concept might profitably be applied to syntactic questions.²¹ The opposition concept is not really new *per se*, since it had long been recognized that, for example, the imperfect and the aorist could be seen as opposed in a given set of circumstances, but its rigidly systematic application by the Prague school roused some opposition from a group based in Copenhagen. The most prominent figure of this group was Hjelmslev, who in 1937 tried to make the opposition concept more flexible by admitting the possibility of multi-member oppositions,²² while another influential figure was Holt whose *Études d'Aspect* (1943) became the most widely known summary of the position of the group; many of Holt's conclusions are approximated by Brunel in his *Aspect et l'ordre du procès en grec*.

By the middle of the century the Prague school seemed to have prevailed over its opponents in the field of linguistic theory and most of the works written on the Greek verbal system since that time (apart from the sections in general, and rather traditional, grammars, such as those of Schwyzler and Humbert²³) have taken this line. By far the most significant single work on the subject since 1950 has been that of Ruipérez, whose theories have been discussed extensively not only throughout this thesis but also by numerous more competent scholars since its publication as *Aspectos y tiempos del verbo griego*. In the early sixties, Jerzy Kurylowicz, who had long been an Indo-Europeanist of some note, turned to the question of verbal structure, combining the Prague school's oppositions with a notion of Aspect heavily coloured by Slavonic, and not surprisingly came to the conclusion that the Classical Greek Aspects were of Slavonic type. The same line of reasoning is apparent in the work of Friedrich (1974),

while Szemerényi (1969) eliminated Aspect altogether from the Greek verb, claiming that only Slavonic was possessed of a set of verbal relations worthy of that name.²⁴ However, this strange sort of positivism is perhaps preferable to the attempt by Comrie (1976) to define Aspect in such a way as to make it applicable in detail to all languages, a line of thought which leads him into numerous confused statements.²⁵ A more profitable approach seems to be that taken by McKay²⁶ who eschews syntactic comparativism, insisting that the problems of any language are to be solved within the framework of that language and hence making his definition of Greek Aspect applicable solely to the phenomena observable in Greek.²⁷

NOTES

¹ In *Nicomachean Ethics* 10.34, Aristoteles contrasts ἡσθῆναι and ἡδεσθαι with Aspectual awareness but without dwelling on Aspect.

² Compare Holt, *Etudes*, for this and the diagram on p.23. The method chosen simply seemed the most obvious.

³ See Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca*.

⁴ Phrynikhos. *Eklogai* 315 in Rutherford, *The New Phrynichus*.

⁵ Bekker, *Anecdota Graeca*, p.889.

⁶ Varro, *De Lingua Latina*, vol. 2, §§96-111.

⁷ Macrobius, *De Differentiis* in Kiel, *Grammatici Latini*, vol. 5, pp.599-654.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.640.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.611, cf. 618, 622.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.620.

¹¹ Interestingly here he opposes Varro in seeing three past tenses - "praeteritum imperfectum, praeteritum perfectum and praeteritum plusquamperfectum". Neither seems to have been willing to admit that the Latin perfect was a temporal form for *both* present time and for narrative.

¹² Curtius, *Greek Verb*, p.2.

¹³ Brugmann-Thumb, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.492.

- ¹⁴ Moulton, *Grammar*, vol. 1, *Prolegomena*, pp.108-51.
- ¹⁵ Bolling, *Tenses*.
- ¹⁶ Pedersen, *Aktionsarten*.
- ¹⁷ Hartmann, *Aorist und Imperfektum*.
- ¹⁸ Meillet, *Le Slave Comun*; Meillet and Vendryes, *Grammaire Comparée*.
- ¹⁹ Porzig, *Aktionsart*; Hermann, *Objektive und subjektive Aktionsart*. The former is what I would call *Aspect* and the latter a *realization* of an *Aspect* or an *aspectoidal distinction*.
- ²⁰ Wackernagel, *Studien*; Chantraine, *Histoire*.
- ²¹ Jakobson, *Struktur*.
- ²² Hjelmslev, *Structure, Morphemes*.
- ²³ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*; Humbert, *Syntaxe*, pp.133-81.
- ²⁴ Szemerényi, *Unorthodox Views*.
- ²⁵ Comrie, *Aspect*.
- ²⁶ McKay, *Grammar, Perfect, Historical Present, Syntax*.
- ²⁷ I have deliberately abbreviated my discussion of authors from Curtius to the present in order to treat some of their points more fully in the main body of the work.

CHAPTER 3 THE IMPERFECTIVE ASPECT

When we come to consider the Greek Imperfective, we find problems at every step, even the generic label of the Aspect itself being disputed, since it runs the gamut from the "present theme" of Ruiperez to the specially defined and structuralistically derived DURATIVE of Friedrich. To this is related also the problem of the basic *valor* of the Imperfective - are we to consider it as Kurylowicz does, as basically temporal in character, or as something more detached from the speech event and rather definable in terms of the surrounding context, as will be argued in this section?

Process

I will endeavour to show that the Imperfective is used to express Activity in Process, and in order to determine the accuracy of this assumption, I am going to take a few examples from the chosen books. I begin with K2-4

ἄλλοι μὲν παρὰ νηυσὶν ἀριστῆες Παναχαῖων
 ὕδον παννύχιοι, μαλακῆ δειμημένοι ὕπνῳ·
 ἀλλ' οὐκ Ἀτρεΐδην Ἀγαμέμνονα ποιμένα λαῶν
 ὕπνος ἔχε γλυκερὸς, πολλὰ φρεσὶν ὀρμαίνοντα, *the other*
chiefs of the assembled Akhaians were sleeping all night,
but sweet sleep did not hold Agamemnon, Atreus' son,
leader of the host, since he was going over much in his
mind.

Here the three activities certainly do last through a certain space of time, but what is significant in the context is that all are seen as developing situations, and, moreover, as developing simultaneously. The paralleling of the activities is a common usage of the Imperfective and at the start of the book sets a background for the actions that immediately follow.

We see in ω412-4

ὡς οἱ μὲν περὶ δεῖπνον ἐνὶ μεγάροισι πένοντο.
 "Ὅσα δ' ἄρ' ἄγγελος ὤκα κατὰ πτόλιν οἴχετο πάντη,
 μνηστήρων στυγερὸν θάνατον καὶ κῆο' ἐνέπουσα, s' they
were setting about their meal in the hall; Rumour
was making her way about the city, announcing the
 terrible fate of the suitors,

that the Imperfective is useful for transferring the narrative from one vignette to another. As they stand, the phrases are separate, the first summing up the previous activity while the second introduces the new one. Yet, the fact that both are set in the Aspect which describes developing processes makes it natural that a notion of simultaneity should be conveyed, and one might idiomatically translate *while they were* ...

In P408-9

πολλάκι γὰρ τό γε μητρὸς ἐπέυθετο νόσφιν ἀκούων,
 ἢ οἱ ἀπαγγέλλεσκε Διὸς μεγάλου νόημα, for he often
used to hear the news in secret from his mother, when
 she would announce the plans of great Zeus,

the Imperfective conveys a notion of repeated activity and, though this is reinforced by πολλ' and the form in -σκε, it is important to note that the activities are seen more as developing, and even parallel, processes than a series of simple single occurrences.

A further interesting example is β257-9

ὡς ἄρ' ἐφώνησεν, λῦσεν δ' ἄγορην αἰψήρην.
 οἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἐσκίδναντο ἑἴα πρὸς δῶμαθ' ἕκαστος,
 μνηστήρες δ' ἐς δῶματ' ἔσαν θεοῦ Ὀδυσσεύος, so he spoke,
 and broke up the assembly. The others each went to
 their own homes, but the suitors made their way to the
 house of divine Odysseus.

Here the Imperfectives following the Aorists have a flavour of *they began to go ... or set off ...*, while at the same time they set the background against which Telemakhos' parallel action of consulting Athene becomes central; and after it is completed we find the suitors at Odysseus' house.

Furthermore, we see the same patterns in such non-Indicative examples as B139-40

ἔξιτέ μοι μεγάρων, ἄλλας δ' ἀλεγύνετε δαΐτας
 ὑμᾶ κτήματ' ἔδοντες ἀμειβόμενοι κατὰ οἴκους, *get out of
 my house, make other people's meals miserable, eat up
 your own possessions and go among your own houses,*

where ἔξιτε suggests the beginning of the activity (*get moving out*) and the other verbal forms could be understood as having the same nuance, but seem predominantly to suggest iteration (*make a habit of ...*), but in any case they all present the activities as ongoing processes. So too in P19

Ζεῦ πάτερ, οὐ μὲν καλὸν ὑπέρβιον εὐχειάσθαι, *Father Zeus,
 it is not right to be a lofty boaster,*

where the verb refers not merely to a single act of boasting, or even a series of such acts but to a particular personality trait.

Duration

The fact that the idea of Duration is present in all of these situations does not imply that Process and Duration are identical or inseparable. Indeed (because of its temporal associations) the concept of "Durative" is inadequate to express the content of the Imperfective Aspect unless it is so refined as to lose all contact with what is generally meant by that term. Granted that temporal duration very often coincides with the use of the Imperfective in Greek, many examples can be found of Imperfectives expressing activities which are virtually "momentary" (have an almost imperceptible duration), not to mention phrases where real duration is expressed by the aorist, as in the first lines of the Iliad. In fact it is possible to state that the "lasting-in-time" feature of the Aspect is totally dependent on the context. The real significance of the Imperfective, as with all other Aspectual distinctions, is as the indication of how the speaker wishes to view the activity in relation to its context; the point is that, however momentary the activity, the speaker has reasons for describing it in a retarded fashion. The space which an

activity occupies in objective time is irrelevant; all activities, however brief, have a duration in objective time – but the speaker chooses, as it were, to halt an activity for contemplation. Ruipérez expresses this well when he says "puede ser usado el tema de presente [i.e. Imperfective] en lugar del de aoristo cuando al escritor le interesa subjetivamente contemplar morosamente el desarrollo de una acción verbal".¹ This will be useful in the description of the Imperfective as it ignores temporal considerations and focuses on the factor which is integral to the concept of Aspect, namely its essential subjectivity. Moreover one can more easily see from this explanation how the various realizations of the Imperfective are able both to be separated from and related to each other. These realizations into which traditional grammars divide the various occurrences of the Imperfective Aspect are conditioned by the context in which they occur and by the differing semantic and syntactic concepts of the other languages in terms of which they are explained. In other words, while an Imperfective may be translated as conative, iterative or merely continuative, all that is expressed by the form is that the activity is perceived in its taking place, its *παράτασις*. This Processive *valor* takes further nuances from the character of the verb as Stative or Dynamic. If the verb belongs to the former category the Imperfective stem merely brings out the Stative character of the verbal activity (though not as strongly as the Perfect does) while presenting it in a retarded fashion, e.g. ω125

μνώμεθ' 'Οδυσσεὺς δὴν εἰχομένοιο δάμαρτα, we were the suitors of long-absent Odysseus' wife,

cf K12 (καίετο), P643 (δύναμαι), and ἀλγύνετε in β139 quoted above. In Dynamic verbs, the Imperfective may, as a realization of the *valor* of Process, also imply activity is just beginning, as in β388

Δύσετό τ' ἥελος σκλόωντό τε πᾶσαι ἀγυιαί, the sun went down and all the roads grew dark.

cf ω234, K198, P318. Mostly, however, Dynamic verbs present the activity as durative background e.g. P627.

οὐδ' ἔλαθ' Αἴαντα μεγαλύτερα καὶ Μενέλαον

Ζεύς, ὅτε δὴ Τρώεσσι δίδου ἑτεραλκία νίκην, *it did not escape the notice of Aias and great-hearted Menelaos that Zeus was giving victory to the Trojans.*

Having said that the traditional method of classifying the Imperfective by its realizations is totally artificial and that it is inadequate *per se* in penetrating to the basic *valor* of the Aspect, I nevertheless find it useful for drawing attention to the many and often confusing patterns in which the Imperfective is found. For convenience, therefore, I will make use of these categories, but I shall examine examples in the light of my primary assumption of the Processive *valor* of the Imperfective.

Rather than try to explain the subcategorizations of the Imperfective by taking examples from the whole range of the Aspect, I would like first to deal with its Indicative Mood, as I think one can see more clearly from this the types of patterns in which the Imperfective is found. Now the Indicative of the Imperfective is divided into two temporal formations, the present and imperfect tenses, to deal with the dichotomy between present and past, or more precisely, between what the speaker regards as belonging to the "here-and-now" and what he sees as part of the "not-here-and-not-now".² I intend to deal with these two tenses separately.

Present Tense

The most common of the categories in which the present tense is found is that which has provided the name of Durative for the Aspect, where an activity is continuous through a space in time, usually extending beyond the point which the speech event itself occupies, e.g. K159-61

ἔγρεο, Τυδείος υἱέ τί πάννουχον ὕπνον ἀπτεῖς;
οὐκ ἀπτεῖς ὡς Τρῶες ἐπὶ θρωσμηῶν πεδύοιο
καταί ἀγχι νεῶν, ὀλίγος δ' ἔτι χῶρος ἐρύκει; *get up, son of Tydeus, why are you sleeping all night? Do you not see how the Trojans are sitting on the plain near the ships, with only a small space protecting us?*

P201-3

ἄ δειλ', οὐδέ τί τοι θάνατος καταθύμιός ἐστιν,
 ὃς δὴ τοι σχεδὸν εἶσι, σὺ δ' ἄβροτα τεύχεα δύνεις
 ἀνὴρὸς ἀριστῆος, τὸν τε τρομέουσι καὶ ἄλλοι, *Poor wretch,*
death is so far from your mind; it is coming near you
while you put on the immortal arms of a champion, at
whom other men tremble,

B123-6

τόφρα γὰρ οὖν βίοτόν τε τεδὸν καὶ κτήματ' ἔδονται,
 ὄφρα κε κείνη τοῦτον ἔχη νόον, ὃν τινα οἱ νῦν
 ἐν στήθεσσι τιθεῖται θεοί. μέγα μὲν κλέος αὐτῇ
 πολεῖται, αὐτὰρ σοί γε κοθὴν πολέος βιότοιο, *They will go*
on eating up your livelihood and possessions whenever
she keeps her present mind, which the gods are putting
into her heart. Great fame is being wrought for her,
but for you, only a loss of a good deal of your
substance,

ω249-52

αὐτὸν σ' οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κοιλὴ ἔχει, ἀλλ' ἄμα γῆρας
 λιγρὸν ἔχεις σάχημις τε κακῶς καὶ ἀεικέα ἔσσαι.
 οὐ μὲν ἀεργίης γε ἀναξ' ἔνεκ' οὐ σε κοιλίει,
 οὐδέ τί τοι δούλειον ἐπιπρέπει εἰσορᾶσθαι
 εἶδος καὶ μέγεθος, *you're in poor shape, afflicted*
with old age, you're squalid and badly dressed. Yet it
is not because of slackness that your lord neglects you -
*indeed in shape and size you do not look like a slave.*³

Another possible use of the present tense is to express a verbal activity which has clear reference to future time; this is a psychological realization of the concept of present time whereby once the activity is conceived in the speaker's mind, it is regarded as already in process, even if the critical part of the activity still lies in the future. Such a usage often occurs in threats or promises when the future is so vivid to the speaker that it can be presented as present, e.g. 8541

κείσεται οὐτηθεῖς, πολέες δ' ἄμφ' αὐτὸν ἑταῖροι,
 ἡλίου ἀνιόντος ἐς αὐριον. εἰ γὰρ ἐγὼν ὡς
 εἶην ἀθάνατος καὶ ὀγήρως ἡματα πάντα,

ὡς νῦν ἡμέρη ἦδε κακὸν πέσει Ἀργείοισιν, *he will*
lie stricken, and many of his companions about him,
when the sun rises tomorrow. Would that I were
immortal and had as great a share of agelessness
as the share of woe that the day will bring the
*Argives.*⁴

This realization is especially common with verbs of motion, one of which, εἶμι, became in Classical Attic the regular future of the verb ἔρχομαι, replacing the Homeric formation ἐλεύσομαι, e.g. A169, νῦν δ' εἶμι φθίηνδ'..., *now I am going (intend to go) off to Phthia* whose future implication contrasts with the more particularly present implication of εἶσι in P202 quoted above. Already in Homer ἔδομαι, which looks like an Imperfective, is being used as the future of ἐσθίω, and B123 (quoted above), with its emphasis on continuation, illustrates how this may have come about.

The continuation which the present tense can imply was never in Homeric Greek applied to the realm of the past in the sense of the historic present,⁵ but it does have links with the past in that it may be used for an event which began in the past but continues in the present, e.g. P225-6

τὰ φρονέων δώροισι κατατρέχω καὶ ἐδώδῃ
 λαούς, ὑμέτερον δὲ ἐκάστου θυμὸν ἀέξω, *it is for this
 reason that I have been regaling your followers with
 gifts and provisions and have been making much of you
 yourselves.*

In this case the connection with the past comes through the previous lines, but more often it is made with adverbial modifiers (πάρος, πάλαι, etc.); the form merely expresses that the activity is in Process. The modifier may be extended as in B296.

... ἀλλ' ἐξ οὗ προτὶ Ἴλιον ὠσάμεθ' αὐτούς
 ἐκ τοῦ δὴ τόξοισι δεδεγμένους ἄνδρας ἐναίρω, ... *but
 since we drove them back towards Ilion, I have been
 watching and slaying men with my arrows.*

This idiom is still common in many languages (English has adopted a form of the perfect, but the English perfect is syntactically different from the Greek) and in Greek is somewhat paralleled by the Perfect, which can also be used in this sense where a State rather than a Process is being presented as extending from the past.

The continuous present may also manifest itself in the sphere of the timeless, and here the form is unencumbered by any other nuance than that of activity in Process. The reason for the use of the

present tense is twofold - firstly the Process is presented as taking place before the eyes of the speaker, as it were, in the realm of the "here-and-now" or *actuel* (as French linguists call it) and secondly because the setting up of a tense for the past time within the Imperfective Aspect tended to limit the said temporal form to that time sphere.⁶ By far the commonest use is in similes where it contrasts with the Aorist in expressing the activity in Process as against simple, Total occurrence.⁷ Another very common timeless use is that in gnomic statements where again it contrasts with the Aorist by stating that the activity which is presented as an eternal truth is one which the speaker wishes to linger over or draw attention to by describing in an extended fashion, e.g. β69

λίσσομαι ἡμὲν Ζηνὸς Ὀλυμπίου ἠδὲ Θέμιστος,
ἢ τ' ἀνδρῶν ἀγορᾶς ἡμὲν λύει ἠδὲ καθύζει, *I beg you, by Zeus the Olympian, and Themis, the one who convenes and breaks up the assemblies of men.*⁸

In contrast with this use of the present Indicative, the total action nuance of the Aorist tends to stand out as a particular feature, either an abrupt action or a culminating point, as in P177

ἀλλ' αἰεὶ τε Διὸς κρείστων νόος αἰγιόχοιο,
ὅς τε καὶ ἄλκιμον ἄνδρα φοβεῖ καὶ ἀφείλετο νίκην
ῥηϊδίως, ὅτι δ' αὐτὸς ἐποτρύνει μαχέσασθαι, *but the will of aegis-bearing Zeus is stronger; it causes a strong man to take flight and robs him of victory - easily, though he himself desires to fight.*⁹

The present often has a sense that the activity is merely being attempted rather than actually taking place, but this again is a contextual realization; the form does express that Process which is in development but there is something in the surrounding context which implies that the action has not been, and may not be, completed. For example in I261

... σοὶ δ' Ἀγαμέμνων
ἄξια δῶρα δίδωσι μεταλλήξαντι χόλοιο, *but Agamemnon is offering you fine gifts, if you lay aside your anger,*

the translation of *offer* is prompted as much by the fact that Akhilleus does not accept the gifts as by the conditional force of the

Participle μεταλλήξαντο. This nuance, however, is more easily distinguished in the past tense of the Imperfective than in the present, perhaps because it is easier to convey by context that a past activity was not successful than to intimate that a current activity may not be so. Homer and his audience would not necessarily have been aware of this nuance, as their mode of thought would be influenced by the Aspectual system of their language and they would not be concerned to have recognizable boundaries between these *Aktionsarten*, which become important to us because of our different idiomatic approach.

Another realization which is less common in the present than in the past, partly, I think, because the context once more is less amenable to bringing it out in present time, is that where an activity in Process is realized as a series of repeated actions, e.g. P631-3,

τῶν μὲν γὰρ πάντων βέλε' ἄπτεται, ὅς τις ἀφῆ, ἢ κακὸς ἢ ἀγαθὸς· Ζεὺς δ' ἔμψης πάντ' ἐδύσει
 ἡμῶν δ' αὐτῶς πᾶσιν ἐτώσια πίπτει ἔραζε, *all their missiles strike home, whoever shoots them, good man or bad, for Zeus is guiding them all, while ours keep falling to the ground, wide of the mark.*

Whether this realization appears also depends to a degree on the semantic value of a form, but one must not fall into the trap of assuming, as some scholars do, that Aspect is entirely a matter of verbal meaning.¹⁰ Such scholars not only count the contextual realizations of an Aspect as somehow integral to it but consider that each verb can be assigned to one "basic" Aspect on the basis of its translation into the scholar's own language.

Imperfect Tense

The Imperfective Aspect possesses in its Indicative Mood a second temporal form, the imperfect, which transfers to the realm of past time most of the realizations found in the present tense, and these will be treated in roughly the same sequence in order to bring out the deficiencies of either tense in comparison with the other. Firstly then, the imperfect expresses in past time the continuation which is the most common application of the Processive *valor* of the Aspect. So in K314-7

ἦν δέ τις ἐν Τρώεσσι Δόλων 'Ευμήδεος υἱὸς
 κήρυκος θεϊοιο, πολύχρυσος πολύχαλκος
 ὃς δὴ τοῦ εἴδους μὲν ἔην κακός, ἀλλὰ ποδώκης
 αὐτὰρ ὁ μούνος ἔην μετὰ πέντε κασιγνήτησιν, *there was*
among the Trojans one Dolon, the son of a divine herald,
Eumedes. An extremely rich man, he was ugly in body,
but swift of foot - and he was the only brother to five
sisters,

we see the notion of developing Process characteristic of the verb
 "to be" applied to past time. In P666

ὡς ἀπὸ Πατρόκλοιο βοὴν ἀγαθὸς Μενέλαος
 ἦϊε πόλλ' ἀέκων' περὶ γὰρ δῖε, μή μιν Ἀχαιοὶ
 ἰδέουσι πρὸ φόβοιο ἔλωρ δηϊτοισι λίποιεν, *thus did Menelaos*
of the loud war-cry make his way from Patroklos' body -
unwillingly, for he was afraid that the Akhæians would
leave it as a prize in the headlong flight,

the imperfect ἦϊε sums up the simile, describing Menelaos' activity
 in an extended fashion in order to parallel it with that of the
 simile, at the same time providing a background to ἐπέτελλεν (668),
 while δῖε records the fear as coextensive with the motion. We see
 in β322-3

...μνηστῆρες δὲ δόμον κάτα δαῖτα πένοντο
 οἳ δ' ἐπελώβευον καὶ ἐκερτόμεον ἐπέεσσιν
 ὡδε δὲ τις εἶπεσκε νέων ὑπερνηγορέοντων, *the suitors*
were preparing dinner in the hall, boasting and
chivvining one another. Thus one of these overbearing
youths would say ...,

a series of imperfects which may be seen as iterative, but which
 are nevertheless merely part of the Process which is background to
 the next action. In the five-line passage of ω208-12

ἔνθα οἱ οἶκος ἔην, περὶ δὲ κλίσσιον θέε πάντη,
 ἐν τῷ σιτέσκοντο καὶ ἔσανον ἠδὲ ἔαυον
 δμῶες ἀναγκαῖοι, τοῖ οἱ φίλα ἐργάζοντο.
 ἐν δὲ γυνὴ Σικελὴ γρηῦς πέλεν, ἥ ρὰ γέροντα
 ἐνδοκέως κομέεσκεν ἐπ' ἀγροῦ, νόσφι πόληος, *there was*
his house, and a lean-to ran all the way around. In
it the bound servants, who looked after his
possessions, ate, slept and lived. Among them was
an old Sicilian woman, who looked after the old man
on his farm far from the city.,

we see imperfects used for the purpose of setting a scene whose
 "reality" we may assume to have lasted for some time.¹¹

The imperfect can also refer to an activity in the past which is yet more remote than another activity e.g. P270

... ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρα σφι
λαμπρῆσιν κορύθεσσι Κρονίων ἥρα πολλὴν
χεῦ', ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ Μενoitιάδην ἤχθαιρε πάρος γε,
ἄρα ζωὸς ἔων θεράπων πν Αἰακίδαο, *About their
shining helmets the son of Kronos poured a thick
mist, for he had not hated the son of Menoitios
while the latter was (had been) servant to
Akhilleus.*

Here the hating is certainly prior to the pouring, since Patroklos is now dead; however, the verbal form in which it is cast is the same one which expresses any other Process in the past. Therefore any assumption that the form ἤχθαιρε expresses anteriority is conditioned by its idiomatic translation into other languages. Greek did not have the same preoccupation with relative anteriority or posteriority as Latin or many modern languages, and only concentrated on expressing the nature of the activity, whether Total or Processive, leaving it to the context to clarify the relative temporal relationships.¹²

Unlike the present tense, the imperfect is never extended into other time spheres; the form is limited to a definite temporal area and any exceptions are only apparent. This is the case with the so-called "imperfect of recognition" which expresses an activity which has been "going on" for some time but is only just seen to be so, e.g. P147

οὐ γάρ τις Λυκίων γε μαχησόμενος Δαναοῖσιν
εἰσι περὶ πόλιος, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρα τις χάρις ἦεν
μάρνασθαι δηλοῖσιν ἐπ' ἀνδράσι νωλεμῆς αἰεὶ, *None
of the Lykians will come to the city to fight
the Danaans, since there is no gratitude from
him, for our ceaseless fighting against his
enemies (i.e. there never was, but I've only
just realized it);*

this could have been translated *there has been no gratitude ...* referring to the whole line of past experience without taking the present into account. Whatever the tense problem, however, the Aspectual question is clear.¹³ An example of the Imperfective

used with a nuance of Prospectivity is P197

... ὁ δ' ἄμβροτα τεύχεα δῶνε
 Πηλεΐδew Ἀχιλλῆος, ἃ οἱ θεοὶ Οὐρανίωνες
 πατρὶ φίλῳ ἔπορον· ὁ δ' ἄρα ᾧ παιδὶ ὅπασσε
 γηράς· ἀλλ' οὐχ υἱὸς ἐν ἔντεσι πατρὸς ἐγήρα, *He*
proceeded to put on the wonderful arms of
Achilleus, son of Peleus, which the heavenly
gods had given to his father. Peleus gave them
to his son, but Achilleus was not to grow old
in his father's harness.

Nor is the imperfect normally found in the timeless contexts, except where the context is built into a relatively complex narrative as in 0274 or 0495 in which ἦεν is asserted as background to the timeless Total action presented with the aorist, a retrospective recognition of fate to which the imperfect would be appropriate.¹⁴

The imperfect may sometimes take on a conative sense but this too depends on the context for its realization, i.e. all that the form itself expresses is the activity in Process but there is some feature, implicit or explicit, in the surrounding text providing the notion of non-achievement. In Δ465

ἔλκε δ' ὑπὲκ βελέων λελημένος ὄφρα τάχιστα
 τεύχεα συλήσειε ...
 νεκρὸν γάρ ἐρύοντα ἰδὼν μεγάθυμος Ἀγήνωρ
 πλευρά ...
 οὔτησε ξυστῶ χαλκῆρεῦ, λῦσε δὲ γυῖα,

the imperfect ἔλκε implies that the victim *was dragging (the body)* when Agenor saw and killed him but as the dragging is directly related to the phrase ὑπὲκ βελέων, and as he was hit by a weapon, one may translate *was trying to drag*. Indisputable examples of this realization are rare in the Homeric poems, and none occur in κ, π, β or ω, but this is not to be wondered at, since this realization, like others, is not inherent in the *langue* but is a matter of the total context and its translation into another language.

The iterative function again tends to be commoner in the imperfect, for the possible reason that it is easier to see a series of actions in the past as a developing activity than a present or future series. Unlike the use of the aorist to present an iterative series as a Totality, the imperfect lingers over the iteration and presents it as a Process. In K9

ὡς πυκύν' ἐν στήθεσσι ἀναστενάχεται Ἀγαμέμνων,

it is πυκύν(α), *repeatedly*, which shows that a series of groans, rather than a continuous groaning, is referred to, but something of the effect of continuous groaning is nevertheless maintained. So too in P408 the same effect is gained by πολλάκι, in β384-5 by ἐκάστῳ and in ω184 by ἐπιστροφάδην.¹⁶

Finally an extremely rare use of the imperfect is that which emphasizes the subject's role in the action, e.g. B107

ἔστι σκῆπτρον ἔχων, τὸ μὲν Ἥφαιστος κάμε τεύχων.
Ἥφαιστος μὲν δῶκε Διὶ Κρονίδῳ ἀνακτι,
αὐτὰρ ἄρα Ζεὺς δῶκε διακτόρῳ ἀργεῦφόντη·
Ἑρμείας δὲ ἀναξ δῶκεν Πέλοπι πληξέππῳ,
αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτε Πέλοψ δῶκε Ἀτρεὺς ποιμένι λαῶν·
Ἀτρεὺς δὲ ἀνήσκων ἔλιπεν πολύαρνι θυέστη,
αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτε θυέστ' Ἀγαμέμνονι λεῖπε φορῆναι.

This has caused confusion in the minds of many scholars, and has been used by those who support the theory of the "resultative Perfect" since it seems to indicate an emphasis on the continuing State of the object, i.e. *Thyestes left it to Agamemnon (and he still has it)*. Yet it would be perfectly natural to translate *he was the one who* and assume that the Imperfective Aspect is being used to highlight the last member of the series, and to signal the conclusion of the deviation from the narrative.

The development which is the characteristic feature of the Imperfective Aspect can at times arise from another action and so the Imperfective comes to have a flavour of *proceeded to, began to*, e.g. K198

τάφρον δ' ἐκδιabάντες ὀρυκτὴν ἔδριόωντο
ἐν καθαρῷ, ὅθι δὴ νεκρῶν διεφαίνετο χώρος,
they crossed the ditch and proceeded to sit
down in a spot clear of corpses.

In P51

δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ.
αἷματί οἱ δέυοντο κόμαι χαρίτεσσιν ὁμοῖαι, *He
fell with a crash, and his armour clanged about
him, his beautiful hair was wet with blood.*

we see how thin is the borderline between this inchoative realization
(his hair began to grow wet) and the usual nuance of continuing
activity and thus how artificial is the distinction. A further
example is §381

αὐτίκ' ἔπειτά οἱ οἶνον ἐν ἀμφιφορεῦσιν ἄφυσσεν,
ἐν δέ οἱ ἄλφιτα χεῦεν ἐύρραφέεσσι δοροῖσι.
Τηλέμαχος δ' ἐς δώματ' ἴων μνηστῆρων ὀμίλει, *When
she had put wine in jars, she poured white-grain
into well-stitched sacks. Telemakhos proceeded
to go inside and mingle with the suitors,*

or ω368

ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρα χλαῖναν καλὴν βάλεν· αὐτὰρ Ἀθήνη
ἄγχυ παρισταμένη μέλε' ἤλδανε ποιμένι λαῶν, *About
him she threw a fine cloak, but Athene proceeded
to stand near the shepherd of the people, and
began to fill out his limbs.*¹⁷

Modern grammarians may find it convenient to distinguish this
"inchoative" realization but it is only a contextual matter of
the juxtaposition of two activities and is in no way integral to
the Aspect. A related phenomenon is that, where the parallelism
of the two activities is felt to be more important than their
Totality or sequentiality, both are expressed by the imperfect,
as in §21-2

τρεις δέ οἱ ἄλλοι ἔσαν, καὶ ὁ μὲν μνηστῆρων ὀμίλει
Εὐρύνομος, δύο δ' αἰὲν ἔχον πατρώια ἔργα, *He had three
other sons, one of whom, Eurynomos, associated with
the suitors, while the other two looked after their
father's farm.*

These many patterns in which the Imperfective is found have as
their basis the idea that the activity described by them is somehow
related to another. The relatedness is usually a contextual
suggestion and more often than not serves to build a vignette which

acts as background for the main action. It is this concept of background activity which explains the use of the Imperfective of verbs of motion; not only is the idea of *to make one's way* present, but this Process is often an introduction to another activity.

Introducing and Closing Speeches

Another area where the concept of background activity may be usefully applied is in the variation in introducing or concluding speeches with the imperfect or aorist. Each has its own justification in the context but one may posit as a general principle that the imperfect is found at the beginning of speeches where by virtue of its emphasis on the activity as Process, it indicates that we are to pause for the speaker's words, to which the verb not only acts as an introduction (hence enabling us to translate *he began to speak*) but also as background, e.g. K377

... τὼ δ' ἀσθμαίνοντε κυχῆτην,
 χειρῶν δ' ἀφάσθην' ὃ δὲ δακρύσας ἔπος ἠΰδα,
*Breathing hard, they caught him and seized his
 hands. Dolon burst into tears and began to
 plead.*

Here the imperfective activity of speaking arises from, or is connected to, that of crying. No such implication appears in P715

τὸν δ' ἠμείβετ' ἔπειτα μέγας Τελαμῶλος Αἴας,
*Great Aias, son of Telamon, proceeded to make
 answer,*

where the form merely connects two speeches.¹⁸ The aorist in similar circumstances simply records the fact of speaking, as in P200

τὸν δ' ὡς οὖν ἀπάνευθεν ἔδεν νεφεληγερέτα Ζεὺς
 τεύχεσι Πηλεΐδαο κορυσσόμενον θείοιο,
 κινήσας ῥα κάρη προτὶ δν μυθήσατο θυμόν, *When
 Zeus the cloud-gatherer saw him putting on the
 armour of the divine son of Peleus, he shook his
 head and spoke to his heart.¹⁹*

At the end of a speech, on the other hand, the imperfect is used resumptively, to pick up the narrative after the speech, often in combination with another imperfect or Imperfective form which introduces a new or parallel element, e.g. ω383

ὡς οἱ μὲν τοιαῦτα πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἀγόρευον, so they were talking to one another.

cf. Α136

ὡς τῷ γε κλαίοντε προσαυδήτην βασιλῆα
μειλιχίου ἐπέεσσιν ...²⁰

The aorist in these cases merely acts as a close-quotes, a summing-up form, stating a Total action which is simply one of a series in the narration, e.g. K465

ὡς ἄρ' ἐφώνησεν, καὶ ἀπὸ ἔθεν ὕψος' ἀέρας
ἔηκεν ἀνά μυρτίκην ...²¹

In some cases we have a doubling up of introductory verbs, as in ω453

ὁ σφιν εὐφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπε,

and the effect here is *he spoke up and said*. Similarly in ω327

τὸν δ' αὖ Λαέρτης ἀπαμείβετο φώνησέν τε, *then Laertes proceeded to answer and said,*

we have an Imperfective and an Aorist in combination, for there is no mechanistic set to constrain the poet from choosing forms which suit his purpose.²² Yet while most verbs can occur in either Imperfective or Aorist, a number appear in only one Aspect,²³ and here we must admit the possibility of formulaic influence in composition.

Aorist Present?

Now I wish to examine several problems in the Imperfective which are both morphological and syntactic. In recent years much has been made of the supposed neutralization of the present tense or, in other words, the problem of why there are no Aorist presents. Although this topic could as easily have been discussed in connection with the Aorist, it is more convenient to mention it here because most

commentators seem to see the question in terms of a present tense lacking an Aorist Aspect rather than an Aorist Aspect not being realized in the sphere of present time. The most thorough statement of this position is made by Ruipérez who states that the present tense lies outside the Imperfective/Aorist opposition because that form represents the *archivalor* of the Imperfective Aspect.²⁴

In order to meet this argument it is not enough to claim that "Aorist presents" occur in Russian or in Modern Greek since in those languages the forms which might be compared serve as futures. Moreover one must remember that, while these languages have syntactic patterns descended from the same original stock as those of ancient Greek, it is likely that they have evolved different syntactic patterns in the course of becoming distinct languages so that close comparison is not necessarily profitable and identification impossible.²⁵ A better explanation seems to be that the present tense, expressing as it does the sphere of time which is passing before the eyes of the speaker, the "here-and-now", tends to present all activities as Processes and because it is, as it were, directly involved in the activities, it can not take a view of the Total action. However when the Greek felt the need to express Total, or momentary, actions in either present or future time spheres he seems to have felt no qualms about using the aorist Indicative to do so, as can be seen from its moderately frequent appearance in comedy, whose language is generally supposed to be closest to that of everyday speech. This situation seems quite normal if one assumes that in Greek Aspect was of primary importance and tense secondary, i.e. the Greek speaker made his choice of Aspect first, regardless of the fact that in the Indicative one of the Aspects available to him (viz. the Aorist), seemed to occur more readily in contexts where the time reference was past. The point is that any attempt to treat a language as if it were a system based on precise or universally valid "mathematical" principles is bound to enjoy only limited success. In syntax, as opposed to phonology, many more factors must be taken into account, including the capacity of the speakers of a language to overcome its formal shortcomings if they feel it necessary. It

has been my aim throughout this discussion to reiterate that a theory of oppositions, while useful in bringing out features of syntactic interaction, must be sufficiently flexible to allow for the subjectivity and subtlety (rather than objectivity and mechanism) of linguistic phenomena.

Forms of Imperfective

Another problem which is both morphological and syntactic is the question of oppositions within the Imperfective itself. This problem only arises because of the dispute over the definition of Aspect, where one sees it in such sharply defined terms as *Durative/Punctual*, *Completed/Non-Completed* and so on. This, especially when combined with lexical considerations, often gives rise to the concept of several different Aspectual systems underlying that which is found in our texts. Usually advanced in support of this view is the large number of alternate formations of the Imperfective stem, a situation which also occurs in Sanskrit where each stem can have a variety of formative infixes used interchangeably to convey the Imperfective idea. Each of these suffixes, so the argument runs, once expressed an *Aktionsart* or Aspectoidal nuance such as conation, iteration, etc. While this is probably correct for the very earliest stage of Indo-European, it seems that even in prehistoric times these suffixes had become merely alternative formations and that later each language chose, from its range of suffixes, a limited number which became immutable in each verb. Thus in Homer such pairs as μένω/μύμνω, τυσθάνομαι/τεύθομαι, etc., do not appear to show any differentiation of an aspectoidal (as distinct from a metrical) nature, although it is reasonable to presume that when originally formed they did. Only in the case of -σκ- formations does it seem that a distinctive function persists in part. It is noteworthy that in Homeric Greek, unlike Sanskrit, the "formative suffix" is extended to the other Aspects, the Aorist and the Perfect, if they exist, with the result that the formally Imperfective elements are dominated by the force of the other Aspectual elements attached to them. Ruipérez claims that the reduplicated forms are the only ones to show any differentiation of meaning.²⁶ Now the only two reduplicated Imperfectives which have corresponding non-reduplicated forms are ὄσχεσθω (simple ἔχεσθω) and

μύμνειν (simple μένειν). While some scholars assign a punctual meaning to these forms, *I check* and *I come to a halt* respectively, Ruipérez points out that a punctual meaning goes against the "durativity" characteristic of the Imperfective stem and so arrives at the meanings "comenzar a μένειν y continuar en la acción de μένειν" and "comenzar a ἔχειν y continuar en la acción de ἔχειν".²⁷ He claims that the ingressively Aoristic part of the verbal notion is often "pleonastically underlined" by an Aorist Participle expressing that very portion of the activity. The only trouble with this is that every example he quotes has this "pleonastic underlining", a fact which makes one dubious of the claim that the reduplicated Imperfective also expresses this idea. From my examination of the occurrences of both verbs, I can see no differences in usage between μύμνειν and μένειν or between ἔσχειν and ἔχειν which are not lexical developments: of the fifty-four occurrences of μύμνειν, not more than six can be said to carry any other nuance than *to stay, remain, be in a place* and indeed many will only bear this interpretation, e.g. 1187

... πατήρ δὲ σὸς αὐτόθι μύμνει
 ἄγρῳ ... , *your father stays there in the country-*
side [as a regular habit, since that is where he
lives],

cf. 1132, 1552, X38, where the factor common to all, namely that the person spoken to/about is already in position, makes any idea of "comenzar a μένειν" most inappropriate. However the strongest example is M133, αὐτὸ τ' ἀνεμον μύμνουσι καὶ ὑετὸν ἥματα πάντα, a simile concerning established trees withstanding the wind and rain, where there can be no suggestion at all of their beginning to do so. In the half-dozen examples where such a *valor* is possible, it is likely that we are ignoring the interaction of the context with the semanteme, which due to its Dynamic character, may take on notions of *begin to* ... Thus in 1355

ἄλλ' ὅσον ἐς Σκαυιάς τε πύλας καὶ φηγὸν ἔκανεν
 ἔνθα ποτ' οἶον ἔμεινε ...

there is a subsidiary nuance (which is however of the order of *he stopped and proceeded to wait* rather than *he began to wait and continued to do so*) but that nuance would not come into play without

the previous line. The example which is decisive for Ruipérez is P721

μύμνομεν ὁξὺν Ἄρηα παρ' ἀλλήλοισι μένοντες,

where both verbs occur, leading Ruipérez to the conclusion that the phrase means *we used to check the flow of war by standing by each other*.²⁸ However it seems equally possible to assume that the phrase simply conveys the steadfastness in defence, their awaiting the shock of battle. It is worth considering here the possibility of metrical or formulaic influence since the form μένοντι- occurs at the end of a line in twenty-one out of its twenty-five appearances (thrice more in this very formula - ε227, φ211, Ε572) while μύμνοτι-, and μύμνευ generally, seems not to be incorporated into formulae.

When one considers the pair ἔσχευ/ἔχειν, one finds more scope for building a theory of Aspectual oppositions - ἔσχευ does often have a greater proportion of the idea of "comenzar a ἔχειν y continuar en la acción de ἔχειν". Out of fifty-four examples, however, only twenty-four can definitely be said to show any idea of *check and hold* while the remaining thirty seem to imply *retain possession*, e.g. δ164

πολλὰ γὰρ ἄλγε' ἔχει πατὸς πύς οἴχομένοιο
ἐν μεγάροις ..., *the son of an absent father has a
lot of trouble in his house,*

cf. ι40, Z509, X263 as against Ψ321

ἔπιποι δὲ πλανώονται ἀνὰ δρόμον, οὐδὲ κατέσχει, *the
horses are wandering on the course and he is not
checking them,*

cf. ν380, λ456, Ε90. In his efforts to set up a rigid distinction in this pair of verbs, Ruipérez seems to misinterpret the contexts in which some examples occur, as when he contrasts γ123, σέβας μ' ἔχειν with Ε812, δέος μ' ἔσχειν or when he claims that in Δ302, ἔπιποις ἔχεμεν "los caballos están quietos" while in Ο456, ἔσχευ ἔπιποις "los caballos están desbocados".²⁹ It seems to me, however, that in the first pair one could make an equally valid case for the opposite nuances in each verb while in relation to the second the context seems in both cases slightly different from Ruipérez's interpretation of it. In Δ302 Nestor is arranging a battle formation, albeit for Homer an archaic one, wherein the chariots make up the front rank, followed by the infantry, so that, while they are now motionless, as Ruipérez

states, the ἔχεμεν properly refers to the drivers' keeping them in hand during the advance and not dashing off independently into the fray. In O456 Poulydamas' charioteer has been killed and as a result the horses have reared up but, unless we are to understand Poulydamas' "giving" them to Astynoös as merely a nominal assignation, we must assume that he calmed them first, so that the reference of ἔσχελεν is Poulydamas' order to keep them out of the melée but within sight and call. In summary then, we may say that less than fifty per cent of the examples of ἔσχελεν support Rui Pérez's theory, μύμνελεν offers only marginal support and there are no other verbs with the same opposition in common use. In the same way it is virtually impossible to see an opposition between such verbs as πυνθάνεσθαι and πεύθεσθαι as exemplified in β315

νῦν δ' ὅτε δὴ μέγας εἰμι καὶ ἄλλων μῦθον ἀκούων
πυνθάνομαι ... , *now that I am grown and learn the*
opinions of others by keeping my ears open,

when compared with γ187

ὄσσα δ' ἐνὶ μεγάροισι καθήμενος ἡμετέροισι
πύθομαι, ἢ θέμις ἐστὶ, δαίσεαι ... , *all that I*
learn, sitting in my halls, you shall know, if it
is right.

Iterative Forms

This leaves us with the vexing question of the "Ionic iteratives" in -σκ- and their relationship to the Imperfectives in -σκ-. There can be little doubt, I think, that the forms are cognate in morphological origin³⁰ but what *valor* the suffix originally had in Indo-European would demand a far more wide-ranging enquiry than that envisaged here. All that can be said is that by Homeric times the infix had become a merely formative morpheme irrevocably bound to the particular verb so that it is impossible to separate its force from the total semantic force of the verb. However when the suffix is applied to past tenses, I think some nuance can be discerned. In Homer -σκ- can be applied to both Imperfective and Aorist stems (with the Imperfective being somewhat more common numerically), and so it is not good enough to say, as Rui Pérez does, that the suffix *always* has a

durative *valor* and consequently appears as iterative when attached to an Aorist stem.³¹ Nor can one safely postulate with Giacalone-Ramat³² that the suffix *always* has an iterative nuance, especially in the light of such passages as E708

ὅς ρ' ἐν Ἔλῃ ναίεσκε μέγα πλούτου μεμηλώς,

cf. Ω730, φ41, where the sense is clearly Processive. Yet a heavy proportion of uses of the suffix do seem to have a strong iterative flavour, e.g. ξ220:

ἀλλὰ πολὺ πρῶτιστος ἐπάλμενος ἔγχευ ἔλεσκον
ἀνδρῶν δυσμενέων, ὃ τέ μοι εἴξευε πόδεσσι, but I
would leap out in front and slay with my spear any
of the enemy who proved slower than I,

cf. λ593-600, E802, φ263, etc. Ruipérez is convinced that the forms are purely durative and points out that the context is often crucial in their interpretation. He quotes Σ159-60,

ἄλλοι' ἐπαΐεσθε κατὰ μόθον, ἄλλοτε δ' αὖτε
στάσκε μέγα λάχων ...,

where ἄλλοτε ... ἄλλοτε undoubtedly does emphasize the disparate character of the activity and, when combined with τρύς in 157, seems to provide a powerful argument in favour of contextual conditioning. Yet such an example becomes less significant when one takes account of the number of passages where such adverbial modifiers are absent. Furthermore Ruipérez seems to have misinterpreted several of the examples. One of those he quotes is θ271-2,

αὐτὰρ ὁ αὖτις ἴων, πάϊς ὡς ὑπὸ μητέρα, δύσκειν
εἰς Αἴανθ'· ὃ δέ μιν σάκεϋ κρύπτασκε φαεινῷ, but
he, like a child retreating to its mother, would
dart back toward Aias who would cover him with his
shield,

but surely here the entire description is one of Teukros *repeatedly* darting out from behind Aias' shield and then retreating while the latter covers him (and the second verb, morphological anomaly though it is, must also have an iterative notion as well as showing the *proceeded to* force that so often occurs in the Imperfective following an Aorist: cf. the pattern established in 267-8, στή ... ὑπεξέφερεν).

So also in reference to B104-5

ἔνθα καὶ ἡματιή μὲν ὑφαίνεσκεν μέγαν ἴστον,
 νύκτας δ' ἀλλύεσκεν ... , *then by day she would*
weave a great tapestry and by night unravel it,

Ruipérez claims that the iterative *valor* is a realization in the *parole* of the *valor* of duration in the *langue*.³³ Granted that this is definitely a strong factor to consider, it seems that, unlike the ordinary imperfects and aorists where the iterative notion is apparent from the context, the forms in -σκ- are positively characterized for some stylistic nuance. Several facts emerge from an examination of the poems. Firstly, apart from φάσκον and ἔσκον the majority of verbs in -σκ- occur only once each, often in settings which are "dramatic" in character and in which the sense of repeated action could be more satisfactorily and immediately conveyed by the suffix rather than by any circumlocution such as is found elsewhere, especially where the form without -σκ- is used. Secondly, there are few examples of opposition between the Imperfectives of one verb with and without the -σκ- stem suffix. In Ω23-4,

τόν δ' ἐλεαίρεσκον μάκαρες θεοὶ εἰσορόωντες
 κλέψαι δ' ὀτρύνεσκον εὐσκόπον ἀργεῖφόντην,

the iterative notion is expressed by ὀτρύνεσκον (an. . αἴρεσκον) alone while in Π532,

πρῶτα μὲν ὀτρύνεν Λυκίων ἡγήτορας ἄνδρας
 πάντη ἐποιχόμενος ... ,

it is conveyed by the phrase πάντη ἐποιχόμενος. So also there are few examples of Aorists with and without -σκ- recognizably in opposition but in ξ220 quoted on p.52, repetition is expressed by ἔλεσκον, whereas in E37,

Τρῶας δ' ἔκλιναν Δαναοὶ· ἔλε δ' ἄνδρα ἕκαστος
 ἡγεμόνων. πρῶτος δὲ ἀναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων,

the iteration is conveyed by ἕκαστος and by the series which starts with πρῶτος and the Aorist expresses no more than its ordinary Aspectual force. The repetition implied by the forms in -σκ- can also entail habitual action rather than iterative effort on one occasion, and again the factor which differentiates them from ordinary imperfects is their lesser reliance on contextual indicators for their

iterative character. The difference between Imperfective stems with -σκ- and Aorist stems with the same suffix seems to be that the Aorist tends more toward emphasis on the Total character of the activity repeated while the Imperfective concentrates more on its Process. An opposition of Imperfective and Aorist is seen in such a pair as P461

ῥέα μὲν γάρ φεύγεσκειν ὑπὲκ Τρώων ὄρουμαγδοῦ

as compared with ρ316

οὐ μὲν γάρ τε φύγεσκε βαθείης βένθευσιν ὕλης.

In the first, the poet lays stress on the manner of the activity and lingers over it because of his interest in describing each of Akhilleus' forays and strategic withdrawals while in the second he is merely recording that the dog many times did not flee in the face of forest beasts, as a *mark in his favour*, a Totality summing up his qualities. To a certain extent this suffix cuts across Aspectual distinctions which are elsewhere observable and, in doing so, is perhaps reflecting a pattern which prevailed at an earlier stage of the language. However there are enough examples of a purely Processive meaning to indicate that by Homer's time any original nuance has been largely lost.

Subjunctive

When we come to the use of the Imperfective in the other Moods we find that the *valor of activity in Process* emerges clearly in virtually every occurrence of the Aspect. However the context-dominated realizations, such as the conative or the iterative, are less often apparent in the Subjunctive and Optative, perhaps because a speaker, when he is using Moods which express activities having as yet no higher degree of existence than the mental, is not able or willing to predict whether an activity will be successful or repeated but is only indicating that there is a chance of that activity being in progress. The Imperfective is in these Moods statistically less frequent than the Aorist (as is normal for a non-residual term, which is only used

where the speaker has a particular reason for doing so) although in speech it is far the commoner. So the Subjunctive of visualized hypothesis³⁴ occurs in both narrative and in simile (where more clearly than ever the non-future character of these Moods becomes obvious) expressing that the movement of the action has been retarded for contemplation, e.g. K185

ὡς δὲ κύνες περὶ μῆλα δυσωρήσωνται ἐν αὐλῇ
θηρὸς ἀκούσαντες κρατερόφρονος, ὅς τε καὶ θ' ὕλην
ἔρχεται δι' ὄρεσφι..., *as dogs keep hard watch over
flocks in a steading, when they hear a ferocious
beast, which is making its way through the wooded
mountains.*

Here the "Complexive" Aorist, which takes no notice of the duration of the watching, contrasts with the Imperfective, dwelling on the predator's movement. Another example is P98-9

ὀππότε' ἀνὴρ ἐθέλη πρὸς δαίμονα φωτὶ μάχεσθαι,
ὅν κε θεὸς τιμᾷ, τάχα οἱ μέγα πῆμα κυλίσθη, *whenever
a man, against the will of the powers that be, is
willing to fight against one whom a god is honouring,
great pains soon overwhelm him.*

In β179,

ᾧ γέρον, εἰ δ' ἄγε οἷ μαντεύεο σοῦσι τέκεσσι
οἴκαδ' ἰών, μή ποῦ τι κακὸν πάσχωσι ὀπίσσω, *old
man, be off home, direct your prophecies to your
children so that they won't be having trouble
later on.,*

the main purpose of the Imperfective is to suggest ongoing suffering as a parallel to the prophesying which is itself presented as a continuous process. The Imperfective in ω202

... χαλεπὴν δέ τε φῆμιν ὀπάσσει
θηλυτέρησι γυναίξι, καὶ ἢ κ' εἰεργὸς ἔησιν, *it
will give her a bad reputation among women, even
those who are the virtuous.,*

implies that the state of being virtuous is one which is simply going on.³⁵ The Imperfective Subjunctive expressing the speaker's will is, as may be expected, less common, but there are not a few examples of its use in connection with the verb εἶμι in the form ἴωμεν, or more precisely ἴομεν, though of course it does

occur with other verbs, e.g. 3410

Δεῦτε, φίλοι, ἥϊα φερώμεθα ... , *come, friends,*
*let's get on with carrying out the provisions.*³⁶

An example which could be said to exemplify both nuances (Will and Hypothesis), thus showing the artificiality of the distinction, is K62-3

αὐθι μένω μετὰ τοῖσι, δεδεγμένος, εἰς ὃ κεν ἔλθῃς,
ἢε θέω μετὰ σ' αὐτίς, ἐπὶν εὖ τοῖς ἐπιτείλω; *Am*
I to stay here waiting until you come, or am I to
run after you, when I've given the message?

Optative

The Optative of contingent possibility also is used in the Imperfective where the speaker wishes to represent the activity as extended and, though it is often due to a transference in narrative from the Subjunctive because of the sequence of Moods, there is enough of its old independence to facilitate its use in non-dependent contexts, e.g. K222

..... ἀλλ' εἴ τις μου ἀνὴρ ἄμ' ἔποιτο καὶ ἄλλος,
μᾶλλον θαλπωρὴ καὶ θαρσαλέωτερον ἔσται, *but if*
another man were to accompany (be going with) me,
it will be more of a comfort and an encouragement.

Here the Imperfective indicates that the accompanying is parallel to the activity characterized complexively in δύναι (1.221) and also to the state of affairs expressed as a future in ἔσται. In P70

ἔνθα κε ῥεῖα φέροι κλυτὰ τεύχεα Πανθοῦδοο
'Ατρεΐδης, εἰ μὴ οἱ ἀγάσσειτο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων, *then*
Menelaos would have easily carried off the fine arms
of Panthoïdes, had not Phoïbos Apollon noticed him,

the Imperfective must be considered in relation to the context: ἔσται (1.60) is followed by a simile (11.61-7) and this is related to the narrative with ἐτόλμα (1.69). Then the progress of the stripping is interrupted: φέροι represents that progress. The Imperfective in B336

κτῆματα γάρ κεν πάντα δαδαίμεθα, οἰκία δ' αὐτῆ
τούτου μητέρι δοῦμεν ἔχειν ἢ δ' ὅς τις ὄπιός, *we*
would divide all his possessions, and give the
house to his mother and whoever marries her

is probably formed by a Stative verb whose meaning is *be married to*.³⁷

In wishes the Imperfective Optative implies yet again that the speaker wishes to present the activity as in Process, as in P640

εἴη δ' ὅς τις ἑταῖρος ἀπαγγέλλειε τάχιστα
Πηλεΐδῃ... I wish there were one of his companions
to announce it to Akhilleus.

In ω436,

....οὐκ ἂν ἐμοῦ γε μετὰ φρεσὶν ἠδὲ γένουτο
ζώεμεν, ἀλλὰ τάχιστα θανῶν φθιμένοισι μετείην, it
would not be pleasant for me to live; may I die
and be among those who have gone,

the Imperfective μετείην represents the continuing state (Process of Stative verb) following the Aorist θάνων. The Imperfectives in 8232,

μή τις ἔτι πρόφρων ἀγανὸς καὶ ἥπιος ἔστω
σκηπτοῦχος βασιλεύς, μηδὲ φρεσὶν αἴσιμα εἰδώς,
ἀλλ' αἰεὶ ναλεπὸς τ' εἴη καὶ αἴσουλα ῥέξου, Let no
sceptre-bearer be knowingly kind or gentle,
even if he is wise. May he be always harsh and
act haughtily.

could be seen respectively as Durative & Iterative, but in any case simply express the activity as a developing whole.³⁸ The rarity of the Imperfective *vis-à-vis* the Aorist is due not merely to the latter's residual character but also to the fact that it would seem to be less common to express a hope for a developing Process.

Infinitive

In the Infinitive also the Imperfective is limited to situations where there is a definite reason for using it. So in K147

ἀλλ' ἔπε, ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλον ἐγείρομεν, ὅν τ' ἐπέουκε
βουλὰς βουλεύειν, ἢ φευγέμεν ἢ μάχσθαι, Come with
me, let's wake someone who can make plans with us,
as to whether we should continue to fight or flee.

In P357-8,

οὔτε τιν' ἔξοπῖσω νεκροῦ χάζεσθαι ἀνώγει
οὔτε τινὰ προμάχεσθαι Ἀχαιῶν ἔξοχον ἄλλων, *he*
ordered no-one to retreat from the corpse and
none to fight in front of the other Akhaians,

the Imperfective Infinitives, together with a Perfect Infinitive in 1.359 (βεβῶμεν), all stress the continuity of the current effort, while individually χάζεσθαι may be taken as inchoative and προμάχεσθαι as conative. The inchoative use of the Infinitive is clear in β423

Τηλέμαχος δ' ἐτάροισιν ἐποτρύνων ἐκέλευσεν
ὄπλων ἄπτεσθαι ... , *Telemakhos, encouraging his*
companions, ordered them to begin setting up the
equipment ... ,

an introductory phrase which is then followed by a detailed description of what they did. The Imperfective in ω252,

οὐδέ τί τοι δοῦλειον ἐπιπρέπει εἰσοράσθαι
εἶδος καὶ μέγεθος ... , *you don't seem like a*
slave to look at, with your size and appearance.,

draws close attention to the ongoing Process of judging Laertes by careful scrutiny.³⁹ Of course some verbs occur more often in the Imperfective, e.g. εἶμι, πέμπω, and sometimes it is hard to assess the motivation for a particular use of the Imperfective because of the subjectivity mentioned earlier, but it is interesting to note that the *valor* of the Aspect is rarely encumbered by any secondary Aspectoidal considerations.

It is sometimes the case that the Imperfective Infinitive is used as an Imperative, to command the development of the activity, e.g. κ65

αὔθι μένειν, μή πως ἀβροτάξομεν ἀλλήλοισιν
ἐρχομένω... , *stay here, lest we miss one another*
wandering about,

where the question being answered is whether Menelaos should go on awaiting Agamemnon's return or follow on as soon as he is ready.

Again in B305,

ἀλλά μοι ἐσθιέμεν καὶ πινέμεν, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ,
come, eat and drink with me, as before,

the function of the Imperfective is to urge the continuation or repetition of activity.⁴⁰ The lesser frequency of the Imperfective Infinitive as compared with the Aorist in this connection is due to the fact that it is a reduction to the bare minimum of inflection for brusqueness and urgency, functions which are more appropriate when complete action is being expressed.

Participle

In the Imperfective Participle, we again find the full range of context dominated realizations that we found in the Indicative. The basic *valor* of activity in Process shows up in such examples as K565

ὡς εἰπὼν τάφροιο διήλασε μώνυχας ἕππους
*καγχαλώων' ἄμα δ' ἄλλοι ἔσαν χαίροντες Ἀχαιοί, When
he had said this, he drove the horses across the
ditch, laughing as he went, while the other Akhaians
followed rejoicing.*

Similarly in P117,

τὸν δὲ μάλ' αἴψ' ἐνόησε μάχης ἐπ' ἀριστερὰ πάσης
*θαρσύνουθ' ἑτάρους καὶ ἐποτρύνοντα μάχεσθαι, He
noticed the man away on the left of the battle,
putting heart into his men and encouraging them to
go on fighting,*

the Imperfective is used for activities which are in Process over a continuous period of time. In the quasi-formulaic phrase exemplified in B268,

..., σχέδοθεν δέ οὐ ἦλθεν Ἀθήνη,
*Μέντορι εἰδομένη ἡμὲν δέμας ἠδὲ καὶ αὐδὴν, Athene
came near him, appearing with the body and voice
of Mentor,*

the appearance is a parallel activity to the event of ἦλθεν. There are many other examples in the chosen books and through the poems. The fact that the Imperfective Participle can be used for

activities which are simultaneous with other activities in past or future (whether these activities are themselves expressed by Imperfectives, Aorists or Futures) may seem to imply a coincidence which suits Bakker's⁴¹ view of the *valor* of the Aspect but it is in reality only a simultaneity of development, with the Participle providing a framework of continuing background in which the activity takes place. The Participle can also, of course, be used for situations which are totally divorced from any time sphere, whether in the context of a simile, such as in P751

...ὡς τε πρῶν ἴσχαύει ὕδωρ
 ὑλήεις, πεδίον διαπρύσιον τετυχηκῶς,
 ὅς τε καὶ ἰφθίμων ποταμῶν ἀλεγεινὰ ῥέεθρα
 ἴσχει, ἄφαρ δέ τε πᾶσι ῥέον πεδίωνδε τίθησι
πλάζων' οὐδέ τί μιν σθένει ῥηγνύσι ῥέοντες, as
*a wooded headland holds back the water which has
 carved a channel across the plain. It checks the
 harsh streams of the mighty rivers and makes them
 go wandering over the plain, but although their
 flow is strong, they cannot break through,*

or a gnomic statement expressing a truth felt to be valid for all time, as is the case in E532-3

αἰδομένων ἀνδρῶν πλέονες σοοὶ ἢ πέφανται
φευγόντων δ' οὐτ' ἄρ κλέος ὄρνυται οὔτε τις ἀλκή,

or a description. The conative and iterative senses are rare in the Participle because any subsidiary nuance is usually more readily attributable to the finite verb, while the Participle tends to be merely an auxiliary. However the possibility of discerning these realizations is intimated by, for example B55,

οἱ δ' εἰς ἡμέτερον πωλεύμενοι ἥματα πάντα
 βοῦς ἑρεῖοντες καὶ οἷς καὶ πίονας αἰγας
 εἰλαπινάζουσιν πίνουσί τε αἴθοπα οἶνον
 μαφιδίως... *every day they come to my house and
 slaughter oxen and sheep and fat goats, banqueting
 and drinking the shining wine, in a wanton fashion,*

where the iterative flavour of the Participles is reinforced by the phrase ἥματα πάντα, or P291

Ἴππόθοος ποδὸς ἔλκε...
 Ἐκτορι καὶ Τρώεσσι χαριζόμενος..., *Hippochoos*

*was dragging [the corpse] by the foot, hoping
to please Hektor and the Trojans,*

which shows some notion of attempt.⁴²

In this chapter I have covered a lot of ground, both theoretical and practical, but such detail was made necessary by the large number of individual questions which the Imperfective has raised in the minds of investigators. An examination of these questions, however, has tended to reinforce the conclusion that, whatever nuances it may assume in various contexts, the *valor* of the Aspect, that of activity in Process, can be discerned in almost every passage in which it is used.

NOTES

¹ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.85.

² This is not the place for morphology but I suspect that this is the function of the augment - to express distance between the speaker and the verbal activity and the "non-imminent" character of such activities.

³ For other examples of the present tense, see K37,38,51,55,58, 61,66,71,82,83,91,92,95,96,100,105,113,116,118,121,125,141,142,159,160, 161,164,165,167,170,173,176,208,214,220,239,243,245,250,251,279,309, 311,319,323,325,326,331,341,370,378,385,386,396,407,409,414,415,416,417, 419,421,422,425,432,479,534,535,548,551,552,557,558; P23,27,30,35,75, 92,96,101,122,143,147,168,172,174,180,201,202,203,239,243,244,250,251, 252,331,332,338,444,450,471,473,478,489,503,513,514,565,566,588,623,629, 630,632,637,641,643,644,672,687,688,693,709; 828,29,32,33,34,41,44,51, 57,58,66,68,73,79,87,89,90,92,114,118,125,126,130,132,138,141,163,165, 167,169,170,171,198,202,206,207,210,235,237,238,239,240,241,253,254,255, 265,274,275,276,284,285,292,310,314,315,318,320,325,327,328,350,351,364, 367,369,403; ω14,56,76,114,122,187,244,245,249,250,251,252,257,263,281, 282,288,298,304,306,309,321,324,328,343,358,407,431,433,461,474,478,481, 495,512,514,515, and also those in fn 4 below.

⁴ Cf. K55,76; P146; 849,89,102,115,123,127,176,207,214,318,359; ω476.

⁵ Its absence is hardly due, as some scholars have stated, to the desire of the poet to distance himself from the action. The historical present is a psychological realization of the concept of present, in which, though the event itself is completed, its implications for the speaker are sufficiently pressing for it to be regarded as still in Process. Its first appearance is in Herodotos and, though it also occurs in Sanskrit, this does not prove that it is old.

⁶ The use of the imperfect with present reference in excluded wish and potential statements (the "unreal") is not found in Homer.

⁷ See further Chapter 8 on the use of Imperfective and Aorist in Similes.

⁸ Cf. K259; P22,157,446,447; B182,217,390; ω3,4,29,190,255,296,351,507.

⁹ See chapter 4, pp

¹⁰ For example, Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, pp 258-9.

¹¹ For other examples of the imperfect, see K2,4,9,10,12,17,25,26,33,75,77,78,79,152,154,155,182,199,227,228,229,230,231,232,264,286,288,301,336,351,355,357,364,365,390,401,450,454,471,474,478,484,487,493,498,499,503,504,507,515,524; P6,51,68,86,126,142,191,213,234,262,266,270,271,278,308,325,351,354,355,356,360,361,363,364,366,368,375,376,377,378,382,387,395,403,404,406,413,424,430,431,433,436,438,439,459,464,495,497,554,575,576,577,584,597,603,611,627,671,686,699,702,721,730,735,741,746,747,752,753,759,761; B10,11,13,16,21,22,23,36,47,59,82,104,105,106,119,156,172,174,184,201,225,234,272,312,313,322,323,338,346,398,429; ω1,2,5,9,11,13,17,19,24,26,27,28,30,38,40,41,51,52,61,64,75,78,92,98,104,125,126,129,139,140,141,150,155,156,159,160,161,162,170,171,182,185,194,203,208,209,210,211,212,224,231,242,262,269,279,283,289,311,312,313,339,343,370,383,386,389,415,417,419,423,448,452,456,460,464,466,470,492,501,535,536,539,541.

¹² Cf. β225-6 ἦεν ... ἐπέτρειεν; ω104 ἦεν (parallels with ὤων and ναύων respectively).

¹³ Wackernagel, supported by Ruipérez (*Aspectos*, p.98) sees the imperfect in such cases as an attraction for ... ἔστι, ὡς φόνην ..., but this seems an inversion of the facts. Although the recognition comes in the present the bulk of the activity's development really belongs to the past. Other examples are ω182, Y348, v209, Π33, Ψ671.

¹⁴ See pp. and indeed the whole of Chapter 8.

¹⁵ Cf. ω51.

¹⁶ Cf. K15,16,542; P26,171,409,461,462; B94,432; ω126,180,181,527.

¹⁷ Cf. K21,42,72,128,131,150,179,191,198,202,227,277,300,333,358,375,382,454,483,514,526,529,530,543,565,572,578; P4,18,33,45,60,108,123,129,130,189,192,194,209,277,318,424,427,458,482,491,516,524,529,541,552,595,596,628,648,694,700,715,722; B2,8,13,15,35,103,148,152,226,259,296,337,371,377,383,387,388,390,396,397,406,413,416,419,420,426; ω72,167,172,177,184,221,234,315,320,337,386,410,411,422,449,450,466,490,492,496,498,501,505,522,535,536,539,545.

¹⁸ Cf. K60,81,86,143,163,191,203,277,283,302,369,377,390,400,423,426,446,461,508,554; P18,33,74,119,169,326,468,474,484,500,537,553,585,621,668,684,707; B129,177,208,242,261,269,302,309,348,362,399; 23,35,105,120,191. 43,280,302,327,330,356,372,375,399,406,472,477,494,510,516,541.

¹⁹ Cf. K36,64,140,158,219,233,248,318,328,340,532; P11,90,141,183,200,442,507,560,651; B24,39,84,95,160,228,409; ω53,??. 350,393,422,442,453,513.

²⁰ Cf. K148,162,177,218,240,295,313,328,332,372,512; P33,209,233,246,256,333,342,481,516,567,624,648,656,694,722; B35,80,103,146,267,296,321,361,377; ω57,138,345,397,408,438,450,463,496,513,520,533.

²¹ Cf. B257.

²² Another example is K81.

²³ Imperfective only - ἀμείβειν, μύθων ἄρχειν, ἰρᾶσθαι, ἐρεείνειν
ἐπιτέλλειν, εὔχεσθαι, ὀνομάζειν, ἀγορεύειν,
Aorist only - εἶπεῖν, νεκῆσαι, ὁμόσαι, δεῖξαι, ἠνυκαπεῖν,
κεκλέσθαι, μυθήσασθαι, ἀγορήσαι
Formally ambiguous - φάσθαι, ἦ

Formulaic influence does not necessarily override aspectual choice and in most cases Imperfective and Aorist are completely appropriate. Moreover some verbs may be linguistically rather than poetically defective.

²⁴ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp 105,108,111.

²⁵ This may be thought a strange argument when applied to Modern Greek. But just as Russian is separated by the fact of its belonging to a different branch of the Indo-European family which evolved independently of Greek, so Modern Greek is separated from the ancient language by time.

²⁶ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p. 135.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p.123.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, p.123.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p.122.

³⁰ I am forced to omit from the main argument the interesting problem of the origin of the formation. The conventional theory of Delbrück, that the form is a reduced grade of the verb root *es, to be (+ suffix) added to the Imperfective or Aorist Participle carries with it some problems. Firstly a form created from such a specifically Stative semanteme as *es would surely follow the Stative pattern of Processive with Imperfective and ingressive or complexive with Aorist. Secondly any form built from a Participle with -σκον would be expected in Greek to give -οσκον and -ασκον continually (this objection would

be overcome if the Imperfective and Aorist *stems* were cited, though it assumes the building of a periphrastic tense on an uninflected stem, which is unusual in Indo-European). As a specifically Imperfective suffix, the *-σκ* forms seem not to show an iterative nuance, except in Lykian, and where forms exist in common, they seem to be purely Processive (βόσκω, Skt *gacchati*; gnosco, γινώσκω, cf. also e.g. εὐρίσκω, Hit. *akwanzi*, *they drink*, *akuškanzi*, *they keep on drinking*). In some languages the suffix is at times combined with stem reduplication and in Greek, Latin, Sanskrit and Avestan an inchoative notion sometimes appears, though only Latin extends this on a wide scale.

³¹ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.134.

³² Giacalone-Ramat, *Funzione*, *passim*, but esp. pp.109, 116, 123.

³³ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.134.

³⁴ The subject of Mood is beyond the scope of this thesis but I must outline here the view I have taken throughout. I reject Hahn's theory that the Subjunctive and Optative are merely alternative future *tenses* (*Subjunctive and Optative*) because of the structural unlikelihood of a language having three distinct, morphologically characterized forms expressing the one idea. Instead I support (with reservations) the analysis made by Gonda (in *The Character of the Indo-European Moods*), who defines Mood as *a means of intimating the speaker's view of conception of the relation of the process expressed by the verb to reality* (p.6) and sees the Modal system as a series of graduated fields, subjective and largely context-dominated. His views of the four-Mood system available to the speaker of Greek are convincing when he says, that if he

"... expressed himself by means of an indicative, the process referred to was to his mind actual, even if, from an objective point of view it was not ... By resorting to an imperative he pronounces a command ... The subjunctive ... served him to what [sic] may broadly speaking be called visualization. The optative ... enables the speaker to introduce the elements of visualization and contingency, the latter being ... the main character of this mood." (p.51)

Amplifying his comments on the Optative, he claims,

"In using this form [the speaker] took, with regard to the process referred to, and which existed in his mind, the possibility of non-occurrence into account; he visualized this process as non-actual: it is possible, or it is wished for, or desirable or generally advisable or recommended and therefore individually problematic; it may be probable, supposed, hypothetical, or even imaginary, its realization is dependent on a condition or on some event that may or may not happen. This condition or other event may be expressed, be implicit or even be vaguely or generally inherent in the situation. If this hypothesis be correct it becomes also

clear why the optative of wish (cupitive) originally referred to realizable as well as unrealizable wishes. Being the mode of eventuality the optative also renders useful service to those who wish to be guarded in what they say. Whether in a particular case an optative is 'potential', 'general', expressive of some wish or other, depends to a considerable extent on the situation or the context, and if such should be resorted to, on other syntactical means (order of words, particles, conjunctions, etc.)." (pp.51-2)

while in relation to the Subjunctive, he says,

"Its general function may ... have been to indicate that the speaker views the process denoted by the verb as existing in his mind or before his mental eyes, or rather: as not yet having a higher degree of being than mental existence. The subjunctive, in other words, expresses visualization. A process in the subjunctive represents a mental image on the part of the speaker which, in his opinion, is capable of realization or even awaits realization. There is, however, no question of contingency. Whether the speaker expects this realization, desires it, fears it, orders or hopes it, or whether he merely sees it before his mental eyes, is a matter of indifference. Any implication and specialization: wish adhortation, deliberation, 'anticipation' depends on circumstances: context, situation, intonation, meaning of the verb, etc.; and in spoken language also on gestures." (pp.69-70).

³⁵ Cf. K5,55,62,63,67,90,130,235,306,346,362; P94,110,121,480,743; B124,128,189,193,204,213,358,368,374,376,404; W83,491,511.

³⁶ Cf. K70,126,251,344,350; P634,712; B168,404; W358,405,432,437,462,495.

³⁷ Cf. K78,189,222,492,503,505; P104,156,162,224,366,417,488,562,563,711; B54,62,74,76,77,86,185,251; W134,190,238.

³⁸ Cf. W436.

³⁹ Cf. K32,40,101,116,117,120,121,136,179,197,209,238,260,273,297,300,312,327,336,357,356,359,388,399,403,410,419,421,437,441,455,549,562; P19,31,77,98,117,119,131,148,155,171,182,193,235,252,273,300,339,351,353,358,359,367,380,390,396,415,433,454,463,465,476,497,510,546,548,563,572,657,671,675,683,688,698,703,710; B5,7,10,15,33,36,52,71,75,113,117,132,142,147,180,189,195,197,207,227,236,238,244,265,298,311,320,336,364,370,385,394,397; W25,75,114,117,224,239,244,255,269,270,324,380,407,419,436,457,460,508.

⁴⁰ The only other example in the chosen books is P510.

⁴¹ Bakker, *Greek Imperative*, pp. 23-4.

⁴² Other examples of Imperfective Participles are K4,6,16,28,34, 42,54,66,68,69,79,111,114,118,122,123,167,171,180,181,188,189,200, 201,206,221,224,236,237,238,239,246,280,289,291,295,339,348,366,369, 375,376,382,394,423,440,457,461,468,470,484,486,491,493,496,500,502, 503,508,516,517,521,524,549,554,556,569,579; F2, 47,62,65,75,85, 86,94,103,109,115,119,128,129,136,143,153,170,189,199,213,214,215, 219,221,225,257,265,267,271,272,276,308,325,330,347,356,373,374,381, 383,387,390,393,408,412,426,430,436,438,440,441,459,460,462,464,473, 478,484,502,520,524,532,536,537,552,566,571,582,584,604,637,658,660,663, 672,674,676,677,681,683,684,687,691,700,703,707,711,720,721,724,731, 738,741,745,756,761; 87,13,23,24,31,39,42,50,56,73,74,78,80,84,86, 92,97,109,110,116,136,140,143,149,160,162,165,179,189,200,215,219,220, 226,228,240,241,244,247,249,255,264,266,267,288,300,314,324,331,332, 341,351,362,365,367,369,376,381,384,400,401,414,421,423,428,429; ω4, 5,7,21,39,48,53,56,59,60,69,82,97,100,104,112,113,114,125,127,132,143,145, 146,152,156,158,159,163,175,178,179,181,185,218,221,222,227,229,231, 233,239,241,242,243,271,272,280,283,302,307,312,313,317,319,326,330, 333,338,348,350,356,362,364,368,378,379,380,388,393,400,401,406,414, 415,419,420,425,427,438,448,453,459,474,477,493,499,503,507,512,516, 536,548.

CHAPTER 4

THE AORIST ASPECT

One of the greatest problems which scholars have faced in the study of the Homeric verbal system has been concerned with the Aspect generally called the Aorist. Not only is there disagreement as to the temporal ambit of the entity and the amount of emphasis on the object of the action, but difficulty seems to arise with the very definition of the Aspect and its basic *valor*. In this section, I wish to examine these and other problems relating to the Homeric Aorist, without claiming to provide solutions to them.

Various Theories

Unlike the Perfect and Imperfective, the Aorist has never elicited general concurrence as to its *valor*. The debate has not only been concerned with points of detail (as with the Perfect) or with terminology (as with the Imperfective), but with both together and with other considerations besides. Scholars of the nineteenth century, both in the English-speaking countries and on the Continent, seemed to agree on the interpretation that the Aorist was a simple tense form which expressed a completed action *in the past*, and then tried to interpret all the realizations of the Aspect in temporal terms, often distorting the text or producing fantastic explanations in order to do so. Monro, for example, makes such statements as,

"The aorist gives the meaning of the verb without the accessory notions of progress or continuance. It does not transport us to a time in the past when the action was present (as the imperfect does) but makes us think of it as now past"¹

and

"the aorist is often used in Homer of the immediate past — that which in an especial sense is *now* past."²

Though there would be some justification for these statements, if only the Indicative was meant, they were assumed to be valid for the non-Indicative forms as well, as was the notion of relative time, in such statements as

"When an aorist is used of an action which is subordinate to another in the past, it implies completion before the main action ... A similar use of the aorist is regular in the Subjunctive ... and in the Participle."³

Goodwin, building on hints thrown out by Madvig and others, made a great advance over this concept of the Greek verbal system in such statements as

"this fundamental idea of *simple occurrence* remains the essential characteristic of the aorist through all the dependent moods, however indefinite they may be in reference to time,"⁴

but his comments on the various uses of the Aspect show that he had still not rid himself of the domination of temporal criteria. As I will try to show in this chapter the idea of past time is not only not integral to the Aorist Aspect, it occurs *only* in the Indicative, and even there the many examples where contexts leave no doubt of pastness need to be weighed against those in which there is no room for pastness.

On the Continent, however, perhaps due to the influence of Slavonic grammarians, the Aorist was explained in terms of completion rather more often than pastness (though this factor is also not unimportant in their definitions). So we find in the work of Kühner-Gerth the dual summation of the Aorist as expressing the action as "schlechthin ... geschehen", and as a form suitable for narration because it represents past time.⁵ Schwyzer claims that the Aorist is primarily "confective" (ἀπέθανε, *er starb*) as against the mainly "inflective" imperfect⁶ and amplifies this by categorizing the "ingressive" and "complexive" uses of the Aorist as "confective" also, claiming that they represent the completion of a "Zustandsänderung".⁷ However all the verbs which he quotes are Stative and the only way such verbs can be realized in certain contexts is as the expression of entrance into their State. Further proof that the confective notion is not basic to the Aspect is that these verbs are also the ones which

appear in other contexts in the so-called "Complexive" realization to express their Stative meaning as a Totality.

In this century, the inadequacy of the temporal view has long been realized, but has often not been as thoroughly eliminated from Aspectual discussion as might be expected. We still find temporal interpretations in the work of scholars who have re-interpreted the Aorist in order to bring out its character as unmarked, unlimited (*ἀόριστος*, as the Greeks themselves saw) as to considerations of duration, iteration, completion, etc. So we find Chantraine arguing that the Aorist expresses action pure and simple, abstracted from all ideas of duration.⁸ The first part of this definition, however, has the disadvantage of being so vague that it has been used to describe both Perfect⁹ and Imperfective Aspects,¹⁰ though the second part seems more applicable to the Aorist. Humbert inflates the second half of this statement into the major criterion for distinguishing the Aorist, which expresses the action "depouillé des valeurs subjectives de durée et d'achèvement".¹¹ However, Humbert is unwilling to break completely the link between the Aorist Aspect and time, as can be seen from his suggestion that in the "ingressive" and "terminative" Aorists, the Aspectual *valor* of the forms exists side by side with the temporal *valor* "qui reste attaché au passé".¹² Yet this "attachment" to the past is illusory, as can be seen from the frequent use of the Aorist (and the aorist) in situations which are essentially timeless, or from the small but important number of aorists used in reference to situations which belong to the speaker's present or future.

Even Ruipérez, who is otherwise so conscientious in eliminating temporal considerations, sees the aorist used for present time as a realization of a "past *valor*" in his comment that,

"En los ejemplos de la 2^a persona, la acción expresada pertenece claramente al pasado en la conciencia del que habla, que es la 1^a persona ... El tipo *ἔγελασα* es temporalmente un pretérito normal, teniendo en cuenta que son pretéritos los contenidos verbales anteriores al presente psicológico"¹³

and further

"En lo referente al pretérito, el tipo de *aor[isto]* *pro fut[ur]* de Heródoto VIII, 102, 2 ... está condicionada psicológicamente por el contexto; se trata de una acción verbal futura, pero que resulta pretérita en el momento del futuro desde el cual se la considera."¹⁴

There would seem to be fewer anomalies, however, if one were to grant temporal considerations a place *only* in the Indicative and to assume that even there they are less important than is usually assumed. It is context which decides all temporal connections in the Aorist and the fact that the Indicative usually refers to the past in narrative is a mere side effect of the *valor* of *Totality* which the Aspect possesses — it is easier to see *what the speaker regards as a fact* as complete if it takes place in the past than to envisage its probable wholeness in a time sphere which is not yet itself complete.

A concomitant of the temporal view is the conception of Aspect as a distinction between *Completed/Uncompleted*, which appeared in rudimentary form in the works of German scholars in the nineteenth century and was developed further by the Polish scholar Jerzy Kurylowicz. He proposes for the Greek verbal system a pattern identical to that operating in Slavonic,¹⁵ with an Aspect for Non-Completion (our Imperfective) and one for Completion (our Aorist, his Perfective) and the Perfect expressing State, as a sort of midpoint, partaking of the characteristics of both. This definition of the Aorist as *completed* is based on the assumption that past time is integral to the Aspect, since an action can only be seen as *completed* if one can see the end or tangible result of the process of completing and so must be past, as only with hindsight can one observe the full effectuation of any action. Further temporally-oriented thinking is seen in Friedrich's claim that the structure of the Imperfective/Aorist opposition is *Linear/Punctual*, when he makes such statements as

"An action is always extended with reference to the point of the present whereas the past and future are points with respect to the infinite extension of the lines leading forward and backward from the present."¹⁶

This temporal view has been criticized elsewhere,¹⁷ but I reiterate here the general principle that Aspect is not an objective and

mechanistic distinction between two polarized and rigid categories, as the temporal view implies, but a subjective and subtle choice involving the continuous intervention of the speaker's (or writer's) will. Furthermore, his position is not improved by his statement that,

"past tense is an implication of the aorist forms but it ranges from a limited probability to a weak connotation to zero",¹⁸

since it is not the Aorist itself which implies past time but the context (of the narrative, in this case, of Homer) in which the forms are found.

Totality

Many of the problems connected with the Aorist, however, would seem to be lessened if one analyses the Aorist as *the expression of the verbal idea as a Totality, as Complete* (but not necessarily completed). This characterization can, I think, allow one to go some distance toward overcoming the great problem which has beset many of the enquiries produced in recent years, namely how to reconcile the two apparently different realizations of the Aorist, the Momentary and the "Complexive" (the type ἐβασίλευσε δέκα ἔτη). The speaker *chooses* to express the activity not as in Process but, as it were, drawn together into a compact unit so that it can be viewed as a single event, however long that event may last in objective time, and however many acts may be involved. Or better still, one may say that, while the Imperfective represents the verbal activity as in Process, the Aorist simply ignores this perspective. A few examples may be in order here. The first is P342

ὡς φάτο, καί ῥα πολὺ προμάχων ἐξάλμενος ἔσθη, *Thus he spoke, and with a leap took his stand in front of the other warriors.*

If the poet had chosen to use the Imperfective ἔσθητο (apart from metrical considerations), he would have implied in this context that his movement was parallel to the speaking or at least connected with it in some way. The Imperfective combined

with the Aorist Participle could also indicate the process of moving into position after the suddenness of the leap. The Aorist, however, simply records the occurrence of the action in its entirety, without other qualifications or limitations, as an entity in a series of similar occurrences. This is how the concept of *Totality* fits the so-called "punctual" Aorist. We may contrast this with ω266

ἄνδρα ποτ' ἐξεύλισσα φίλην ἐν πατρίδι γαίῃ
 ἡμετερόνδ' ἐλθόντα, I entertained the man once
in my own country when he came to the house.

Here the Aorist ἐξεύλισσα could simply be taken to refer to the giving of gifts, but the ensuing two-line description of Odysseus' self-identification, combined with the repetition of ἐξεύλισσα in 1.271 tend to imply that the activity is one which occupied a certain amount of time i.e. the process of "entertaining". The duration, however, is ignored and the events are simply presented as undivided, whole action. This is *Totality* applied to a verbal context which involves duration, the so-called "Complexive" use.

Realizations of Totality

The concept of *Totality* can be applied to both Stative and Dynamic verbs. In the latter, the Aorist Aspect characterizes the action as simple occurrence, as naked fact, bare of subsidiary qualifications or limitations, e.g. K23-4

ἀμφὶ δ' ἔπειτα δαφουινὸν ἐέσσατο δέρμα λέοντος
 αἴθωνος μεγάλου ποθηνεῆς εἴλετο δ' ἔγχος, *then he*
cast about himself the dark skin of a great tawny
lion and took a spear,

cf. ω381, ψ456, ξ449.¹⁹ In the Stative type, however, two realizations appear, depending on context. The first is where the verb expresses entrance into the State, and this is particularly common with verbs of emotion, e.g. K190

τοὺς δ' οὖ γέρων γήθησεν ἰδὼν θάρσυνέ τε μύθη, *when*
he saw them, the old man became elated and encouraged
*them.*²⁰

In the second realization, however, the verb expresses the whole span of the activity and this is the so-called "Complexive" use e.g. I481

καὶ μ' ἐφύλησ' ὡς εἶ τε πατήρ ὄν παῖδα φιλήσῃ, *he loved me as a father might love his own son.*

cf. K240

ὡς ἔφατ', ἔδεισεν δὲ περὶ ἑαυτοῦ Μενελάω, *so he spoke, since (and) he feared for Menelaos.*²¹

However it seems better to recognize that the ingressive and finitive meanings are contextually conditioned rather than to attempt to divide verbs into categories such as "ingressive" (inflective, inchoative, inceptive, etc.) and "egressive" (perfective, terminative, effective, etc.). For example, Brugmann-Thumb²² classify ὄρυσσθαι, *to start off* as "ingressive" seen from the point of view of *to be in motion* but ἀγνύναι, *to break* as "perfective" with reference to *to be whole*. As Ruipérez points out,²³ the difficulty with taking this line

that

"igualmente justificado estaría tomar el punto de referencia opuesto y considerar 'perfectivo' a ὄρυσσθαι, considerándolo desde el estado de reposo anterior, e 'ingresivo' a ἀγνύναι con referencia al nuevo estado de 'estar roto' en que entra el objeto."

This reasoning reaches a very distorted stage in Schwyzer's²⁴ classification of verbs into inflective-conflective (ἵστασθαι) and conflective-inflective (φεύγειν) types. While we are noting the importance of context we may also observe that every Aorist is "Complexive" in the sense that it expresses an activity which itself occupies a certain portion of time, a simple occurrence which may be placed in a definite time sphere if there is some temporal expression or implication in the surrounding context. In the same way punctuality is a type of complexive action in which the duration is minimal. What, in effect, I am saying is that the distinction between "Punctual" and "Complexive" is totally artificial (there is, after all, only one form which covers both) and is made necessary merely by the

logical expectation that a simple, Total occurrence must be momentary and by the interaction of Aspectual *valor* with the character of the semanteme as Stative or Dynamic.

This interaction produces a series of realizations which can be discerned in various contexts. The most common of these, the expression of simple punctual occurrence, when in the Indicative is usually in the time sphere of "past". A good example is β150-4

ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ μέσσην ἀγορὴν πολύφημον ἰκέσθην,
 ἔνθ' ἐπιδληθέντε τιναξάσθην πτερὰ πυκνά,
 ἐς δ' ἰκέτην πάντων κεφαλᾶς, ὄσσοντο δ' ὄλεθρον,
 δρυφαμένω δ' ὀνύχεσσι παρειᾶς ἀμφί τε δειρᾶς
 δεξιῶ ἤϊξαν διὰ οἰκία καὶ πόλιν αὐτῶν, *But when*
they arrived in the middle of the market-place,
they wheeled about and shook their wings rapidly.
They made for the heads of the crowd, portending
death and after they had ripped each other's cheeks
and throats they darted off to the right among the
houses.

In this passage the Aorists all express activities as single, simple occurrences, with the Imperfective background of swooping setting the scene for the final events, just as the Imperfectives of 148-9 set the scene for 150-1. Another example is K21-4

ὀρθωθείς δ' ἔνδυνε περὶ στήθεσσι χιτῶνα
 ποσσὶ δ' ὑπὸ λιπαροῦσιν ἔδησατο καλὰ πέδιλα,
 ἀμφὶ δ' ἔπειτα σαφοῦνδον ἔέσσατο δέρμα λέοντος
 αἰθωνος μεγάλου ποδηνεκῆς, εἴλετο δ' ἔγχος, *He*
stood up and put his tunic about his body. Then
he bound his fine sandals beneath his shining feet,
cast about himself the tawny skin of a great lion
and took up his spear,²⁵

where the Imperfective ἔνδυνε marks the beginning of the dressing process, but all the other details are presented as simple occurrences. In the sequence P309-18

τὸν βάλ' ὑπὸ κληῖδα μέσσην διὰ δ' ἀμπερῆς ἄκρη
 αἰχμῆ χαλκείῃ παρὰ νεύατον ὦμον ἀνέσχε.
δοῦπησεν δὲ πεσῶν, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ.
 Αἶας δ' αὐ φόρκυνα, σαῦφρονα φαίνοπος υἱόν,
 Ἴπποθόω περιβάντα μέσσην κατὰ γαστέρα τύψε,
ῥῆξε δὲ θώρηκος γυάλον. διὰ δ' ἔντερα χαλκῆς
ἦφου ὁ δ' ἐν κούρησι πεσῶν ἔλε γαῖαν ἀγοστίφ.

ώρησαν δ' ὑπό τε πρόμαχοι καὶ φαίδιμος Ἔκτωρ
 Ἄργεῖοι δὲ μέγα ἕαχον, έρύσατο δὲ νεκρούς,
 φόρκυν θ' Ἴπποθοόν τε, λύοντο δὲ τεύχε' ἀτ' ὤμων,
*He hit him beneath the middle of the collar bone
 and the sharp bronze point drove right through
 the shoulder. He fell with a crash, and his armour
 rang upon him. As Phorkys, the warlike son of
 Phainops, took his stand over Hippothoos' body,
 Aias hit him in the midriff with his spear, which
 broke through the hollow corselet and spilled his
 entrails. Phorkys fell in the dust, clawing and
 mouthing at the earth. Hector and his champions
 fell back, the Argives shouted loudly and dragged
 away the bodies of Phorkys and Hippothoos and began
 to loot their armour,*

we have an excellent example of the use of the Aorist for the rapid-fire narration of a series of complete actions, while the Imperfective at the end serves to "wind down" this particular sequence. Finally in ω273-5,

καὶ οἱ δῶρα πόρον ξεινήϊα, οἷα ἔφκει.
 χρυσοῦ μὲν οἱ δῶκ' εὐεργέος ἑπτὰ τάλαντα,
 δῶκα δὲ οἱ κρητῆρα πανάργυρον ἀνθειδέοντα, I gave
*him gifts of friendship, as was right. Seven
 talents of well-worked gold I gave him, and a
 silver bowl chased with flowers,*

the use of the Imperfective in place of the Aorist πόρον would have alerted our attention to the fact that a description will follow. However the Aorist ignores this perspective and simply presents all the actions as co-ordinate.²⁶

Past, Present, Future

In all of these instances, and virtually always in narrative passages, the Indicative of the Aorist is used for events whose time reference is past. Nevertheless, there are instances in which the aorist of simple occurrence is realized in the time sphere of the present e.g. P173 (also E95),

νῦν δέ σε ἠνοσάμην πάγχυ φρένας, οἷον ἔειπες, but
as it is, I reproach you for what you have said.

The rarity of this particular reflection of the aorist of simple occurrence has often been noted, and perhaps it is rare because

it is uncommon for a speaker to envisage any activity which is truly present as Total: it seems to require the kind of situation where an emotional rejoinder sweeps all other considerations aside.²⁷ This realization, however, is not a problem if one thinks in terms of Aspect rather than tense.

An interesting phenomenon here is that of the verb ἔπλετο. Of its fifty or so occurrences, only sixteen seem to have any definite past reference, and they appear to be clearly Aoristic in character (as is implied by the morphological form). In these examples we see the two realizations characteristic of Stative verbs, the "ingressive" as in ε392

καὶ τότε ἔπειτ' ἄνεμος μὲν ἐπαύσατο ἡδὲ γαλήνη
ἔπλετο νηνεμῖη ... , *and then the wind dropped and the
the sea became very calm,*²⁸

and the "complexive" in the recurrent formula τῷ (τῇ) γὰρ φύλον ἔπλετο θυμῷ.²⁹ However, the great majority of uses of the word occur in contexts where the time reference is either present or general, as is the case with β364

τίπτε δέ τοι, φύλε τέκνον, ἐνὶ φρεσὶ τοῦτο νόημα
ἔπλετο; ... , *What is the thought which is in your
mind?*

or Z434

λαὸν δὲ στήσον παρ' ἐρινεόν, ἐνθα μάλιστα
ἀμβατός ἐστι πόλις καὶ ἐπίδρομον ἔπλετο τεῖχος, *but
station your men by the olive tree, where the city
is most accessible and the wall can be scaled,*

The traditional explanation of this usage is that it represents *it has (recently) come into being* and so *it is*,³⁰ for which Monro quotes as parallels the Sanskrit Aorist and the English Perfect with *have*,³¹ but this sense would seem to require a Perfect for its expression in Greek. Could it be that we have here the extremely rare Aorist of Totality in present time, though on a scale unparalleled in literature? Or has it in the heroic verse become largely an alternative to ἐστὶ, whether as

a one word formula or by poetic licence?³² It may be instructive to compare the so-called "impatient Aorist" of such questions as Δ243

τύφθ' οὕτως ἔσσητε τεθηπότας ἢ ὕτε νεβροῦ, *why do you stand thus amazed, like fawns?*,³³

cf. B323, or the present aorists which are joined with νῦν, such as P173 quoted earlier (p.75), and E422-3, Γ415.³⁴ These tantalizing hints, together with the following usage, give the impression either that the colloquial language was more flexible than is usually assumed on this point or that the Aspectual system was in Homer's time undergoing a minimal shift toward a rigidity which would confine the aorist more and more to the past. This verb must remain a problem in any theory of the Aorist, yet it *is* an Aorist and whether one is dealing with present or past, one is treating activity viewed as a whole, in which any idea of *has/had become* is conditioned by context and the relative time preoccupations of modern languages.

In the same way, the Aorist of simple occurrence can appear in connection with an event which is strictly future, e.g. Δ160-1

εἴ περ γάρ τε καὶ αὐτίκ' Ὀλύμπιος οὐκ ἔτι ἔσθην
 ἔκ τε καὶ ὄψέ τελεῖ σὺν τε μεγάλῃ ἀπέτισαν, *If the Olympian does not fulfil them (our oaths and promises) straight away, he will do so later and they will pay dearly;*

the commentators' explanations³⁵ that the statement is a generalization and that the aorist is therefore "gnomic" do not seem to stand up to examination of the context. Monro³⁶ and Kühner-Gerth³⁷ see the future Aorist as "completed" (which concept involves the idea of past time) in the mind of the speaker, and Goodwin as expressing the action "as if it had already happened".³⁸ Even twentieth century scholars have assumed a temporal *valor* for this realization. Chantraine seems to feel that the Aorist can only have a future sense if it expresses the consequences of another action.³⁹ But one need not resort to special pleading to establish this as a perfectly natural realization of the Aorist Aspect — its statistical rarity is irrelevant, being due to the same causes as the rarity in the present mentioned above.

Timeless, General

The Indicative of the Aorist can also be used in situations where time is irrelevant (thus showing again the predominance of Aspect in the Greek verbal system) and this timeless use can be realized in two fields,⁴⁰ that of the simile and that of the generalizing statement. Once again, the earlier explanation was to reduce all these occurrences to the realm of past time. The aorist in similes, for example, was explained as being due to the anteriority inherent in the form, i.e. the simile was seen as a self-contained narrative wherein the aorist expressed a past in relation to the presents also in the similes. So Schwyzer⁴¹ comes to the conclusion that the aorist in similes represents a past which is not that of the speaker (though he also applies this to the "gnomic" aorist). According to this theory, for example, in Δ141-5 the aorist ἠρήσαντο would imply *many horsemen have made bids* (prior action) *for the article but it goes on lying as an ornament for a king*. In the same way statements of universal validity, such as Σ309

ξυνὸς ἐνυάλλος, καὶ τε κτανέοντα κατέκτε. *the god of war is impartial and kills the would-be killer,*

were assumed to be the reflection of some past event enshrined as an example for future generations. This is the basis of Van Groningen's theory that the aorist in these cases was due to the Greek fondness for mythical allusions, which were necessarily seen as having taken place before the speech event.⁴² Surely it is simple to assume that the aorist is here deprived of all temporal qualifications, that the sphere wherein such situations have their place is a timeless, and, as it were, eternal world and that the aorist merely has its Aspectual value of *Totality*, here realized as momentary action.⁴³ As Friedrich puts it,

"the aorist is used for universal or unbounded time, which shares with the instantaneous the property of not being marked for durativity."⁴⁴

Another temporally based explanation occurs in an article by Kravar,⁴⁵ who claims that the timeless aorist is both a past and a

form deprived of temporal significance

"l'aoriste gnomique (intemporel) marque une action qui, par rapport au temps où l'on parle, est intemporelle, et, par rapport au temps où elle s'accomplit, passée."⁴⁶

In contrast to the view presented in the present work, that Aspect was the dominant factor in the use of the Greek verbal system and that the temporal affiliations of a form were to a large extent determined by the surrounding context, Kravar makes use of the arguments of two Croatian scholars, Majnarić and Musić,⁴⁷ to argue that the timeless aorist is a result of the use of a form which is temporally past in contexts which lie outside any time limits. Kravar poses four questions but does not seem really to answer any of them. The first of these is, as has already been intimated, whether the aorist is a past tense or a timeless form, and here he seems to sit on the fence, claiming that it is both simultaneously. Apart from the use of the comparative evidence of another language (always a dangerous practice in syntactic discussion), Kravar claims that

"En cherchant la clé de l'énigme sur le plan de l'opposition aspectuelle présent/aoriste, on court le risque d'attribuer à l'aoriste en tant qu'intemporel des qualités qui lui sont propres en tant que forme aspectuelle en général et qui pourraient, par conséquent, être démontrées dans n'importe quelle autre opposition aspectuelle, par ex. dans celle entre l'aoriste et l'imparfait sur le plan temporel. Car, le coeur du problème se trouve, comme nous l'avons déjà souligné, au niveau passé-présent, et non pas à celui des deux aspects."⁴⁸

This illustrates one of Kravar's chief weaknesses, his confusion of tense and Aspect. Present and imperfect are not two separate Aspectual themes but rather two subcategories of a single theme, the Imperfective, and one cannot therefore set up two oppositions, *present/aorist* in timeless situations and *imperfect/aorist* in others. So then, why should the qualities attributable to the aorist in timeless situations be any different from those in "n'importe quelle autre

opposition aspectuelle"? Further on the same page, Kravar reveals the temporal orientation of his thinking when, describing the so-called "expressive" nuances of the "gnomic" aorist he says

"si telle ou telle forme, qui dans le système verbale fonctionne comme expression du passé, apparaît, dans certains emplois, dépourvue de son sens temporel, cela ne se passe sans effets expressifs."⁴⁹

His attempted justification later⁵⁰ by use of the Croatian example of Miloš who may be the epic hero Miloš Obilić and then the prototype of a strong man, simply will not hold water in the light of the Greek examples, most of which have no legendary figure to whom one can pin the story. However even though he avoids saying that the aorist Indicative implies pastness in the similes, he implies that the context (presumably of the simile) throws the aorist into a past relative to any present in the simile.

The second question, whether the timeless aorist is so of itself or takes such a *valor* from the context, is so closely related to the first that the same arguments need not be repeated to counter it. It is worth repeating, however, that to consider that the aorist takes its timeless realization only through its occurrence in general situations is to argue that temporal distinctions predominate over Aspectual ones in Greek, or, if one wishes to take Aspect into account, to define the Aorist *valor* as *momentary/punctual in past time*. To say that one can compare past forms used in the same way in other languages is either simplistic or a misinterpretation of the evidence, besides committing a major error in endeavouring to compare syntactic systems.⁵¹ Kravar's third question relates to the *rapport* between the present and aorist in similes and he attempts to answer this by setting up an opposition *present/aorist*⁵² in atemporal situations to match that between aorist and imperfect in the temporal sphere. This is, as has been intimated earlier, the wrong approach, since the opposition should be between Aorist and Imperfective Aspects in *all* situations. But it is one of the normal functions of the present Indicative to represent an activity in Process without any particular time reference, and the similes create just such a situation.

Kravar's next point concerns the relation in similes between the Aorist Indicative and Aorist Subjunctive. This is a question which is really beyond the scope of this work but I must comment here that the difference is one of Mood and not of Aspect; both forms are Aorist and therefore show the same *Aspectual valor* (another argument against the view that the aorist is temporally a past form since the Aorist Subjunctive shows no inherent pastness). All this leads Kravar to a final question — is the timeless aorist a survival of the Indo-European verbal system, or an isolated phenomenon? While questions of comparative philology are only marginally relevant to this enquiry, I cannot refrain from commenting that if it is a phenomenon peculiar to Greek, then we must acknowledge that the Indo-European verbal system was temporally based and that somehow the various languages comprising the group independently developed Aspectual systems which most later lost again — Kravar himself admits that there is nothing unusual about the gnomic aorist when he says

"si l'aoriste était intemporel *von Haus aus*, le problème 'gnomique' ne se présenterait même pas"⁵³;

the "gnomic" aorist is only a problem if one is thinking in temporal rather than Aspectual terms. But perhaps Kravar's insistence on the temporal nature of the Aorist is an attempt to fit the facts of Greek into a Slavonic-type Aspectual pattern by taking the Greek Imperfective to correspond to the Slavonic Imperfective and the Greek Perfect (perhaps assumed to represent completed action) to equal the Slavonic Perfective. As I have said elsewhere in this work,⁵⁴ it is neither profitable nor possible to compare the Greek Aspectual system too closely with the Slavonic, since, even though they may have had common origins (and it would seem that these were closer to Greek than Slavonic), it is clear that they have developed differently in a number of ways and so the answers to the Greek problems are to be found within the framework of Greek.

Among the scholars who support the "idée très en vogue"⁵⁵ of the Aorist being an Aspectual form first and therefore basically uncommitted to any temporal limitations is Humbert, who, however,

tends to spoil his argument by dividing the timeless use of the aorist into an "aorist of experience" and a "gnomic aorist".⁵⁶ The former, he says, is really a past and is always accompanied by a generalizing word while the latter is not. This distinction, however, seems arbitrary in many examples; Humbert takes Hesiodos, *Works and Days* 240⁵⁷

πολλάκι καὶ ξύμπασα πόλις κακοῦ ἀνδρὸς ἄπηύρα,
often a whole city has suffered through the fault
of an evil man,

as empiric, but it could equally be understood as timeless similar to
I320

κάθ' ἄνδρα ὅμως ὁ τ' ἀεργὸς ἀνὴρ ὁ τε πολλὰ ἐοργῶς,
they die equally - the man who has done nothing and
the one who has done much.

Humbert's distinction, however, being temporally-based, is much less important than the Aspectual form which is common to both. Similarly it would appear anomalous to make a distinction between the Aorist in similes and that in *sententiae* since both can be explained more economically as realizations of the same Aspectual *valor* in different contexts. Indeed there seems little need to say, as Humbert does,⁵⁸ "l'aoriste n'a pas, en ce cas, valeur de temps", with the implication that the Aorist is inherently marked for time but is here deprived of it. The whole thrust of this section so far has been to see the Aorist as a unity, an Aspect (unlimited by definition in respect of time) whose *valor* is one of Totality and which is realized in different contexts with different temporal references. The Aorist in these cases would merely imply that the activity is to be seen as Total, complete, or simply not in Process, as in I320 already quoted or the famous P32, ... ῥεχθὲν δέ τε νῆπιος ἔγνω, the fool learns his mistake after it is done, especially in contrast to the present which expresses the ongoing character of the activity.

An interesting argument concerned with the supposed pastness of the aorist is that regarding the augment which is assumed to be an inherent marker of past tenses along with the secondary endings. I do not think that one can prove that the augment was originally an

integral signal of pastness since it would thus be obligatory in every case of a past meaning, and Homer and the poetic tradition would only have been able to quote metrical licence for dropping it. One problem relating to the optional character of the augment is why it is only found in the Indicative. Perhaps it was originally a feature of narrative which had spread by Homer's time to the whole of the imperfect and aorist tenses, irrespective of time reference. All this would be mere idle speculation were it not for the fact that it seems to fit, better than the explanation which follows, the situation where aorists in similes and *sententiae*, though timeless, usually have the augment.⁵⁹ The alternative explanation, first proposed by Wackernagel⁶⁰ and then repeated by others such as Schwyzer⁶¹ and Friedrich,⁶² is that the aorist is augmented in these contexts as a symbol, not of the past, but of *reality*. Apart from metaphysical considerations as to the nature of reality, why should timeless situations merit greater claim to "reality", and therefore to the augment, than ordinary temporal *milieux*? Moreover, if the augment represents reality, and it is the function of the Indicative also to express this concept, as these scholars seem to feel,⁶³ why is the whole Indicative Mood not possessed of an augment? Both the latter writers contradict this in their statements⁶⁴ that the aorist is marked for pastness by the secondary endings *and the augment*. Surely a simpler way of looking at the phenomenon is to assume that the general validity of these forms is underlined by a marker of their character as not specifically confined to the "here-and-now".

The temporal line is also the basis of Ruipérez's theory⁶⁵ that the aorist is a fit form for the expression of generalities because of its "neutrality", i.e. its character as expressing the "verbal action pure and simple". While this neutrality is undoubtedly an important factor in many uses of the Aorist and will be treated later, I do not think it is the ultimate explanation for the timeless usage; after all, Perfect and Imperfective are also used in timeless contexts. Rather, it would seem preferable to see the Aorist as an Aspectual form above all, whose temporal connotations stem largely from the context.

Since here the context which conditions the form is one which is abstracted from the temporal ambit of the poem and so is effectively timeless, it follows that the verb too can be seen as timeless and that it therefore presents the unmixed expression of Aspect alone. To sum up: the use of the aorist in similes and statements of generality would cause no particular problems were it not for the temporal obsessions of Latin-based grammar. Within the Greek verbal system time was, on the whole, less significant than Aspect, and the Aorist, being an Aspect rather than merely a tense, has a single *valor* which is realized as *Total* in any context, temporal or atemporal, in which it occurs.

Order of Events

Another temporally-based consideration which plays an important role in all discussions of the Aorist is the time "slot" which an activity occupies relative to another activity, i.e. whether it takes place before, after, or simultaneously with, another activity. Although in Latin it is customary to specify precisely which of two activities comes first in time by means of perfect, pluperfect and future-perfect tenses, in Greek the verbal form expresses only the speaker's Aspectual view of the activity, while time relationships, like absolute time references, are indicated by the context. Most commonly there is an inherent logical order in the events described, but it may be strengthened by the addition of an adverb, or by the syntactical subordination of a clause: in B378-9

αὐτὸν ἐπεὶ ῥ' ὅμοσέν τε τελευτήσέν τε τὸν δοκῶν
 αὐτῷ ἔπειτ' ὁ οἶνον ἐν ἀμφιφορεῦσιν ἄφουσεν, *when*
she had sworn and completed the oath, she drew off
wine into jars for him.,

the conjunction ἐπεὶ, introducing Total action (Aorist) verbs, strengthens the presumption that the swearing of the oath entirely precedes the more mundane events described in the next lines.⁶⁶

In narrative, coordinate verbs often appear in the order of the events described, as in P346-9

τὸν δὲ πεσόντι έλεπσεν ἀρηΐφιλος Λυκομήδης,
σιτῆ δὲ μάλ' ἐγγύς ἴων, καὶ ἀκόντισε δουρὶ φαεινῷ,
καὶ βάλεν Ἴππασίδην Ἀπισάονα, ποιμένα λαῶν,
ἦπαρ ὑπὸ πρᾶκίδων, εἶθαρ δ' ὑπὸ γούνατ' έλυσεν,
Lykomedes the warlike felt pity as he fell, and
going up, he took his stand and cast his shining
spear. He hit Apisaon, Hippasos' son, the
shepherd of the people, in the liver below the
diaphragm, and loosed his knees.

But the logical order of the events is often different from that of their presentation, as may be seen from E35-42

ὡς εἰποῦσα μάχης έξήγαγε θοῦρον Ἄρηα
τὸν μὲν έπειτα καθεῖσεν ἐπ' ἠΰσεντι Σκαμάνδρῳ
Τρῶας δ' έκλιναν Δαναοί· έλε δ' ἄνδρα ἕκαστος
ἠγεμόνων· πρῶτος δὲ ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν Ἀγαμέμνων
ἀρχόν Ἀλιζώνων, Ὀδίου μέγαν έκβαλε δίφρου·
πρῶτῳ γὰρ στρεφθέντι μεταφρένῳ ἐν δόρῳ πῆξεν
ῶμων μεσσηγύς, διὰ δὲ στήθεσφιν έλασσε,
δούπησεν δὲ πεσών, ἀράβησε δὲ τεύχε' ἐπ' αὐτῷ
when she had said this, she led mighty Ares from
the battle and then sat him down by roaring
Skamandros. The Danaans carried the attack to the
Trojans and each of the leaders took his man.
First of all, Agamemnon, lord of men, cast the
leader of the Halizones, great Odios, from his
chariot. He caught him through the middle of the
shoulders with his spear when he had turned and
drove it straight through his chest. Odios fell
with a crash and his armour rang about him.

Here the participles εἰποῦσα and στρεφθέντι are both presented in the sequence of occurrence in relation to the verbs to which they are subordinated, but πεσών, whether it is to be taken as simultaneous or anterior, is not. The coordinate sequences εξήγαγε, καθεῖσεν and πῆξεν, έλασσεν, δούπησε are in their respective orders of occurrence, but most of the other sequences refer to temporal parallels: εκλιναν and έλε are parallels and as a group follow the action of εξήγαγε, but not necessarily that of καθεῖσεν (έπειτα and μὲν ... δ' by a combination of emphases suggest a *meanwhile* notion, and we are no longer concerned with Ares' movements); εκβαλε recapitulates έλε (as first instalment) and is itself recapitulated by στρεφθέντι ... δούπησε, and ἀράβησε is parallel to δούπησε (or may come slightly

after it). However the point is that Homer chose to describe all these actions with the same Aspectual forms, regardless of their relative temporal sequence.

Duration and Iteration

The concepts of punctuality and instantaneity are, as already hinted, inadequate to cover all the realizations of the Aorist Aspect, and especially so in relation to the so-called "Complexive" use, where an activity which in objective time has perceptible duration is expressed by the Aorist. One need not resort to such explanations as Kühner-Gerth's⁶⁷ — that the complexive Aorist expresses, as it were, the action as drawn together to one point — nor that of Schwyzer,⁶⁸ that the complexive Aorist is to be derived from the "confective" or punctual type by a process of weakening. Such ideas seem to result from an over-emphasis on the instantaneous portion of the Aspectual *valor*, taking it as basic and trying to derive the other from it, rather than finding the common factor behind sets of equal terms. One must simply recognize that the speaker wishes to view the activity from a distance, so to speak, as a whole, complete action. So the aorists in $\omega 266$, quoted earlier, covers the entire period of Odysseus' stay, and yet no notice is taken of the extended nature of the activity; the Aorist is used to sum up in one short phrase the total action before proceeding with the details of the gifts. Thus I do not agree with those scholars who claim that the momentary and the complexive Aorists cannot be reconciled, and I prefer to regard both as simply realizations of the *valor* of Totality in different contexts — in the one the Totality is that of a single instantaneous occurrence while in the other, it is that of a long-lasting event seen, as it were, from a bird's-eye perspective, and so viewed in its entirety.

A close relative of this complexive use is that whereby a series of similar, simple occurrences are lumped together and expressed by a form which takes no notice of the repetition and merely characterizes the activity as one entire event. So in $\theta 297$

ἀλλ' ἔξ οὗ πρὸς Ἴλιον ὡσάμεθ' αὐτούς,
 ἐκ τοῦ δὴ τόξοισι δεδεγμένος ἄνδρας ἐναίρω.
 ὅκτ' οἱ προέηκα χανυγλώχινας οἰστούς,
 πάντες δ' ἐν χρόῳ πῆχθεν ἀρηϊθῶν σίληων,

Teukros replies to Agamemnon, who has accused him of slackening his efforts, that he has shot eight arrows, all of which have found their mark, and to do so he uses the Aorist of simple occurrence, leaving its iteration to be expressed by the contextual signals ὅκτ' and πάντες.⁶⁹

Markedness

That the Aorist expresses "action pure and simple", the verbal activity as a bare fact without regard for such considerations as duration, iteration or the like, has been acknowledged by scholars, and this lack of subsidiary nuances introduces the rather involved question of the *marked/unmarked* status of the Aspect. According to the definition of markedness offered earlier, the Aorist must be considered the unmarked term since it is often used where there is no pertinent reason for using the other, marked, term, which is, according to the choice of expression open to the speaker in a given set of circumstances, either the Imperfective or the Perfect. This is what the ancient grammarians must have meant when they called the Aorist the residual Aspect, and it can be seen from the uses of the Indicative, and even more in the other Moods and non-finite forms of the verb. It is this very residuality which has caused such problems in the investigation of the *valor* of the Aorist — where a form is used for a specific purpose or limited number of purposes, one can easily discern the basic concept behind these uses, but where a form finds definition by the absence of the idea which marks the other term, it is extremely difficult to refine, from the multitude of uses, any factor which is common to them all. It is also this residuality which prompts the claim that the Aorist is in some way more "objective" than the Imperfective because it lacks the subsidiary nuances which the latter seems to have in abundance. So Humbert claims that the Aorist

is

"depouillé des valeurs subjectives de durée ou d'achèvement qu' expriment présent et parfait."⁷⁰

Granted that the viewing of the activity as in Process is subjective, how is the decision to regard the action as "depouillé ... de durée ou d'achèvement" any less so? Moreover while the choice of Aspect is certainly subjective, it is possible to discern an objective basis from which the choice is made and which therefore limits the range of subjectivity. Further, for Humbert this objectivity is negative, defined merely as the absence of "conditions subjectives" and he qualifies his statement by commenting.

"Soutenir que l'aoriste exprime directement le <<momentané>>, c'est parler comme si le grec pouvait immédiatement considérer l'action de façon objective, telle que la réalité la lui fournit."⁷¹

Again leaving aside metaphysical speculation as to realities, one must question why "le momentané" is any more real or objective than the quality of duration which he attributes to the Imperfective. It is a different thing to say that the Aorist is better suited to express "the verbal idea" because of its greater ambiguity; this is a concomitant of its lesser markedness, and to confuse the concept of the verbal idea or "action pure and simple" with any idea that the Aorist is, because of this, more "objective" seems to be overstating the case.

Subject and Object

Ruipérez' statement⁷² that the "punctual" Aorist is hard to distinguish from the "neutral" in "transformative" verbs (in which the "punctual" Aorist shows up as "finitive") and that there is an external object which is transformed by the verbal activity, raises the question of the resultative character of any verbal form. This will be discussed in connection with the Perfect, but it is even more pertinent here because of the strong tendency to assume that the

is somehow incomplete alone, without an object on which to act.

One statement of the position is that of Humbert who, after quoting Chantraine's comment that "le verbe seul n'a guère de sens, et le complément à l'accusatif est indispensable pour que la phrase s'achève",⁷³ goes on to compare the Aorist rather unfavourably with the Perfect in this connection. The arguments have been set out elsewhere⁷⁴ but it is here worth repeating the two basic principles behind my objection to the theory. Firstly, to assume such an important role for the object would seem to contradict what must be the most fundamental component of the generally accepted definition of Aspect, namely that this category is concerned with the relationship of the *subject* to the activity. Then too, the apparently great dependence on the object in the Aorist seems to be a psychological realization of the combination *Total Aorist plus limiting Accusative*. Whether the verbal activity has an object which is transformed is, then, unimportant in the claim that, because the Aorist concentrates on the final point of the action, it is hard to distinguish the "punctual" Aorist from the "neutral". Moreover to emphasize the transformed character of the object seems tantamount to admitting that the Aorist conveys the expression of completion, a fact which, as Ruipérez himself states,⁷⁵ is a reflection of the aorist realized as Total *in past time*. In this connection, however, Ruipérez must be commended for his refutation of the commonly held view that βαλεῖν βέλος is "ingressive" and βαλεῖν ἄνδρα "perfective".⁷⁶ While it is useful to construct the psychological movement of this trope and provide superb argumentation to demonstrate that the action of βαλεῖν terminates in βαλεῖν βέλος and that ἄνδρα is an Accusative of direction, he fails to make use of this example to show the inadequacy of placing inordinate emphasis on the object of the verbal activity.

Subjective/Objective

A second problem which is somewhat akin to the question of the so-called "objectivity" of the Aorist is the attempt to separate the two realizations of the Aorist so widely as to create two distinct oppositions with the Imperfective. The chief proponent of this theory is Hermann⁷⁷ who claims that between ἐβασύλασθε and ἐβασύλασθε δέκα ἔτη

there is merely a subjective distinction (subjektive Aktionsart), a difference of perspective in the face of the same action, while between ἐβασύλευε and ἐβασύλευσε, *he became king*, the distinction is objective in that the actions are different. In the former case, the Aorist, he claims, represents the action as "completed" and the Imperfective as durative. The telling argument against this conception is that there is no separate form for the expression of the *subjective/objective* distinction, which in any case is only realized in Stative verbs, since in Dynamic verbs any such distinction would be impossible to unearth. One must also point out here the trap of regarding the Aorist as expressing action which is completed, for this is a side effect of the predominantly past time employment of the Indicative. One should also emphasize that Aspectual distinctions are *always* subjective; the criterion for Aspect is that it lies, not in the activity itself but in the speaker's view of that activity in relation to its context. One could in fact find justification for the classification of the various realizations of the Imperfective as "objective" on the same grounds, as Brunel does,⁷⁸ since they express not the speaker's viewpoint but the type of action involved, were it not for the fact that in Greek these *Aktionsarten* are expressed by the same means as the "subjective" Aspects. The *Aktionsarten* are in Greek merely nuances of the Aspects, induced in the hearer's/reader's consciousness by the context.

Variant Passive Forms

A question which is both morphological and syntactic is that of the passive aorists in -ην and -θην, which in my view are not opposing but different morphological expressions for a single syntactic entity.⁷⁹ The chief proponent of the theory that one can find an Aspectual distinction between these forms is Prevot, who, in a monograph published in 1935,⁸⁰ claimed that the aorist in -ην has a *valor* "determiné" and that in -θην a *valor* "indeterminé", defining the former as "valeur d'état". There are several good reasons for rejecting such a theory and I will examine the theoretical

considerations first before passing on to examine the evidence. Firstly, one must ask why, if the form in -ην truly expressed a "valeur d'état" it is not replaced by the Perfect, to all forms of which this *valor* is more appropriate, or if the State is to be considered a lasting one, why the form is not rendered redundant by the Imperfective, of which the "lasting-in-time" component is so important a part.⁸¹ It seems, too, that Prevot has surreptitiously introduced the idea not of mere State but of resultant State, for example in his discussion of Thoukydides III 53,4,

ἀποβλέφατε γὰρ ἐς πατέρων τῶν ὑμετέρων θήκας οὐς ἀποθανόντας ὑπὸ Μήδων καὶ ταφέντας ἐν τῇ ἡμετέρῃ ἐτιμῶμεν,

when he claims that ταφέντας expresses the State of being buried. If this is so why does he neglect to claim that ἀποθανόντας can equally be interpreted as expressing a State, that of being dead, and so extend his theory to the entire Aorist Aspect? Another objection comes from the fact that Prevot defines the terms *determiné/indeterminé* not in the Slavist's sense of *action within the limits of duration, completion, etc./action unbounded in reference to these considerations* but with the notion, first introduced by Meillet and by Holt,⁸² of *action avec son terme/action sans son terme*. One must here object, of course, that the concept of State and "action avec son terme" are not synonymous, that the State of being dead, for example, can be considered with or without its "terme", the act of dying, simply as a State of existence (or in this case, non-existence) and similarly the State of being buried can be envisaged either with or without its "terme", the act of burial. Another question one might feel impelled to ask here is why in any given verb the Aorist only occurs regularly in one form or the other, rarely in both; if a true Aspectual opposition existed, one would expect it to be realized more frequently than in the few cases, scattered from author to author and from century to century, in which it is. The diachronic scope of Prevot's work is larger than that of my own so I cannot examine in detail the list of Aorists in -ην which Prevot provides, but Ruipérez has already done this⁸³ and it seems reasonable to endorse his

observation that while the majority of Aorists in -ην are formed from Dynamic verbs, those in -θην, which are those most frequently found, are formed equally from Stative semantemes.⁸⁴ In context, I doubt if one can really see any nuance in either type. As an illustration, I would quote Prevot's claim that the aorist ἐκάη in I212,

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ κατὰ πῦρ ἐκάη καὶ φλόξ ἐμαράνθη,

expresses a State of being burned. Aside from asking, as Ruipérez does, on what state of the πῦρ the poet could possibly wish to focus, one must note here a clear synonymity between πῦρ ἐκάη and φλόξ ἐμαράνθη, which both express completeness (in this case also with a finitive nuance) of the Processes κατακαίειν and μαραίνειν. It is rare that both Aorist formations appear in Homer from the same verb but of the half-dozen or so examples which do occur, none can be seen to show any nuance which distinguishes one member of any pair from the other, both showing simply the Aorist *valor* of *Totality*. One of the most frequent pairs in the poems is ἐπάγην/ἐπέχθην and here Prevot claims that the forms in -ην imply that the missile is firmly embedded in the place where it made its impact. This, he states, is the case in E616

τόν ῥα κατὰ ζωστήρα βάλεν Τελαμώνιος Αἴας,
νειαίρη δ' ἐν γαστρὶ πάγη βολιχόσκιον ἔγχος

and Δ528 ... πάγη δ' ἐν πνεύμονι χαλκός which are opposed to θ298

ὄκτις δὴ προέηκα τανυγλώχινας οὐστούς
πάντες δ' ἐν χροῦ πῆχθεν ἀρηϊθῶν αἰζηῶν,

by virtue of the fact that in the former the spear fixes in an organ while in the latter "il a touché le but".⁸⁵ Yet there seem several good reasons why the examples should be totally coordinate — ἐν γαστρὶ = ἐν πνεύμονι = ἐν χροῦ. Firstly, as Ruipérez comments,⁸⁶

"No hay base para pensar que en θ298 las flechas permanecieron clavadas, ni para sostener que en πάγη de los otros dos ejemplos la forma verbal expresa positivamente el estado resultante",

and secondly, the two forms are metrically different and neither could be substituted for the other.

Another fairly common pair is ἐδάμην/ἐδαμάσθην, the latter showing its origin as a recent formation from the sigmatic Aorist Active, which appear in such lines as 9231,

... λύνῃ γὰρ ἀσκελῶς ἐδαμάσθην
κῦμασιν ἐν πολλοῖς ...

and B860,

ἄλλ' ἐδάμη ὑπὸ χερσὶ τοδῶκεος Αἰακίδαο
ἐν ποταμῷ ...

I cannot see any difference except in metrical value between the two, since both could conceivably be taken as expressing the State of the subject, but it is more likely that both express the Totality of being brought down. The other verbs in this series are:—

βλάπτω aorists ἐβλάφθην and ἐβλάβην, e.g. I512
λίσσονται δ' ἄρα ταῖ γε Δία Κρονίδα κιοῦσαι
τῷ "Αἴην ἄμ' ἔπεσθαι, ἵνα βλαφθεῖς ἀποτεύσῃ,

cf. Ψ545

... μέλλεις γὰρ ἀφαιρήσεσθαι ἄεθλον
τὰ φρονέων ὅτι οἱ βλάβεν ἄρματα καὶ ταχέ' ἔππω

μίσγω aorists ἐμίχθην and ἐμίγην, e.g. E134
Τυδεΐδης δ' ἑξαῦτις ἰὼν προμάχοισιν ἐμίχθη,

cf. Ψ219

οὐδέ κεν Ἀργεῖη Ἑλένη, Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα,
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἄλλοίῃφ ἐμίγη φιλότῃτι καὶ εὐνή.

τέρπω aorists ἐτέρφθην and ἐτάρπην, e.g. ρ174
κοῦροι, ἐπεὶ δὴ πάντες ἐτέρρθητε φρέν' ἀέθλους,

cf. Λ780

αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τάρπημεν ἐδοτύος ἠδὲ ποτῆτος.

φαίνω aorists ἐφάνθην and ἐφάνην, e.g. A200
... αὐτίκα δ' ἔγνω
Παλλάδ' Ἀθηναίην· βελνὼ δέ οἱ ὄσσε φάνθεν,

cf. T46

καὶ μὴν οἱ τότε γ' εἰς ἀγορὴν ἦσαν, οὐνεκ' Ἀχιλλεύς
ἔξεσάνη ...

It is interesting to note that there are several verbs having Aorists of both formations in later Greek which in Homer's time had only one type.⁸⁷ However there seems to be no distinction between the two forms, where both appear. It must be remembered that all the Homeric doublets quoted above are metrically different (except τέρω) and this fact explains, more easily and convincingly than Prevot's hypothesis, why the poet chose one form over the other in any given context. In the case of verbs where only one form appears in Homer one cannot be certain that the second form did not exist in Homer's time, though the forms in -θη- do seem to be of more recent formation, arising first in vocalic verbs but beginning to spread into consonant stems, forming variants of which Homer (usually) found use for only one, while the other survived elsewhere.

Subjunctive

When we come to the use of the Aorist in the other Moods, we find that it far outweighs the Imperfective or Perfect in numerical frequency. This is natural for the unmarked or residual term which is used where there is no specific reason to use the other. Ruipérez's explanation of the predominance of the Aorist in the non-Indicative Moods - that it occurs because of the proportionately greater number of "transformative" verbs⁸⁸ - seems to be a thinly veiled attempt to use the semantic theory of Aspectual usage to state that a particular Aspect is used because of the "inherently" durative or punctual nature of the activity. It is contradicted, too, by the fact that Ruipérez himself admits,⁸⁹ the Imperfective is used when the author/speaker chooses to underline the activity's duration, and even more so when he endorses Chantraine's statement that

"Il est naturel, lorsque l'on envisage dans

l'avenir une action ou une état de choses que l'on veut ou que l'on souhaite voir se produire, que la notion verbale soit considérée en elle-même et que l'on n'ait pas en vue le procès qui aboutit a cette réalisation."⁹⁰

It is in the non-Indicative Moods that the total indifference of the Greek Aspectual system, and especially of the Aorist, to any notion of relative time, is seen most clearly; the Aorist expresses the activity in and by itself, abstracted from limitations as to duration, completion, etc. It is consequently very hard to say what particular nuance of the Aorist is being expressed, if indeed it is expressing any at all. So we find the Subjunctive of visualized hypothesis in such examples as K65,

αὐθι μένειν, μή πως ἀβροτάξομεν ἀλλήλοισιν
ἐρχομένων...; *stay here, lest we miss each other in
our travels.*

where the Aorist ignores the repeated passing of the two men and presents it as a simple occurrence. In P91,

.....εἰ μὲν κε λίσσω κατά τεύχεα καλά
Πάτροκλόν θ'...; *if I abandon the fine arms and
Patroklos...*

we have an Aorist used to convey the utter finality of the abandonment, which is paralleled by the Aorist νεμεσήσεται in 1.93 to describe the Totality of rejection. The Aorist in β98

μῦμεντ' ἐπελγόμενοι τὸν ἐμὸν γάμον εἰς ὃ κέ φᾶρος
ἐκτελέσω...; *go on waiting, even though you are
eager for marriage with me, until I finish the robe.*

refers to the final moment of the workmanship which will precede the marriage. In ω217-8

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ πατρὸς πευρήσομαι ἡμετέροιο,
αἶ κέ μ' ἐπιγνώη καὶ φράσσειται ὀφθαλμοῖσιν, *I will
test our father, to see whether he recognizes me
when (lit. and) he sees me,*

the Aorist is used to emphasize the recognition in its entirety, its Totality, rather than the Process of realization.⁹¹ In the expression of the speaker's will, the Subjunctive of the Aorist is less common statistically than that of the Imperfective, due to the

profusion of examples of ἵσμεν, but it does occur in such examples as K97

δεῦρ' ἔς τοὺς φύλακας καταβήσομεν, ὅφρα ἵδωμεν, let us go down to the guards, so that we may check them out.

where the poet is concentrating on the completeness of the activity of approaching the guards to inspect them. A similar argument applies to P121

Αἴαν, δεῦρο, πέπον, πεοὶ Πατρόκλοιο θανόντος
σπεύσομεν, ἄλ' κ' ἐνέκων περ' Ἀχιλλῆϊ προφέρωμεν
γυμνόν... Aias, my friend, come here, let us hurry to the dead Patroklos, in the hope that we may carry away the naked body to Akhilleus.⁹²

Optative

In the Optative there is a clear preponderance of the Aorist, perhaps because the Optative, expressing even more clearly than the Subjunctive that an activity has as yet no higher degree of existence than the mental, leaves comparatively little room for the conception of the activity as in Process. Among the many passages where we find the Aorist expressing the contingent possibility as a Totality are K243

εἰ μὲν δὴ ἕταρόν γε κελεύετε μ' αὐτὸν ἐλέσθαι
πῶς ἂν ἔπειτ' Ὀδυσῆος ἐγὼ θείοιο λαθούμην, if you command me to choose a companion, how could I forget divine Odysseus.

(in P161-3)

εἰ δ' οὗτος προτὶ ἄστι ἔγα Πριάμοιο ἄνακτος
ἔλθοι τεθνηὼς καὶ μιν ἐρουσαίμεθα χάρις,
αἰψὰ κεν Ἀργεῖοι Σαρπηδόνοσ' ἔντεα καλὰ
λύσειαν ... If he, even though dead, could be brought into the great city of lord Priamos, if we could drag him from the fray, the Argives would give us the fine arms of Sarpedon.

we see the Aorist used for actions which are co-ordinate, simple Totalities, contrasted with ἀγοόμεθα which arises from them.

The Aorists in β31

ἤε τιν' ἀγγελίην στρατοῦ ἔκλυεν ἐρχομένοιο,
 ἦν χ' ἡμῖν σάφα εἶποι, ὅτε πρότερός γε πύθουτο;
*Has he heard of the approach of an army, which
 he could tell us about after he has learnt of it?*

ignore the details of the narrative, and present it as an action, whole and undivided. One might be tempted to see evidence for a relative-temporal use of the Aorist in ω254

τοιοῦτω δε ἔοικας, ἐπεὶ λούσαιτο φάγου τε
 εὐδέμεναι μαλακῶς... *you look like one who would
 sleep soft when he has bathed and eaten.,*

but this is chiefly a function of ἐπεὶ; The Aorist merely implies completeness.⁹³

The Optative which implies a wish on the part of the speaker is no less preponderantly in the Aorist, presumably because of the natural human tendency to wish for a Total event rather than a developing Process in most situations. Occasionally the context lends credence to the suggestion that the Aorist implies pastness, as in K537

αὐτὸν γὰρ δὴ Ὀδυσσεύς τε καὶ ὁ κρατερὸς Διομήδης
 ᾧδ' ἄφαρ ἐκ Τρώων ἔλασαιτο μώνυχας ἵππους, *I hope
 it is Odysseus and mighty Diomedes who have driven
 the horses away from the Trojans.,*

where, however, the final point of the action of driving is relevant, and so it is expressed as complete. More commonly the time implied by the context is more likely future as in ω402.

οὔλέ τε καὶ μάλα χαῖρε, θεοὶ δέ τοι ὄλβια δοῦεν,
Hail and farewell, may the gods grant you wealth.,

where the Aorist emphasizes the completeness of the action, as is appropriate in the case of a blessing.⁹⁴

Infinitive

The Aorist Infinitive is again extremely common, due not only to the residual nature of the Aspect, but also to the fact that the Infinitive itself expresses the verbal idea as an abstract, unlimited

notion, which reinforces the character of the Aspect as one which is used where there is no particular reason to use the other: it is here, if anywhere, that the Aorist expresses the "verbal action, pure and simple" of the commentators. In most cases the Aorist is used to mark the action as whole and undivided, e.g. K231

ἤθελε δ' ὁ τλήμων Ὀδυσσεὺς καταδῦναι ὄμιλον
Τρώων ... , *Bold Odysseus was willing to do down*
among the crowd of Trojans.,

where it is not the progressive details but the movement as a whole which is signalled. In P151

σχέτλι, ἐπεὶ Σαρπηδόν' ἄμα ξεῖνον καὶ ἑταῖρον
κάλλιπες Ἀργείουσιν ἔλωρ καὶ κύρμα γενέσθαι, *Wretch,*
you left Sarpedon, your guest and friend, to be a
prize for the Argives.,

one could translate γενέσθαι either inchoatively or complexively, but in either case the Aspectual *valor* of Totality is clear. The Aorist in B130

Ἄντινο', οὐ πως ἔστι δόμων ἀέκουσαν ἀπῶσαι
ἢ μ' ἔτεχ', ἢ μ' ἔθρεψε... , *Antinocs, I cannot*
exclude from the house the one who bore and
raised me.,

expresses the finality of exclusion without reference to its internal development. The Aorist Infinitive can also serve as an Imperative and sounds an extremely brusque or urgent note, for all the reasons mentioned above, its residuality, abstraction and reduction of morphological marking, e.g. o37-8

ἦα μὲν ἐς πόλιν ὀτρῦναι καὶ πάντας ἑταίρους
αὐτὸς δὲ πρῶτιστα συβύρην εἰσαφικέσθαι, *order the*
ship and all your companions to the city and you
get yourself to the swineherd as swiftly as
*possible.*⁹⁵

Participle

In the Participle we again see concentration on the Totality of the action. However, this is another area where the temporal

character of the Aorist is called into question, in the ascription to the Participle of distinctions of relative time. The scholars of the nineteenth century, convinced that the Aorist denoted past time, made of the Aorist Participle a form marking the activity as having occurred before that expressed by the main verb, whatever Aspect the latter may take.⁹⁶ It is true that the Aorist Participle can refer to an action which is prior to the main action, but this implication is added in Greek by the sentence arrangement rather than being inherent in the verb itself, as in the long example quoted above (p.85). The Participle is merely a convenient substitute for a subordinate finite form of the same Aspect, and expresses the activity in the same way, i.e. *Total action + Total action*. Other nuances rarely occur in the Participle, which merely adds concomitant circumstances to the main action. However there is one case where English translations condition a realization in the Participle due to the distinction between Stative and Dynamic verbs. Stative verbs often use the Aorist Participle to describe the emotional state of a character who is performing a certain activity, e.g. 8301

Ἀντίνοος δ' ἑὸς γελάσας κίε Τηλεμάχου

and here the Stative verb is realized as "ingressive", *he burst out laughing and went...* In Dynamic verbs, of course, one cannot really see any nuance but that of simple momentary action. In K294

τὴν τοι ἐγὼ ῥέξω χρυσοῦν κέρασιν περιχεύας, *I shall gild her horns and sacrifice her to you.*

the gilding is presented as complete, according to ritual, before the (future) activity of sacrifice. A similar argument applies to P187

άνερες ἔστε, φίλοι, μνήσασθε δὲ θούριδος ἀλκῆς,
ὄφρ' ἔν ἐγὼν Ἀχιλλῆος ἀμύμονος ἔντεα δύω
καλά, τὰ Πατρόκλοιο βίην ἐνάριξα κατακτίας, *Be men,
my friends, remember your valour, while I put on
the fine arms of blameless Akhilleus which I took
from Patroklos when I killed him.*

In ω93

ὡς σὺ μὲν οὐδὲ θανάων ὄνομ' ὤλεσας, ἀλλὰ τοι αἰεὶ
 πάντας ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους κλέος ἔσσεται ἐσθλόν, Ἀχιλλεῦ,
so, when you died, you did not lose your name,
Achilleus - great fame will be yours always.,

we see the Aorist Participle used for a complete action which is prior to, or simultaneous with another complete action, with contextually past reference, also Aorist.⁹⁷

Sometimes an Aorist Participle is used where one might expect a Perfect, as in P120, quoted above, where θανόντος is not simply *dead* (although that might suffice as a translation) or *now that he is dead*, but *since he has died*, with the weight of emphasis on the event of death. It may be that metrical considerations influenced the poet's choice, but the Aorist is not inappropriate: in fact it might even be regarded as preferable, since a Perfect would have repeated much of the meaning of νέκυν in the next line.

One can often contrast two neighbouring semantemes of the same meaning in order to bring out the Aspectual distinctions between the two Participles, e.g. ξ364

... οὐδέ με πείσεις
 εἰπὼν ἀμφ' Ὀδυσῆι ..., *you will not persuade me,*
by speaking of Odysseus,

where the verb εἰπὼν acts as a summation of the Total action of speaking and a background to the main action, can be opposed to ξ362

... ἦ μοι μάλα θυμὸν ὄρινας
 ταῦτα ἕκαστα λέγων ..., *you stirred my heart,*
enumerating each detail,

where the act of speaking, though still a background circumstance, is conceived of as a Process, the detailed retelling of Odysseus' exploits.

This chapter has in some ways been a rambling affair, for the simple reason that it has been the Aorist which has drawn the greatest amount of discussion in any interpretation of the Homeric Aspectual system. Many scholars have been overwhelmed by the almost complete restriction to past time of the Aspect in the Indicative and, though distancing themselves from the clumsy attempts of nineteenth century scholars to relegate all uses of the Aorist to past time, have sought to re-introduce the temporal determinant through the back door, as it were, both by emphasizing the object of the activity and by defining it as completed. Throughout this section, however, I have tried to present the Aorist as an *Aspect*, an entity basically unfettered by temporal considerations, whose unitary *valor* of Totality can be discerned beneath all the permutations of morphology and/or context.

NOTES

- ¹ Monro, *Homeric Grammar*, p.65.
- ² *Ibid.*, p.65, cf. p.67.
- ³ *Ibid.*
- ⁴ Goodwin, *Moods and Tenses*, p.16.
- ⁵ Kühner-Certh, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.153.
- ⁶ Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.260.
- ⁷ *Ibid.*, p.261.
- ⁸ Chantraine, *Grammaire*, p.183.
- ⁹ Chantraine, *Histoire*, p.21, "l'idée verbale d'une façon absolue".
- ¹⁰ This is basically the stand of scholars who Slavicize Greek Aspect, e.g. Szemerényi, *Unorthodox Views*.
- ¹¹ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.141. I am not sure what distinction he is trying to make with the term "subjective", however, since the consideration of an activity as deprived of duration may be as subjective as the recognition of duration, a fact which he himself admits later on the same page.
- ¹² *Ibid.*, p.142.

¹³ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.107.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.93, yet he claims that other examples such as Δ160-1 reflect the future meaning as a *valor* of the "lægue".

¹⁵ Though, as I have pointed out elsewhere (see Chapter 9) the Slavonic system is not as simple as the *Completed/Uncompleted* distinction would suggest.

¹⁶ Friedrich is paraphrasing Kurylowicz, *Inflectional Categories*, p.92.

¹⁷ See above p.32.

¹⁸ Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.111.

¹⁹ Other examples which could be quoted here are presented in fn.26 below.

²⁰ Some other examples are K99,403; P71,733; B101,375; ω57,469, etc.

²¹ Further examples are K134,285,531; P107,153,272,303; B50; ω193, 288.

²² Brugmann-Thumb, *Griechische Grammatik*, vol. 2, p.542.

²³ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.73.

²⁴ Schwyzler, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.259.

²⁵ Cf. B42-6, where the imperfect is used for two related activities and the aorist for the rest, and K131-5. On the other hand, in E736ff and Θ387ff the aorist ἐνόησα is used. Aspectually this is different but no less appropriate. In fact it might be argued that in these last two passages, in the context of removing a garment and replacing it with battledress, the Aorist is more appropriate, regardless of formulaic or metrical requirements.

²⁶ Further examples of the aorist used for simple occurrence are K28,29,31,32,34,35,45,46,47,51,52,59,73,74,116,119,124,125,132,133,135, 136,138,139,140,149,150,157,162,168,169,177,178,179,180,181,190,194, 200,201,210,218,240,241,255,257,267,268,269,270,271,272,273,275,276, 287,289,290,293,295,297,299,313,328,332,334,335,336,338,339,350,354, 358,359,366,372,374,377,389,391,393,404,406,411,412,430,436,440,445, 448,455,456,457,458,461,466,469,470,476,478,482,488,494,,496,501,502, 512,513,516,517,518,520,522,523,525,527,529,530,532,540,,541,,545,546, 550,560,561,563,564,566,567,571,576; P1,3,7,9,11,15,25,35,36,37,43, 44,48,49,50,60,71,72,78,80,81,82,83,84,86,89,97,113,114,116,118,119,123, 124,128,130,151,166,170,173,187,188,193,196,198,204,206,209,210,211,213, 233,237,246,247,256,257,261,262,270,273,274,275,276,278,281,285,292,294, 295,297,298,299,300,302,304,305,320,321,323,328,334,343,344,347,348,349, 353,401,410,411,425,427,443,456,466,468,470,472,483,491,492,495,499, 512,517,518,519,523,525,526,527,528,530,531,532,533,535,537,539,541,545, 552,560,569,570,573,574,578,579,580,581,582,587,589,591,592,593,594,

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²⁷ See also the section on the Imperfective, pp.46-48. The usage appears in Aristophanes whose language is generally supposed to approximate that of colloquial speech.

²⁸ Cf. μ169, Λ737.

²⁹ Cf. θ571, υ145, ξ397, σ113, υ304 (κέρουον), Η31, Κ531, Λ520, Ε158 (στύγερον), Ε337, Ψ548.

³⁰ Monro, *Homeric Grammar*, pp.66 and 38; Paley's, Leaf's commentaries.

³¹ Monro, *Homeric Grammar*, p.67.

³² I think we can discount the suggestion, first made by Curtius (*Track Verb*, p.280) that the form is an imperfect, syncopated from ἐπέλετο, due to its temporal implausibility.

³³ Leaf and Bayfield: "There is no analogy for the lengthening of the vowel in the perfect ... The difficulty is to see how the idea of a point of time, such as the aorist seems to imply, can be introduced."

Paley: "ἔσσητε for ἐστήατε, an older form of ἐστήατε. Those who read ἐσσητε must regard it as the plural of ἔσσην."

³⁴ Is Γ415 *as I have loved you up to now*, the opposite of πάλαι φιλω, *I have loved you for a long time*? Again it is interesting to compare the views of the commentators on these lines and on Y306.

³⁵ Leaf and Bayfield: "ἔτέλεσσεν: gnomic aor. So ἀπέτωσαν ..."

Paley: "The aor. shows the sentence to be general, as in what follows" [but Paley translates it with reference to the specific situation].

³⁶ Monro, *Homeric Grammar*, p.66.

³⁷ Kühner-Gerth, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.166.

³⁸ Goodwin, *Moods and Tenses*, p.18.

³⁹ Chantraine, *Grammaire*, p.184.

⁴⁰ By this I am not implying any functional difference but merely separating the use in two different situations for ease of treatment.

⁴¹ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, pp.281, 283.

⁴² Van Gronigen, *Considérations*.

⁴³ Ruipérez, commenting on the use of the aorist in generalizing contexts says (*Aspectos*, p.165), "cuando se considera un contenido verbal en abstracto, en general, interesa la noción verbal en sí, pura, deprovista de calificaciones aspectuales."

⁴⁴ Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.516. Other examples of timeless aorists (as distinct from aorists in Similes, cf Chapter 8) are K224;P173,487,647.

⁴⁵ M. Kravar, *L'Aoriste Intemporel*.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.41.

⁴⁷ Quoted by Kravar (*L'Aoriste Intemporel*) on pp.33-5, fn 4, 6, 7, 16.

⁴⁸ Kravar, *L'Aoriste Intemporel*, p.39.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p.42.

⁵¹ In any case I think that his attempt to find a gnomic perfect in the Latin of Cl B.C. is misguided.

⁵² Kravar, *L'Aoriste Intemporel*, p.45.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.46.

⁵⁴ See pp.17-8, 20, Chapter 9.

⁵⁵ Kravar, *L'Aoriste Intemporel*, p.47.

⁵⁶ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.145.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, p.146.

⁵⁹ In the similes the explanation could be found in the comparative lateness of their language.

⁶⁰ Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen*, p.181.

⁶¹ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.285.

⁶² Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.516.

⁶³ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.307; cf. also Chantraine, *Grammaire*, p.201 (this seems to be what Friedrich is saying on p.55 (*op. cit.*)).

⁶⁴ Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.511; Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.257.

⁶⁵ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.99, 164.

⁶⁶ Other examples of the aorist used to express a "prior-past" activity are K296,526,575; P125,505,546,567,598,599,600,703,704; B297,378; ω22,71,205,207,349,388,390,400,421,424,467,489,500.

⁶⁷ Kühner-Gerth, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.153.

⁶⁸ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.261.

⁶⁹ Other examples are K49,483; P215,222; β392; ω178,325,381, 428,429,528.

⁷⁰ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.141. He goes on (pp.141-2), "Si l'aoriste est le plus objective des temps du verbe, cette objectivité est secondaire et, elle aussi, négative ... Cette objectivité relative, ce n'est autre chose que le rejet des conditions subjectives de la durée ou d'achèvement."

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p.142.

⁷² Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.74.

⁷³ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.147.

⁷⁴ *Ibid.* pp.121-3.

⁷⁵ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.69.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p.83.

⁷⁷ Hermann, *Aktionsart*.

⁷⁸ Brunel, *L'Aspect*.

⁷⁹ The historical development is irrelevant here but the situation seems to have been that the old Indo-European Aorist in "-em" (<-m plus long vowel of root) became at an early stage a separate suffix forming athematic Aorists from consonantal stems; since the Aorists thus formed were often intransitive this led to a shift toward passive meaning. In vowel stems this suffix was added to the morpheme "-ə-" of unknown origin and meaning to prevent contraction (the exceptions

in Greek -άηναί, etc. — are only apparent since there is usually an "s", "w" or "y" involved). Later this "-θ-" was extended by analogy, often replacing the old Aorists until it became the most common form in Classical Greek. The fact that we still get ἐτόρᾱν, *I turned (around)* as well as ἐτρέφθην, *I was turned*, proves nothing *Aspectually*, since voice is independent of Aspect.

⁸⁰ A. Prevot, *L'Aoriste*.

⁸¹ This is in fact similar to the situation proposed by Brunel (*L'Aspect*, p.60) that "l'aoriste en -θην s'oppose en tant qu' aoriste au présent, l'aoriste en -ην en tant qu' aoriste aussi au parfait, ce qui revient à dire qu'il exprime avant tout l'état, mais d'une manière ((ponctuelle)), abstraite si l'on préfère, ou pari is avec une nuance ingressive." This must be subjected to the same set of criticisms as Prevot's thesis, namely that if the opposition is merely a convenient alternative for the Perfect on the one hand and the Imperfective on the other, why does it exist at all?

⁸² Holt, *Etudes*; Meillet, *Aperçu*.

⁸³ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.141-5.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.* p. 142, though the conclusion is stated negatively.

⁸⁵ Prevot, *L'Aoriste*, p.36f.

⁸⁶ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.138.

⁸⁷ θρούπτειν only τροφῆναι:τροφθῆναι does not appear until Aristoteles.

κλίσειν only κλιθῆναι:κλιθῆναι is Classical.

κρούπτειν only κρουθῆναι:κρουθῆναι/κρουθῆναι is late Hellenistic.

κτεύσειν only κταθῆναι:κτανθῆναι is late Hellenistic.

πλήσειν only πληθῆναι (Att.πλαγ-):πληθθῆναι is Classical.

ρήσειν only ραθῆναι:ρηθῆναι does not appear.

στρέψειν only στρεφθῆναι:στραφῆναι does not appear until

Herodotos.

τρέπειν only τραπῆναι:τρεφθῆναι is Classical.

τρέφειν only τραφῆναι:τρεφθῆναι in Hesiodos.

τύπτειν only τυπῆναι:τυφθῆναι is very late (c. C6 A.D.).

φράσειν only φραθῆναι:φραγῆναι is post-Classical.

ψύσειν only ψυχθῆναι:ψυχῆναι is Classical.

⁸⁸ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.89, 103.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p.85.

⁹⁰ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.89, from C. Lantaine, *Rapports*, p.76.

⁹¹ Other examples of the Aorist Subjunctive in subordinate clauses are K39,62,63,97,99,101,107,115,146,183,193,225,235,238,325,330,348,425,444,449,452,486,510,511; P17,30,40,62,93,95,100,134,144,154,230,242,245,390,418,452,454,455,522,547,522,631,635,636,652,658,685,692,713,714,726,756; B25,43,67,98,100,101,133,144,161,168,186,216,218,220,229,307,316,329,330,333,358,360; ω7,29,133,135,136,286,354,355,360,435,437,454,462,480,532.

⁹² Cf. K108; ω337,485.

⁹³ Other examples of the Optative of contingent possibility are K11,14,19,20,26,57,111,166,171,204,206,207,211,247,303,307,345,368,380,381,468,489,492,506,537,557,571; P8,38,102,103,104,126,127,149,159,260,327,341 399,463,490,506,586,630,640,667,681,732; B43,53,54,62,76,78,145,219,248,250,335,336,343,351; ω108,237,238,334,344,435.

⁹⁴ Cf. P417,561; B34; ω461,491.

⁹⁵ Other examples are K18,48,55,56,127,174,206,221,242,247,281,308,370,344,347,368,395,403,433,439,501,551; P8,16,28,32,67,77,167,168,178,255,272,337,419,421,490,504,505,604,643,646,655,659,686,692,709,727; B59,83,86,123,142,144,159,171,183,191,245,248,272,280,284,329,373,375; ω31,34,159,168,171,174,236,237,240,262,279,307,369,374,430,433.

⁹⁶ An interesting claim here is Monro's observation that "The Participle of the Aorist is sometimes used to express exact coincidence with the action of the principal Verb: as βῆ δὲ αὔξασα, *went with a spring*, ψευσαμένη προσπῦδα, *spoke a lie*, ἄλιτο λαθῶν, *leaped unseen*. Here a Pres. Part. would imply that there was a *distinct* subordinate action; the Aor. expresses something that *coincides* with or is part of the main action" (*Homeric Grammar*, p.66). This is almost an exact reversal of the view held by other C19 scholars and seems to me wrong also. Firstly it seems that the Aorist Participle *does* express a distinctly different action in that it stands for another Aorist (i.e. in this case αὔξε καὶ βῆ). Secondly, although they differ in Aspect, I cannot see how ξ362 can be compared with ξ364 to produce such a conclusion as Monro's.

⁹⁷ Other examples of the Participle are K21,30,35,40,47,72,80,123,131,139,148,157,158,163,179,184,190,191,194,198,246,254,267,271,276,282,302,303,310,337,345,349,354,356,364,368,377,397,400,406,443,446,452,455,456,465,467,476,485,489,490,504,505,512,519,525,528,545,546,551,564,573,576,577; P2,10,18,27,30,32,39,43,46,48,50,57,63,73,74,80,82,86,89,90,95,114,120,127,132,141,167,169,183,188,190,200,207,233,234,268,275,283,285,290,293,296,303,305,311,313,315,320,326,334,337,338,342,346,352,391,399,405,428,437,441,442,456,457,481,487,489,490,498,505,507,516,521,522,523,526,533,538,539,540,545,551,555,579,580,585,588,600,603,605,612,621,636,673,678,694,717,718,726,732,734,738,742; B3,33,67,81,94,102,151,153,174,186,205,221,224,237,246,250,260,261,269,295,317,343,348,352,375,400,403,405,413,419,422,425,430; ω6,14,44,50,77,79,85,87,88,90,100,101,106,108,110,119,129,137,147,148,153,160,165,183,189,190,200,219,234,260,267,285,293,296,301,316,320,335,338,346,361,372,388,396,397,398,405,429,436,437,480,483,487,488,491,504,506,518,519,521,522,525,534,535,538 and K202, if καθεζόμενος is not Imperfective as I have taken it (p. 66).

CHAPTER 5

THE PERFECT ASPECT

One of the least disputed points in the theory of the Greek Aspects as propounded here is that of the basic *valor* of the Perfect Aspect — that it expresses the State following or resulting from an action, often but not always with some reference to the action itself. The questions which most vex scholars are how much reference there is to the prior action, how much the State depends on that action and whether the result should affect the subject or the object. One is tempted to deal at some length with the theoretical issues, but it must suffice to make a few brief comments before turning to our main concern in this chapter, the use of the Perfect in the Homeric poems.

Aspect of State

Friedrich, while offering an enlightening analysis of some problems in Aspectual categories,¹ seems to go wide of the mark in his comments on the Perfect, defining it as a *mélange* of features which include "true aspect" (linear-punctual) and "quasi-aspect" (the concept of State). Whether his conclusions that the Perfect is not a true Aspect because

"state or consequence ... is semantically quite different from the basic aspects DURATIVE and COMPLETIVE, since in addition to past completion and (unquantified) duration, it also involves some idea of state or general condition",²

is valid depends on one's acceptance of the *Durative/Completive* opposition as "basic". As I have tried to show earlier in this work,³ *Duration* is hardly the basic characteristic of the Imperfective nor is *Completion* integral to the Aorist, though in both cases they may occur as realizations of the primary concepts.

Ruipérez ingeniously incorporates the Perfect into a system of oppositions by taking it as the marked term in opposition to both "Present" and Aorist, which form the usual basic opposition of the structuralists. Thus, while the "Present" is marked for durativity in relation to the Aorist, the Perfect is marked for stativity in relation to both. Having labelled the "Present"-Aorist as the uncharacterized term, which can "therefore have a neutral as well as a negative *valor*", Ruipérez proceeds to claim that both the Aorist and "Present" can be used

"donde objetivamente el uso del perfecto tendría una justificación positiva."⁴

However his examples are not convincing, those from Homer being mainly uses of οἴχομαι (which is a special case)⁵ while the later ones seem to rest on the assumption that in the two parts of a sentence which are structurally coordinate, their verbal forms, whatever they may be morphologically, must also have the same *valor*. He himself admits that it is hard to find examples of the Aorist for the Perfect, and the only examples he does quote are those of Aorists used complexively⁶ (especially γ94, 6552), the possibility of which meaning Ruipérez admits in his chapter on the Aorist but conveniently ignores here.

The "problem" of the "anomalous Perfect" and Ruipérez's solution to it by invoking the distinction between "transformative" and "non-transformative" verbs will be discussed later.⁷ He objects to Chantraine's solution that the Perfect expresses merely State and nothing else, with the claim that this definition,

"no elimina la diferencia existente entre uno y otro tipo, pues el estado es posterior al término final de la acción en el tipo 'normal' y anterior a ese término en el tipo 'anormal'."⁸

The fact is that for Chantraine this distinction is irrelevant, that only the concept of State is integral to the Perfect. His criticism of Brugmann-Thumb's⁹ attempt to reduce the "anomalous" Perfect to the "normal" type also seems a little unfair, especially as the translation which he quotes from them — *he entrado en alegría y ahora*

estoy alegre – is so similar to that which he himself evolves at the end of his enquiry – *ponerse alegre y seguir estando alegre*.¹⁰ In dealing with "transformative" and "non-transformative" verbs and defining the criteria for deciding to which category a given verb belongs, he states that two types are indeterminable, those with neither "Present" nor Aorist, and those with only an Aorist, yet he continually refers to οἶδα (which only has Aorist εἶδον) as a Perfect of the "normal" type, thus implying that it derives from a "transformative" verb.¹¹ A morphological error is evident in the assumption (also made by many other authors including Wackernagel and Chantraine) that what does not occur in our texts, in this case a "Present" and/or an Aorist, did not exist at the time the poems were written.¹²

That the Perfect expresses a State, as opposed to the Imperfective which expresses a Process, and the Aorist which expresses something else, is a dictum of Classical scholarship which has remained unquestioned since Curtius first stated it over a century ago.¹³ Examples of this may be gleaned from almost any passage in which the Perfect appears in Homer. e.g. K252-3

ἀλλ' ἕομεν· μάλα γὰρ νύξ ἄνεται, ἐγγύθι δ' ἠώς,
 ἄστρα δὲ δὴ προβέβηκε, παροίχωκεν δὲ πλέων νύξ
 τῶν δύο μοιρῶν, τριτέτη δ' ἔτι μοῖρα λέλειπται,
Let us go, the night is passing and dawn is near.
The stars are gone down, two-thirds of the night
is past and only one-third is left.

Here the Perfects in 1.252 express their *valor* of State in a slightly different fashion to that in 253. In *προβέβηκε* and *παροίχωκεν*, the State is a result of prior activity, but in using *λέλειπται*, the poet does not refer to the activity of leaving, but simply presents us with an established circumstance, *it remains, is still ahead*. In P240-2,

οὐ τι τόσον νέκυος περιδείδω Πατρόκλοιο,
 ὅς κε τάχα Τρώων κορέει κύνας ἢ δ' οἰωνούς,
 ὅσσον ἐμῇ κεφαλῇ περιδείδω, μή τι πάθῃσι,
I am not so afraid for Patroklos' corpse, which
will soon feed the birds and Trojan dogs, as I am

terrified that something will happen to my own life.,

we see the Perfect used not for the Process of fearing (as the Imperfective would imply) nor yet for the onset of fear (for which the Aorist would most likely have been used) but for the State of *being afraid*, a nuance which renders it similar to, though more intense than, the Imperfective of a Stative verb. The Perfect in 8233,

ὡς οὕτως μέμνηται Ὀδυσσεὺς θείοιο
λαῶν οἷσιν ἀνασσε, πατὴρ δ' ὡς ἥπιος ἦεν, none of
the people whom Odysseus used to rule, remembers
him, and he was as gentle as a father,

would seem from its relationship to such forms as μνήσασθαι, μνησκέσθαι to imply *I have called to mind and now have in mind* but the context only draws attention to the present State of remembering. In 299-300

κοῦ δαὲ νηῦς ἔστηκε θεή, ἥ σ' ἤγαγε δεῦρο
ἀντιθέους θ' ἑτάρους; ἢ ἔμπορος εὐλήλουθας
νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίας, οἱ δ' ἐκβήσαντες ἔβησαν,
where is the ship stationed, which brought you here
with your godlike companions? Or are you here as a
passenger on another's ship, set down on its way
somewhere else?

the two Perfect forms equally emphasize present States, but the attachment of νηὸς ἐπ' ἀλλοτρίας to εὐλήλουθας draws attention to the activity of coming implied in it much more strongly than the more detached implications of the relative clause, and the last clause quoted.¹⁴ The Perfects of some verbs are so commonly used with distinctive meanings which in many other languages are expressed by Imperfective verbs that they have been commonly regarded as equivalent to the Imperfectives; such as οἶδα, *I know* (i.e. *I saw mentally and still retain knowledge of*) or ἔστηκα, *I stand* (i.e. *I have moved into position and am now here*). However such verbs never lose their character of expressing a State to the extent of being used in Imperfective-type realizations, i.e. ἔστηκα is always *I am on foot/standing* rather than *I am moving into position*. An interesting hapax legomenon is προβέβουλα in A113 ... καὶ γὰρ ῥα Κλυταιμνήστρης προβέβουλα, *indeed I prefer her to Klytaimnestre*, where the sense *I prefer* does not obscure its origin as *I have thought about it and*

have made up my mind. So in the common verb, πέποιτα, I rely on, can be seen its Aspectual meaning of *I am in the condition of having put my trust in*, and in the same way ἔοικα is clearly *I have come to be like*, and so *I resemble*.

Dynamic and Stative Verbs

This *valor* of State is realized differently depending on whether the verb involved is a Dynamic verb or a Stative one. In the former the meaning *I am in the state of having done* sometimes takes on a flavour of *I am responsible for/guilty of having done* or at other times, *I have the reputation of having done*. The latter occurs in B272

ὦ πόποι, ἦ δὴ μυρὶ Ὀδυσσεὺς ἐσθλά ἔοργε
βουλὰς τ' ἐξάρχων ἀγαθὰς πόλεμόν τε κορύσσω,

where the form ἔοργε is not a mere alternative for the Aorist but rather expresses, *Odysseus is credited with having done many good deeds*,¹⁵ and indeed contrasts well with the Aorist of simple occurrence in 274

νῦν δὲ τόδε μέγ' ἄριστον ἐν Ἀργείοισιν ἔρεξεν
ὅς τὸν λωβητῆρα ἐπεσβόλον ἔσχ' ἀγοράων, but this is
the best thing he's done among the Argives in
stopping that windy boaster from speaking.

A sense of responsibility or guilt appears in 6693

... οὐδέ τι πατρῶν
ὑμετέρων τὸ πρόσθεν ἀκούετε, παῖδες ἐόντες,
οἶος Ὀδυσσεὺς ἔσκε μεθ' ὑμετέροισι τοκεῦσιν,
οὔτε τινα ῥέξας ἐξαΐσιον οὔτε τι εἰπὼν
ἐν οἴμῳ· ἦ τ' ἐστὶ δίκη θεῶν βασιλῆων·
ἄλλον κ' ἐχθαύρησι βροτῶν, ἄλλον κε φιλοῦν.
κεῖνος δ' οὐ ποτε πάμπαν ἀτάσθαλον ἄνδρα ἔωργει,
Have you not heard anything long ago from your
fathers of what sort of man Odysseus was, never
doing or saying anything unfitting among the
people — though this is the way of divine kings;
one man they may hate and another they might love —
but Odysseus was never guilty of acting arrogantly
toward any man.

An example which may be felt to partake of both nuances is Π424, while even B272, already quoted, cannot be completely freed from the suspicion of "responsibility", even if only to the extent that Odysseus' reputation depends on his action. This may seem to imply a resultative nuance, but if so, only to the extent that its effects reflect back on the subject.

In Stative semantemes, however, the *valor* of State simply appears as an intensification of the normal semantic character of the form. The difference, then, between the Imperfective and the Perfect in these verbs is a subtle one, involving rather a shift of emphasis than a complete change of focus. In I420 ... τεθαρσήκασα δὲ λαοῦ, *the people are full of courage*, the Perfect is used in a context which is highly charged with emotion so that an emphatic underlining would be appropriate. So also in K433

εἰ γὰρ δὴ μέματον Τρώων καταδῦναι ὄμιλον,
 θρήϊκες οἷδ' ἀπάνευθε νεήλυδες, ἔσχατοι ἄλλων·
 ἐν δέ σφιν Ῥήσος βασιλεύς, πάυς Ἡϋονῆος, *If
 you are eager to get among the Trojan army, the
 Thracians, newly-arrived, are there at the end
 of the line and among them their king, Rhesos,
 son of Eioneus,*

there is no implication of action, but only of a State of mind.
 A similar argument applies to P175

οὐ τοι ἐγὼν ἔρριγα μάχην οὐδὲ κτύπον ἵππων, I am
 not afraid of battle or the noise of horses,

cf. β197 (ἔουκε), ω353 (δέδοικα).

This analysis of the various realizations of the Perfect according to whether the verbs are Dynamic or Stative seems to suit the facts of the Homeric texts better than Ruipérez's analysis in terms of "transformative" and "non-transformative" verbs, and it seems appropriate at this point to make some comparison of the two approaches, which are superficially very similar, especially as Ruipérez's basic purpose is to explain the different realizations of the Perfect. For Ruipérez those verbs are "transformative" which effect a change in either subject or object. He claims that while the "transformative" type is realized in the Perfect as the expression of State arising out of action, the "non-transformative" verbs always appear in the Perfect as mere statements of the verbal idea.¹⁷ The following is Ruipérez's list of Homeric Perfects of non-transformative verbs¹⁸

- ἀλάλημαι in ο10 Τηλέμαχ', οὐκέτι κατὰ δόμων ἄπο τῆλ' ἀλάλησαι.
- βέβηκα in 090 Ἥρη, τίπτε βέβηκας; ... and Z495 ... ἄλοχος δὲ φύλη οἴκονδε βεβήκειν.
- προβέβουλα in A113 discussed above.

-γέγηθα in ζ106 ... γέγηθε δέ τε φρένα Λητώ.

-δεδάκρυμα in Π7 τύπτε δεδάκρυσαι, Πατρόκλεις ..., cf. also υ353.

-δέδωρκα in Χ95 σμερδαλέον δέ δέδορκεν ἔλισσόμενος περὶ χειρῆ.

-ἔολπα in Χ216

νῦν δὴ νῶι ἔολπα, Διὸ φίλε φαίδιμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ,

οἴσεσθαι μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιοῖσι προτὶ νῆας.

-ἔρριγα in Ρ175 discussed above

-μέμηλε in Β614 ἐπεὶ οὐ σφι θαλάσσια ἔργα μεμήλει.

-ὀδώδα in ε60

... τηλόθεν δ' ὀδμή/κέδρου τ' εὐκαέτοιο θύου τ' ἀνά

νῆσον ὀδώδει/δαιομένων ...

-ὄρωρα in Ψ112 ... ἐπὶ δ' ἀνὴρ ἐσθλὸς ὄρώρει.

-πέποιθα in π71 αὐτὸς μὲν νέος εἰμὶ καὶ οὐ πω χερσὶ πέποιθα.

-πεπότημαι in Β90 αἰ μὲν τ' ἐνθα ἄλυσ πεποτήται, αἰ δέ τε ἐνθα.

-τεθήλα in ε69 ... τεθήλει δέ σταφυλῆσι.

While all these verbs are classified by Ruipérez as "non-transformative", I would hesitate to classify them all as *Stative*. Clearly *Stative* are the verbs describing emotional States, especially γέγηθα and ἔρριγα; perhaps also ἔολπα, *I live in hopes*, μέμηλε, *it is of concern* to me and προβέβουλα also belong to this class. Ἀλάλημαι, too is most probably a *Stative* verb, *I am a wanderer*, even though such a translation of ο10 would not seem idiomatic in either English or Spanish. Other verbs which are best taken as *Stative*, even though their English equivalents suggest a *Dynamic* character, are πεπότημαι, *I am in the condition of flying* (which in most of its Homeric uses comes to mean simply, *I flit about*), δέδωρκα, *I gaze at*, or in the Participle, *having assumed a certain expression*, ὀδώδει (where even Ruipérez translates *había olor, there was an odour*, rather than *olía, something was giving off a smell*) and τεθήλει (which again has so strong a *Stative* implication that Ruipérez translates it as present, *está en flor, is in flower*). Δεδάκρυμα, from δακρύω, which is a verb of behaviour and so related to verbs of emotion, is probably also *Stative*, *I feel sadness which manifests itself in tears*. Βέβηκα however is a *Dynamic* verb and its meaning *I am in the position of having gone* is clearly shown in 090, the first example quoted above.

Ruipérez posits an "anomalous" meaning *ando, doy pasos, I walk* for such passages as Z495 mentioned earlier but this seems to be a mere stylistic nuance wherein the poet skips over the action and presents us with a *fait accompli*, a "metafora aspettuale" as Berettoni calls it,¹⁹ *all of a sudden, she was gone*. So also ὀρώρει is mistranslated by Ruipérez as *contemplaba, he was supervising*, on the analogy of γ471 where the formula occurs with ὄροντο. However, the phrase is probably ἐπὶ ... ὀρώρει, *was leader (having been set over the men)*, making use of a possible intransitive realization of ὄρωμι, a Dynamic verb.

Also in Ruipérez's list are the verbs of noise-making which have been such a stumbling block in any theory of the Perfect. Although as we find them in literature, their emphasis appears to be firmly on the making of sounds, I suggest that originally the sounds may have been the concrete expression of strong emotion. In this case they would be in the same class as ἔολπα, γέγηθα and other Stative semantemes. Their anomalous position even in Homer suggests that they have developed from something other than mere Dynamic verbs of noise-making; that they are in fact Stative verbs of behaviour comparable to δεδάκρυμα.

Ruipérez's attitude, however, seems to be a reaction against those who see the State expressed by the Perfect as *always* the result of a prior action. Other scholars have offered different opinions as to the degree of proximity to the prior action. Humbert claims that the Perfect expresses a "State" in the present, or at least in the "actuel"²⁰ but qualifies this by adding Apollonios Dyskolos' definition of it as an "achèvement présent" (translating οὐτέλευα ἐνεστῶσα) which seems to imply that he saw a fairly close connection between the State and the preceding action of which it is the "achèvement". Kühner-Gerth, too, consider the State to be intimately tied to the action, if I read aright the comment that "Das Perfekt ... bezeichnet eine Handlung, welche in der Gegenwart des Redenden als eine vollendete, zur Entwicklung gekommene, erscheint."²¹ However this is modified by the emphasis they place on the lasting quality of the State.²² Schwyzer, on the other hand, places very little emphasis on the previous action, calling the Aspect an "einheitlich

zuständlichen (stativen) Aspekt".²³ He supports this by quoting examples of the "intensive Perfect" such as βέβρουχε, ὄδωδε, γέγηθε, though his reason for seeing these as the oldest level (they have no "o-grade") seems faulty. Chantraine, like Humbert, claims that the Perfect expresses "achèvement" but states later that the Perfect presents "l'idée verbale ... d'une façon absolue"²⁴ (whatever that means; it sounds more like a definition of the Aorist). The "resultant State" theory of the Perfect was the dominant one among scholars until recently; Ruipérez²⁵ quotes Holt and Schwyzer (though he seems to misrepresent the latter, who merely claims the Perfect of lasting result to be one of the developments of an originally intransitive Perfect) as well as claiming that it is the *valor* most commonly and empirically attributed to the Perfect. When, however, one examines the whole range in the Homeric poems, the most one can say is that the Perfect expresses the verbal idea as a State whether it results from a prior action or not. *Every* Perfect emphasizes State but contexts vary, some drawing attention, explicitly or implicitly, to a prior action, and others apparently ignoring it, so that an objective judgement as to whether it is always implicit in the Perfect itself is difficult, if not impossible. Irrespective of the attempt to understand the details of realizations by postulating "transformative/non-transformative" or Dynamic/Stative oppositions, State remains the *valor* of the Perfect. One of the main difficulties in distinguishing the different types of verb is, of course, the fact of having to describe them in terms of a modern language with different categories, and another is the lack of definitive evidence.

The Perfect Tense

As an Aspect, the Perfect is unencumbered by temporal considerations. However, in the Indicative Mood, where time does play an important part, the perfect tense has drawn queries as to its precise temporal location, though eliciting less disagreement on this question than on that of its Aspectual *valor*. Most scholars concur in seeing the chief sphere of employment of the perfect as that of present time, i.e. the "present of the speaker" as the Germans commonly call it. This seems to be supported by the fact that in Homer it usually appears in dialogue rather than in narrative. That

it is not limited to speech, however, is proven by its use in similes where it appears as a general State, e.g. K186

ὡς δὲ κύνες περὶ μῆλα δυσωρήσονται ἐν αὐλῇ
θηρὸς ἀκουσάντες κρατερόφρονος, ὅς τε καθ' ὕλην
ἔρχεται δι' ὄρεσφι· πολὺς δ' ὄρυμαγδὸς ἐπ' αὐτῷ
ἀνδρῶν ἠδὲ κυνῶν, ἀπὸ τέ σφισιν ὕπνος ὄλωλεν, *as*
dogs keep watch in a steading, when they have heard
a mighty wild beast coming through the mountains.
There is much clamour of men and dogs, and sleep
*is destroyed for all.*²⁶

However in keeping with the fact that time was less often stressed in Greek than is generally assumed, we often find the perfect used in present situations which extend from the past, e.g. E132

... οὐ τὸ πάρος περ
θυμῷ ἦρα φέροντες ἀφροσύνας οὐδὲ μάχονται, *who have*
been standing for a long time with resentment in
their hearts and not fighting,

or even for activities which are strictly future, thus paralleling the present tense of the Imperfective in these respects.

The Pluperfect

In Homer, as in Classical Greek, the pluperfect is to Perfect as the imperfect is to the Imperfective. As the realizations which manifest themselves in the present tense do, or are potentially able to, appear in the imperfect, so the pluperfect is used in the same way as its present time counterpart, the perfect. And so the pluperfect expresses *the State of the subject*, e.g. K153-6

... ἔγχεα δὲ σφιν
ὄρω' ἐπὶ σαυρωτῆρος ἐλήλατο, τῆλε δὲ χαλκὸς
λαμψ' ὡς τε στεροπὴ πατρὸς Διὸς· αὐτὰρ ὁ γ' ἦρωσ
εὖδ', ὑπὸ δ' ἔστρωτο ῥινὸν βοῶς ἀγραύλοιο,
αὐτὰρ ὑπὸ κράτεσφι τύπης τετάυυστο φαεινός, *their*
spears stood driven into the ground by their butt-
ends and the bronze was shining like father Zeus'
lightning. The man himself was sleeping; under
him was spread the hide of a mighty ox and under
his head was arranged a shining pillow.

Here the States described by the pluperfect certainly do result from prior action but they are Perfect Aspect, and merely transfer the concept of State into the past. In P364

... μέμνηντο γὰρ αἰεὶ
 ἀλλήλους ἀν' ὀμιλον ἀλεξέμεναι φόνον αἰπὺν,
*for they were mindful of the need to ward off
 swift death from each other in battle,*

there may be implicit an activity of *calling to mind*, but it is insignificant in comparison with the State of *being mindful*. In B16

τοῖσι δ' ἔπειθ' ἦρως Αἰγύπτιος ἦρχ' ἀγορεύειν,
 ὃς δὴ γῆραι κυφὶς ἔην καὶ μυρία ἦδη,
*The hero Aigyptios began to speak to them. He was bowed
 by old age and knew many things,*

the verb is on which usually occurs in the Perfect, to express the state of knowledge consequent on its acquisition, as expressed in Aorist εἶδον. The pluperfect in ω48,

μήτηρ δ' ἔξ ἀλῶς ἦλθε σὺν ἀθανάτῃσι ἀλίησιν
 ἀγγελίης αἰουσα· βοῆ δ' ἐπὶ πόντον ὄρωρε
 θεσπεσίη, ὑπὸ δὲ τρόμος ἔλλαβε πάντας Ἀχαιούς,
*Your mother came from the sea with her immortal
 hair, Aídens when she heard the message. A weird
 vibration hovered over the water and a trembling
 gripped all the Akhaians,*

is probably the same verb -ἐπὶ...ὄρωρα- which gave Ruipérez such trouble in relation to Ψ112 (see above p.115).²⁷ The idiom using βέβηκε to bypass the action and go straight to the State is more common in the pluperfect, as in P137-9

ὡς Αἴας περὶ Πατρόκλῳ ἦρωϊ βεβήκει.
 Ἄτρεΐδης δ' ἑτέρωθεν, ἀρηΐφιλος Μενέλαος,
 ἐστήκει, μέγα πένθος ἐνὶ στήθεσσι ἀέων,
*Thus was Aias on guard about the hero Patroklos,
 and the son of Atreus, warlike Menelaos, stood
 on the other side, with great grief in his heart.*

Here the pluperfect expressing a State performs the function of returning our attention to the main narrative after the interruption of the simile, just as an Imperfective would do in similar circumstances.²⁸ A passage where this has caused problems is Z495ff.

... ἄλοχος δὲ φύλη οἰκόνδε βεβήκει
 ἐντροπαλιζομένη, θαλερὸν κατὰ ὄακρυ χέουσα.
 αἴψα δ' ἔπειθ' ἔκανε δόμους εὐ ναετάνοντας.

Here it has been argued that βεβήκει must be the equivalent of an Imperfective verb which describes Andromakhe's journey homewards, especially as it is combined with an Imperfective Participle *and a verb* (ἔκανε in 497) *which tells of her arrival there*. But surely Homer was not so bound by formulaic frameworks that he could not represent the act of departure homeward vividly as an established State and then go on to deal with the end of the journey.

The so-called "anomalous" Perfect also, of course, occurs in the pluperfect and is seen there in the same varieties of semanteme as in the perfect,²⁹ e.g. P357

οὔτε τιν' ἔξοπίσω νεκροῦ χάζεσθαι ἀνίγει
 οὔτε τινα προμάχεσθαι Ἀχαιῶν ἔσχεον ἄλλωι,
*He ordered the Akhaians not to retreat from
 the corpse and not to fight in front of the line.*

Another interesting case is X34

... μέγα δ' οἰμῶεας ἔγεγώνετο
 λισσόμενος φίλον υἱόν ... , he groaned loudly in
appeal to his dear son.

Here, if the form *is* pluperfect and not an already formed imperfect, it might possibly give a clue to the origin of the "Perfect of sound" – the "intensive" verb of emotion is accompanied by a Participle specifying the type of emotion concerned. Again it is noticeable that the *valor* of State is realized differently depending on whether the verb is basically Dynamic or Stative and this has led scholars to the same types of difficulties as mentioned earlier. Again the question of the "resultative Perfect" raises its head in the work of Chantraine, in regard to the form βεβλήκει. Relying on the assumption (also made by Wackernagel) that what does not occur in the text of our poems did not exist in the language at the time of their composition, Chantraine observes³⁰ that, while a Perfect Passive exists and is used quite frequently, there is no trace of a Perfect Active apart from βεβληκώς, βεβληκέναι, one example of βεβλήκει and of course, the form βεβλήκει. Since, however, even Chantraine is loth to see much of the resultative Perfect in Homeric Greek, he makes the ingenious

suggestion that the form is a reduplicated Aorist of the same type as πέπληγε which has become lengthened by position (it only occurs at the ends of verses) or by the addition of νῦ ἐφελευστικόν. There are so many analogically developed forms in the poems that one cannot rule this out as impossible; nevertheless I can only find three examples of the form unaccompanied somewhere in the context by another form of βάλλω or by ἀμαρτάνω where the character of the Perfect as the expression of State *might* be felt to be appropriate in order to make a contrast between the two actions. It is not a great step from this contrastive use to the "Aspectually metaphorical" use (cf. above p.115) and indeed the latter could be the key to the three examples mentioned above (χ258=275, Δ108, E394); the Perfects are uncontrasted with any form of βάλλω or ἀμαρτάνω but serve to bring the hearer's/reader's attention straight to the State of *having released the missile* by skipping the action.³¹

The Future-Perfect

The future-perfect in Greek is slightly different from the Future in that, whereas the Future acts almost as a separate Aspect, the future-perfect is much more closely integrated into the Perfect system, i.e. it seems more like a temporally future form of the Perfect than a Perfect which has taken its place within the Future system. It has often been said³² that the future-perfect has more overtones of completion than of State, but this is a realization of *parole*, since reference to a State in the future usually carries with it a strong implicit psychological reference to the attainment of that State. Surely, too, it has been a semantic argument which has led scholars to this conclusion as it has been a factor in the theory of "resultative Perfect", all the more so since the great majority of the forms which occur in the future-perfect are from Stative verbs. It is thus not surprising that the future-perfect expresses the concept of *State* transferred to the future. Again we have a series of verbs which always occur in the Perfect, whether as "true" Perfects like οἶδα in

ω506

Τηλέμαχ', ἦδη μὲν τόδε γ' εἴσσει αὐτὸς ἐπελθών,
 ἀνδρῶν μαρναμένων ἵνα τε κρινόνται ἄριστοι,
 μή τι κατασχύνειν πατέρων γένος...

Telemakhos, now that you yourself have come into battle where men are tested, you will know not to bring shame on your ancestors,

or as "anomalous" Perfects like ἀνώγα in π404,

*εἰ μὲν κ' αἰνήσωσι Διὸς μεγάλοιο θέμιστες,
αὐτὸς τε κτενέω τοὺς τ' ἄλλους πόντιας ἀνώξω, if
the decrees of great Zeus are favourable, I myself
shall kill him and even urge on all the others;*

(incidentally this is the only example of the future-perfect of such a verb in the poems, and it could be formed from ἀνώγω). In the future-perfect, as expected, Stative verbs are realized as intensified State, e.g. ω544

*ἔσχεο, παῦε δὲ νεῦκος ὁμοῦτοιο πολέμοιο,
μὴ πῶς τοι Κρονίδης κεχολώσεται εὐρύσοπα Ζεὺς,
hold, cease this strife of brothers, so that the
son of Kronos will not be angry with you,*

while Dynamic verbs have a slightly different sense, e.g. τ46

*ἢ δέ μ' ὀδυρομένη εἰρήσεται ἀμφὶ ἕκαστα, (don't you
ask questions but leave me to test Penelopeia) she
in her grief will be the one to ask me about every
detail.³³*

Transitive and Intransitive

Many of the Perfects mentioned thus far are intransitive, and this fact has raised some of the most complex conjectures in the field. Syntactically it would seem that there is a link between the Perfect and the Middle since both appear to have been originally intransitive. However this thesis is not concerned with origins and what does concern us is that many active transitive verbs have Perfects which are fundamentally intransitive (such as πέσθω, πέποιθα, βρέθω, βέβριθα), and that many verbs which are middle in the Imperfective are active in the Perfect – a factor which also enters into the discussion of the so-called "resultative-Perfect". According to Wackernagel, and following him, Chantraine, the Perfect, originally an intransitive verbal form expressing State, acquired an Accusative object and eventually became so tightly bound up with it that the resulting State

which the Perfect expressed (*sic*) came to inhere in the object rather than in the subject, i.e. *I have done it and it remains done*.³⁴ But can this really be so? Firstly why should the mere possession of an object by a verb (which is what transitivity in fact amounts to) cause a shift in emphasis from the subject to a lasting result in the object? Humbert quotes the Aorist to imply that the resultative type was spread throughout the Greek verbal system. But this is surely misleading since any idea of result would be hard to separate from the normal Aorist of Total action plus limiting Accusative. He says that, while πέφουκα makes sense by itself as "je suis naturellement", the form ἔφουσα only makes sense in the context of ἔφουσα κατῶδα.³⁵ Apart from the fact that many Aorists seem to occur alone and still to be perfectly intelligible, a more likely explanation is that the Accusative of the direct object was probably originally a form implying limitation in the same way as the Accusative of size, etc., did in classical Greek. Thus in ἔφουσα κατῶδα, the Aorist would probably have been understood as *I bore*, and κατῶδα would have been a specific translating the activity into physical manifestation. Secondly, and related to this, the concept of transitivity seems not to have been as precisely defined in Greek as in Latin or English; for example, many verbs can be construed with the genitive, and of these a number (like ἄρχω) can occur in the Passive as well. Thirdly, Aspect seems clearly to be concerned with the *subject* of the verb rather than the object³⁶ and it seems *a priori* illogical and disruptive that the unity of the system should develop so disparate a sense.³⁷ Chantraine quotes³⁸ as an example of this resultative Perfect the βεβύηκεν of K145 and II22 ... τοῦτον γὰρ ἄχος βεβύηκεν Ἀχαιοῦς. However when one looks at the contexts, one sees that the ἄχος has just been or is about to be described and the Perfect has the kind of summing-up notion which, if the subject were animate, we would call "Responsibility". In the same section, Chantraine claims to see, as a stage in the development of the resultative Perfect, the Perfect which expresses "un ensemble d'actions qui aboutissent à un état présent" and quotes p284 τολμήεις μοι θυμός, ἐπεὶ κακὰ πολλὰ πέπονυσα

and B272 cited above. But surely the emphasis is not on the actions which lead to the State but on the State (of the subject) which results from the actions and so πέπονθα emerges as a purely normal Perfect meaning *I am in the condition of having suffered many ills.*³⁹

Another group of forms which have caused confusion are those from the stems πεπληγ- and κεκοπ-. Chantraine (and Wackernagel) have used passages like π456

... Ὀδυσῆα
 ῥάβδῳ πεπληγυῖα κάλιν κούησε γέροντα, *having struck*
him with the rod she made Odysseus an old man
again,

to support arguments for the resultative Perfect.⁴⁰ Yet here an Aorist rather than a Perfect meaning seems to be needed; *by striking*, with the emphasis on the action, makes better sense than any notion of State (responsibility, status, etc.). The same consideration applies wherever this word occurs.⁴¹ Surely the explanation is that πεπληγῶς should be read πεπληγῶν, as in B264 (with v.1. -ῶς), and πεπληγυῖα as πεπληγοῦσα. The reduplicated Aorist is also found in the Infinitive -εμεν,⁴² Indicative middle -ετο⁴³ and Indicative active -ον.⁴⁴ The apparently Perfect forms are easily understood as translations into Ionic of assumed Aeolic forms at a period of doubt about the reduplicated Aorist. Similarly κεκοπῶν in such examples as σ335 and π60 was often reformed to κεκοπῶς in spite of the fact that an Aorist meaning is totally appropriate.⁴⁵

Perfect and Imperfective

A verb which has never been well treated by commentators is ἐνήνοθε. (variant ἐνήν-), which has usually been assumed to be a Perfect. The passage where a Perfect sense would be most appropriate is ρ270

γινώσκω δ' ὅτι πολλοὶ ἐν αὐτῷ δαῖτα τύθενται
 ἄνδρες, ἐπεὶ κνίση μὲν ἐνήνοθεν ... , *I can see that*
many men dine there, for the fat lies thick;

a similar Perfect nuance is possible in σ365, a generalizing statement concerning divine habits. However the remaining three instances

(B219, K134, A266) are all in descriptive passages whose time reference is past and where one would expect an Imperfective. A second explanation, that the forms are reduplicated Aorists,⁴⁶ would cause problems for the first two passages cited. It might be preferable, therefore, to see the forms as Perfects of a verb which had become obsolete by Homer's time, here anomalously applied to the past, especially as there is some confusion over the initial vowel.⁴⁷

I now turn to verbs which are in effect the opposite of those like οἶδα and ἔστηκα, verbs in which the state seems to be very similar to the Imperfective of a Dynamic verb, viz. the Imperfectives which are claimed to function as Perfects, ἦκω, οἴχομαι and ἰκάνω, all verbs of motion. The first only occurs twice in Homer and each time has a clear Perfect sense⁴⁸ — in E478 Sarpedon is chiding Hektor and reminds him that he has come a long way to help,

καὶ γὰρ ἐγὼν ἐπίκουρος ἔων μάλα τηλόθεν ἦκω, for I,
your ally, am here (having come) from afar,

and again in v325 Odysseus is asking Athene to stop deceiving him and says ... οὐ γὰρ οἶω/ἦκειν εἰς Ἰθάκην ..., I do not think I am in Ithake. It is possible, too, that ἰκάνω has a Perfect sense, e.g.
H547

... ἀπὸ δὲ φλέβα πᾶσαν ἔκερσεν,
ἢ τ' ἀνά νῶτα θεούσα διαπερὲς αὐχέν' ἰκάνει

could be translated, he shore through the vein which, running all the way up the back, is accessible at the neck (where presumably the man was struck). Similarly, in a simile A117, which describes how, when a lion comes upon a nest of fawns, the doe

ἢ δ' εἴ περ τε τύχησι μάλα σχέδον, οὐ δύναται σφιν
χραυσεῖν· αὐτὴν γάρ μιν ὑπὸ τρόμος αἰνός ἰκάνει,
even if she is very near, she cannot help them, for
a terrible trembling lies (has come) upon her,

cf. v450, v200. An example where both Perfect and Imperfective senses would be appropriate is α409 in which Eurymakhos, asking Telemakhos

about his guest, the disguised Athene, says

ἤε τι ν' ἀγγεῖν πατρός φέρει ἐρχομένου,
ἢ εὖν αὐτῷ χρεῖος ἐλδόμενος τόδ' ἰκάνει, *does he
bring some news of your father's arrival: or is he
here* [Perfect sense]/*does he come* [Imperfective
sense] *on business of his own?*⁴⁹

However, an example which is more probably Imperfective is Π52

ἀλλὰ τόδ' αἰνὸν ἄχος κραδίην καὶ θυμὸν ἰκάνει,
ὀππότε δὴ τὸν ὅμοιον ἀνὴρ ἐθέλησιν ἀμέρσαι
καὶ γέρας ἄφ' ἀφελέσθαι, ὃ τε κράτει προβεβήκη·
αἰνὸν ἄχος τό μοι ἐστίν, ἐπεὶ πάθον ἄλγεα θυμῷ, *for
this reason does pain come upon a/my heart and
spirit (viz.) whenever/that a man is willing to
dishonour an equal and take away his prize, just
because his is pre-eminent in power. This now is
my pain, since I have suffered (such) vexation in
my heart.*

This interpretation involves taking τόδ' in 52 as an adverbial accusative which looks forward to the ὀππότε clause and seeing 55 as integral to the thought flow. The first three lines, 52-4, are a generalization but Akhilleus couches them in terms which refer to his own state (first ἀμέρδω < μέρος, then more specifically γέρας ἀφελέσθαι) before putting his case in plain language. One could take ἰκάνει as Perfect, *grief lies on (has come over) ... because a man ...* but this would require us to reinterpret the last line cited.⁵⁰

On the other hand, οἴχομαι seems to be used more often in Imperfective senses than in Perfect ones. An example which is often quoted to illustrate a Perfect sense for οἴχομαι is Z379=384 where Hektor, asking after his wife says ... ἐς Ἀθηναίης ἔξοίχεται ..., which has generally⁵¹ been translated, *is she gone to the temple of Athene* but could just as well be seen as an ordinary Imperfective, *is she on her way to ...* An indisputable example of Imperfective usage is to be found in Λ408

οἶδα γὰρ ὅτι κακὸν μὲν ἀπούχονται πολέμοιο, *for I
know that towards run away from battle,*

(the general sense here makes an Imperfective more appropriate than a

Perfect). In most instances the context would suit a Perfect realization as well as an Imperfective one. Such is the case of T342 where Zeus, seeing Akhilleus grieving, says to Athene,

τέκνον ἐμόν, δὴ πάμπαν ἀπούχεαι ἀνδρὸς ἑῆος

which may be rendered with a Perfect sense *my child, you have deserted your man* but may also be translated Imperfectively as *my child, you are deserting ...* In Ω201, however, the Perfect realization seems more likely:

ὦ μοι, πῆ δὴ τοι φρένες οὔχονθ', ἧς τὸ πάρος περ
ἔκλε' ἐπ' ἀνθρώπους ξεινοῦς ... , *alas, where now
are your wits gone, for which you used to be famed
among strangers?*

cf. ο707. So we may say that of the three verbs which in the Classical period were used with a Perfect nuance, ἦκω, ἱκάνω and οὔχομαι, only ἦκω shows in Homer its later sense of *I am come*.⁵²

*ἱκάνω vacillates between a Perfect and an Imperfective sense while οὔχομαι usually occurs in contexts where an Imperfective idea would be appropriate.⁵³

Subjunctive, Optative

In the "oblique" Moods, the *valor* of State emerges unencumbered by ideas of time. Thus the Subjunctive of visualized hypothesis implies that the speaker wishes the verbal activity which he postulates as a probability to be considered as a State rather than as Process or Totality, e.g. K90

ὦ Νέστορ Νηληϊάδῃ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,
γνώσεαι Ἀτρεΐδην Ἀγαμέμνονα, τὸν περὶ πάντων
Ζεὺς ἐνέηκε πόνοισι διαμπερές, εἰς ὃ κ' αὐτῆ
ἐν στήθεσσι μένη καὶ μοι οἴλα γούνατ' ὀρώρη,
*Nestor, son of Neleus, great glory of the Akhaians,
do you not recognize Agamemnon, Atreus' son, whom
of all men Zeus loads with pain, whilever life
remains in my breast and my knees have strength.*

Here the Perfect is found in co-ordination with the Imperfective of a Stative verb and acts in the same way, simply expressing the verbal activity as a State, without, in this case, any reference to prior action. In P435

ἀλλ' ὡς τε στήλη μένει ἔμπεδον, ἢ τ' ἐπὶ τύμβῳ
 ἀνέρος ἐστήκη τεθνηότος ἢ ἑ γυναικός, *As steady
 as a monument, which stands on the grave of a
 dead man or woman,*

there is some implication of prior action: *it has been set up
 and so is there.*⁵⁴

The comparative rarity of this realization in the poems, like that of the perfect Indicative itself, is perhaps due to the fact that the speaker rarely feels the need to emphasize the State-like portion of the activity, whether the State is a result of the action or not. The Subjunctive which expresses the will of the speaker is unknown in the Perfect, possibly because there is far less need to enjoin the existence of a State than the performance of an action. The Optative of contingent possibility is limited to a handful of examples, e.g.

8249

εἴ περ γάρ κ' Ὀδυσσεὺς Ἰθακήσιος αὐτὸς ἐπελθὼν
 δαιτυμένους κατὰ δῶμα ἐὼν μνηστῆρας ἀγαυοὺς
 ἐξελάσαι μεγάροιο μενοιρήσει ἐνὶ θυμῷ,
 οὐ κέν οἱ κεχάρουτο γυνή, μάλα περ χατέουσα,
 ἐλθόντι'... *If Odysseus of Ithake were to come
 in person and planned to drive out the suitors
 dining in his halls, his wife would not be
 overjoyed at his coming, for all her yearning,*

where the State of joy suggests greater intensity than the Process of joy which the Imperfective of the Stative verb would express.⁵⁵ Wishes expressed with the Optative are virtually non-existent in the Perfect, being only found in a very interesting construction with

θυήσκω, e.g. Σ98

αὐτίκα τεθναίην, ἐπεὶ οὐκ ἄρ' ἔμλλον ἑταίρῳ
 κτενομένῳ ἐπαμῦναι ... *may I be dead right now,
 since I was not fated to save my friend from being
 killed,*

which almost amounts to *I may as well be dead, since ...*; the poet might have said θάνοιμι but instead chooses (in a manner analogous to the use of βεβήκει) to bypass the action and emphasize the State.

Infinitive, Participle

The *valor* of State appears just as clearly in the Infinitive, although only two of the three possible types occur. The "anomalous" type is found in such examples as θ223

στῆ δ' ἐπ' Ὀδυσσεὺς μεγακῆτεῦ νηὶ μελαίνῃ,
ἦ ρ' ἐν μεσσάτῳ ἔσκε, γεγωνέμεν ἀμφοτέρωσε, *he*
stood on the great-prowed black ship of Odysseus so
that his shout would reach both ends.

The Infinitive from Stative verbs, which expresses the activity as intensified State, is very common (comparatively speaking) as in K67

φθέγγεο δ', ἦ κεν ἔρηθα, καὶ ἐγρήγορθαι ἄνωχθι,
πατρῶθεν ἐκ γενεῆς ὀνομάζων ἕνδρα ἕκαστον, *call*
out wherever you go, order the leaders to be awake,
calling each man by name and patronymic,

where Agamemnon's advice to Menelaos is that he should see to the leaders' being awake and staying awake. Infinitives from Dynamic verbs only appear in medio-passive forms which in terms of their realizations can be seen as Stative, or in intransitive semantemes such as ἔστηκα.⁵⁶

The Participle, too, takes on the same variety of nuances, depending on the character of the semanteme. Again the Stative type of verb tends to reinforce the *valor* of State of the Perfect, e.g. K312

ἦ κῆρ χεῖρεσσιν ὑφ' ἡμετέρῃσι δαμέντες
φύξιν βουλεύουσι μετὰ σφίσι, οὐδ' ἐθέλουσι
νύκτα φυλασσέμεναι, καμάτῳ ἀδηκότες αἰνῶ, ...
or whether, already beaten at our hands, they
are planning flight, and are unwilling to keep
watch at night, worn out by terrible tiredness,

in which the State of weariness is parallel to the event of having been beaten (the implication of pastness in δαμέντες resulting from the logic of its association with βουλεύουσι). Both could have been expressed as States, but weariness as a reason for reluctance to keep watch seems more essentially State than being beaten as a reason for taking positive action.

The Perfect in P369

ἤερι γὰρ κατέχοντο μάχης ἐπὶ θ' ὄσσον ἄριστοι
 ἔστασαν ἀμφὶ Μενολτιάδῃ κατατεθνηῶτι, *For there*
hung a thick mist about the area where the
champions stood about dead Patroklos,

shows the poet's normal description of Patroklos after his last battle, focusing on the fact that, in terms of the poem's time scale, he *was now* a corpse. In β185

... οὐκ ἂν τόσσα θεοπροπέων ἀγόρευες,
 οὐδέ κε Τηλέμαχον κεχολωμένον ὦδ' ἀνείεις,
 σὺ οἴκῳ δῶρον ποτιδέγμενος, αἶ κε πόρησιν,
You would not have uttered so many prophecies,
nor would you be urging on Telemakhos in his
anger, hoping that he will provide a gift for
your house,

an Aorist Participle would have concentrated on the onset of the anger, while the Perfect implies *now that he is angry*.⁵⁷

The Dynamic type often has a nuance of *responsibility for/guilt at having done*, though this is rare since, perhaps because of the conventions of epic, the poet rarely feels the need to emphasize the role of character in the action, e.g. χ318

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ μετὰ τοῖσι θυοσκός οὐδὲν ἐοργῶς
 κείσομαι ... , *But I shall lie among them, a diviner*
who has not caused any harm.

More commonly the Participle of a Dynamic verb merely implies a State of having done, e.g. P542

... ὡς τίς τε λέων κατὰ ταῦρον ἐδοδῶς, *like a*
lion who is bloody from eating a bull;

the rare but not impossible realization of *ex-State* does not seem to occur in Homer. One example of a Stative Perfect which has become part of a stock phrase is πεπνυμένος in Τηλέμαχος πεπνυμένος (e.g. β309) where the epithet seems originally to have been the Perfect Participle of the verb πνεύω, in the metaphorical sense *I am wise*, used with a Perfect sense in each case though not necessarily being in all passages relevant to the occasion. Other examples, not so perfunctory perhaps, are κεκορυθμένος, e.g. P87

βῆ δὲ διὰ προμάχων κεκροθυμένος αὔθοπι χαλκῷ,
 ὄξεα κεκληγώς, *he moved through the front line*
crowned with shining bronze, screaming shrilly

or εἰδώς in that phrase so often used of women in both poems
 e.g. ω278

δῶκα δέ οἱ . . .
 χωρὶς δ' αὐτε γυναῖκας ἀμόμονα ἔργα εἰδυίας
 τέσσαρας εἰδαλίμας, ὅς ἤθελεν αὐτὸς εἰλέσθαι,
I gave him . . . and, besides, four shapely women,
skilled in appropriate tasks, to be chosen by
*himself.*⁵⁸

This survey of the Homeric Perfect has been relatively more straightforward than either the chapter on the Imperfective or that on the Aorist, because on the whole there has been a greater degree of concurrence among scholars on this facet of the verbal system. Its *valor* of State largely established, its terminological limits barely disputed, the Perfect has only really raised questions of detail, and most of these can be resolved, as I have tried to show, by consistently applying the assumptions of Aspect wherever the Perfect occurs.

NOTES

- ¹ Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, pp.116-119.
- ² *Ibid* p.117.
- ³ See Chapters 1, 3, 4.
- ⁴ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.46.
- ⁵ See pp.124-26 of this chapter.
- ⁶ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.46-7.
- ⁷ See pp.112-116.
- ⁸ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.50.
- ⁹ *Ibid.* p.50.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.50, cf. p.62.

¹¹ This may sound petty but I think it illustrates a major fault — that of trying to reconcile traditional interpretations to a modern general theory which is rather different in approach.

¹² A slight error of fact is noticeable when he claims that some Perfects are formed independently of their "Presents" or Aorists. Oddly enough he quotes δέδορκα and claims this has no connection with ἔδορακον or δέρομαι. It is necessary in the first instance to restrict one's arguments to forms which occur in extant texts and always to rely most on this evidence, but in the light of the knowledge that extant texts comprise only a fraction of the language as it was used at any period, it is unscientific to take the absence of a form in our texts as *proof* of its absence from the language without evidence that something else was substituted for it (cf. also my argument on βεβλήκει. (p.119f).

¹³ Curtius, *Greek Verb*, p.37² though Curtius tends to emphasize the completion rather than the state and is thus led into many errors.

¹⁴ Other examples of the Perfect Indicative are K39,93,94,100,120, 145,146,172,208,236,247,34²,409,419,438,440,538; P145,164,253,637, 689,690; β52,63,64,88,132,199,211,271,275,279,283,332,411; ω84,115 122,188,250,253,254,264,308,353,404,407,481,509.

¹⁵ See also McKay, *Perfect*, p.11.

¹⁶ For other examples see fn.14.

¹⁷ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.62.

¹⁸ Found *ibid.*, pp.55-8.

¹⁹ Berettoni, *Piucheperfetto*, p.182.

²⁰ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.147.

²¹ Kühner-Gerth, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.146.

²² *Ibid.*, p.147.

²³ Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik*, p.263.

²⁴ Ch. traine, *Histoire*, pp.18 and 21.

²⁵ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.45.

²⁶ Cf. P54,264.

²⁷ Other examples of the pluperfect are K187,189,195,256,263,265,

394,472,475,520,540,569; P133,139,267,279,350,357,369,371,377,384,
397,402,493,543,606,736; B108,122,158,141; 21,34,70,144,195,229,
273,295,313,384,446.

²⁸ Cf. also P286,706. The proportional figures for the poems are
Pluperfect 39: Perfect 15. This includes all compounds.

²⁹ See above pp.112-16.

³⁰ Chantraine, *Grammaire*, p.200; *Histoire*, p.15.

³¹ I do not see the point of dividing the verb along the lines of
βάλλω, *I throw*, and ἔβαλον, *I completed a throw, I hit*, simply because
the latter has as object a person while the former subordinates the
thing thrown. Again it is a question of how one defines the concept
of transitivity and the Accusative case (I see the Accusative as
merely limiting the activity of the verb in some way).

³² For example by Goodwin, *Moods and Tenses*, p.21; Schwyzer,
Griechische Grammatik, p.289; Jannaris, *Historical Grammar*, p.444.

³³ Other examples of the future-perfect are P155; B40,187,203.

³⁴ Wackernagel, *Vorlesungen*, p.170; *Studien*, p.4 and *passim*;
Chantraine, *Grammaire*, p.199, *Histoire*, pp.8-16.

³⁵ Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.147.

³⁶ See my definition of Aspect on p.2.

³⁷ For a discussion of the further history of the Perfect see McKay,
Perfect, p.12.

³⁸ Chantraine, *Histoire*, p.13.

³⁹ *Ibid.*; cf. Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, p.517.

⁴⁰ See above p.115.

⁴¹ -ως-B264, X497; -οῦα-κ238, 319, π456, E753.

⁴² Π728, Ψ660.

⁴³ υ198, M162, O113, 397, Σ31, 51.

⁴⁴ Θ264, E504, Ψ363.

⁴⁵ These forms are often written πεπλήγων and κηκόπων with the
Aeolic Perfect accent.

⁴⁶ No-one, so far as I am aware, has ever suggested this possibility. I only raise it here because it *might* be taken thus.

⁴⁷ It is possible that we have two different verbs, as L.S.J. suggest, ἀνήνοθε and ἐπ-ενήνοθε < ἐπινηνέω = ἐπινέω, *hear upon*. However, L.S.J. give no derivation for the first (cf. Leaf and Bayfield, *Iliad*, p.306).

⁴⁸ If ἦκω is the reading. Some editions print ἴκω and these may have reason on their side, i.e. if ἦκω occurs only in these two places as against forms in ἴκω - elsewhere, it may be that ἦκω, a common verb in later times when ἴκω had dropped out of use, was substituted for it at a period when both were tending to have the same sound. The main objection to this theory however, is that an Imperfective verb ἴκω would seem very odd in E478.

⁴⁹ It seems, however, that the Perfect of this verb, if it occurs at all, is to be found in the formulaic phrase ἴκμενον οὐρον, *a breeze which is favourable (because of having come up at the right time)*. Ἰκάνω, from a morphological point of view, would be more likely Imperfective, with its thematic endings and stem formation in -αν-.

⁵⁰ My interpretation of the last line cited is I think a novel one, depending on the repetition of αὐτὸν ἀχὸς and the use of μοι. Most commentators tend to prefer seeing 52-4 not as a generalization but as specific, and translate 55 differently, e.g. Lattimore's *This is a bitter thought to me. My desire has been dealt with roughly*.

⁵¹ E.g. by Lattimore, *Iliad*; Goodwin, *Moods and Tenses*, Curtius, *Greek Verb*.

⁵² Of these verbs, ἦκω is the only one which could be a morphological Perfect; ἦκω < ἦκοα like δέιδω < δέειδοα. However, if it were a Perfect, the whole paradigm must have been reformed from the first person Singular after αα had become ω.

⁵³ This verb would be explained morphologically as Imperfective built on an "o-grade" Perfect (as later στήκω was built on ἔστηκα). In any case a Perfect of οἴχομαι (or some verb formed from it) does occur in Homer in K252 quoted above.

⁵⁴ The Subjunctive of hypothesis is also seen in K130; β111, 112; ω258,297,329,403.

⁵⁵ This is the only example of the Optative in K,P,β,ω.

⁵⁶ Other examples of the Infinitive are K480; P359,405,510,641; ω380.

⁵⁷ Other examples of the Participle are K2,62,98,135,234,250,339,343,360,362,387,399,417,424,471,510,547; P3,5,8,61,87,88,161,181,227,229,247,323,325,329,341,355,375,402,412,435,492,531,535,542,

592,598,609,664,710,725,728,735,746,748,756; 838,54,61,129,170,
188,208,220,231,298,309,342,344,371,383; ω9,40,51,56,107,163,204,
206,278,375,392,395,442,487,510.

⁵⁸ The form ἰδυῖα has become part of other formulae in Homer —
ἀγλαῖ ἔργα ἰδυῖα (ν289, σ418), ἰδυῖησι προπύδεσσι (A608, Σ380) and
κεδνὰ ἰδυῖα (τ346).

CHAPTER 6
THE PROBLEM OF THE FUTURE

I wish to approach this topic by examining a concrete problem which has of late attracted some attention among linguists,¹ namely that of the paired Futures of ἔχω and δέδωμι, ἔξω/σχῆσω and δεδώσω/δώσω. These are the only verbs in Homer which have Futures formed from both Imperfective and Aorist stems. From there I will go on to examine the Future as a whole in an attempt to discover whether it should be considered as a separate Mood, as some authors argue,² as a mere tense in which an Aspectual opposition can be set up³ or rather, as I shall attempt to show here, a defective fourth Aspect, to some extent tense-dominated, but retaining some Modal features.

Paired Future Forms

ἔξω/σχῆσω: The normal assumption here is that ἔξω, being formed on the Imperfective stem, partakes of the basic relation of the stem, i.e. activity in Process (*I shall have, keep hold of, etc.*) and all its realizations, while the form σχῆσω, from Aorist stem σχ-, expresses the essential notion of the Aorist in *I shall seize, check.*⁴ We do indeed find an Imperfective sense for ἔξω in such examples as I609

... φρονέω δὲ τετιμῆσθαι Διὸς αἴση
ἢ μ' ἔξεει παρὰ νηυσὶ κορωνύσιον ... , *but I think I am*
marked out by the decree of Zeus, which will keep
me here beside the beaked ships ...

cf. τ494. Slightly different is ζ281

ἢ τίς οἱ εὐξαμένη πολυάρητος θεὸς ἦλθεν
οὐρανόθεν καταβάς, ἔξεει δέ μιν ἥματα πάντα, *some*
much admired god has come down from heaven in answer
to her prayers and will have her forever.

cf. P232. In the former pair the subject already "has" something while in the latter pair, though something has not yet been obtained, the emphasis lies more heavily on the later continued possession than on the acquisition. In some other passages ἔξω may seem to admit an Aoristic interpretation but consideration of the context reveals that an Imperfective meaning is at least possible or even probable. So in υ263

κερτομίας δέ τοι αὐτὸς ἐγὼ καὶ χεῖρας ἀφέξω
πάντων μνηστήρων ...,

one might take ἀφέξω as Aoristic and assume that Telemakhos is promising to stop completely the suitors' blows and threats. However when one looks at the previous line ἐνταυθοῦ νῦν ἦσο μετ' ἀνδράσιν οἶνοποτάζων, it becomes clear that the two activities are parallel. *You continue to sit here drinking among the men and (meanwhile) I will be keeping away*. Another case where the immediate context can be seen to give a Processive meaning to the activity of holding off is τ489 where Eurykleia, having recognized Odysseus and about to tell Penelopeia, is threatened by the former,

σίγα ...
εἴ χ' ὑπ' ἐμοῦ γε θεὸς δαμάσῃ μνηστήρας ἀγαυούς,
οὐδὲ τροφοῦ οὔσης σεῦ ἀφέξομαι, ὅππότε' ἂν ἄλλας
δυμῆς ἐν μεγάροισιν ἐμοῖς κτείνωμι γυναῖκας, *keep
silent [she is already, since he has her by the
throat] or else (if a god brings down the noble
suitors at my hand) I won't be leaving you alone
when I'm killing the other women in my halls.*

Here again the parallelism of the two activities is stressed.
Further in O186

ὦ κόποι, ἦ ῥ' ἀγαθὸς περ ἔων ὑπέροπλον ἔειπεν,
εἴ μ' ὀμότιμον ἔοντα βίη ἀεκόντα καθέξει, *even
though he is mighty, he has spoken out of turn, if
he is going to restrain me, his equal in honour,*

the act of restraining need not necessarily be Aoristic, in spite of Zeus' specific order to that end, but may express continuity (*to be restraining*), conation (*to try to restrain*) or even possibly repetition in view of the frequency of Zeus' orders. In ο522

ἄριστος ἀνὴρ μέμονέν τε μάλιστα
 μητέρα' ἐμήν γαμέειν καὶ Ὀδυσσεὺς γέρας ἔξειεν, *the*
best man (among them) has in mind to marry my
mother and have the "honor" of Odysseus,

if we think of γαμέειν as a Dynamic verb, *to take in marriage*, we may assume that ἔξειεν means *will obtain*, although even then it could express the continuing state after the marriage, but if, as is likely, γαμέειν was a Stative verb, *to be married*, ἔξειεν would have a parallel sense, *to enjoy*.⁵ Again, we might expect to translate v427=ο31

ἀλλὰ τὰ γ' οὐκ οὔω πρὶν καὶ τινα γαῖα καθέξει *as*
but I think that will not be before the earth
receives one of their number,

but the negative context makes it as likely to mean ... *before the earth holds one* ... On the other hand, σχήσω at times seems clearly to convey the idea of *take hold of, bring to a halt*, as in λ70

νῆσον ἐς Αἰαίην σχήσεις εὐεργέα νῆα, *on the island*
of Aiaie, you will beach your well-built ship,

cf. P182, τ572, etc. In some passages however the Aoristic idea is less immediately obvious, as in the pair E104

... οὐδέ ἔ φημι
 δῆθ' ἀνοχήσεσθαι κράτερον βέλος ...

and E285

... οὐδέ σ' οὔω
 δηρόν ἔτ' ἀνοχήσεσθαι ...

At first glance, one might think that Pandaros is referring to Diomedes' inability to go on holding out, as he has been, and thus one would assume the verbs to have Imperfective force. However when one takes into account the previous lines, one sees that what Pandaros is drawing attention to is a successful hit (βέβληται and βέβληαι) which sets up a new set of circumstances, so that a "complexive" Aorist would not be inappropriate. Also in χ172

ἢ τοι ἐγὼ καὶ Τηλέμαχος μνηστῆρας ἀγαυοὺς
 σχήσομεν ἔντοσθεν μεγάρων ... *I and Telemakhos will*
keep these fine suitors within the hall,

the verb might be seen as conveying an Imperfective idea, because Odysseus goes on to outline a parallel action (*while you look after Melanthios*). However, since the suitors have not yet begun to attack, the Aorist could convey the complexive idea of *if they attack, we'll block them*. A similar explanation can be posited for Ω670

σχήσω γὰρ πόλεμον τόσσον χρόνον ὅσον ἴτωγας, I shall hold up the war for as long as you ask,

where the durative notion in the subordinate clause does not prevent σχήσω having a complexive Aorist meaning. A much less certain example is Ν747

... ἐπεὶ παρὰ νηυσὶν ἀνὴρ ἄτος πολέμοιο
μύμνει, ὃν οὐκέτι πάγχυ μάχης σχήσεσθαι οὔω, *since there is by the ships a man, unsated in battle, who won't, I think, hold back from battle for very long,*

where Akhilleus has not yet started fighting and *is* holding back so that an Imperfective would be expected and perfectly natural. An Aoristic idea could only be assumed if one sees Poulydamas as using the Aorist residually. So far I have tried to show how each form can be assumed to occur predominantly with one *valor*, namely an Imperfective idea of activity in Process with ἔξω and an Aorist notion of Totality in σχήσω. The one noteworthy exception to this general conclusion, Ν747, need not worry us unduly if, as I shall argue later in this section, these forms were relics of an older system which had begun to decay in Homeric times so that a certain amount of overlap was inevitable.

There is an interesting difference in the way the two parties to the Trojan War refer to their intentions to hold what they already possess. Throughout the *Iliad*, the Trojans refer to their attempts to halt the Danaan advances in terms of ἔξειν while, during the Trojan foray which occupies Books Λ-P, the Akhaians talk of their manoeuvres to "check" (σχήσειν) the push, e.g. Ε473

φῆς κου ἄτερ λαῶν πόλιν ἐξέμεν ἠδ' ἐπικούρων
οἶος ... , *you used to say that you would hold the city alone without the army or the allies,*

as against A820

ἢ ῥ' ἔτι που στήσουσι πελώριον Ἑκτορ' Ἀχαιοί,
ἢ ἤδη φθίσονται ὑπ' αὐτοῦ δουρὶ δαμέντις, ... *whether*
the Akhaians will put a stop to mighty Hektor, or
they will go on perishing beneath his spear.

The reason for this seems to lie in the military situation not only of the time period covered by the main story but also of the whole campaign. The Trojans think of themselves as fighting a defensive war, as "holding" their country, so that any success would be seen as stemming the tide of invasion (not to mention the fact that they haven't had a successful "expedition" in nine years -- the Greeks are still there). The Danaans, on the other hand, fully aware that they are the aggressors, view the totally unprecedented Trojan push, which brings the war right to their doors, as an aberration which must be "halted" before they can get on with the main business of sacking Ilion. That the two sides have the same view of the situation is shown by such examples as M126

... ἔφαντο γὰρ οὐκέτ' Ἀχαιοὺς
σχήσεσθ' ἄλλ' ἐν νηυσὶ μελαίνησιν πεσέεσθαι, *they*
used to say the Akhaians would never halt them but
that they would fall upon the black ships,

cf. M107,166, N151, P639, etc. What may at first sight seem a violation of this general pattern is N51

ἔξουσιν γὰρ πάντας ἔϋκνήμιδες Ἀχαιοί, *the well-*
greaved Akhaians will hold them all

but on consideration of the context, the appropriateness of the Imperfective becomes apparent. Poseidon, disguised as Kalkhas, is encouraging the two Aiantes to keep fighting and his message is, *the Trojans are making strong efforts but we are holding them and will continue to do so if you come to our aid.* In this instance the immediate context of events is more important than the general situation. The speaker may always make a subjective choice of the contextual elements to be acknowledged in his selection of Aspect. Here the two possible forms are metrically identical so that the choice is not limited by formal factors.

Διδώσω/δώσω: Where we find a similar pair of Futures from διδώμι, *I give*, we would naturally expect διδώσω to have an Imperfective meaning and δώσω an Aorist one. However the situation is complicated by the fact that διδώσω only occurs twice, both times in connection with δῶρα, i.e. ν358

... ἄταρ καὶ δῶρα διδώσομεν, ὡς τὸ πάρος περ, we shall give you gifts as before

and ω314

... θυμὸς δ' ἔτι νῶϊν ἐώλπει
μύξεσθαι ξενίῃ ἢ δ' ἄγλαά δῶρα διδώσειν, *we hoped in our hearts that we would meet again in friendship and give each other fine gifts.*

Examples of δώσω are, of course, very common e.g. φ358

... ἄλλα δ' Ἀχαιοὶ
δώσουσ', εἴς ὃ κε πάντα ἐνιπλήσωσιν ἐπαύλους,
others the Akhaians will give me until all the pens are full.

cf. β223, θ143, T144. It is pertinent to note here that the examples of διδώσω both seem to look forward to a continuing relationship with gift-giving as an open-ended and intermittent factor so that an Imperfective idea would be appropriate. On the other hand, φ358, β223, θ143 all seem rather to have an Aoristic notion of Totality and T144 is also best taken as Aoristic (cf. παρασχέμεν in 140) unless the speaker intended the *giving* to be parallel to the *seeing*, which is unlikely.

Origins

These two forms are an isolated phenomenon in the Homeric verbal system and an interesting question arises as to where they originated. One possibility is that they are merely dialectal variants chosen for the metrical convenience of the composer. Another is that they are relics of the double origin of the Future, as Desiderative⁶ (root reduplicated with "i" and followed by the suffix "-syo") or Aorist

Subjunctive (root extended by "s").⁷ Since the former component of the first type was also used for forming Imperfective stems, as in this case, the Future so formed would approximate to the Imperfective in any case. The reason for choosing the Aorist Subjunctive would seem to have been that, when the speaker sees the activity as awaiting realization, without any further qualifications, he would most likely consider it as simple, Total occurrence and take no interest in its development. It is also possible here, according to this view, to see the most direct line of development from the concepts underlying these categories to those which are the basis of the Homeric Future; indeed Brugmann-Delbrück⁸ see both form and function as coalescing in many verbs, e.g. ἄρξω from both *arkh-syo and *arkh-so. Within the Indo-European group, each language kept only one of these processes so that the pairs ἔξω/σχῆσω and δίδωσω/δώσω were left as isolated phenomena in the Homeric dialect.⁹ The formal convergence, in these verbs, of Aspectual theme and morphological expression of original function did not inspire the Greeks to extend by analogy the Aspectual distinction throughout the Future; there is, for example, no *λέψω corresponding to λείψω. Of the many objections to such a theory, however, perhaps the most cogent is that very few "futures" in any Indo-European language seem to have been formed from reduplicated Desideratives and it seems more likely that these pairs were not new formations but vestiges of an Aspectual distinction which was operative when the Future was closer to its Aspectual origins.

I do not think that there need be any doubt that the Future was in origin a morphological by-form of the Subjunctive. Syntactically, too, it retains its links with the latter category. In many cases the Subjunctive (and to some extent the Optative) appears to be used in place of the future Indicative. The expression of the speaker's *will* is common to both and at times the only method of differentiating the two is the use of οὐ or μή in the negative versions. This is the case with such examples as N47

Αἴταντε, σφῶ μέν τε σαώσετε λαόν Ἀχαιῶν
ἀλκῆς μνησαμένω, μή δέ κρυεροῦο φόβοιο

where a Future sense would not be inappropriate, while in μ383

δύσομαι εἰς Ἄλδαο καὶ ἐν νεκύεσσι φαείνω,

only the presence of φαείνω, which is probably an Imperfective Subjunctive, gives any hint that δύσομαι may be an Aorist Subjunctive and not a future Indicative.

Often the poet passes from Subjunctive to future Indicative without any apparent justification, e.g. β222-3

σῆμά τέ οἱ χεύω καὶ ἐπὶ κτέρεα κτερεῖξω
πολλὰ μάλ' ὅσα ἔοικε καὶ ἀνέρι μητέρα δώσω, I
would heap up a tomb for him and render the proper
obsequies and then (when I have done that) I intend
to give my mother to a man in marriage.

Here the conditioning phrase is the one in brackets; the speaker visualizes an activity in the *Subjunctive* and then, in the future *Indicative* expresses a consequence of that activity after it has been realized.¹⁰ Sometimes the pattern goes the other way, i.e. from future Indicative to Subjunctive, but in this case the change is more readily marked by the appearance of ἄν or κε, e.g. A184

πέμψω, ἐγὼ δέ κ' ἄγω Ἑρισηίδα καλλιπάρηρον
αὐτὸς ἴων κλισίηνδε ..., I intend to take her back
and then I would (want to) come to your hut and
take fair-checked Briseis.

However since the particles are also found with the future Indicative, there are many cases of disputed interpretation, where a form could be either future Indicative or Aorist Subjunctive with short vowel. So I155 (κε ... τμησούσιν) must be considered as future, as must π298 (κ' ... θέλξει) but no such certainty can be expressed about ζ221 (ἄν ... λοέσσομαι), β258 (κ' ... κηρήσομαι), φ226 (κεν ... δαμάσσειται), ξ99 (κε ... καταλέξω). Chantraine¹¹ claims that when the negative οὐ is used in place of μή, the Subjunctive is being used as an emphatic future, e.g. A262

οὐ γάρ πω τοίους ἕδον ἀνέρας οὐδέ ἔδωμαι,

or ζ201

οὐκ ἔσθ' οὗτος ἀνὴρ δειρὸς βροτῶς οὐδέ γένηται
 ὅς κεν Φαιήκων ἀνδρῶν ἐς γαῖαν ἵκηται
 δηϊοτήτα φέρων ...¹²

This could be the case but it is also possible that the employment of these two negatives was not as rigidly codified in Homer as in the Classical period and that μή, which was originally perhaps more of a prohibitive particle (cf. μή, rather than οὐ, with the Imperative) would be felt to be inappropriate in a purely "prospective" utterance. However, while recognizing the formal and syntactic elements which connect the Future to the Subjunctive, I do not endorse the theory of Walter and Hahn that the Indo-European verb was temporally based and that therefore Subjunctive and Optative were merely alternatives for a future *tense*. Throughout this thesis, I have attempted to show that, in Greek, Aspect was the basic verbal category and that tense only existed in the Indicative, and I think it can be shown that this was the case for Indo-European also. However it is not my task to do this and I will only comment that these scholars were unwise to ignore the subtle distinctions and possibilities inherent in a system of three terms (Future, Subjunctive and Optative) simply because they occur in similar constructions or situations, an assumption analogous to that of alleged "confusion" between Aorist and Perfect Aspects.

Intention

The Future, as we find it in the Homeric poems, has a dual function. Primarily, it seems to have expressed a notion which is basically Modal in character, that of *Intention*. Yet it cannot be another Mood since it possesses a Verbal Adjective (Participle) and a Verbal Noun (Infinitive) which otherwise are only generated by the Aspects in Greek.¹³ This idea of *Intention* is rigidly preserved in the Participle, which usually occurs with verbs of motion, e.g. P146

οὐ γάρ τις Λυκίων γε μαχσόμενος Δαναοῖσιν
ἔειπεν περὶ πόλιος ... *None of the Lykians is coming*
*about the city in order to fight the Greeks.*¹⁴

cf. K32, β215, etc. It can also be slightly more remote, e.g. K355

ἔλπετο γὰρ κατὰ θυμὸν ἀποστρέφοντας ἑταίρους
ἐκ Τρώων λέναι ... , *for he was hoping in his heart*
that they were friends coming from the Trojans in
order to recall him,

and in some cases can express an Intention imparted to another, e.g.
8368

εὐτέ μιν εἰς Ἄϊδαο κυλάρταο προὔπεμψεν
ἔξ Ἑρέβου ἄξοντα κύνα στυγεροῦ Ἄϊδαο, *when he*
sent him to the house of wealthy Hades to bring
back that infernal dog from the darkness

(the fact of transferred Intention will be discussed later). The idea
of Intention is also apparent in the Indicative, especially in the
first person, e.g. ω216

αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ πατρὸς πειρήσομαι ἡμέτεροιο
αὐτὸν κέ μ' ἐπιγνώω... , *but I will (intend to)*
test our father, to see whether he can
recognize me ... ,

8143

... ἐγὼ δὲ θεοὺς ἐπιβώσομαι αἰὲν ἔδοντας
αὐτὸν κέ ποθι Ζεὺς δῶσι παλίντιτα ἔργα γενέσθαι,
I will build an altar to the gods who live
forever, if Zeus grants me recompense for these
insults,

K115

ἀλλὰ φίλον περ ἔοντα καὶ αἰδοῦτον Μενέλαον
νεικέσω, εἴ περ μοι νεμεσήσῃς, οὐδ' ἐπιχεύσω,
ὡς εὔδει... , *for, even though Menelaos is*
respected and dear to you, I am going to blame
him, even if you get angry, and I won't hide it,
because he sleeps...

P206

... ἀτὰρ τοι νῦν γε μέγα κράτος ἐγγυαλίξω,
τῶν ποιῆν δ' τοι οὐ τι μάχης ἐκ νοστήσαντι
δέξεται Ἀνδρομάχη κλυτὰ τεύχεα Πηλεΐωνος,
I will put great power in your hands, to make
up for the fact that Andromakhe will never
receive the famous arms of Akhilleus from you on
*your return from battle.*¹⁵

In the other persons of the Indicative, the sense of Intention
becomes less immediate and the form takes on a different flavour.

FUTURE

The second person, for example, often seems to convey a notion of desire, even of command, e.g. P34

νῦν μὲν δὴ, Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, ἧ μάλα τεύσεις
γνωτὸν ἐμὸν ... , *now indeed, divinely-nourished*
Menelaos, you shall truly pay for my kinsman...

cf. K235. On the other hand in ω511

ὄψαι, αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα, πάτερ φύλε, τῷδ' ἐπὶ θυμῷ
οὐ τι κατασχύνοντά τεδν γένος, ὡς ἀγορεύεις,
you will see, if you wish, dear father, that in
this crisis I will not shame your family, as you
think,

the effect of the qualification αἶ κ' ἐθέλησθα seems to be to make ὄψαι rather a forecast of the future, although there can be no doubt that Telemakhos was thinking *I want you to see*.

Also in the third person the sense of transferred Intention may be present e.g. P515

ἦσω γὰρ καὶ ἐγώ, τὰ δὲ κεν Διὶ πάντα μελήσει, *for I*
myself will cast, and Zeus will take care of the
rest. (I leave the rest to Zeus.)

In some circumstances, it can amount to a command, as in τ344

...οὐδὲ γυνὴ ποδὸς ἄψεται ἡμετέροιο, *not a woman*
will touch my foot.

The tendency of third person futures, however, is to express mere futurity, as in P208, quoted above. It is worth noting that in the original thought, δέξεται would express intention (*I do not want Andromakhe to receive ...*) but in the subordinate clause in which it occurs there is little scope for this.

The relatively rarer Future Infinitive seems to be an analogical development, which is only used in actual or virtual indirect speech, i.e. just as the Imperfective and Aorist are replaced by Imperfective and Aorist Infinitives, so it was felt that there should be a Future Infinitive to replace the Future Indicative. In this connection there is a series of verbs which regularly take a Future Infinitive and in which the notion of a forward looking state of mind would seem to be

best completed by a statement of Intention. Among this group are μέλλω, which in the Homeric period is more likely to mean *I am of a mind (that I am going to ...)*, μέμαα and μέμονα *I am eager (with the intention of ...)*, and, of course the well-known set ἔλπομαι, *I hope*, ὑπίσχομαι, *I promise*, ὄμνυμι, *I swear*, and ἀπειλέω, *I threaten*. Some examples of these verbs, used for the expression of a "prospective" idea, are given below:

μέλλω P278

... μίνυνθα δὲ καὶ τοῦ Ἀχαιοῦ
μέλλον ἀπέσσεσθαι..., *the Akhaians were minded to retreat a little way from the corpse.*

μέμαα M197

... μέμασαν δὲ μάλιστα
τεῦχος τε ῥήξειν καὶ ἐνπρήσειν πυρὶ νῆας, *they were most eager to break the wall and burn the ships.*

μέμονα E89

οὕτω δὴ μέμονας Τρώων πόλιν εὐρυάγυιαν
καλλείψειν ..., *surely you are not so eager to leave the wide-streeted city of the Trojans.*

ἔλπομα 275

οὐ σέ γ' ἔπειτα ἔολπα τελευτήσειν ἃ μενοινᾷς,
I have no hopes that you will fulfill your intention .

ὑπίσχομαι Y85

... ποῦ τοι ἀπειλαί
 ἄς Τρώων βασιλεῦσιν ὑπίσχεο οἰνοποτάζων
 Πηλεΐδew Ἀχιλλῆος ἐναντίβιον πολεμίξειν; *where are the claims which you promised to the Trojan chiefs in your cups, that you would fight single handed against Peleus' son Akhilleus?*

ὄμνυμι K 323

... καὶ μοι ὄμοσον
 ἦ μὲν τοὺς ἵππους τε καὶ ἄρματα ποικίλα χαλκῶ
δωσέμεν..., *swear that you will give me the horses and bronze coloured chariot.*

ἀπειλέω 8415

ὣδε γὰρ ἠπεύλησε Κρόνου πάϊς, ἧ τελέει περ,
 γυιώσειν μὲν σφῶϊν ὑφ' ἄρμασιν ὠκέας ἵππους,
 αὐτὰς δ' ἐκ δίφρου βαλέειν κατὰ θ' ἄρματα ἄξειν,
*for Zeus has threatened, and by this method he
 will accomplish it, that he intends to lame your
 horses in their traces, throw you yourselves from
 the car and break the vehicle in pieces.*

Both Imperfective and Aorist Infinitives also occur with these verbs, mostly still referring to future time but with the futurity being implied from contextual elements. The Imperfective could be derived from a statement with the present Indicative expressing open-ended Process which may include the future, but both could be derived from Subjunctive and Optative verbs, expressing will or wish.

Future time

The second use of the Future in Homer was the expression of future time. This is another indication that by the Homeric period the Future was being treated as an Aspect covering the Indicative, since in Greek the non-Indicative Moods do not have temporal functions. However it is interesting to note that most of the purely temporal uses of the Future involve the verb ἔσσομαι and its Participle ἐσσόμενος. So we have such examples as P180

... παρ' ἐμ' ἕστασο καὶ ἴδε ἔργον,
 ἢ ἐ πανημέριος κακὸς ἔσσομαι ... , *stand by me and
 see whether I shall prove a total coward,*

β285

σοὶ δ' ὁδὸς οὐκέτι ὄρηδ' ἀπέσσειται, ἦν σὺ μενοιναῖς,
the journey you desire will not be far away,

ω84 and κ41 for the Indicative. The Participle is found in such examples as Z358

... ὡς καὶ ὀπίσω
 ἀνθρώποισι πελώμεθ' ἀοίδιμοι ἐσσομένοισιν, *so that
 we might be examples to those who will come after
 us,*

and the frequent turr exemplified in ω433

λάβη γὰρ τάδε γ' ἐστὶ καὶ ἐσομένοιαι κυ^ρῖσθαι,
for this will be a reproach even for those who
*come after us to hear of.*¹⁷

In the Infinitive, too, this temporal orientation often seems more prominent than the idea of Intention e.g. P239

ᾧ πέπον, ᾧ Μενέλαε διοτρεφές, οὐκέτι νῦν
 ἔλπομαι αὐτῷ περ νοσισσέμεν ἐκ πολέμοιο, *I do*
not think, divinely-nourished Menelaos, that
*we will return from battle.*¹⁸

K106

...ἀλλά μιν οἴω
 κήδεσι μοχθήσειν καὶ πλείοσιν, εἴ κε γ' Ἀχιλλεὺς
 ἐκ χόλου ἀργαλέοιο μεταστρέψη φίλον ἦτορ, *But I*
feel that he will suffer with many pains, if ever
*Akhilleus turns his heart from fierce anger.*¹⁹

Once again the division is artificial, being based on the realization of a unitary *valor* in different contexts; the Greeks themselves may not have felt the tension, and modern commentators may offer interpretations quite different from my own.

Conclusion

That the sense of *Intention* which earlier I claimed to be inherent in the Future can apply either to the speaker or the subject or even be largely absent may seem to confuse further the nature of the category. Yet perhaps some clarification is possible; if A says to B *you will do this*, he is expressing an Intention which he wishes B to take up and make his own, while in, *this is what will happen*, the element of futurity is more prominent, though one can still render it, with an idea of Intention or hope, as, *I intend that this will happen*. Here then is the key to the problem. If one defines Aspect in Greek as expressing the *speaker's* concept of the relation of the activity to the context, it does not really matter whether this view corresponds to any which the subject might have, although in some cases the two may coincide and in the case of the first person invariably do so. The argument is complicated by the fact that we are dealing with a

narrative poem but in the case of direct speech it is necessary to assume that the poet is taking on the *persona* of the character speaking.²⁰ So in Θ368 quoted above, it seems at first sight incongruous that the future Participle is made to refer to Herakles who is after all the grammatical object of the verb προὔπεμφεν. But one assumes that Herakles would not have gone on the journey to Hades of his own accord and so he must have acquired the Intention from Eurystheus in the form of a command. So we can imagine a vignette of Eurystheus, obsessed with the capture of the dog, telling Herakles to go for just such a purpose. This is in major part irrelevant, however, since it is Athene who is telling the story and therefore she who must express an opinion as to whether either of the characters had this idea in mind. Similarly in K355 the assumption that the Trojans are coming after him with the specific Intention of turning him back (and not, for instance, of giving him further orders) is firstly Dolon's own but ultimately comes from the speaker/author/narrator who chooses to ascribe motivation to one of his characters in this fashion.

So we may now summarize our conclusions from this chapter. Without doubt the Future had its origin in a Mood closely allied to the Subjunctive and traces still exist of what may have been an Aspectual distinction operative at its first appearance.²¹ However this has largely broken down and otherwise the Future is a unity, without any distinction of Aspect. On the syntactic level, too, the Future seems to possess a *valor* which is more properly Modal in that it refers not to the internal dynamics of the activity as Aspect does but to its "realizability". Yet this Modal character is not total, since the form has by our period begun to possess a temporal sense and a Participle and an Infinitive so that it can be considered to some extent an Aspect. The Infinitive, it is true, seems to be a recent analogical formation, but the Participle is firmly entrenched in the Homeric verbal system. In conclusion we may say that the Future as we find it in the Homeric poems is a formation which is transitional between a Mood and an Aspect, taking some of the characteristics of

both without fully being either. It remains the only category in which the otherwise absolute hegemony of Aspect is not asserted and, as it does not contain Mood either, the Greeks themselves continued to be confused about it, as is shown by the fact that Modern Greek has abandoned it entirely and returned to the Subjunctive to create an Aspectual distinction within the *concept* of future time.

NOTES

¹ Crisafulli, *Aspect and Tense*; Chantraine, *Grammaire*, pp.203-4; Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.91,102, etc.

² For example, Humbert, *Syntaxe*, p.151; Moore, *Comparative Syntax*, p.76.

³ This was apparently suggested to some authors by the developments in modern Greek and by the two pairs mentioned below.

⁴ Though, as stated by Ruipérez, any activity has its own duration and consequently the act of checking can often be seen as "durative", the point is whether the speaker wishes to concentrate, or wishes the hearer to concentrate, on the Process or on the initial moment, whether he wishes to record the development of the activity or merely its occurrence.

⁵ The reason for the *future* Infinitive seems to be a desire to retain the speaker's words, i.e. γαμέω καὶ ἔξω, *I shall be married, I shall have*.

⁶ An example of a true desiderative in Homer is ὀφείλοντες (E37) but this is so isolated as to be useless from a syntactic point of view. Desideratives in -σεύω are attested in Attic-Ionic.

⁷ A fine example of this is the root οὐσ- which provides in Homer both οὐσε, an Aorist Imperative, and οὐσω, a Future.

⁸ Brugmann-Delbrück, *Vergleichende Grammatik*, t.II3/2, p.788.

⁹ Proponents of this theory often point to the variety of Imperfective stems in Indo-European, which may have originated in an Aspectual distinction.

¹⁰ Note however that the future of χέω does not occur in Homer and that κτερεῖξω could itself be future. Liddell-Scott-Jones suggest that χεῖω could be that future but this is opposed by the appearance of χεῖωσθω (Subj.) at H86.

¹¹ Chantraine, *Grammaire*, pp.209,330.

¹² In both these examples οὐδέ is preceded by οὐ and it might be thought that this was a significant factor. However in Γ54,

οὐκ ἄν τοι χάρισμα κέρτατος τά τε δῶρ' Ἀφροδίτης
ἦ τε κόμη τό τε εἶδος, ὅτ' ἐν κονίῃσι μεγέλης,

we have the subjunctive in the first part of the sentence rather than the second and only one negative.

¹³ See Chapter 1, pp.3-4.

¹⁴ Perhaps *will come*. With this verb it is often impossible to be sure whether its original Imperfective sense predominates or the implication of Intention which led to its becoming in Classical Attic and Ionic prose effectively the Future Indicative of ἔρχομαι.

¹⁵ The ambiguity of *to be going to/about to* is a fact of English idiom not of Greek. Comrie (*Aspect*, pp.64-5) makes the suggestion that we are dealing with a Prospective Aspect wherein a state is related to some subsequent situation. Even in English such a suggestion runs into problems of both a morphological and a syntactic nature, while in Homeric Greek it would be impossible to reconcile with the majority of Future uses.

¹⁶ Other examples of the Indicative used for Intention are K44, 55, 88, 105, 108, 210, 215, 292, 294, 305, 324, 370, 378, 412, 413, 427, 463; P29, 182, 226, 231, 232, 448, 451, 453, 480, 717; K127, 162, 187, 192, 194, 196, 256, 287, 292, 294, 306, 315, 326, 357; ω123, 248, 303, 324, 476, 481. Participles expressing Intention are seen K343, 451; P701; β264, 360; ω116, 224.

¹⁷ Other examples of this future use are K41, 126, 129, 213, 217, 223, 235, 282, 304, 453, 481, 534; P41, 208, 232, 241, 448, 514, 556, 558; β61, 134, 135, 137, 164, 166, 190, 191, 193, 204, 270, 273, 278, 295, 318, 368; ω84, 94, 196, 197, 201, 432.

¹⁸ The original thought, *we shall return*, would be an expression of Intention, but, as with δέξεται in P208, this is obscured by the subordination, especially as the verb of thinking is negated.

¹⁹ Other examples of the Infinitive are K57, 331, 337, 365, 371, 387, 393; P365, 406, 407, 488, 496, 503, 639; β156, 176, 198; ω28, 341, 395, 470, 471.

²⁰ I am here referring of course to very narrowly defined linguistic rather than literary usage.

²¹ Kurylowicz's suggestion that this is the conditional Injunctive is plausible but weakens when he restricts it to the Injunctive of the sigmatic Aorist, thus failing to account for stem differentiation.

CHAPTER 7
ASPECTUAL DISTINCTION IN THE IMPERATIVE

This special study of the Imperative has been made necessary by the confusion in the works of many scholars over the precise relationship between Aspect and Mood. The whole thrust of this work has been to see Aspect as the dominant feature of the Homeric verbal system taking precedence over tense, which only exists in the Indicative, and Mood, since it applies throughout that category. Therefore the *a priori* expectation would be that the Aspectual distinctions are the same in the Imperative as in the other Moods, even though in some realizations there may be special effects due to the interaction of Imperative and Aspectual *valores*.

One may study the Imperative best in terms of the command situations in which it is found. There are basically three areas where an order is issued – ordering or prohibiting an activity which is in progress, an activity which has not yet started, or a general precept.¹ In these three situations respectively, the Imperfective Imperative would imply, *continue doing/being*, *begin doing/-*, or *do/be* generally, while the Aorist would express, *continue doing/being and end it*, *do/begin being* (simple occurrence) or *do/be* (general occurrence). So we have examples of the Imperfective used for the first type in K192

οὕτω νῦν, φίλα τέκνα, φυλάσσετε..., *so now, my lads,*
do on guarding...

P559

σοὶ μὲν δὴ, Μενέλαε, κτηφείη καὶ ὄνειδος
ἔσσειται, εἰ κ' Ἀχιλλῆος ἀγαθοῦ πιστὸν ἑταῖρον
τείχει ὑπο Τρώων ταχέες κύνες ἐλήσουσιν.
ἀλλ' ἔχεο κρατερῶς, ὄτρυνε δὲ λαὸν ἅπαντα, *Yours*
will be the reproach and shame, Menelaos, if the
swift dogs of the Trojans are going to tear apart

the faithful companion of noble Akhilleus beneath the wall. So (translating ἀλλ') keep up your steadfast resistance and encourage the entire army,

B97

κοῦροι, ἐμοὶ μνηστῆρες, ἐπεὶ θάνε δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
μύμνεται, ἐπελεγόμενοι τὸν ἐμὸν γάμον εἰς ὃ κε φάρος
 ἐκτελέσω... *Boys, my suitors, since Odysseus has
 died, go on waiting, though you are eager for
 marriage with me, until I finish the cloak,*

ω483-6

ὁ μὲν βασιλευέτω αἰεὶ,
 ἡμεῖς δ' αὖ παίδων τε κασιγνητῶν τε φόνου
 ἔκλησιν θέωμεν· τοῖ δ' ἀλλήλους φιλεόντων
 ὡς τὸ πάρος, πλοῦτος δὲ καὶ εὐρήνη ἅλις ἔστω,
*let him go on being king, let us make them
 forget the murder of sons and brothers, let
 them go forward in friendship, as before, and
 let there be wealth and peace aplenty.*

In all of these there is a contextual suggestion of continuing what is already happening or has been happening. In K192 the old man's pleasure at the watch being kept is the basis of his exhortation to keep it up. In P559 Menelaos is holding firm and is urged to continue to do so and so continue to be an encouragement to others. In B97 the suitors had already been waiting when they were asked to wait longer. In ω483 Odysseus is already king, and is to continue as king, in contrast to the act of causing forgetfulness, described in the Aorist in θέωμεν (1.485), while φιλεόντων and ἔστω differ in that former friendship is to be continued, resumed after its recent disruption. This continuation of a current or former Activity is the usual implication of the Imperfective Imperative in such a context.²

The Aorist Imperative occurs less commonly in circumstances where an Activity apparently already going on is enjoined. Only three examples occur in the four books:

K280

καὶ οὐ μὲν, ἀγχιόχοιο Διὸς τέκος, ἢ τέ μοι αἰεὶ

έν πάντεσσι πόνουσι παρίστασαι, ούδέ σε λήθω
 κινύμενος· νῦν αὐτε μάλιστά με φῦλαι, 'Αθήνη
 δός δὲ πάλιν ἐπὶ νῆας εὐκλείας ἀφικέσθαι, *Hear
 me, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, who stand
 beside me in every trial and watch my movements,
 be with me especially now and grant that we
 return to the ships,*

870

σχέσθε, φίλοι, καί μ' οἶον έάσατε πένθει λυγρῶ
 τεύρεσθ[αι]... *hold back, my friends, and let
 me be ground down by bitter grief,*

ω265

έκ γάρ του έρέω, σὺ δὲ σύνθεο καί μευ ἄκουσον,
*I shall tell you something and you must take it to
 heart and hear me out.*

Nevertheless there appears to be enough contextual difference to justify the choice of the Aorist in these. In K280 the presence of Athene has only just become apparent. Odysseus takes it as evidence of her continuing interest, but the point of his appeal here is that he wants her interest applied to the particular enterprise he is embarking on. The force of φῦλαι is something like *demonstrate your affection*, and he goes on to be specific with another Aorist, δός. In 870, one could argue that the townsfolk are already holding back, but in fact the context is a meeting at which the difficulties Telemachus is facing are stated for appraisal *de novo*, so it is appropriate that the advice to hold back and to allow the affliction should be presented in Totality, or at least without reference to continuity, even though it might be equally appropriate to add to the bitterness of the irony by using the Imperfective and so drawing attention to the lack of support up to the present. So too in ω265, although Laertes is already listening, Odysseus is introducing a new element for which he claims attention:³ if Laertes were showing signs of interrupting, ἄκουε might have been used to forestall this, but irrespective of his reaction, both the expression of intention to add a fresh point and the Aorist appeal to take note of it (σύνθεο) make ἄκουσον acceptable and natural, quite apart from the likelihood that the Aorist may signal an appeal to hear the whole discourse (*hear me out*).

In cases where the Activity has not yet started, the Aorist is more common than the Imperfective. For example in K544,

εἶπ' ἄγε μ', ὧ πολύαιν' Ὀδυσσεῦ, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν,
ὄπως τούσδ' ἵππους λάβητον... Tell me, Odysseus of
the many woes, great glory of the Akhaians, where did
you get these horses...?

P654

ὄτρυνον δ' Ἀχιλλῆι δαΐφρονι θᾶσσον ἴοντα
εἶπεῖν, ὅτι ῥά οἱ πολὺ φίλτατος ὦλεθ' ἑταῖρος,
Urge him to go quickly and tell warlike Akhilleus
that his beloved companion is dead.

B25

κέκλυτε δὴ νῦν μευ, Ἰθακήσιοι, ὅτι κεν εἴπω,
Hear me now, Ithakans while I speak.

ω214-5

ὕμεῖς μὲν νῦν ἔλθετ' εὐκτίμενον δόμον εἴσω,
δεῖπνον δ' αἶψα συῶν ἱερεύσατε ὅς τις ἄριστος,
Now you go inside the well-built house and
sacrifice the best of the hogs for dinner.

In all these the expression of Totality seems natural enough in appeals for new action, as also in K159,544, P179,509, β113, 373, ω114,381.⁴

Yet we see the Imperfective in such examples as K370

ἢ μέν' ἢ ε σε δουρὶ κινήσομαι ... Stay where you
are or my spear will stop you.

P13

Ἄτρεΐδη Μενέλαε διωτρεφές, ὄρχαμε λαῶν,
χάτσο, λείπε δὲ νεκρὸν, ἔα δ' ἕναρα βροτόεντα,
Son of Atreus, divinely nourished Menelaos, give
back, leave the corpse, forgo the bloody arms.

ω357

θάρσει, μὴ τοι ταῦτα μετὰ φρεσὶ σῆσι μελόντων,
Have courage don't let this concern you.

Now in comparison with the examples illustrating the use of the Aorist in these circumstances, it may be observed that these

Imperfectives do not indicate action in Totality so much as open-ended Activity: in K544, a specific act of telling is enjoined, in P654 a specific act of urging, in B25 a specific act of hearing and in ω214-5 specific acts of going and sacrificing; whereas in K370 the waiting enjoined is essentially a cessation of flight, so that the emphasis is on the beginning with no indication of its ending, in ω357, Laertes is really being urged not to go on with the war he has just expressed, as the rest of the line makes explicit, and again the emphasis is on beginning an activity of being courageous rather than on making a specific courageous effort.⁵ In P13, it must be admitted it seems reasonable to ask whether the command ought not to be taken as implying a complete withdrawal and giving up of the body, in which case Aorist verbs might be expected; but Euphorbos is concerned less with spoiling the body than with using its control as a basis for challenging Menelaos, and again the notion of (ceasing to defend and) beginning to take a less preoccupied stance is appropriate. So also in P652 σκέπτεο is a request to initiate a search for Antilokhos in preparation for the more specific urging in 654 referred to above.⁶

Another passage in which Imperfective Imperatives are used for commands to do something not already being done is K479-81.

ἀλλ' ἄγε δὴ πρόφερε κρατερὸν μένος· οὐδέ τί σε χρὴ
 ἐστάμεναι μέλεον σὺν τεύχεσιν, ἀλλὰ λύ' ἵππους·
 ἢ εὖ σὺ γ' ἄνδρος ἔναλρε, μελήσουσιν δ' ἔμοι ἵπποι,
come, put forth your great strength - you should not
stand there idle with your gear - loose the horses,
or you kill the men and I'll take care of the horses.

Here, however, the activities envisaged are already in the minds of Diomedes and Odysseus, and are indeed the purpose of their present visit; the implication is *get on with the attack.*⁷ The same applies in K146, 383, 425, P179, 622, B372, ω323, 357, 394, 519.

In Homeric Greek, as in Classical Attic, a prohibition is usually expressed by μὴ with Imperfective Imperative or Aorist Subjunctive; the Imperfective Subjunctive is never used and the Aorist Imperative

is rare. Why this should be so is beyond the scope of this work, and my inquiry will merely touch on the difference between the two Aspects. Although the situation prevailing in negative commands is not necessarily the same as that in positive ones, it is logical that the basic *valores* of Imperfective and Aorist should be the same in both, as this does not depend on positive or negative but is constant throughout the verbal system. Therefore an Imperfective should prohibit the Development of the activity, while the Aorist should forbid the Totality, the "action pure and simple". In considering which Aspect to use, account is not necessarily taken of whether the activity has already commenced or not, both being used in either case — in the first, the Imperfective would imply, *don't go on doing/being*,⁸ the Aorist, *don't do/stop being*, while in the second case the Imperfective, commanding the negative course of an activity, would convey, *keep away from doing/being* (*don't try to ...*, etc.), and the Aorist, *don't do/be* (complexive prohibition). That one should be able to use both Imperfective and Aorist in prohibitions of a general nature goes without saying — here the Imperfective would again be, *resist doing/being* and the Aorist, again complexively, *do not do/be*. As an example of an activity already in progress being stopped by an Imperfective Imperative, we have K193:

...μηδέ τιν' ὕπνος
αἰρεῖτω, μή χάρμα γενώμεθα δυσμενέεσσιν, *and*
let sleep continue not taking you, lest we fall
prey to the enemy.

P31

...ἀλλά σ' ἔγωγ' ἀναχωρήσαντα κελεύω
 ἐς πληθύν ἵεναι, μή δ' ἀντίος ἕστασ' ἐμεῖο,
I advise you to retreat into the crowd, and
don't go on trying to stand against me.

B304

Τηλεμαχ' ὑφαγόρη, μένος ἄσχετε, μή τί τοι ἄλλο
 ἐν στήθεσσι κακὸν μελέτω ἔργον τε ἔπος τε, *High-*
hearted Telemakhos, unchecked in strength, do not
go on worrying about what has been said and done.

There are no examples in K,P,B,ω, of an Aorist prohibition of an activity which is already going on, but Ω568 is an instructive

example. Eight lines earlier, in 560, Akhilleus begins his reply with μηκέτι νῦν μ' ἐρέθιζε, γέρον ..., *do not go on irritating me, old man*, and after some explanation, returns to the same theme with τῷ νῦν μή μοι μᾶλλον ἐν ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ὀρίνης, *so in these circumstances don't provoke my heart further in its grief*. Here the adverb μᾶλλον, besides implying a link with what has preceded, adds to the force of the Aorist, which serves the disjunctive purpose of summing up the speaker's words. Also an Imperfective verb would tend to render μᾶλλον similar in force to ἔτι in the above example, but the Aorist, in a sense, cuts the activity in two and focuses attention on what follows, in its entirety, and this comparative break with the *status quo* is perhaps aided by a certain intensity in μᾶλλον to give the command a certain harsh forcefulness.⁹

As in positive commands, the Imperative may be used resumptively, to urge the putting into effect of what is intended (or suggested by preliminary action), but not yet overtly begun, so also in prohibitions the Imperative is found in efforts to prevent the occurrence of an intended or indicated Activity. An example of this is ω54.

Ἴσχεθ', Ἀργεῖοι, μὴ φεύγετε, κοῦροι Ἀχαιῶν,
stay, Argives, sons of the Akhaians, don't flee...

where the Greeks, terrified by the mysterious happenings connected with Akhilleus' death are on the point of flight. Nestor tells them to give up their intention of fleeing and then explains what is going on. So also in X339, Hektor, at last reconciled to his death, says to Akhilleus

μή με ἔα παρὰ νηυσὶ κύνας καταδάψαι Ἀχαιῶν, *do not leave [i.e. go on with your intention of leaving] me to lie by the ships for the dogs to eat¹⁰ (but ransom my body after you kill me)*,

cf. 335 where Akhilleus has expressed this intent. A fine contrast using the same verb in the Aorist for an unstarted activity is E684 where Sarpedon cries out to Hektor,

κεῖσθαι ... μὴ δὴ με ἔλωρ Δαναοῖσιν ἐδόσης
of let ., do not let [i.e. entertain the thought
me lie as prey for the Danaans;

here there is no notion of Process since Sarpedon is at no-one's mercy and not reconciled to dying, but he is frightened by Odysseus' forays and begs Hektor not to leave him completely.

The resumptive use of the positive Imperative mentioned earlier also shows up in prohibition, and here again it is a natural realization of the *valor* of the Imperfective. This is really the same as the type exemplified by μὴ ... ἔα above and only calls for comment insofar as the activity prohibited has not yet been referred to, but has begun to occur, e.g. in A210, Akhilleus has not yet drawn his sword, but he has his hand on the hilt when Athene grabs him by the hair and, after explaining why she came, continues,

ἀλλ' ἄγε λῆγ' ἔριδος, μὴδὲ ἔξφοσ ἔλκεο χειρῦ, try
to (or begin to ...) abate your quarrel, and don't
go on to draw your sword.

As in positive commands it is often difficult to distinguish in prohibitions this resumptive use from the normal continuative employment, and indeed it is only necessary to do so in order to explain uses of the Imperfective which seem anomalous if one defines the Aspectual opposition in terms such as *Durative/Punctual* rather than *Processive/Total*.

Examples of the Imperative used in general precepts are rare enough in the poems, but perhaps we may see one in K69, ... μὴδὲ μεγαλύνεο θυμῶ, don't be overly haughty. The Imperative here may be thought to refer merely to Menelaos' own behaviour, but also has a more general application in the light of the usual behaviour of Homer's heroes, i.e. when one is asking advice, one should not be arrogant.

When one considers the Imperfective Imperatives in which beginning was suggested in translation, one may observe that the inceptive and conative realizations are not always clearly distinguishable, since the dividing line between them is not an essential feature

of the Imperfective, and may in fact be important mainly for translation into languages with different Aspectual systems. Repeated Activity, too, is a context-dominated nuance and an example can be seen in K67-9,

φθέγγεο δ' ἧ κεν ἴησθα, καὶ ἐγρήγορσαι ἄνωχθι,
πατρόθεν ἐκ γενεῆς ὀνομάτων ἄνδρα ἕκαστον,
πάντας κυδαίνων... *wherever you go, call out,
and order wakefulness, naming each man according
to his ancestry and honouring all.*

Here the conditioning phrase is ἧ κεν ἴησθα, which leads one to conclude that it is the repetition of the calling which is uppermost in Agamemnon's mind. It is noteworthy that ἄνωχθι, formally a Perfect, is actually parallel to the Imperfective φθέγγεο.

The *valor* of the Perfect has, in an earlier chapter, been analysed as that of State, and one would expect this *valor* to be realized also in the Imperative. Further, in the same chapter it was argued that the division between the two different types of Perfect was artificial, inasmuch as they could also be seen to possess the same *valor*. The Perfect Imperative is rare in the Homeric poems, too rare to allow analysis in terms of the three command situations, but examples of both types, the "normal" and "anomalous", are found. The verb οἶδα, for instance, is a "true" Perfect, expressing a State of knowledge, and its Imperative has the same quality, as in K329

ἔστω νῦν Ζεὺς αὐτός, ἐρύγδουπος πόσις Ἥρης
μὴ μὲν τοῖς ἔπποισιν ἀνὴρ ἐποχήσεται ἄλλος
Τρώων... *let Zeus himself, loud-thundering
husband of Here, know that no other Trojan will
ride behind the horses.*

An example which at first sight seems anomalous, but really expresses a true Perfect meaning, is τέτλαθι which in A586 is contrasted with an Aorist:

τέτλαθι, μήτηρ ἐμή, καὶ ἀνάσχεο κηδομένη περ,
mother, be patient [command for a certain state]
and sustain this insult [complexive or ingressive,
cf. 578, an indirect reference to the same act],
even though you're feeling aggrieved.

Another interesting case is X365 where Akhilleus, having just killed Hektor, says to his corpse τέθναθι, κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι ..., which, though hard to translate because of the semantics involved in the concept of death, I would take to mean *Stay dead [neither your prophecies nor your ghost can affect me], I will take my fate when it comes*. Among the Perfect Imperatives, there is also a proportion of cases of "anomalous" Perfects like ἄνωγα. In the passage quoted above (K65-70) ἄνωχθι is used in much the same way as an Imperfective Imperative — *set about ordering*; whatever Perfect force there originally was in this verb had already ceased to be apparent in the Homeric language, and later Greek sheds no further light on it.

In this section I have argued that there is no difference between the uses of the three Aspects of Homeric Greek in the Imperative and those of other Moods. More particularly, I have tried to show how, despite such factors as the interaction of Aspect and Imperative, the subjectivity of Aspect, and the semantic concepts of the modern languages into which the poems are translated, the Aspectual *valores* are preserved throughout the system.

NOTES

¹ The difference between Dynamic and Stative verbs is here partially neutralized, as is the difference in the use of the negative (the only case where the negative retains its function of connection with the semantic meaning, rather than the Aspect, is where a negative Imperative is linked to another Imperative as in K193, where the meaning is *let ... continue not taking*, rather than *do not continue letting ...*).

² cf. K291, 378: P185, 559, 622, 718: B178, 369: ω132, 357, 519.

³ cf. a similar situation in 1.248.

⁴ cf. K176, 278, 281, 284-5, 321, 384, 442-3; P185, 480, 645-7, 654, 864-6, 113, 161, 212, 229, 262, 289, 349, 353-5, 373; ω215, 256, 287, 329, 331, 443, 454, 474, 481; see also Δ307, I203, O427, Ψ469, ε178, λ74-7, υ151, ρ75.

⁵ Both μένεσθαι and θαροεῖν are Stative verbs, and it may be that the tendency to use them in the Imperfective is strong enough to discourage the Aorist unless there is a fairly strong emphasis on the specifics of the Total action.

⁶ In P654f ἔοντα εἰπεῖν represents in indirect discourse the commands ἔθι and εἰπέ, *be on your way and tell*. Undoubtedly ἐλάθε could have been used, but as Antilokhos would have to find Akhilleus before passing on the message, just as Menelaos had to look for him, it may not be too fanciful to see in both σκέπτεο and ἔοντα an acknowledgement of the comparative indefiniteness of the necessary precludes to the two Total acts of communication.

⁷ The subjectivity of Aspectual choice is nowhere more apparent than when an Activity is represented as in process when it is as yet only conceived in the mind and its overt performance has not begun. Sometimes, of course, as in the context of K479ff., overt preparatory action has already been taken.

⁸ Although the idiomatic translation of *don't go on doing is stop doing* and the Aorist is simple prohibition, not referring to Process, I am trying by this inflection to bring out the nuances of the Aspectual distinctions.

⁹ McKay, *Greek Grammar*, p.218.

¹⁰ Again we have problems with *allow* but Chantraine's explanation (*Grammaire*, p.230) that the Imperfective is used because "on ne sait quels chiens" seems false for two reasons. Firstly it is the complexive καταδάφαι which refers to the dogs not ἔα, and secondly because, though indeterminance of subject may be a factor in other Aspectual systems, it is irrelevant in Greek, where there are other devices for its expression.

CHAPTER 8

TENSE AND ASPECT IN THE HOMERIC SIMILES

In reading the voluminous literature written on the subject of Aspectual usage in Greek, one soon realizes that the Homeric simile has been one of the major causes of confusion. In this chapter, I will try to clarify certain points, especially in relation to the patterns into which the similes are cast, the difference between the Mood in similes, and finally the question of Aspectual usage. I take a simile to be a poetic (or literary) embellishment whereby a comparison is made with something external to the subject matter being presented, but which has some feature linking the two, at least in some imaginative way. Such a definition would exclude the type of comparison which adds more or less necessary definition to a passage (many of the comparisons introduced by οἷος belong to this class) and the comparisons which relate two essentially similar things, as when Nestor cites events of his early life. In practice I have confined my attention to those similes which are attached to the narrative and contain at least one verbal form with Aspectual force.

Formal Construction

The first task in the investigation of the Homeric simile is to examine the form taken by the similes. The simplest type of simile is that which is really only one step removed from the comparative-clause type rejected above.¹ Such similes are introduced by οἷος or ὅσος and usually take the Indicative. . . . E770ff

ὅσον δ' ηεροειδὲς ἀνὴρ ἔδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσιν
 ἦμενος ἐν σκοπιῇ λεύσσων ἐπὶ οἴνοπα πόντον
 τόσσον ἐπιθρόνονοι θεῶν ὑψηχέες ἵπποι, as far as a
 man sees into the misty distance as he sits on a
 high rock and looks out over the dark sea, so far
 do the high-stepping horses of the gods leap,

cf. Ω317, etc. There is, however, one example of the Subjunctive in such a simile, i.e. ε249f (where *τορνύγιο* would scan)

ὅσσον τίς τ' ἔδαφος νηὸς τορνύσεται ἀνὴρ
φορτίδος εὐρείης, εὖ εἰδὼς τεκτοσυνάων,
τόσσον ἐπ' εὐρεῖαν σχεδίην ποιήσας Ὀδυσσεύς, *as
much as a man, skilled in carpentry, marks out the
hull of a broad ship, so did Odysseus work on the
broad raft.*

The great majority of similes in this class are confined to two lines but that found in ζ102-9 shows that the construction does not restrict the development of more complex vignettes.²

The second group of similes are those introduced by *ἐοικώς*, *ἐναλύγκιος* and other words of a similar cast. These usually extend the comparison between two objects by means of an adjectival clause (though, they are not the only similes to do so) and predominantly make use of the Indicative,³ e.g. 0586ff

ἀλλ' ὃ γ' ἄρ' ἔτρεσε θηρὶ κακὸν ῥέξαντι ἐοικώς,
ὅς τε κύνια κτείννας ἢ βουκόλον ἀμφὶ βόεσσι
φεύγει πρὶν περ ὄμιλον ἀολλισθῆμεναι ἀνδρῶν, *but he
fled like a wild beast who has done some evil
thing, killed a dog or a cowherd tending cattle,
and runs away before a crowd of men assembles,*

cf. Ν242. There is also one example each of *εἴκελος* (P281), *ῥσος* (Λ297) and the rare *φή* (B144), and one which introduces a "relative-clause" type simile with *ἔχων* (Π752). However the Subjunctive occurs in several examples,⁴ e.g. Ε4ff

δαῦτέ οἱ ἐκ κόρυός τε καὶ ἀσπίδος ἀκάματον πῦρ
ἀστέρ' ἑπωρινῆ ἐναλύγκιον, ὅς τε μάλιστα
λαμπρὸν παμφαύνησι λελουμένος Ὀκεανοῦ, *as
unquenchable light blazed from his helmet, like a
star in summer which shines at its brightest after
it has bathed in the streams of Okeanos.*

There are a number of similes introduced by *ἥυτε* which are narrative in character and which generally do not depend on a relative clause, e.g. Γ10ff

εὔτ' ὄρεος κορυφῆσι νότος κατέχευεν ὀμίχλην,
 ποιμέσιν οὐ τι φίλην, κλέπτῃ δέ τε νυκτὸς ἀμείνω,
 τόσσον τίς τ' ἐπιλεύσσει ὅσον τ' ἐπὶ λαῶν ἦσιν·
 ὡς ἄρα τῶν ὑπὸ ποσσὶ κονίσαλος ὄρνυτ' ἐλλῆς, *as*
the south wind pours over the peaks of the
mountains a mist — no joy to shepherds but better
than night for the thief — and a man can see only
as far as he can throw a stone, so the cloud of
dust rose beneath their feet.

Again the Indicative is found in the majority of these⁵ while the Subjunctive only occurs in 2547ff

ἥϊτε πορφυρέην Ἴριον θνητοῖσι τανύσση
 Ζεὺς ἐξ οὐρανόθεν, τέρας ἔμμεναι ἢ πολέμοιο,
 ἢ καὶ χειμῶνος δυσθαπέος, ὅς ῥά τε ἔργων
 ἀνθρώπους ἀνέπαυσεν ἐπὶ χθονί, μῆλα δέ κῆδει,
 ὡς ἢ πορφυρέη νεφέλη πυκάσασα ἔαυτήν
 δούετ' Ἀχαιῶν ἔθνος ..., *as Zeus strings out from*
heaven a shining rainbow to be a portent for
mortals, either of war or of harsh winter, which
stops men from working on the land and troubles
flocks, so the thick shining cloud descended on the
Achaians.

However, the great majority of similes in the Homeric poems, the "Homeric" or "epic" similes, are introduced by ὡς, and for convenience I have divided the examples into several categories. The first group are introduced by the conjunction alone and are basically narrative in character, ranging from a one-line comparison to a fully developed simile occupying several verses, e.g. A113ff

ὡς δὲ λέων ἐλάφοιο ταχείης νήπια τέκνα
 ῥηϊδίως συνείραξε, λαβὼν κρατεροῖσιν ὀδοῦσιν,
 ἐλθὼν εἰς εὐνήν, ἀπαλὸν τέ σφ' ἦτορ ἀπηύρα·
 ἢ δ' εἴ περ τε τύχησι μάλα σχεδόν, οὐ δύναται σφι
 χραισμεῖν· αὐτήν γάρ μιν ὑπὸ τρόμος αἰνὸς ἰκάνει·
 καρπαλίμως δ' ἦϊξε διὰ δρυμὰ τυκνὰ καὶ ὕλην
 σπεύδουσ' ἰδρώουσα κραταιοῦ θηρὸς ὑφ' ὀρμῆς·
 ὡς ἄρα τοῖς οὐ τις δύνατο χραισμηῖσαι ὄλεθρον
 Τρώων, ... *as a lion who has come upon the resting*
place of a swift deer and, catching the fawns,
breaks their necks with his strong teeth, taking
away their tender lives. He comes upon them but
cannot help them for a terrible trembling seizes
her and she darts away quickly in a sweat through
the woods and thick brush at the onslaught of the
mighty beast. So none of the Trojans could avert
their own doom.

Here the Indicative is the Mood most commonly used but the Subjunctive does occur in about one-third of cases.⁶

All other similes in ὡς take the form of subordinate clauses and perhaps the simplest in construction are those introduced by ὡς εἰ and taking the Optative, as involving a potential comparison,⁷ e.g. B780

οἱ δ' ἄρ' ἔσαν, ὡς εἴ τε πυρὶ χθῶν πᾶσα νέμολτο,
*The rest went forward, as if the whole earth were
 being eaten by fire,*

cf. C314, K410. There seems to be one anomalous example of the Subjunctive in such a clause (I481ff) and several instances (A474, Ψ598) which have themselves no verb but which may be presumed to preserve the Mood of the principal verb, i.e. the Indicative.

The next group of similes are those which make use of ὡς ὁπότε, e.g. δ335ff.

ὡς δ' ὁπότε ἐν ξυλόχῳ ἔλαφος κρατεροῦ λέοντος
 νεβροῦς κοιμήσασα νεπηγενέας γαλαθηνούς
 κνημοῦς ἐξερέησι καὶ ἄγκρα ποιήεντα
 βοσκομένη, ὁ δ' ἔπειτα ἔην εἰσηλυθεν εὐνήν,
 ἀμφοτέροισι δὲ τοῖσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφήκεν,
 ὡς Ὀδυσσεὺς κείνοισιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφήσει, *as when
 a doe ensconces her new-born, milk-sucking fawns in
 the lair of a mighty lion and goes off to feed in
 the leafy groves and on the mountain spurs. The
 lion comes to the nest and inflicts a terrible fate
 on both fawns, and so will Odysseus inflict a
 terrible fate on the suitors.*

Here we find two examples of the Subjunctive and only one of the Indicative.⁸

The overwhelming majority of similes in this class, however, are introduced by ὡς ὅτε, e.g. M41ff

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἐν τε κίονεσσιν καὶ ἀνδράσιν θηρευτῆσι
 κῆπιος ἢ λέων στρέφεται σθένεϊ βλεμαίνων·
 οἱ δέ τε πυργηδὸν σφέας αὐτοῦ ἀρτύναντες
 ἀντίον ἕστανται καὶ ἀκοντίζουσι θαμειὰς
 αἰχμὰς ἐκ χειρῶν· τοῦ δ' οὐ ποτε κυδάλιμον κῆρ
 ταρβεῖ οὐδέ φοβεῖται, ἀγνηορῆ δέ μιν ἔκτα·
 ταρφέα τε στρέφεται στίχας ἀνδρῶν πειρητίζων·
 ὅππῃ τ' ἰθύση, τῆ τ' εἴκουσι στίχας ἀνδρῶν·

ὡς Ἐκτωρ ἂν' ὄμιλον ἰὼν ἐλίσσεθ' ἐταίρους
 τάφρον ἐποτρύνων διαβαινέμεν, *as when a boar or a
 lion, confident in his strength, turns on men and
 dogs, but they arrange themselves in ranks and
 cast many javelins at it. The beast's mighty
 heart never trembles or fears, but its bravery
 destroys it, for it prowls around the ranks of
 men, looking for a way to get through, but the
 lines give way at that point. So Hektor made his
 way through the crowd, calling on his companions
 and encouraging them to cross the ditch.*

These are fairly evenly divided between Indicative and Subjunctive.⁹
 An important subcategory of the large ὡς ὅτε class consists of those
 similes which contain the indefinite pronoun τις, i.e. ὡς ὅτε τις.¹⁰

Here the Subjunctive tends to prevail, e.g. P61ff

Ἵως δ' ὅτε τις τε λέων ὄρεσῦτροφος, ἀλλὶ πεποιθῶς,
 βοσκομένης ἀγέλης βοῦν ἀρπάσῃ ἢ τις ἀρτίστῃ·
 τῆς δ' ἐξ αὐχέν' ἔαξε λαβῶν πρᾶτεροῦσιν ὄδοῦσι
 πρῶτον, ἔπειτα δέ θ' αἶμα καὶ ἔγκατα πάντα λαφύσσει
 δηῶν· ἀμφὶ δέ τόν γε κύνες τ' ἄνδρες τε νομῆες
 πολλὰ μάλ' ἰύζουσιν ἀπόπροθεν οὐδ' ἐθέλουσιν
 ἀντίον ἐλθέμεναι· μάλα γὰρ χλωρὸν δέος αἰρεῖ·
 ὡς τῶν οὐ ἰωνι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν ἐτόλμα
 ἀντίον ἐλθέμεναι Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο, *as when a
 mountain-dwelling lion, relying on his strength,
 seizes the best heifer from the grazing herd. He
 first grasps the neck and breaks it with strong
 teeth, then proceeds to lap up the blood and
 entrails as he pulls his prey apart. About him
 dogs and herdsmen set up a great hue and cry but
 none is willing to go out against him, for green
 fear seizes them. So none of them dared in his
 heart to go against mighty Menelaos.*

However several examples have the Indicative and there is one instance
 of the Optative in C384ff

... ἐγὼ δ' ἐφύπερθεν ἐρεισθεῖς
 δύνεον, ὡς ὅτε τις τρυπῶ δόρυ νῆϊον ἀνήρ
 τρυπάνῳ, οἱ δέ τ' ἐνερθεν ὑποσσεῖουσιν ἱμάντι
 ἀψάμενοι ἐκάτερθε, τὸ δὲ τρέχει ἐμμενὲς αἰεῖ, *so I
 leant on it from above and began to turn it, as I
 when some man bores through a ship's timbers with a
 huge drill and men below move it by means of the
 strap, having straightened it to run continuously
 in the groove.*

This example is an aberration, however, and perhaps it is better to accept the ancient emendation of τρουπῶ to τρουπᾶ Indicative.¹¹

Connection to Context

The great majority of similes are connected to their referents by ὡς, so. This is overwhelmingly the case when the simile is introduced by ὡς alone or in a word group, but there are exceptions, such as τοῖος (Δ488), τόσσος (P266). The small group of similes introduced by ἥτε or ἐοικώς usually also connect with the context by means of ὡς, but there are a few examples of other connective words (τόσσος in B472, τῷ ἔκελος in ε54) while ἐναλύγκιος, ἴσος, εἴκελος and φῆ do not occur sufficiently frequently to be significant. When the simile is introduced by other phrases, ὡς is less common; οἶος and ὀσος are, as one might expect, usually picked up by τοῖος and τόσσος, as in E559 and δ793 respectively, though at times they connect with their referents by other means (e.g. Δ75 connects with τῷ εἰκυῖ').¹²

In most similes the formal connection with the narrative (the ὡς, τοῖος, etc.) follows the simile and usually semantic connection also exists with what follows; the typical pattern is shown in Γ23ff

ὡς τε λέων ἐχάρη μεγάλῳ ἐπὶ σώματι κύρσας,
 εὐρῶν ἢ ἔλαφον κεραῶν ἢ ἀγριον αἶγα
 πευνάων· μάλα γάρ τε κατεσθίει, εὖ περ ἂν αὐτὸν
 σεύωνται ταχέες τε κύνες θαλεροῦ τ' αἰζηοῦ.
 ὡς ἐχάρη Μενέλαος Ἀλέξανδρον θεοειδέα
 ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ἰδὼν ... , as a lion rejoices at its
 good fortune, when it comes upon the great body of
 a horned stag or wild goat. It is very hungry, for
 it eats much, even though swift dogs and young men
 harry it. So Menelaos rejoiced when he caught
 sight of godlike Alexandros.

However it is also possible for a simile to be prompted by a signal in the passage preceding it; such is the case, for example, in Ο524ff

ἐν δ' ἔπεσ' ὡς ὅτε κύμα θοῆ ἐν νηῖ πέσῃσι
 λάβρον ὑπὸ νεφέων ἀνεμοτρεφές· ἢ δέ τε πᾶσα
 ἄχνη ὑπεκρύψθη, ἀνέμοιο δέ δεινός ἀήτης
 ἰστίῳ ἐμβρέμεται, τρομέουσι δέ τε φρένα ναῦται

δειδιότες· τυτθὸν γὰρ ὑπὲκ θανάτου φέρονται·
 ὡς ἐδαΐζεται θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσιν Ἀχαιῶν, he fell
upon them, as when a wave, borne swiftly on the
winds from beneath clouds falls on a swift ship -
it is totally covered by the spray, and the fierce
blast of the wind howls against the sail while the
sailors' hearts tremble in fear. So the heart in
each Akhaian breast was divided.

The important point to note here is that the verb in the simile and the verb in the surrounding context with which the *semantic* connection is made usually take the same Aspect. There seem to be several distinct arrangements. Where the "point of reference" is Imperfective, thus indicating that we are to pause while the simile unrolls, the connecting verb in the simile is also usually Imperfective. This is the case with 0554ff

πυρὰ δὲ σφισι καίετο πολλά.
 ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐν οὐρανῷ ἄστρα φαεινὴν ἀμφὶ σελήνην
 φαίνεται ἄριπρεπέα, ὅτε τ' ἔπλετο νήνεμος αἰθήρ·
 ἔκ τ' ἔφανεν πᾶσαι σκοπιαὶ καὶ πρόνες ἄκρου
 καὶ νάπαι· οὐρανόθεν δ' ἄρ' ὑπερράγη ἄσπετος αἰθήρ,
 πάντα δὲ εἶδεται ἄστρα, γέγηθε δὲ τε φρένα ποιμήν·
 τόσσα μεσηγὺ νεῶν ἠδὲ Ξάνθοιο ῥοάων
 Τρώων καίοντων πυρὰ φαίνεται Ἰλιόθι πρό, *many were*
the fires which were burning, as when in the sky
the magnificent stars appear about the shining moon,
and all the peaks, headlands and valleys show up
and the bright air pours from the heaven - the
shepherd knows all the stars and his heart rejoices.
So many appeared the fires which the Trojans were
keeping alight between the ships and the streams of
Xanthos before I! 'on,

f. ζ102, υ25, Σ161. However it sometimes happens that even when the "point of reference" is Imperfective, the connecting verb is Aorist, as in 0787ff

Ἥ δ' ὑπερῷῳ αἴθει περὶ φρων Πηνελόπεια
 κεῖτ' ἄρ' ἄσιτος, ἀπαστος ἐδητύος ἠδὲ ποτῆτος,
 ὀρμαίνουσα ἢ οὐ θάνατον φύγει υἱὸς ἀμύμων,
 ἢ ὅ γ' ὑπὸ μνηστῆρσιν ὑπερφιάλοισι δαμῆη.
 ὅσα δὲ μερμήριξε λέων ἀνδρῶν ἐν ὀμίλῳ
 δείσας, ὅπποτε μιν δόλιον περὶ κύκλον ἄγωσι
 τόσσα μιν ὀρμαίνουσαν ἐπήλυθε νήδυμος ὕπνος, *In the*
upper room, wise Penelopeia was lying without food
or drink, wondering whether her blameless son would

escape death or be brought down by the haughty suitors. As a lion among a crowd of men debates with himself in fear when they draw a circular trap around him, so she worried as sweet sleep came to her.

In this the link between simile and context is confined to the idea of worry, but Penelopeia's long drawn out agony is shown to have the intensity of a lion's access of concern as the realization comes upon him (δέσσας) that he is trapped.

If the "point of reference" is Aorist, however, it is simply recording the event as complete. In this case an Aorist in the simile would merely be a comparison of action, although there may be some narrative development within the simile. An example of this is N62ff

αὐτὸς δ' ὡς τ' ἔρηξ ἠκύπετος ὤρτο πέτεσθαι
ὅς ῥά τ' ἀπ' αἰγύλιπος πέτρης περιμήκεος ἀρθείς
ὄρμησιν πεδίολο διώκειν ὄρνεον ἄλλο,
ὡς ἀπὸ τῶν ἦϊξε Ποσειδάων ἐνοσύχθων, *and as a hawk
starts in flight, when it rises from the storm-
haunted, craggy cliffs and swoops to chase some
other bird, so the Earth-Shaker Poseidon darted
away from them*

cf. E161, ε368. Sometimes the difference in Aspect is more apparent than real, especially in similes in which the comparison is made with an introductory word which implies repetition of the verbal "point of reference" and a relative clause expands the detail, as in ε51ff.

σεύατ' ἔπελτ' ἐπὶ κῦμα λάρψ ὄρνιθι εἰοικώς,
ὅς τε κατὰ δεινούς κόλπους ἁλὸς ἀπρυγέτοιο
ἰχθύς ἀγρώσων πυκνὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἄλμη·
τῷ ἔκελος πολέεσσιν ὄχησατο κύμασιν Ἑρμῆς, *then he
raced over the waves like a seagull who, searching
for fish along the terrible troughs of the
unharvested rollers, often wets his wings with
spray. Thus did Hermes fly above the close packed
waves.*

In this σευαμένῳ and ὄχησαμένῳ may be implied at beginning and end with ὄρνιθι and τῷ, while δεύεται gives background detail.

Not all similes connect with the context on both sides, and in fact, near some of them a definite break in the narrative occurs, precluding such connection. Where there is a link on both sides,

however, it is most common (as in the examples quoted) for both connecting verbs to have the same Aspect. Yet there are examples of similes which connect with the context on both sides but have an Imperfective on one side and an Aorist on the other. Such, for example, is II756ff

τὼ περὶ Κεβριόναο λέονθ' ὡς δηριναθήτην,
 ὣ τ' ὄρεος κορυφήσι περὶ κταμένης ἐλάφοιο,
 ἄμφω κεινάοντε μέγα φρονέοντε μάχεσθον·
 ὡς περὶ Κεβριόναο δύο μῆστρες αὐτῆς,
 Πάτροκλός τε Μενουτιάδης καὶ φαίδιμος Ἕκτωρ
 ἔεντ' ἀλλήλων ταμείην χροά νηλέϊ χαλκῷ, *the two of
 them fought about Kebriones like lions who, on
 mountain peaks, fight over a dead stag; they are
 both hungry and have high thoughts. So about
 Kebriones the two warriors Patroklos, son of
 Menoitios and glorious Hektor, strove to tear each
 other's flesh with cruel bronze.*

Here δηριναθήτην marks the onset of the fight and is understood with λέονθ' ὡς, while the relative clause pauses over the detail, and the narrative resumes with a parallel pause.

An apparent anomaly which could well be considered here is N489ff

Αἰνεΐας δ' ἐτέρωθεν ἐκέκλετο οὔς ἐτάροισι,
 Δηΐφοβόν τε Πάριν τ' ἔσορῶν καὶ Ἀγήνορα δῖον,
 οὗ οἱ ἄμ' ἠγεμόνες Τρώων ἔσαν· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
 λαοὺ ἔπονθ', ὡς εἴ τε μετὰ κτύλον ἔσπετο μῆλα
 τλόμεν' ἰκ βοτάνης· γάνυται δ' ἄρα τε φρένα ποιμήν·
 ὡς Αἰνεΐα θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι γεγῆθει,
 ὡς ἔδε λαῶν ἔθνος ἐπισπόμενον εἰσ' αὐτῷ.

Here commentators have, as it were, broken the simile into two parts unrelated in their subject-matter, with ἔσπετο referring back to ἔπονθ' and γάνυται forward to γεγῆθει. This dislocation would be unprecedented in Homer and perhaps a simpler explanation exists. It may be that ἔπονθ' is only marginally related and that the lines should be repunctuated to change the colon after ἔσαν to a comma, place a full stop (or at least a colon) after ἔπονθ' and put commas after βοτάνης and ποιμήν. Then it could be translated

Aineias from the other side called to his companions, singling out Deiphobos, Paris and divine Agenor, who were the leaders of the Trojans, and then the people followed. And as a flock start off to follow a huge ram to drink from the spring, and on that account the shepherd is pleased, so Aineias was pleased when he saw the host begin to follow him,

where ἔσπετο corresponds to ἐπισπόμενον, an ingressive Aorist from a Stative verb. The simile tells of the start of a movement and of the continuing pleasure it brings and this is applied in both directions.¹³ Yet it is unusual in the way it modifies the opening link ἔπονθ' ... ἔσπετο and proceeds to develop the simile, with a more exact point of reference to follow, but without connectives either at beginning or end to show a clear division.

Mood in Similes

I must now return to a point touched upon earlier and deal with the differences between the Moods in the similes. In the simplest similes, those introduced by οἷος and ὅσσοις, the main verbs are preponderantly Indicative, due, one might suppose, to their relatively straightforward statement that one thing compares with another in one respect. The Subjunctive in ε249 may be thought to be due to the presence of τις, but this is apparently not definitive, since we have τις with the Indicative in Ψ845ff.

*ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ σόλον εἶλε μενεπτόλεμος Πολυπόιτης,
ὅσσον τις τ' ἔρριψε καλαύροπα βουκόλος ἀνὴρ·
ἢ δέ θ' ἔλιτσομένη πέτεται διὰ βοῦς ἀγελαίας·
τόσσον παντὸς ἀγῶνος ὑπέρβαλε ... , but when the
steadfast warrior Polyroites took the weight, he
overshot the rest of the field by the distance a
cowherd hurls his staff, when he flings it
whirling through the fat cattle.*

In the group introduced by ἤυτε, also, the Subjunctive only occurs once, and the similes which are extended by adjectival clauses (the ἐουκῶς-ἐναλύγκιος type discussed above) have a ratio of four to one in favour of the Indicative. There is no discernible reason for

the choice of Subjunctive rather than Indicative in these similes. One should not argue that the Subjunctive is a generalizing one since all similes are, to a greater or lesser extent, statements meant to be valid for all time, and these activities do not seem to be any more general than those for which the Indicative is used. One must also dismiss here the possibility that the choice is made for metrical reasons since there are several examples where the two forms have the same metrical value.

When we come to the large class of similes introduced by ὡς, we find in general a fairly even balance of Indicative and Subjunctive, though several exceptions are noteworthy. The ὡς εἰ group take the Optative, as is natural for the expression of a hypothetical contingency, but in those which take (or potentially take) the Indicative, the εἰ may not be conditional but merely an emphatic reinforcement of ὡς, so that these examples really belong with the other groups. The categories in ὡς ὅποτε and ὡς ὅτε predominantly take the Subjunctive, as might be expected in view of the prevalence of general temporal clauses in such circumstances in Classical Greek. Again the presence or absence of τις does not seem to affect the choice of Mood. A fine pair of examples using the same verb to illustrate this point are N389ff

ἦρκε δ' ὡς ὅτε τις δοῦς ἦρικεν ἢ ἀχερωῖς,
 ἢ ἐκτύς βλωθρή, τήν τ' οὔρεσι τέκτονες ἄνδρες
 ἐξέταμον τελέκεσσι νεήκεσι νηῖον εἶναι.
 ὡς ὁ πρόσθ' ἔπιπν καὶ δύφρου κεῖτο ταυσοθεῖς,

and E414ff

ὡς δ' ὅθ' ὑπὸ πληγῆς πατρὸς Διὸς ἔξερούπη δοῦς
 πρόρριζος, δεινὴ δὲ θεοῦ γύγνεται ὀδυμῆ
 ἐξ αὐτῆς, τὸν δ' οὐ περ ἔχει θράσος, ὅς κεν ἕδηται
 ἐγγύς ἑών, χαλεπὸς δὲ διὸς μεγάλου κεραυνός.
 ὡς ἔπεσ' Ἔκτορος ὤκα χαμαὶ μένος ἐν κονίῃσι.

It seems that, granted that the difference between the Indicative and Subjunctive was that between what the speaker regards as "real" and what he merely visualizes as possible, and so between what is to him relatively objective and what is not so, then the poet had the choice

of presenting the picture of the simile as a concrete one or as merely hypothetical. This is however a tenuous question since any simile must be in a sense hypothetical but also "real" in that, once set up, it is a complete self-developing world.

Moreover, it is not uncommon for a simile begun in the Subjunctive to be continued in the Indicative, e.g. A414ff

ὡς δ' ὅτε κάρπιον ἀμφὶ κύνες θαλεροῦ τ' αἰετοῦ
σεύωνται, ὁ δέ τ' αἴσι βαθείης ἐκ ξυλόχοιο
θήγων λευκὸν ὀδόντια μετὰ γναμπήσσι γένουσαι,
ἀμφὶ δέ τ' αἴσσονται, ὑπαὶ δέ τε κόμπος ὀδόντων
γίγνεται, οἱ δὲ μένουσιν ἄφαρ δεινὸν περ ἑόντα, *as*
when dogs and young men rush about a boar, and he
comes out of his thicket in the woods, grinding his
white tusks in the crook of his jaws. The tusks
flash this way and that, and their gnashing grows in
volume while his attackers await him, even though he
is fierce,

cf. ψ233, ε394, Σ318. The reason for this may be that the poet chooses to forget that he started with a subordinate clause of supposition, or, to put it another way, that, having once conjured up the image of a hypothetical world, he takes its "realness" for granted and uses the Indicative to continue the vignette. However this is by no means the general rule since there are one or two instances of similes which begin with the Subjunctive and continue in that Mood, e.g. O80ff

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν αἴψη νόος ἀνέρος, ὅς τ' ἐπὶ πολλὴν
γαῖαν ἐληλουθῶς φρεσὶ πευκαλίμησι νοήσῃ,
"ἔνθα' εἶην, ἢ ἔνθα," μενοινήσῃ τε πολλά, *as when*
the mind of a man darts about, a much travelled man
who, in his swift thought fancies, "I wish I were
there, or there" and indeed has many wishes of this
sort.

Aspect in Similes

Since the similes contain verbal forms which are morphologically the same as those in any other situation in the Homeric poems, it is to be suspected that they should be used in the same way, i.e. that whatever form the simile may take and whatever Mood it may use, the

Aspectual relationships would remain the same. Even though Ruipérez claims that all verbal forms found in similes are Aspectually neutral,¹⁴ my own investigations have led me to the conclusion that each Aspect does indeed have its proper *valor*, and moreover that this *valor* is independent of any temporal constraints which might be applied in other situations. The majority of similes found in the Homeric poems make predominant use of the Imperfective since, as is natural in comparison, the poet wishes his hearer/reader to concentrate on the development of an activity and to connect it with the occurrence of another activity in the general area. Moreover the similes involve a pause to consider a different scene, so descriptive details are important, and here too the Imperfective is natural. So the *valor* of activity in Process is shown in many examples, such as E499ff,

ὡς δ' ἄνεμος ἄχνας φορέει ἱερὰς κατ' ἁλώϊς
 ἀνδρῶν λιγκμώντων, ὅτε τε ξανθὴ Δημήτηρ
 κρίνη ἐπελεγμένων ἀνέμων καρπὸν ἔει καὶ ἄχνας
 αἰ δ' ὑπολευκαίνονται ἀχυρματῶν ... , As when the
 wind carries the chaff along the sacred threshing-
 floor, when men are winnowing, and fair-haired
 Demeter separates the grain from the chaff with
 hurrying blasts, whitening the piles of chaff,

or τ205ff

ὡς δε χιὼν κατατήκετ' ἐν ἀκροπόλοισιν ὄρεσσιν,
 ἦν τ' Εὐρος κατέτηξεν ἐπὶ Ζέφυρος καταχεύη
 τηκομένης δ' ἄρα τῆς ποταμοῦ πλήθους ἰέροντες,
 the snow melts on the heights of the mountains,
 snow which the east wind softens, after it has been
 powdered by the West wind, and the flowing rivers
 run full with the melt snow.

Other realizations of the Imperfective, such as conation, iteration, ingression, etc., are not so often observable except as possible overtones of the background or parallel activity realization mentioned above.

The Aorist realizes its *valor* of Totality in several ways, depending on whether the verb is Stative or Dynamic. The latter is seen as simple occurrence, as in 0579ff

Ἀντίλοχος δ' ἐπόρουσε κύων ὡς, ὅς τ' ἐπὶ νεβρῶ
 βλημένω αὔξει, τόν τ' ἐξ εὐνήφει θορόντα

θηρητήρ ἐτύχησε βαλών, υπέλυσε δὲ γυῖα, *Antilokhos leapt forward like a hound who leaps on a wounded fawn, which a hunter has aimed at and shot, loosing its knees, as it darts from its hiding place.*

In Stative verbs we often find an ingressive nuance,¹⁵ e.g. A172f

οἱ δ' ἔτι καὶ μέσσον πεδίων φοβέοντο βόας ὡς,
ὡς τε λέων ἐφόβησε μολῶν ἐν νυκτὸς ἀμολγῶ, *while the others still fled across the middle of the plain, like cattle which a lion stampedes when it comes on them in the deep night,*

while a complexive sense might be seen in K183ff

ὡς δὲ κύνες περὶ μῆλα δυσωρήσωσι ἐν αὐλῇ
θηρὸς ἀκούσαντες κρατερόφρονος, ὅς τε καθ' ὕλην
ἔρχεται δι' ὄρεσσι ..., *as when dogs keep sleepless watch over flocks in a yard, as they hear a mighty wild beast moving through the woods on the mountains.*

The Perfect is extremely rare in Homeric similes but when it does occur, it has its normal *valor* of activity as State, e.g. Ω317f

ὄσση δ' ὑπερόφοιο θύρη θαλάμοιο τέτυκται
ἀνέρος ἀφνειοῦ, εὖ κληῖσ' ἀραρυῖα, *as large as a well-hinged door is made in the house of a wealthy man,*

or, as an instance of the "anomalous" perfect, P263ff

ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἐπὶ προχοῆσι διικτεῖος ποταμοῦ
βέβρυχεν μέγα κύμα ποτὶ ῥόον, ἀμφὶ δέ τ' ἄκρα
ἠϊόνες βοῶσιν ἐρευγομένης ἀλός ἔξω, *as when, at the mouth of a mighty river, a huge wave roars against the stream and the out-jutting shores thunder against the backwash of the sea.*

One must here note that the Perfect never occurs in the surrounding context, although this is not remarkable since the surrounding context is usually a narrative one, to which the Perfect is less appropriate.

So then it seems that the Aspects operate under the same distinguishing characteristics in similes as in other situations, when each form is considered in relation to its context. When a simile is drawn out to become, as it were, a miniature narrative, we find patterns of Aspects which parallel these in the main narrative. An illustration of this is provided in Ω523ff

ὡς δὲ γυνὴ κλαίῃσι φύλον πόσιν ἀμφιπεσοῦσα,
 ὅς τε εἴης πρόσθεν πόλιος λαῶν τε πέσσειν,
 ἄστευ' καὶ τεκέεσσιν ἀμύνων νηλεὲς ἦμαρ.
 ἢ μὲν τὸν θνήσκοντα καὶ ἀσπαίροντα ἰδοῦσα
 ἀμφ' αὐτῷ χυμένη λῆγα κωκυέει· οἱ δὲ τ' ὄπισθε
 κόπτοντες δούρεσσι μεταφρενον ἠδὲ καὶ ὤμοις
 εἴρερον εἰσανάγουσι, πένον τ' ἐχέμεν καὶ ὀϊζύν·
 τῆς δ' ἐλεεινοτάτῳ ἀχεῖ φθινύθουσι παρειαί·, as a
 woman weeps (descriptive Imperfective paralling
 Odysseus' weeping) when she embraces (compleive
 Aorist for action grammatically and logically
 presented as background to the weeping) her
 husband, who is (simple occurrence) before his
 city and his people, trying to defend (conative
 Imperfective, whose implication of failure comes
 from the fact of the man's death) his home and
 children - where she catches sight (momentary
 Aorist) of him gasping out his soul in death
 (Imperfective Participles for simultaneous
 continuity), she throws herself on his body
 (simple action echoing ἀμφιπεσοῦσα) and begins
lamenting shrilly (inchoative Imperfective, but
 echoing κλαίῃσι), while those behind her, striking
her again and again (iterative Imperfective) on the
back and shoulders with their spears try to lead
her away into slavery to a life of pain (durative
 Imperfective Infinitive) - her cheeks waste away
with most terrible grief.

Another example is A474ff

ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' αὐτὸν
 Τρῶες ἔπονθ' ὡς εἴ τε δαφουνοὶ θῶες ὄρεσφιν
 ἀμφ' ἔλαφον κεραδὸν βεβλημένον, ὃν τ' ἔβαλ' ἀνήρ
 ὑπ' ἀπὸ νευρῆς· τὸν μὲν τ' ἤλυξε πόδεσσι
 φεύγων, ὄφρ' αἶμα λιαρὸν καὶ γούνατ' ὀρώρη·
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ τὸν γε δαμάσσειται ὡκὺς οἰστός,
 ὠμοφάγοι μιν θῶες ἐν οὔρεσι δαρδάπτουσιν
 ἐν νέμει σκιερῷ· ἐπὶ τε λῆν ἦγαγε δαίμων
 σύντην· ὣς μὲν τε διέτρεσαν, αὐτὰρ ὁ δάπτει·,
 The Trojans followed after him, as in the mountains
 bloodthirsty jackals follow (Imperfective ἔπονται
 understood and linking simile to narrative) a
 wounded (Perfect Participle of State) deer, which a
 man has just shot (simple occurrence) - the deer
 manages to escape its effects by fleeing
 (Imperfective Participle providing parallel back-
 ground which further defines an extends the
 complete action of the preceding Aorist) while the
 blood is still warm and knees have strength
 (Perfect of State). But when the swift arrow
 finally brings him down (Aorist implying completion
 of an activity already begun by implication), the
 flesh eating jackals begin to devour (inchoative

Imperfective) *him in a shadowy grove in the mountains. But some Being causes a hungry lion to appear* (Aorist of simple occurrence which in the circumstances gives the verb a notion of unexpectedness); *the jackals all run away* (complete action in relation to the scene described) *and he proceeds to eat the deer* (Imperfective combining the ideas of ingressive activity and activity arising out of another).

Time in Similes

The similes provide the clearest evidence that the Aspects in themselves have no essential temporal connection. Yet when the Indicative is used, the forms chosen, having in other contexts a temporal function, were often thought to be temporal formations. So the scholars of the nineteenth century, placing as they did inordinate emphasis on the relative time distinctions of Latin, invented the explanation that the aorist in these cases was still a past tense. Under this assumption such an aorist as N389 ἦρκε δ' ὡς ὅτε ὄρυς ἦρκεν ἢ ἀχερωῖς, actually had its origin in a typical experience in the past — as a tree once fell — to which the poet meant the hearer/reader to look back rather than in a visualization of a typical occurrence which is totally abstracted from any time reference but which happens to be Total, and in this case, momentary. In the longer similes also the aorist was thought to represent a past relative to any present in the simile. So for example in X139ff

ἦντε κύρκος ὄρεσιν ἐλαφρότατος πετηνῶν
 ῥηϊδίως, οὔνησε, καὶ τέρωνα πέλειαν,
 ἢ δέ θ' ὑπαιθα φοβεῖται, ὁ δ' ἐγγύθεν ὄξυ λεληκῶς
 ταρπέ' ἐπαύσσει, ἐλέειν γέ ε' ὄρεσιν ἴσσει.

the activity expressed by the aorist was seen as occurring *before* the darting away expressed by the Imperfective verb in the next sentence. However it seems just as probable that the simile, being a world within itself (as indeed the traditionalists claimed) is considered to be valid for all time and hence to lie outside the realms of temporal distinctions. Indeed the temporal view falls down when one considers an example such as P53ff

οἶον δέ τρέφει ἔρνος ἀνὴρ ἐριθηλὲς ἐλαΐης
 χώρῳ ἐν οἰοπόλῳ, ὃθ' ἄλις ἀναβέβροχεν ὕδωρ,
 καλὸν τηλεθάον· τὸ δέ τε πνοαὶ δονέουσι
 παντοίων ἀνέμων, καὶ τε βρῦει ἀνθεῖ λευκῆ
 ἐλθῶν δ' ἐξαπύσης ἀνεμος σὺν λαύλαπι πολλῇ
 βῆθρου τ' ἐξέτρεψε καὶ ἐξετάνουσ' ἐπὶ γαῖῃ, as a

man raises the tender shoot of an olive in a secluded place, the rain keeps the fine flourishing shoot sufficiently watered and all breezes rustle it when it is heavy with white flowers; but suddenly a terrible cyclone comes and tears it up by the roots, leaving it flat on the ground,

since in this instance the aorists come at the end of the narrative as the climatic action and so could not precede the presents in the simile. So in the examples quoted above the poet would be expressing simple Total action: *as a hawk darts and as a tree crashes down*;¹⁶ and the fact that the same word (e.g. ἤρπτε in N389) is also used in the contextual narrative with past reference simply demonstrates that it is not the verb form but the context which sets the time sphere. Similarly, in A172ff cited earlier, ἐφόβησε could, within the idiomatic confines of a strongly temporal language like English, be as easily translated *has stampeded* as *stampedes* but Aspectually the Totality of the activity is simply contrasted with the ongoing Process of fear in φοβέομαι and the implied φοβέονται, and the logic of the time sequence is not prominent.

The specific tense of the Imperfective used is the present, but this does not negate the timelessness of the similes; a fair proportion of the uses of the present in everyday speech are in any case timeless rather than strictly temporally-present. The imperfect tense, however, occurs in two similes: O271ff

... ὡς τ' ἢ ἔλαφον κεραόν ἢ ἄγριον αἴγα
 ἐσσεύαντο κύνες τε καὶ ἀνέρες ἀγροῦνται·
 τὸν μὲν τ' ἠλίβατος πέτρῃ καὶ δάσκιος ὕλη
 εἰρύσσει, οὐδ' ἄρα τέ σφι κυχίμεναι αἴσιμον ἦεν·
 τῶν δέ θ' ὑπὸ ἰαχῆς ἐφάνη λῖς ἠϋγένειος
 εἰς ὁδόν, αἴψα δέ πάντας ἀπέτραπε καὶ μεμαῶτας, αἷ
dogs and huntsmen start a horned stag or wild goat,
which however takes cover beneath a high rock or
leafy wood so that (they know that) it was not
fated to be caught. But due to their clamour a
bearded lion suddenly appears and scatters them
all, for all their eagerness,

and O493ff

... ὡς τε πέλεα
 ἦ ῥά θ' ὑπ' ἕρηκος κοίλην εἰσέπτειτο πέτρῃ
 χηραμόν· οὐδ' ἄρα τῇ γε ἀλώμεναι αἴσιμον ἦεν, ...
like a dove who flees from a hawk into a cleft

under a hollow rock - it was not fated that she should be caught.

In these we apparently have an imperfect used "gnomically". The traditional explanation is that it is a reversion to the thought of the hunter and so a kind of "recognition-imperfect", i.e. *it was clear all along that it wasn't meant to be caught, but it's only just been realized*, while Ruipérez claims that it merely shows the Aspectual neutrality of the form ἦν,¹⁷ thus implying that the form is doing the work of a gnomic aorist. It would even be possible to regard the imperfect in these examples which otherwise contain only aorists as supporting the temporal Aorist theory, and, though I have never seen it suggested, the idea would seem to be supported by the fact that ἔστιν might have been used for the extension from the past. The two latter explanations, however, seem to encounter difficulties. In opposition to Ruipérez we may note that, while the neutralization is a morphological fact, it can in no way be assumed to represent syntactic coalescence in this case, since the "recognition-imperfect" seems to express the peculiarly Imperfective notion of one activity as background to another. The temporal view seems irrefutable but may perhaps be circumvented by a modification of the traditional idea to the effect that the poet is here making a direct comment on the activity in the simile, intervening with his overall time view to present a parallel to what has happened so far.¹⁸ This is a rarity in the Homeric epic, but it is not to be thought that the poet was incapable of bending the "rules" if it suited his stylistic purpose. There are several other examples of imperfect tenses in simile-like constructions, e.g. Ψ630f

ὡς ὅποτε κρέοντι 'Αμάρυκῆα θάπτον Ἐπειοὶ
 Βουπρασίου ... *as when the Epaiot were burying*
Lord Amarynkeus at Bouprasior,

cf. Η133, Ξ469,¹⁹ but these give no ground for assuming the existence of a gnomic imperfect since they are expressions taken from the speaker's narrative past, to which the imperfect tense is quite appropriate.

This leads me to the question, raised by Ruipérez²⁰ and also by the Croat scholar Kravar,²¹ as to why there is no gnomic imperfect or

pluperfect. Ruipérez sees this as bound up with the determination of the "Aspect" of the Aorist in gnomic situations (by which he must mean the aorist Indicative). After analysing Schwyzer's list of gnomic aorists and comparing the gnomic aorists and presents in Menandros' Γνωμαὶ μονόστιχοι, he concludes that the aorists used in non-temporal situations are formed exclusively from "transformative" semantemes, because in these the punctual and the neutral (complexive) uses coincide. From here he forms the unexpected conclusion that the aorist Indicative is therefore neutral in Aspect, and proceeds to claim (he "proved" earlier that the present Indicative is Aspectually neutral) that this conclusion is equal to his statement that "en la posición de tiempo neutro hay neutralización de la oposición aspectual presente/aoristo".²²

Therefore he claims that the lack of a generalizing imperfect is due to the Aspectual neutrality of the present tense, its freedom from the nuances of any Aspectual *valor*. Aside from a virtual admission that there is therefore no difference between the present and aorist Indicative in similes, these arguments are too heavily dependent on certain questionable premises. Firstly, Ruipérez's basic reason for claiming that the present Indicative is Aspectually neutral is that it is unopposed by an "instantaneous" form in the sphere of present time. This has been discussed elsewhere in this work²³ but it must be repeated that the Aorist is an Aspect in itself while the present is only a subtheme of an Aspect, so that one should see the opposition as between Aorist and "present" in *all* situations. Secondly, one is prompted to ask why the Aorist in general statements and similes should be of a different nature from that in ordinary temporal situations since the Aorist too is not an unopposed temporal form but a full Aspect, which happens not to be used very often in the present time sphere. This is related to the third objection in that the assumption of a timeless imperfect would seem to be placing too much emphasis on temporal affiliations, and assuming that the similes, etc., originally had past reference. The whole question however seems needless if one accepts that the predominance of Aspect over tense in similes was complete and that the similes made use of the tenses which, for the reasons outlined earlier, were suited to the expression of

timeless activities.

So, then, the main thrust of this chapter has been to show that the usage of the various Aspects in similes is basically the same as that in other contexts. In the opening paragraph three questions were posed, of which two have been answered. The third, however, is largely beyond the scope of the present work, for the use of Aspect in this group appears to be consistent for both Subjunctive and Indicative and not to affect the apparently random choice of Moods.

NOTES

¹ The difference which I am trying to bring out here is well illustrated by comparing θ124f with K351ff.

² οἷος—Indicative: ζ102ff, ξ63ff, Δ75ff, Ε554ff, Ε864ff, Ζ146ff, Η208ff, Λ62ff, Ν298ff, Ρ53ff, Χ317ff.

δοσος—Indicative: δ791ff, ς322ff, Ε770ff, Κ351ff, Ε394ff, Η589ff, Ψ845ff, Ω317ff.

—Subjunctive: ε249ff.

³ εοικώς—Indicative: ε51ff, Γ151ff, Γ198ff, Ε87ff, Ε522ff, Λ27ff, Η146ff, Η102ff, Ο586ff, Π582ff.

εναλόγκιος—Indicative: Ν242ff.

⁴ εοικώς—Subjunctive: Π259ff, Ρ725ff.

εναλόγκιος—Subjunctive: Ε4ff.

⁵ Indicative: Β87ff, Β455ff, Β469ff, Β480ff, Γ3ff, Γ10ff, Δ243ff, Δ618ff, Π7ff, Π487ff, Ρ737ff, Φ573ff, Χ139ff.

Subjunctive: Ρ547ff.

⁶ Indicative: ζ130ff, λ413ff, ν81ff, τ205ff, υ14ff, χ299ff, χ384ff, χ402ff, Β459ff, Β764ff, Β781ff, Γ23ff, Γ60ff, Δ433ff, Δ482ff, Ε499ff, Η4ff, Θ307ff, Ι4ff, Ι14ff, Α113ff, Α172ff, Α548ff, Μ156ff, Μ421ff, Μ433ff, Ν62ff, Ν703ff, Ο271ff, Ο410ff, Ο630ff, Ο690ff, Ρ3ff, Η156ff, Π352ff, Π384ff, Π633ff, Π756ff, Π765ff, Ρ434ff, Ρ674ff, Ρ747ff, Ρ755ff, Σ161ff, Υ164ff, Υ253ff, Υ490ff, Φ22ff, Φ362ff, Φ493ff, Χ22ff, Χ26ff, Χ199ff, Χ262ff, Χ308ff, Ψ222ff, Ω41ff—57 examples; λ411 has τς.

Subjunctive: ε368ff, θ523ff, ι17ff, χ302ff, Β474ff, Ε136ff, Ε161ff, Ι323ff, Κ183ff, Κ485ff, Λ67ff, Μ167ff, Μ278ff, Μ299ff, Μ137ff,

Ν178ff, Ν198ff, Ο323ff, Ο381ff, Ο579ff, Π428ff, Π109ff, Π657ff, Π742ff, Σ318ff, Χ93ff - 26 examples; Π133, Π157 have τὺς with Subjunctive.

⁷ It may be asked why the Optative is not used more widely in similes. The answer may be that, with the Indicative to represent "reality" and the Subjunctive to represent hypothetical visualizations of the probable, a form which represented the activity as potential or contingent had no place in description, however "unreal".

⁸ Indicative - Λ492ff: Λ671ff, Ψ630ff are examples of characters narrating past experiences (thus making the Indicative appropriate) in parallel but non-simile type comparisons.

Subjunctive - δ335, Λ305.

⁹ Indicative - ε432ff, κ410ff, μ251ff, ν31ff, ρ518ff, σ66ff, φ406ff, ω6ff, Β209ff, Β394ff, Δ275ff, Δ452ff, Ε902ff, Θ555ff, Κ360ff, Λ474ff, Λ558ff, Μ41ff, Μ132ff, Μ451ff, Ν492ff, Ν571ff, Ν703ff, Ο679ff, Π364ff, Π823ff, Π263ff, Σ219ff, Τ357ff, Υ403ff, Φ12ff, Ψ548ff, Ψ692ff, Ψ712ff - 34 examples. Δ319ff, Η133ff, Κ285ff and ξ469ff are similar to Λ671 and Ψ630ff in previous note.

Subjunctive - ε328ff, ε394ff, ε391ff, κ216ff, τ51ff, υ25ff, χ468ff, φ233ff, Β147ff, Δ130ff, Ε598ff, Κ5ff, Λ155ff, Λ269ff, Λ324ff, Λ414ff, Ν334ff, Ν588ff, Ε16ff, Ε414ff, Ο80ff, Ο170ff, Ο605ff, Ο624ff, Π212ff, Π297ff, Π641ff, Π389ff, Π520ff, Σ207ff, Τ375ff, Φ257ff, Φ346ff, Φ522ff, Χ162ff, Χ189ff, Ω480ff - 37 examples.

¹⁰ Indicative - ε488ff, ζ232ff, Γ33ff, Ν389ff, Ν471ff, Ο362ff, Π61ff, Ψ760ff.

Subjunctive - Δ141ff, Ζ506ff, Θ338ff, Λ292ff, Ο263ff, Σ600ff, Υ495ff.

¹¹ If the form were Optative, it could only be potential, as a man might bore ...

¹² The figures are - οὐτος: 4 with ὡς, 5 without; ὅσος: 0, 9; εὐκώς: 7, 3; ἐναλίγκτος: 1, 1; εὐκελος: 1, 0; ὕσος: 0, 1; φή: 1, 0; ἢτε: 9, 3; ὡς: 81, 6; ὡς εἶ: 1, 3 (this excludes the Indicative or potentially Indicative examples, which are counted with ὡς); ὡς ὁπότε: 4, 1; ὡς ὅτε: 74, 13 (this includes ὡς ὅτε τὺς, as the ὡς count includes ὡς τὺς).

¹³ A parallel is provided by Ψ598 which is preceded by ἰάνθη and followed by ὡς ἄρα ... ἰάνθη. Where the two differ is that ὡς here has no connective as does ὡς ἄρα in Ψ598; ὡς εἶτε however has no connective either.

¹⁴ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.159-65. One must note that Ruipérez excludes from his discussion the Perfect in timeless situations.

¹⁵ See Chapter 4, p.70.

¹⁶ Further examples are ε368, ζ232, χ299, φ233, Λ141, Ε136.

¹⁷ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.115, 166.

¹⁸ It may be thought that the present could also be used here since it also expresses extensions from the past. However to have used this form would have been to have made the observation part of the simile rather than a comment on it.

¹⁹ These are to be compared with aorist statements of a character's past experience with similar constructions such as Λ671ff, Δ319ff, K285ff and the recital of a "past" mythical experience in υ66ff.

²⁰ Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, pp.165-6.

²¹ Kravar, *L'Aoriste Intemporel*, pp.44-5.

²² Ruipérez, *Aspectos*, p.164.

²³ See Chapter 3.

CHAPTER 9

NARRATIVE PATTERNS

Throughout this work I have tried to suggest that not only is Aspect more important than tense in the Greek verb but also that, especially in a literary work, the choice of Aspect may be conditioned by many more subtle factors — the wish to present one action in some relational terms to another, the situation expounded in the narrative, not only in the preceding and following passages but also in the chapter or work as a whole, the author's wish to highlight particular points of his narrative, etc. I have also argued that many passages which would seem anomalous if Aspect were applied mechanistically seem to be explained by this context.

Aorist-Aorist

I wish now to summarize my findings by taking some longish passages from the chosen books and translating them in order to show how the interplay of Aspects aids the movement of the narrative. But first I must review the structural arrangements of Aspects which occur with sufficient frequency to be called *patterns*. The simplest pattern is that of Aorist plus Aorist, which seems to indicate little more than that the two activities occurred, without consideration of simultaneity, consequence or any other factor, i.e. *A did X and Y*, *A did X but not Y* or *A did X, B did Y*. This is by far the most common type throughout the epics and is especially used where the pace of the narrative is very rapid, where the poet chooses to focus on distinct, Total occurrences in turn, or even where the poet is not concerned with the action, and is using the Aorist as a mere residual form, e.g. P210-2

ἦ, καὶ χυανέησιν ἐπ' ὀφρύσιν νεῦσε Κρονίων.
Ἐκτορι δ' ἤροσε τεύχε' ἐπὶ χροῦ, δῦ δέ μιν ἄρης

δεινὸς ἐνυάλιος, πλήσθεν δ' ἄρα οἱ μέλε' ἐντὸς
 ἀλκῆς καὶ σθένεος... *The son of Kronos finished
 speaking and nodded his head. The arms fitted
 Hektor's body and terrible, warlike Ares entered
 into him and filled his limbs with strength and
 boldness.*

ω176-9

αὐτὰρ ὁ δέξατο χειρὶ πολύτλας δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς,
 ρηϊδίως δ' ἐτάνωσε βίον, διὰ δ' ἤκε σιδήρου,
 σπῆ δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' οὐδὸν ἴων, ταχέας δ' ἐκχεύατ' οὔστοις
 δεινὸν παπαίνων, βάλε δ' Ἀντίνοον βασιλῆα, *But
 long-suffering Odysseus took the bow in his hands
 and stretched it easily. He sent the arrow through
 the iron and then took his stand on the threshold
 and poured out swift bolts glaring about terribly
 and he hit Lord Antinous.*

β153-5

δρυφαιμένω δ' ὀνύχεσσι παρειὰς ἀμφὶ τε δειρὰς
 δεξιῶ ἤϊξαν διὰ οἰκία καὶ πόλιν αὐτῶν.
θάμβησαν δ' ὄρνιθας, ἐπεὶ ἔδον ὀφθαλμοῦσιν,
*and when they had ripped cheeks and flesh with
 their talons, they flew off on the right through
 the houses of the city and all marvelled at the
 birds when they saw them.*

κ349-50

Ὡς ἄρα ἔειπεν ἔσαντε παρῆς ὁδοῦ ἐν νεκύεσσι
κλυθήτην δ' ἄρ' ὅκα παρέδραμεν ἀφραδίησιν,
*when they had said this, they stepped off the
 path among the corpses and Dolon ran by unawares.*

Aorist-Imperfective

Where we have a combination of Aorist and Imperfective Aspects, the situation is altogether more complex, since there is a distinction depending on which of the Aspects appears first. A pattern of Aorist plus Imperfective tends to imply that one activity arises out of another, i.e. *A did X and then, following on as a consequence, proceeded to do Y.* It is often the case here, however, that the verbs have different subjects, but the important point is that the second is being seen in some way as a continuation of the first. At the same

time the force of the Imperfective is not confined to the link with the preceding Aorist; it may be introducing a parallel with a further Imperfective, or setting the scene for a pause for description, or introducing any other nuance appropriate to the Imperfective. Whatever the other nuances, and however difficult it may be to discern which of them was primarily in the author's mind, an Imperfective following an Aorist almost always has the effect of suggesting that the Imperfective's activity is closely related to that of the Aorist, e.g.

P317-8

'Αργεῖοι δὲ μέγα ἄαχον, έρύσαντο δὲ νεκρούς,
 φόρκυι θ' Ἰππόθοόν τε, λύοντο δὲ τεύχε' ἀπ' ὤμων,
*then the Argives shouted loudly and dragged away
 the corpses of Phorkys and Hippothoos and began to
strip the arms from their shoulders.*

K374-5

δεξιτερὸν δ' ὑπὲρ ὤμου ἔϋξου δουρὸς ἀκικῆ
 ἐν γαίῃ ἐπάγη ὁ δ' ἄρ' ἔστη τάρβησέν τε
 βαμβαίνων, ἄραβος δὲ διὰ στομα γίγνεται ὀδόντων,
*χλωρὸς ὑπὸ δειλοῦς... the point of Diomedes'
 well-polished spear passed over Dolon's right
 shoulder and stuck in the ground. Dolon came to
a halt, as fear gripped him; he began to stutter
and his teeth chattered in stark terror.*

B1-2

ἦμος δ' ἠριγένεια φάνη ῥοδοδάκτυλος Ἥως,
ὄρνυθ' ἄρ' ἐξ εὐνήφιν Ὀδυσσεύος φίλος υἱός,
*When early-born, rosy-fingered Dawn appeared,
 the dear son of Odysseus rose from his bed.*

Of course in some contexts the following Imperfective is simply a parallel, as in ω220-1

οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα δόμονδε θεῶς κίον, αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
 ἄσσον ἔεν πολυκάρπου ἀλωῆς περρητίων, *they quickly
 set off for home, while Odysseus made his way to
 the fruitful orchard to test his father.*

On the other hand, an Imperfective followed by an Aorist would seem to indicate that the first activity forms a background to, or an envelope around, that described by the second verb, i.e. *X was happening and while it was going on A did Y*, or *A was doing X when B did Y*. The norm here is for the two verbs to have different subjects, e.g. P288-92

ἦτοι τὸν Λήθοιο Πελασγοῦ φαίδιμος υἱός,
 Ἴππόθοος, παδὸς ἔλκε κατὰ κρατερὴν ὑσμίνην,
 δησάμενος τελαμῶνι παρὰ σφυρὸν ἀμφι τένοντας,
 Ἔκτορι καὶ Τρώεσσι χαριζόμενος· τάχα δ' αὐτῷ
 ἦλθε κακόν, τό οἱ οὐ τις ἐρύκακεν ἱμένων περ,
Hippochoos, the famous son of Pelasgian Lethos
tied his baldric around his ankle and was
arraaging him by the ankle through the battle to
please Hector and the Trojans when evil suddenly
came to him and no-one could stop it, though they
desired it.

K454-5

ἦ, καὶ ὁ μὲν μιν ἔμελλε γενείου χειρὶ παχείῃ
 ἀψάμενος λίσσεσθαι, ὁ δ' αὐχένα μέσσον ἔλασσε
 φασγάνῳ ἄξιας... , *He spoke, and Dolon was*
reaching out to touch his cheek in supplication,
when Diomedes with a sweep of his sword drove it
through Dolon's neck.

ω125-8

μνώμεθ' Ὀδυσσεῆος δὴν οἴχομένοιο δάμαρτα·
 ἠ δ' οὐτ' ἠρνεῦτο στυγερὸν γάμον οὐτ' ἔτελεύτα,
 ἡμῶν φραζομένη θάνατον καὶ κῆρα μέλαιναν,
 ἀλλὰ δόλον τόνδ' ἄλλον ἐνὶ φρεσὶ μερμήριξε,
we were courting the wife of absent Odysseus;
she would not refuse a marriage which was hateful
to her nor bring it about, since she was planning
black death for us. Then she devised this trick
in her heart.

β267

Ὡς ἔφατ' εὐχόμενος, σχεδόνθεν δέ οἱ ἦλθεν Ἀθήνη,
 as *he prayed thus, Athene came to him from nearby.*

A special variation is when the Aorist is negative and in effect repeats the Imperfective description with an assertion that no action took place, as in β82

ἔνθ' ἄλλοι μὲν πάντες ἀκῆν ἔσαν, οὐδέ τις ἔτιλν
 Τηλέμαχον μύθοισιν ἀμείψασθαι χαλεποῦσιν, *Then*
they were all silent, and no one dared answer
Telemakhos with harsh words.

This pattern is relatively more frequent than the last and is, for example, the typical pattern for introducing similes, counting the simile as the event which interrupts the background activity, causing

a temporary suspension of the narrative while a different picture is painted (the similes also provide a good example of total envelopment, as the verb following is often Imperfective as well).

Imperfective-Imperfective

The other common pattern is Imperfective followed by Imperfective and this usually marks two actions as simultaneous either in their entire duration or at their beginning or end, or that at some other point in their development the lines of the activities, as it were, cross, i.e. *A was doing X while B was doing Y*, etc. It is also quite normal in this situation for the one subject to be engaged in two activities, with the implication that one activity is in some way subordinate to the other, e.g. K9-16

ὡς πυκίν' ἐν στήθεσσι νᾶσθενάχιζ' Ἀγαμέμνων
 νειόθεν ἐκ κραδίας, τρομέοντο δὲ οἱ φρένες ἐντός.
 ἦτοι ὅτ' ἐς πεδίον τὸ Τρωϊκὸν ἀθρήσειε,
θαύμαζεν πυρὰ πολλὰ, τὰ καίετο Ἴλιόθι πρό,
 αὐλῶν συρίγγων τ' ἐνοπῆν ὄμαδόν τ' ἀνθρώπων.
 αὐτὰρ ὅτ' ἐς νῆας τε ἕδοι καὶ λαὸν Ἀχαιῶν,
 πολλὰς ἐκ κεφαλῆς προθελύμους ἔλκετο χαίτας
 ὑπόθ' ἔοντι Διὶ, μέγα δ' ἔστενε κυδάλλιμον κῆρ,
*such were the frequent groans which were issuing
 from Agamemnon's breast, heartfelt groans, and his
 nerves were trembling within him. Whenever he
 glanced toward the Trojan plain, he would feel
 amazed at the many fires which were burning before
 Ilion, the noise of flutes and lyres and the clamour
 of men. But whenever he looked toward the ships
 and army of the Achaeans, he would tear his hair,
 calling on high Zeus and grieving deep in his heart.*

P107-8

...ἦρχε δ' ἄρ' Ἐκτωρ.
 αὐτὰρ ὁ γ' ἐξοπίσω ἀνεχάζετο, λεῖπε δὲ νεκρόν,
*and Hektor was leading them; so he (Menelaos)
 proceeded to retreat and to leave the corpse.*

B91-2

πάντας μὲν ἔλπει, καὶ ὑπίσχηται ἀνδρὶ ἐκάστῳ,
 ἀγγελίας προῖεῖσα νόος δὲ οἱ ἄλλα μενοινᾷ,
*she keeps us all hoping, keeps sending out
 messages and making promises to each man, but in
 her mind she has other plans.*

ω24-7

'Ατρεΐδη, περὶ μὲν σ' ἔφαυεν Διὶ τερπικεραύνῳ
 ἀνδρῶν ἡρώων φίλον ἔμμεναι ἡματα πάντα
 οὐνεκα πολλοῦσιν τε καὶ ἰφθίμοισι· ἴσσεσ
 δήμῳ ἔνι Τρώων, ὅθι πάσχομεν ἄλγ' ἰχαιοῖ,
son of Atreus, we used to say that you were
dearest of all the heroes to thunder-loving
Zeus because you commanded many mighty warriors,
in the land of the Trojans, where we Akhaians
suffered great troubles.

Introducing and Closing Speeches

It is appropriate here to refer again to the patterns involved in the introduction and conclusion of speeches. As a general principle, we may say that an Imperfective at the beginning of a speech indicates that we are to pause for the speaker's words, to which the verb is both introduction and background, while an Aorist merely records the fact of speaking. On the other hand, the Imperfective at the end of a speech, is used either resumptively or, in combination with another Imperfective, to introduce a new or parallel action. The Aorist in the same circumstances, however, serves the disjunctive purpose of summing up, of recording the speech as a Total action, which is simply one of a series in the narrative. Both Imperfective and Aorist Participles occur as pleonastic underlining for verbs of speaking and it is often difficult to see why any form is chosen in a particular discussion, though the Aorist Participle seems at times to describe an activity which is a precursor to the activity of speaking, e.g. *he opened his mouth and said ...* (See Chapter 3 for full discussion.)

Perfect

Patterns involving the Perfect are rare because the Perfect itself is not common in the poems. Where it does occur, however, it usually appears in relation to the Aorist as does the Imperfective, although in this case the Totality of the Aorist is opposed by the State inherent in the Perfect. However two uses are noteworthy — the

sense of responsibility which can sometimes be seen in the Perfect of dynamic verbs and the "pregnant" use of the Perfect which short-circuits, as it were, the action and focuses directly on the State.

Illustration

To illustrate these patterns, I have chosen passages which are basically narrative in character, because it is in this situation that one finds the best interplay of Aspects in their finite forms, but I have also included simile and dialogue in order to give some idea of how they operate there too. Firstly we have ε43-91:—

Ὡς ἔφατ', οὐδ' ἀτίθησε διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης.
 αὐτίκ' ἔπειθ' ὑπὸ ποσσὶν ἐδήσατο καλὰ τέβηλα,
 ἀμβρόσια χρύσεια, τὰ μιν φέρον ἡμὲν ἐφ' ὑγρῆν 45
 ἢ δ' ἐπ' ἀπείρονα γαίαν ἅμα πνοιῆς ἀνέμοιο.
 εἴλετο δ' ῥάβδον, τῆ τ' ἀνδρῶν ὄμματα θέλγει
 ἃν ἐθέλει, τοὺς δ' αὐτε καὶ ὑπνώοντας ἐγείρει.
 τὴν μετὰ χερσὶν ἔχων πέτετο κρατύς ἀργειφόντης.
 Περσὴν δ' ἐπιβὰς ἐξ αἰθέρος ἔμπεσε πόντιω· 50
 σεύατ' ἔπειτ' ἐπὶ κύμα λάρυ ὄρνιθι εὐκίως,
 ὅς τε κατὰ δεινοὺς κίλπους ἑλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο
 ἰχθύς ἀγρώσων κυκινὰ πτερὰ δεύεται ἄλμῃ·
 τῷ ἕκλος πλέεσσιν ὀχῆσατο κύμασιν Ἑρμῆς.
 αἶλ' ὅτε δὴ τὴν νῆσον ἀπικετο τηλόθ' ἐούσαν, 55
 ἐνθ' ἐκ πόντου βὰς ἰοειδὸς ἠπειρόνδε
 ἦεν, ὄφρα μέγα σπέος ἔκετο, τῷ ἔνι νύμφη
 ναῦεν εὐπλόκαμος· τὴν δ' ἐνόσθη τέτιεν ἐούσαν.
 πῦρ μὲν ἐπ' ἐσχορόφιν μέγα καίετο, τηλόθι δ' ὀμῆ
 κέδρου τ' εὐκαέτοιο θύου τ' ἀνα νῆσον ὀδώδει 60
 δαλομένων· ἢ δ' ἐνδον δοιδιόουσ' ὀπὶ καλῇ
 ἱστόν ἐποιχομένη χρυτεῖη κερκιδ' ὑφαίνεν.
 ὕλη δὲ σπέος ἄμφι περὶ τὴν τελεθόουσα,
 κλήθηρ τ' αἰγυρὸς τε καὶ εὐώδης κυπάρισσος.
 ἔνθα δὲ τ' ὄρνιθες ταυσίπτεροι εὐνάζοντο, 65
 σκῶπες τ' ὄρηκες τε ταυύλωσσοί τε κορῶναι
 εἰνάλιαι, τῆσιν τε θαλάσσια ἔργα μέμηλεν.
 ἢ δ' αὐτοῦ τετάνυστο περὶ στείους γλαφυροῦ
 ἡμερὶς ἠβώουσα, τεθηλεῖ δὲ σταφυλῆσι·
 κρῆναι δ' ἐξείης πύρρες ῥέον ὕδατι λευκῷ, 70
 πλησίαι ἀλλήλων τετραμμέναι ἄλλουδὲ ἄλλη.
 ἄμφι δὲ λειμώνες μαλακοῦ ἰου ἠδὲ σελείνου
 θήλειον· ἔνθα κ' ἔπειτα καὶ ἀθάνατός περ ἐπελθῶν
 θηήσατο ἰδῶν καὶ τερφθεῖη φρεσὶν ἦσιν. 75
 ἔνθα στᾶς θηεῖτο διάκτορος ἀργειφόντης.
 αὐτὰρ ἔπειτ' εἴη πάντα ἐφ' ἠθήσατο θυμῷ,
 αὐτίκ' ἄρ' εἰς εὐρύ σπέος ἦεν· οὐδέ μιν ἄντην
 ἠγνούρησεν ἰδοῦσα Καλυψώ, θεῶν,
 οὐ γὰρ τ' ἀγνώρες θεοὶ ἀλλήλοισι πέλονται

ἀθάνατοι, κύδ' εἴ τι ἀπόπροθι δώματα ναίει. 80
 οὐδ' ἄρ' Ὀδυσσεῖα μεγαλήτορα ἔνδον ἔτετμεν,
 ἀλλ' ὃ γ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς κλαῦτε καθήμενος, ἔνθα πάρος περ,
 δάκρυσι καὶ στοναχῆσι καὶ ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ἐρέχθων.
 πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον δερκέσκητο δάκρυα λείβων.
 Ἑρμείαν δ' ἐρέεινε Καλυψώ, δῖα θεάων, 85
 ἐν θρόνῳ ἰδοῦσασα φαεινῆ σιγαλόεντι·

"Τίπτε μοι, Ἑρμεία χρυσοῦρατι, εἰλήλουθας
 αἰδοῖός τε φύλος τε; πάρος γε μὲν οὐ τι θαμίξεις.
 αὔδα ὃ τι φρονέεις· τελέσαι δέ με θυμὸς ἄνωγεν,
 εἰ δύνamai τελέσαι γε καὶ εἰ τετελεσμένον ἐστίν. 90
 ἀλλ' ἔπειο προτέρω, ἵνα τοι πᾶρ ἑξάνια θεῖω."

*So he spoke and Hermes did not disobey.
 Straightway he bound beneath his feet the fine
 sandals, golden and lovely, which would carry him
 over water and over boundless earth with the blasts
 of the winds, and took up the staff with which he
 charms the eyes of some and rouses others who are
 asleep whenever he wishes. Thus equipped, mighty
 Hermes flew off and, after crossing Pierie, he
 dropped from the sky to sea level. Then he raced
 over the waves like a seagull which skims for fish
 along the huge troughs of the unharvested sea and
 wets his fast-beating wings. This was how Hermes
 crossed the wave-torn sea, but when he came near to
 the remote island, he left the dark sea and made
 his way over the land until he reached the great
 cave in which the lovely haired young goddess had
 her dwelling-place. He found her at home, singing
 in a fine voice and traversing the loom as she wove
 with a golden shuttle while a great fire burned on
 the hearth and an odour of easily-split cedar and
 burning incense pervaded the island. About the
 cave a flourishing grove had established itself,
 alder, poplar and fragrant cypress, and in this
 would nest slender-winged birds, owls, long-
 tongued hawks and cormorants whose concern is the
 sea. A trailing vine was stretched around the
 entrance to the cave, mature and laden with
 grapes, and four springs of clear water bubbled up
 near one another and were turned in different
 directions through gardens of violets and pursley
 which grew on all sides - even an immortal who came
 there might gaze in wonder and his heart would be
 gladdened. Such were the sights which met Hermes'
 gaze when he stopped. But when he had taken it all
 in, he went straight into the broad mouth of the
 cave and was recognized on sight by the divine lady
 Kalypso (for the gods who live forever do not fail
 to recognize each other, even if they dwell far
 apart). However he did not find great-hearted
 Odysseus within, since that one was sitting alone*

and weeping, as often before, wracking his heart with tears and groans and sorrow, and was gazing out over the unharvested sea as he cried. The divine lady Kalypso sat Hermes down on a throne shimmering with brightness and proceeded to question him; "Tell me, Hermes of the golden staff, why you are here, so honoured and beloved, for you have not previously come here often. Go on, speak what is on your mind; my heart prompts me to do what you say, if I can do it and there is precedent for it. But wait a while while I put a meal before you."

It may seem incongruous that the description of Hermes' sandals is cast in the imperfect while that of the staff is in the normal form for timeless statements, the present. The reason may be that, while both actions are general, the first is, as it were, inserted into the context of the vignette because of its relevance, i. e. because Hermes is going on a journey, the description of what he always wears on journeys is particularized into the time sphere of that journey. The activity which the staff describes, on the other hand, is irrelevant to the particular scene and is therefore put into the less specific general tense. However the tense question is largely irrelevant since both are Imperfective in Aspect, and merely dwell on the activity in Process. At line 49 Hermes' flight over the sea, which is to be described in some detail, begins with the Imperfective μέτερο and at line 54, when it is complete except for the event of arrival, it is summed up with the Aorist ὄχθησατο: the effect is similar to that of introducing a speech with an Imperfective and closing it with an Aorist. Another Imperfective usage which requires attention is ἤϊεν at line 58 which not only conveys an idea of "proceeded to" (in relation to the Aorist βύς) but also dwells on the Process of Hermes' movement as a background to the description of what he saw; θηεῖτο in line 75 is similarly linked with στάς and has reference to the view described in more general terms in the preceding lines, while Aorist θηήσατο in the subordinate clause following sums up his viewing before describing his next action. The description itself is naturally mostly in the Imperfective but is linked closely with the narrative, and more particularly with Hermes' viewing of it by the use of the imperfect tense (rather than the general present) as was done with the

description of the use of the sandals in line 45. It is interesting, too, to note how the poet chooses to highlight certain points of the description by using the more striking State-oriented Perfect as against the simple Imperfective for elements of the description in which he wishes the hearer to take less interest. A form which deserves comment here is *δεκνέσκετο* in line 84, which might be thought to be Processive, and parallel (*he was gazing as he wept*), but could just as well be iterative, as are other past tense forms in *-σκ-* (*he was weeping and kept on looking between tears*, etc.); in any case the form is emphatic, as I have tried to show in my chapter on the Imperfective. The Perfect *ἐλήλουθας* is a case where the speaker ignores the action and focuses on the State, i.e. *you are in the state of having come, and so are here*, while the present *θαμύζεις* shows what in English is a typically perfect meaning but in Greek is seen as Process with the connection to the past being made by the adverb *κάρως*. Finally the two Imperatives at the end (*αὔδα* and *ἔπεο* lines 89 and 91) are similar but not entirely parallel; *αὔδα* implies the assumption that Hermes, as the gods' messenger, has come with some news, and is thus an instruction to continue, while *ἔπεο* is an invitation to Hermes to make himself at home, *come on in (nearer to me)* and may as well be inceptive as continuative, depending on the etiquette expectations of this particular situation.

Our next passage is 0263-317

ὡς δ' ὅτε τις στατὸς ἔππος, ἀκοστήσας ἐπὶ φάτῃ,
 δεσμὸν ἀπορρήξας θεῖη πεδύλοιο κροαίνων,
 εἰωθὼς λούεσθαι εὐρρεῖος ποταμοῦ, 265
 κυδιῶν· ὑψοῦ δέ κάρη ἔχει, ἀμφὶ δέ χαῖται
 ὦμοις αἴσσονται· ὁ δ' ἀγλαίηφι πεποιθὼς,
 ῥίμφα ἔγούνα φέρει μετὰ τ' ἦθρα καὶ νομὸν ἔππων·
 ὡς Ἐκτωρ λαίψηρά ποδας καὶ γούνατ' ἐνώμα 270
 ὀτρύνων ἱππῆας, ἐπεὶ θεοῦ ἔκλυεν αὐδὴν.
 οἱ δ' ὡς τ' ἠέλαφον κεραὸν ἢ ἄγριον αἶγα
 ἐσσεύαντο κύνες τε καὶ ἄνδρες ἀγροῖωται·
 τὸν μὲν τ' ἠλύβατος πέτρῃ καὶ δάσκιος ὕλη
 εἰρύσατ', οὐδ' ἄρα τέ σφι κλιχήμεναι αἴσιμον ἦεν· 275
 τῶν δέ θ' ὑπὸ ἰαχῆς ἐφάνη λῆς ἠυγένειος
 εἰς ὁδόν, αἶψα δέ πάντας ἐπέτραπε καὶ μεμαῶτας·
 ὡς Δαναοὶ ἦος μὲν ὀμιλαδὸν αἰὲν ἔποντο,

- νύσσαντες ξύφειόν τε καὶ ἔγχεσιν ἀμφιγύουσιν·
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ ἴδον Ἑκτορ' ἐποικόμενον στίχας ἀνδρῶν,
 τάρβησαν, πᾶσιν δὲ παραί ποσι κάππεσε θυμός. 280
 Τοῖσι δ' ἔπειτ' ἀγόρευε θόας, Ἀνδραίμονος υἱός,
 Αἰτωλῶν ὄχ' ἄριστος, ἐπιστάμενος μὲν ἄκοντι,
 ἔσθλός δ' ἐν σταδύῃ· ἀγορῇ δὲ ἑ παῦροι Ἀχαιῶν
 νύκτων, ὀππότε κοῦροι ἐρίσσειαν περὶ μύθων·
 ὁ σφιν εὐφρονέων ἀγορήσατο καὶ μετέειπεν· 285
 "ὦ κόποι, ἡ μέγα θαῦμα τόδ' ὀφθαλμοῖσιν ὄρωμαι,
 οἶον δὴ αὐτ' ἐξαυτίς ἀνέστη κῆρας ἀλύξας
 Ἑκτωρ· ἡ θῆν μιν μάλα ἔλπετο θυμός ἐκάστου
 χερσὶν ὑπ' Αἴαντος θανέειν Τελαμωνιάδαο.
 ἀλλὰ τις αὐτε θεῶν ἐρρύσατο καὶ ἐσάωσεν 290
 Ἑκτορ', ὃ δὴ πολλῶν Δαναῶν ὑπὸ γούνατ' ἔλυσεν,
 ὡς καὶ νῦν ἔσσεσθαι εἶομαι· οὐ γὰρ ἄτερ γε
 Ζηνὸς ἐριγδοῦπου πρόμος ἴσταται ὡδε μενοειῶν.
 ἀλλ' ἀγεθ', ὡς ἂν ἐγὼν εἶπω, πειθόμεθα πάντες.
 πληθὺν μὲν ποτὶ νῆας ἀνάξομεν ἀπονέεσθαι· 295
 αὐτοὶ δ', ὅσοι ἄριστοι ἐνὶ στρατῷ εὐχόμεθ' εἶναι,
 στήσομεν, εἴ κεν πρῶτον ἐρύξομεν ἀντιάσαντες,
 δοῦρατ' ἀνασχόμενοι· τὸν δ' οἴω καὶ μεμαῶτα
 θυμῷ δεύσεσθαι Δαναῶν καταδῦναι ὄμιλον."
 ὣς ἔφαθ', οἱ δ' ἄρα τοῦ μάλα μὲν κλύον ἠδ' ἐπίθοντο· 301
 οἱ μὲν ἄρ' ἀμφ' Αἴαντα καὶ Ἴδομενεῖα ἄνακτα,
 Τεῦκρον Μηριόνην τε Μέγην τ', ἀτάλαντον Ἀρηῆ,
 ὑσμίνην ἤρτυνον, ἀριστήας καλέσαντες,
 Ἑκτορι καὶ Τρῶεσσιν ἐναντίον· αὐτὰρ ὀπίσσω 305
 ἡ πληθὺς ἐπὶ νῆας Ἀχαιῶν ἀπονέοντο.
 Τρῶες δὲ προὔτυψαν αὐλλέες, ἦρχε δ' ἄρ' Ἑκτωρ
 μακρὰ βιβᾶς· πρόσθεν δὲ κί' αὐτοῦ φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
 εἰμένης ἄροισιν νεφέλην, ἔχε δ' αἰγίδα θοῦρον,
 εἰλητὴν ἀμφιδάσειαν ἀριπρεπέ', ἦν ἄρα χαλκεὺς 310
 Ἥφαιστος Διὶ δῶκε φορήμεναι ἐς φόβον ἀνδρῶν·
 τῆν ἄρ' ὁ γ' ἐν χεῖρεσσιν ἔχων ἠγήσατο λαῶν.
 Ἀργεῖοι δ' ὑπέμειναν ἀολλέες, ὠρτο δ' αὐτῇ
 ὄξειτ' ἀμφοτέρωθεν, ἀπὸ νευρῆφι δ' οἰήτο
 θρῶσκον· πολλὰ δὲ δοῦρα θρασειῶν ἀπὸ χειρῶν 315
 ἀλλὰ μὲν ἐν χροῦ πῆγνυτ' ἀρηϊθρῶν αἰζηῶν,
 πολλὰ δὲ καὶ μεσσηγύ κάρος χροῖα λευκὸν ἐπαυρεῖν
 ἐν γαίῃ ἴσαντο λιλαϊόμενα χροὸς ἄσαι.

As when a stabled horse, well fed in the
 manger, breaks his bonds and, accustomed to
 frequent baths in the swift-flowing river, goes
 romping off at a gallop over the plain in his glory
 — he holds his head high so that his mane glitters
 on his shoulders, and, relying on his brilliant
 strength guides his knees toward the beloved horse
 pasture — so when he had heard the god's command,
 Hektor moved his swift knees and feet as he spurred
 on the charioteers. Imagine the scene when men of
 the country and their dogs flush out a horned stag
 or wild goat, but it takes refuge in rugged rocks

or bushy woods - it was not fated to be caught - while their noise suddenly causes a bearded lion to appear on the road, who turns them away for all their eagerness. So the Danaans were for a time pressing the enemy, stabbing with swords and double-edged spears, but when they saw Hektor coming along the lines of men, they grew afraid and their hearts fell at their feet. Then up spoke Thoas the son of Andraimon, the champion of the Aitolians, a man skilled with the javelin, a fine runner and one whom few of the Akhaians could dominate in the assembly, whenever the young men got into an argument. It was this man who, out of love for the Akhaians, spoke up and said, "Is it possible? Indeed this is a great wonder that I see before my eyes, how this Hektor has cheated Death and gotten to his feet again. Everyone was hoping that he would die at the hands of Aias, son of Telamon, but one of the gods came to his help and rescued the fellow, though he has unstrung the knees of many Danaans. I think that now will also be the case for he does not waiting there as their champion without the help of Zeus the loud-thundering. But come, let us all act on the suggestion that I make, let us order the mob to be on its way to the ships and let us, who claim to be champions, make a stand, if by standing against him with spears raised we may draw his wrath first. I think that, even though he is very enthusiastic, he will be afraid to mix with this crowd of Danaans." So he spoke and they took note and hurried to obey; about the Aiantes and lord Idomeneus, about Teukros, and Meriones and Megeas who was like the war-god, they raised battle, calling on their best men to oppose Hektor and the Trojans while behind them, the rest of the army made its way to the Akhaians' ships. The Trojans charged down in a mob, with Hektor striding along manfully at their head, and Phoibos Apollon was going before him, his shoulders clothed in cloud and holding the tempestuous terrible goatskin, shaggy and alight with metal, which the bronzesmith Hephaistos ... given Zeus to wear for the terror of men. With this in his hands did he take the lead of the Trojan people, but the Argives banded together and stood their ground. Then a shrill cry of battle rose up from both sides and many arrows leapt from the bowstring, while not a few javelins, cast by bold hands lodged in the flesh of brave men, though others, which sought to sate themselves with blood, drove into the ground, before they had tasted flesh.

In the simile which opens the passage we have a good example of how the forms express purely Aspectual meaning, and how temporal implications are supplied by juxtaposition and logic, i.e. the horse presumably had already been fed and had broken his rope before he ran off so that the Imperfective θεύη not only dwells on his movement but also shows it as arising from the other activities. The other Imperfectives in the simile are all parallel descriptions of activities which are part of the running while the Perfect Participles describe the characteristics of habit and trust as States. The imperfect ἔνωμα is used to make Hektor's action parallel to the simile, which itself is treated simply as an action. The second simile provides only one major problem, and it is not concerned with the Aorists, which express Total occurrence, but with the form ἦεν; this has been more fully explained in the chapter on similes (see esp. p.167) but it is worth repeating here that the use of the form is not so much a "recognition-imperfect", but a kind of background comment on the action of the simile. Again we find the Imperfective used to pick up the narrative in the same manner as after the first simile, and one of the Aorists which echo the action of the simile, τάρβησαν, seems to take on an ingressive flavour, as the realization of Totality in a Stative verb. Thoas' speech contains several interesting points, not least in the introduction, where the first verb is Imperfective to imply that we are to wait for a background description, in this case a thumbnail sketch of the character, while the Aorists at the end merely mark the end of the description and sum up the activity of speaking as a whole before the actual words spoken are set out. The series of Aorists which open the speech (ἀνέστη, ἐρρύσατο, ἐσάωσε, ἔλυσε) obviously refer to what is objectively past at the moment of speaking, but they contain in themselves no action of relative anteriority, which is rather the result of logical factors in the situation. The Imperfective Subjunctive μεθώμεθα in line 294 is prompted by the fact that the obedience is dependent on the communication, i.e. *I am going to say something and, when I have said it, I hope that we will all go and act on the advice.* The Infinitive, ἀποδέεσθαι, in the next line is cast in the Imperfective in order to contrast the Process of

returning with the act of making a stand, a Total action of resistance which he is urging on the champions, while the finite form of the same verb ten lines later takes the same Aspect to make the returning parallel to the resistance now seen as coming into being. The description of the Trojan's advance begins with an Aorist προὔτυψαν (306), describing the attack as a whole, before dissolving into a series of Imperfectives, ἦρχε, βιβάζ, ἔχε, possibly κί[ε], which depict activities that are part of or parallel to that main action (if κίον is an aorist, as some commentators think, it anticipates the Total act of leading). The Aorist ἠγήσατο serves as a kind of summation of Apollon's leadership of the Trojan attack, *with this in his hands, he took the lead*, while υπέμεναν expresses the decisive act of Akhaian resistance, and ὤπρo the sudden shout as they come together. Our passage ends with a series of Imperfectives, subordinated to υπέμεναν and describing the course of the battle, one of which, θρῆσκον, combines with the repeated adjective πολλός to give an iterative nuance to the description.

The main purpose of this chapter has been to show how the Aspects appear in regular patterns in the Homeric language, and how these patterns can act, as it were, in a dramatic fashion to bring out whatever special interpretation the speaker wishes to convey. In the passages quoted, I have of course not commented on every verbal form, but only done so where I felt that a rigid analysis would distort the flow of meaning.

CHAPTER 10
CONCLUSION

In this thesis, I have not tried to investigate fully every facet of scholarly research or theory on Homeric Greek Aspect. Instead, I have limited my approach by accepting as a hypothesis one modern theory, that of K.L. McKay, and attempting to measure that theory against the text of the two poems, only referring to the work of other scholars in order to contrast their application of theory to text with my own.

I had initially done an analysis of the whole of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* but I have chosen four books (K,P,β,ω) for detailed examination since I wished to reduce the amount of material handled without giving the appearance of a selection prejudiced toward the desired result. As McKay had given some evidence that there was little or no change in the Aspectual system for over a millennium beyond the time of Homer, and my preliminary analysis supported this view, it did not seem important to emphasize the relative dating of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* and of the passages for which evidence of earlier or later origin had been adduced; but rather than ignore possibilities of variation, I chose the four books to include earlier and later levels of both poems. Yet where material has been scarce, I have been forced to range over the whole of the epics, and this has also been valuable in the case of the Future, Imperative and the Similes, where the chosen books offered insufficient material for study.

A further limitation on my basic argument has been the insistence on a definition of Aspect which is specific to the observed effects

of the category in the Homeric poems; in Appendix 1 I have given some indication of the differences between languages in which Aspect is an important feature, and whose Aspectual systems do in fact show strong similarities at certain points. In particular, I have found it necessary to reject the assumption that the Slavonic Aspectual system is the criterion by which Ancient Greek should be judged.

My thesis then has been that Aspect in the Ancient Greek verb expressed the way the speaker saw the verbal activity in relation to its context. Both the subjectivity and the relationship to context are important, and any attempt to apply mechanically a system of black-and-white judgements is bound to lead to confusion. There is a certain hard core of examples in which the use of one particular Aspect is essential to convey the intended meaning, but outside this there are grey areas where the speaker's subjective choice may result in the use of either of two Aspects, neither of which is inappropriate, though each adds a different nuance. It is not, therefore, sufficient to collect a few apparently anomalous examples in order to rule out the possibility of a realization which seems to have been proven by the core examples. One must rather treat as acceptable all examples in which Aspect is not demonstrably anomalous, and by extensive examination of the Greek text, look for a cumulative result. These considerations have led me to concentrate on examining the text in the light of an existing theory - after due consideration - rather than abandoning all presuppositions and formulating a completely new theory without reference to the poems themselves.

Proponents of recent trends in linguistic theory have assumed that the only scientific way to describe language is by abstracting from the mass of available material a series of opposed pairs which can be contrasted so as to define the limits of each. As I have argued, the opposition theory as stated thus far is a valid one and extremely valuable in any analysis of grammatical categories. However, when these theories are solidified, or elaborated, they become

more and more removed from what can be observed in the language. I have taken the view that Aspect in Homeric Greek does not fit so easily into a system of binary oppositions that no other approach is valid, and while acknowledging that some insights are to be gained from an examination in terms of oppositions, I have chosen to treat the various Aspects as each having a basic *valor* and to explore the various realizations which these *valores* present in different contexts. Thus I have not rejected the opposition concept entirely, but merely insisted that it be made more sensitive to context. For example, when the present tense was said to be "neutral" because it was unopposed by a morphologically separate form expressing the Aorist *valor* in present time, I pointed out that in situations where such a form was called for, there was a readily employable entity - the aorist tense - which the Greeks did not hesitate to use, and which made an opposition with the present tense in these cases. Throughout this thesis, I have tried to emphasize that one cannot take a verbal form out of its environment, dissect it anaesthetically and then pontificate on its suitability, but that one must examine the form *in situ* to decide why the poet chose it particularly, taking into account any signals in the context which might be relevant to its interpretation. What in effect I have tried to argue throughout the work is that the duty of grammar must be *de*-scriptive rather than *pre*-scriptive. It may be objected at this point that I am rendering the study of Aspect too subjective and creating a coterie system, which depends on my own selection of "relevant" contextual elements. I would answer this by pointing out that Aspect itself *is always* subjective, in that the choice of what Aspect to use in any given set of circumstances is *entirely the speaker's/writer's*, but that this does not mean that the *study* of Aspect is necessarily subjective, that it cannot be written about in objective terms.

A major problem in any study of Aspect in Homer is the relation between this category and that of tense. Ever since the

"discovery" of Greek in the early Renaissance (by which time the contemporary Greek Aspectual system had come to differ from that of the ancient language, especially in its loss of the old Perfect) the scholars of Western Europe have construed its system of verbal forms in terms more appropriate to that of Latin, where distinctions of time and, more particularly, of relative time were emphasized. Although this view began to be questioned as early as the mid-nineteenth century, modern scholars, as I have tried to show, have not been able completely to eliminate from their writings the idea that Aspect is somehow determined by temporal considerations. The influence of temporal theorizing is also apparent in the analysis of the respective *valores* of Imperfective and Aorist as *Durative* and *Punctual*, or as *Uncompleted* and *Completed*, as well as in the discussion of the Perfect, where not only the traditional definition, but also the concept of the resultative Perfect reinforce the idea that Aspect is temporally determined. It must be admitted here that time was an important factor in the Homeric verbal system, but it must not be taken as the most important. In this work I have argued that Aspect is different from tense, since it cuts across the latter, allowing all three Aspectual units to be realized within the one time sphere, for example, that of past. Indeed, I have suggested that time, the essence of tense, is inherent in context rather than in verb inflexion, while Aspect is one of the most important categories in the inflexion of verbs, extending through all Voices, Moods, Infinitives and Participles.

The main weight of this thesis lies in the three chapters on the three principal Aspects, the Imperfective, Aorist and Perfect. I have accepted McKay's suggestion that Stative verbs should as far as possible be distinguished from Dynamic verbs for the sake of exploring the various realizations of these Aspects, but this distinction is not of absolute importance for my present purpose, and it may be that when we have made further progress with understanding Greek verbs as the ancient Greeks used them, we shall be able to define the lexical categories more precisely. Within these chapters, I have tried to treat the four books exhaustively, outlining their *valores*

from an empiricist viewpoint. I have defined the Imperfective as that Aspect which expresses the verbal activity as a Process, divorcing this concept from any notion of ongoingness or development through time. The Perfect has long been accepted as expressing a State, but it has been necessary to discuss the precise nature of this concept, especially in relation to the prior action, and I have tried to show that whether any such reference occurs depends on the context - that it is the State alone which is always important. The Aorist has caused a great deal of trouble in any description of the Homeric aspectual system, but after discussing some other approaches, I have attempted to show how my own definition of the Aorist as Total Action is better suited to the material of the Homeric verb.

Because of allegations that the Aspects work differently in the Imperative, I have dealt with all three Aspects of the Mood in a separate chapter, and because of the comparative paucity of examples in the chosen books, I have examined Imperatives throughout the two epics. In the same way, I have devoted a separate chapter to the Similes of the two epics, which are now generally accepted as belonging to a relatively late stratum of traditional epic material, and which are recognizable as detached from the time scale of their narrative context. In spite of a few problems, I have shown that the considerations of the three core chapters are also relevant to the Imperative and to the Similes. Under any system of explanation the Future presents problems and is to some extent anomalous, and in a separate chapter devoted to it, I have explored some of these problems and concluded that, in spite of the involvement of Mood in its apparent development, and of some tendencies to tense orientation, the Future is best regarded as a fourth Aspect, albeit an incomplete and defective one in comparison with the Imperfective, Aorist and Perfect.

I have made little attempt to assess the effects of formulaic composition and of metrical considerations on the use of Aspect in the Homeric poems, since in my preliminary investigation I saw little evidence of possible effects, and such as I saw seemed to fall in

the area where a subjective difference of approach was possible, so that it would be difficult to assess whether the poet was actually held back by his formal framework or whether he chose the Aspect to suit what he wanted to say and then adapted the result to his verse. If I had given more attention to this facet, I would have been forced to devote less effort to my general analysis of aspectual usage, and in fact that analysis provides a sounder basis for the examination of such features. In the same way, I have tried to avoid questions of textual criticism, but if, as seems likely, there was virtually no change in the pattern of aspectual usage until a very late period in the language's history, an increase of labour in this field would seem to have been less than productive.

The external limitations of my present enquiry have made it necessary for me to select a few topics for reasonably full examination and to choose only four books out of the forty-eight in the two poems for detailed investigation. However I can only hope that my demonstration of the appropriateness of one particular theory to the text of Homer will provide a surer foundation for a study of finer nuances of aspectual theory. One must note here, though, that the variety of realizations and the importance of context to the study of Aspect makes it difficult to be as certain about the subtleties of aspectual usage as about morphological and phonological details.

APPENDIX 1: LIST OF POSSIBLE HOMERIC VERBAL FORMS

(The most common forms of the model verb λύω here stand for their corresponding forms in any other verb.)

	Imperfective			Aorist			Perfect		
	A	M	P	A	M	P	A	M	P
Indicative (Present/Timeless)	λύω	λύομαι		ἔλυσα	ἔλυσάμην	ἔλύθην	λέλυκα	λέλυμαι	
(Past)	ἔλυον	ἐλύόμην					ἔλελύκην	ἐλελύμην	
Subjunctive	λύω	λύομαι		λύσω	λύσωμαι	λυθῶ	λελύκω	λελυμένος	ῶ
Optative	λύοιμι	λυοίμην		λύσαιμι	λυσάμην	λυθείην	λελύκοιμι	λελυμένος	εῖην
Imperative	λύε	λύου		λύσον	λύσαι	λύθητι		λέλυσο	
Infinitive	λύειν	λύεσθαι		λύσαι	λύσασθαι	λυθῆναι	λελυκέναι	λελύσθαι	
Participle	λύων	λυόμενος		λύσας	λυσάμενος	λυθείς	λελυκώς	λελυμένος	

The forms of the Future are as follows:—

	Active	Middle	Passive
Indicative	λύσω	λύσομαι	λυθήσομαι
Infinitive	λύσειν	λύσεσθαι	λυθήσεσθαι
Participle	λύσων	λυσόμενος	λυθησόμενος

APPENDIX 2

ASPECT: A COMPARATIVE GLIMPSE

Many scholars¹ have assumed that the Ancient Greek, and even the Indo-European, Aspectual system was the same as that existing in the Slavonic group of languages. This conception would seem to be aided by the fact that, firstly it was through Slavonic studies that the Indo-Europeanists first became aware of Aspect and secondly, that modern Greek has developed an Aspectual system superficially like the Slavonic. Some attention, therefore, needs to be given to the comparison of the Slavonic and Greek (especially Homeric) Aspectual systems.

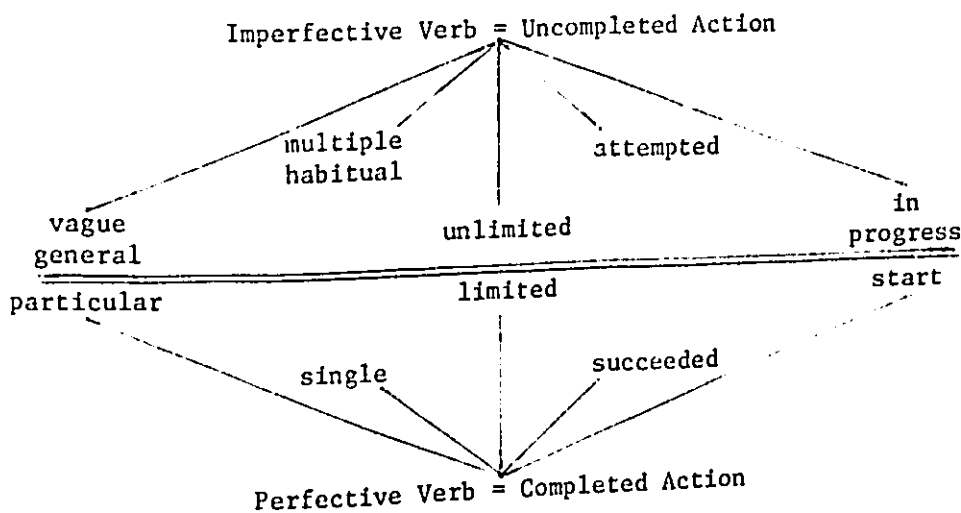
Slavonic Aspect

In Russian (here taken as the typical Slavonic language), Aspect is expressed by a pair of verbal forms, which may be unrelated but are usually derivationally linked forms of the same verb, called Perfective and Imperfective. In verbs of motion a triad of forms is recognized and these are termed Perfective, Definite (Simple, Actual) Imperfective, and Indefinite (Habitual, Potential) Imperfective. When one reads older grammars, and even the works of those writing with more specific reference to Greek, such as Friedrich,² one gains the impression that these Aspects are rather rigid in usage, with the Perfective expressing completed action and the Imperfective uncompleted action. However, examination of actual examples of usage allows one to see that the situation was not so stark, and that a fair degree of subtle choice and sensitivity to context is present in the Russian system, a fact which is now recognized by writers working under the influence of Russian grammarians themselves.³ Thus Davis in a work published in 1973, says,

"Only the most general rules can be formulated for the use of the aspects because in many cases the final choice depends on what the speaker has in

mind or what shade of meaning he intends to express ... In the most general terms, the imperfective aspect focuses attention upon the action itself; it indicates a process or a situation. The verb tells us whether the action is past, present or future. Beyond that, the verb alone does not limit or describe the action in any way; there was or will be an action. The result, if any, is irrelevant, and may be unknown ... *On chital'* may mean *he read, he was reading or he used to read* but another word or phrase will be needed to limit the meaning to one of the above. The verb says only that there was an action in the past; it continued for an unspecified period and then ended, and its result, if it had any, is not relevant to the present discussion ... The perfective verb limits the action far more strictly. It focuses attention away from the action itself and points to the achievement of a result; the action has been or is to be successfully completed. The perfective may point to the moment at which the action is begun or the moment at which it is completed, or it may point to the fact that the action had, will have or was intended to have a definite result. The perfective is normally used when the speaker expresses concern about success or failure in achieving a result."⁴

As can be seen from the above description, the Russian verb, like the Homeric, can have a variety of realizations depending on context, and it is here that the artificial identification of the two systems becomes apparent. One grammar,⁵ taking as basic the *Completed/Uncompleted* distinction of earlier theory, gives a diagrammatic representation of these realizations as follows:-



This rather simplistic pattern does indeed give the impression that there is a high degree of correspondence between the Imperfective and the Homeric Imperfective on the one hand, and between the Perfective and the Homeric Aorist on the other. Such a comparison would seem to have suggested itself to Meillet,⁶ for example, when he defines the Imperfective as expressing "un action qui dure et se développe, soit que ce développement soit continu, soit qu'il résulte de la répétition d'une même procès" and the Perfective as "le procès pur et simple, abstraction faite de toute notion de durée". Even Forsyth's definition of the Perfective as "the presentation of the action as a total event related to a specific single juncture"⁷ seems to be an attempt to reconcile the Slavonic system with Greek definitions. However neither Meillet nor the traditionalists take cognizance of the fact that, though the two systems may correspond in their realizations, it is the Slavonic Imperfective which expresses "le procès pur et simple" and like the Homeric Aorist, merely states that the action took place, abstracted from all temporal or other limitations.

Whereas in the Homeric system, the three Aspects are distinguished by the possession of different stems and, to a certain extent, different endings for each, in Russian the most usual method of differentiating Perfectives from Imperfectives is by adding an element to the latter, which otherwise remains unchanged. These elements are usually prefixes, mostly prepositions, though in their merely perfectivizing use, they add nothing to the meaning (*stroit'*, build, pfv *postroit'*; *pisat'*, write, pfv *napisat'*). Sometimes however these prepositions do change the lexical meaning of the verb, and in such cases the new formation is perfective and can be imperfectivized by suffix alteration (*sroit'*, build, *ustroit'*, set up, new impfv, *ustraiivat'*; *pisat'*, write, *podpisat'*, sign, new impfv *podpisivat'*). Another method of perfectivizing a verb is by suffix alteration; this is common where the Imperfective verb already has a prefix (*porazhat'*, strike, pfv *porazit'*) but also occurs in other verbs where *-avat'* → *-at'*, *-at'* → *-it'*, *-nyut'* (*vstavat'*, arise, pfv *vstat'*; *izuchat'*, learn, pfv *izuchit'*; *zyevat'*, yawn, pfv *zyevnyut'*). A few verbs also make use of different stems for each member of the Aspectual pair (*brat'*, take, pfv *vzyat'*).

Another point of similarity with the Homeric system is that tense is primarily a feature of the Indicative Mood. There are only three true tenses, but these combine with the Aspects to give five forms. The past is morphologically a past Participle (in Old Russian this combined with the verb *to be* to form the perfect tense) and, though it is the only tense in this time sphere, it can express most past nuances through its realization as Imperfective past or Perfective past. An inflected tense also exists, and in the Imperfective is realized in the time sphere of the present (Imperfective present) and in the Perfective appears in the future (Perfective future). The third tense is a periphrastic form, created from the Imperfective Infinitive and *budu*, the future of the verb *to be*, and which serves as an Imperfective future. Note that the system is defective in its lack of a Perfective present; the *valor* of the Perfective is incompatible with present time. It is interesting to note that, unlike the Greek, the Russian Participle is marked for tense as well as for Aspect, and this is due to its being formed from the Indicative tenses rather than the Aspectual stems. There exists also an indeclinable form, the so-called Verbal Adverb, which is tied to a verb and expresses relative time, with the Imperfective denoting simultaneity with, and the Perfective anteriority to, the main action (which may itself be in any tense or Aspect). In the non-Indicative Moods, Imperative, Infinitive and Conditional, the distinction between the two forms is purely Aspectual (though the Conditional is confined to past time). So we can represent the Russian Aspectual system diagrammatically as follows:-

	Imperfective	Perfective
<i>Indicative</i>		
(P)	on chital'	on prochital'
(Pr)	on chitayet	-
(F)	on budyet chitat'	on prochitayet
(Part.)(P)	chitavshii, -	prochitavshii, prochitannii
(Pr)	chitayushchii, chitayemii	- , -
(V.Adv)	chitaya	prochitav
<i>Conditional</i>	on chital' bi	on prochital' bi

	Imperfective	Perfective
<i>Imperative</i>	chitai/chitaitye	prochitai/prochitaitye
<i>Infinitive</i>	chitat'	prochitat'

It compares in its realizations with the Homeric system in the manner shown in fig. 1, while structural similarities may be seen by comparing the above diagram with the scheme of the Greek verb provided on page 205.

Aspect in Modern Greek

The Russian system described above is, on grounds of external structure, very similar to that operating in modern Greek. Here again there are only two Aspects⁸ and only three real Moods, Indicative, Imperative and Participle, with all other necessary forms being expressed periphrastically. As in Russian (where the Participles are formed from *Tense* stems) and Homeric Greek, *Tense* only exists in the Indicative, and it combines with the Aspects to produce five tense forms. The past Continuous and past Simple are formed from the "Continuous" and "Simple" stems but have identical endings based on the old aorist. The future is also formed from both stems with endings derived from the old present and an invariable marker $\theta\acute{\alpha}$, while the present only exists from the Continuous stem (though the system is completed, at least in verbs such as $\pi\eta\gamma\acute{\alpha}\lambda\omega$, *I go*, by the creation of a present Simple $\pi\acute{\alpha}\omega$ ⁹). The Imperative is very similar to the Homeric, with the same endings as the latter and a formation from each stem, while the Participle differs from the Russian in showing only an Aspectual distinction between the two forms. The other Moods are formed by prefixing various particles to the Indicative, so that we have $\nu\acute{\alpha}$ plus the future creating the Subjunctive, and $\theta\acute{\alpha}$ combining with the past to form the Conditional. Some scholars such as Mirambel,¹⁰ set up two further Moods, an "Optative" ($\nu\acute{\alpha}$ plus Subjunctive and past Indicative) and a "Dubitative" ($\theta\acute{\alpha}$ plus present and past Indicative), but admit that these are poorly distinguished from the other moods in actual usage.¹¹ So the modern Greek verbal system, superficially comparable to the Slavonic, can be represented thus:-

	Continuous		Simple	
	Active ,	Passive	Active ,	Passive
<i>Indicative</i> (P)	ἔχανα,	χανόμouνα	ἔχασα,	χάθηκα
(Pr)	χάνω,	χάνουμαι	- , -	
(F)	θα χάνω,	θα χάνουμαι	θα χάσω,	θα χαθῶ
<i>Participle</i>	χάνοντας,	χανούμενος	- ,	χαμένος
<i>Subjunctive</i>	νά χάνω,	νά χάνουμαι	νά χάσω,	νά χαθῶ
<i>Conditional</i>	θα ἔχανα,	θα χανόμouνα	θα ἔχασα,	θα χάθηκα
<i>Imperative</i>	χάνε,	χάνου	χάσε,	χάσου

Syntactically, however, the Modern Aspects seem more like the Homeric than the Russian. The *valores* of "Continuous" and "Simple" are the same as those of Imperfective and Aorist respectively, i.e. activity in Process and activity in Totality, as can be seen from the following examples:—

- (α) Περσὶ πήγαινα κάθε μέρα στή δουλεία, *Last year I used to go to work every day* — past Continuous.
- (β) Ἔχασα τὸ βιβλίό μου, *I lost my book* — past Simple.
- (γ) Διάβαζα τὴν ἐφημερίδα μου, ὅταν ἦρθε, *I was reading my paper, when he came* — Continuous as background for Simple.
- (δ) τοῦ θα πηγαίνουμε, *where shall we go?* — future Continuous.
- (ε) τοῦ θα πᾶμε, *where shall we set out for?* — future Simple.
- (ζ) Μαθαίνω τὰ Ἑλληνικά, *I am learning Greek* — present Continuous.
- (η) ποῦ πᾶμε, *where do we go now?*, (or colloquially, *where to now?*) — present Simple.

Origins

Other realizations of these Aspects are, of course, possible but they align almost exactly with those of the Homeric Aspects, and the Simple seems, like the Aorist, to be the residual Aspect.

If these two systems, with their high degree of agreement, had alone survived to be compared with the Homeric and Classical one, one

might be tempted to question the validity of assuming a three way contrast of syntax in the latter. The evidence of earlier Slavonic, however, shows that several strands of development have occurred, somewhat complicating matters. In Old Church Slavonic, besides the distinction between Perfective and Imperfective (and so between present and future Perfective and Imperfective), any verb may form three past tenses, imperfect, aorist and perfect, from each Aspect. The aorist is either the original morphological aorist (though not used in the same way as the Homeric aorist) or is formed from the strong aorist or imperfect. The perfect, on the other hand, is originally an adjective in "-l" (cf. Lat. *credulus*) but combines with the verb *to be* to form a series of relative time and state tenses, perfect, pluperfect, future-perfect and conditional, in which the feature distinguishing them from the aorist is the notation of State remaining after action. An example of differentiation would be, *he lived for seventy-six years*, which in the Imperfective aorist would state merely how long the man lived, in the Perfective aorist that he lived for that length of time in a particular century which is now past (a usage very similar to that of the Homeric "complexive" Aorist) and in the Imperfective imperfect that he is still alive. In Old Church Slavonic, the manner of defining the Aspects is very much the same as in Russian,¹² although there is some similarity to the Greek system, for example, in the employment of the perfect. In Slavonic the evolution seems to have encompassed several steps; firstly presents have been differentiated so that some correspond to Imperfectives and some to Aorists, a development which is made possible by the large number of present stems ("a-stem" for duratives, which give Slav. "ayu" verbs, "nu" stems for instantaneity, etc.). Then this distinction has been extended throughout the system so that we have (theoretically) two forms in each tense and six effective past tenses:-

- (1) Imperfective imperfect - unlimited activity.
- (2) Imperfective aorist - completed action of a certain duration.
- (3) Perfective imperfect - repeated or habitual action (the form is rare).

(4) Perfective aorist – simple momentary action.

(5) Imperfective perfect – action under way at some point at the past relative to the present.

(6) Perfective perfect – action completed at some point in the past whose effect continues to the present,

(the pluperfects merely transfer the perfects to the realm of the past). Old Russian retained the aorist-imperfect distinction until very late, at least in writing,¹³ but in modern times, aorist, imperfect and pluperfect have dropped out, leaving the two perfects which function as simple past tenses.¹⁴

Modern Theories

Thus those who would make the Homeric Aspectual system the equal of the Slavonic seem to be wrong at every turn. The argument of the traditionalists (and in this category I would place Friedrich) falls down because the *Completive/Non-Completive* distinction which they assume for Slavonic does not correspond to the Greek *Aorist/Imperfective* opposition – and even in the Slavonic languages themselves *Completive/Non-Completive* is not the basic relation but only one realization of it. Meillet's definition of the Slavonic Perfective and Imperfective seem on the one hand to be too much influenced by his profound knowledge of Greek, and on the other to be a misinterpretation in his presentation of the Perfective as the unmarked term, as representing "le procès pur et simple"; the very quality which marks the Homeric Aorist.

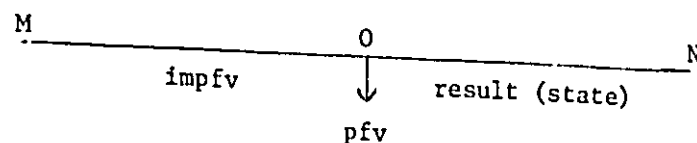
Jerzy Kurylowicz's assumption that the Greek system was based on the Slavonic *Perfective/Imperfective* distinction is more complex. His basic thesis is that there are certain patterns of thought and expression in any language which, if suppressed by the blurring of one form or its extension to a new function, will re-emerge through the shift of another form into the old function, even thousands of years later. He sees Aspect as one of these basic patterns but claims that the Indo-European distinction was not that between State (Perfect) and Action (Imperfective-Aorist), which would seem more accurate morphologically, but between Perfectivity (Aorist) and Imperfectivity, with the Stative Perfect as a sort of "half-way-house" partaking of

features of both the other Aspects, and that this is a situation which Slavonic and Modern Greek have rectified.¹⁵ However, it would seem to me that, unlike the morphology or phonology, the syntax of a hypothetical language cannot be reconstructed as precisely as Kurylowicz's attempts suggest, since the interpretation of usage patterns depends to such a large extent on the existence of a reasonable body of contextual material. A facet of his disregard of this principle is his failure to recognize the inherent subjectivity of Aspectual distinctions, as when he paints a picture of a dominant but mechanistic Aspectual super-structure built on an equally mechanistic temporal base, which can "defectivate" the former. This, at least, is how I read his explanation of why the present is normally Imperfective and the past Perfective:—

"The moment of speaking being perceived as a point joining the infinite linear extension of the past with a similarly extending line of the future, the contrast of the verbal action with this point will make us consider the verbal action as overlapping it ... On the other hand, confronted with the infinite extensions of past and future, the same verbal action will appear as reduced to a point. Therefore the action of the grammatical present is perceived as linear or Imperfective, the *primary* function of the grammatical past or future as punctual or Perfective. Special devices must be used to denote linear actions in the past or future."¹⁶

One can, of course, ask at this point why the "grammatical past" cannot be the same as the temporal past and, therefore, why an activity should not have a temporal extension in the thought of the speaker as well as in actuality; by doing so one can destroy the artificial connection between Perfectivity, defined as mainly past, and pointlike or completed activity. He then applies his distinction rather haphazardly to Slavonic, where it conflicts with the facts of the language, and also to ancient Greek where, for one thing, an Aorist can be used for past Duration and, for another, there is no distinction between an Aorist or an Imperfective future or even an Aorist present used as a future — if indeed the Future belongs to the tense system at all. In his discussion of Latin he is even more in error in assuming the existence of a present, which is anterior to the

speech event (whatever that means), and then by attributing to the Latin perfect a *valor* which is only partly appropriate to it and which seems to be more appropriate to the Greek Perfect, that of resultant State, which he sees as proceeding from the linear view of action:-



Kurylowicz here claims that the Slavonic/Classical Greek distinction is between MO and O but that the Latin is between MO and ON (there no difference in syntax, however, between *scripsit*, formally an Aorist and *cecinit*, formally a true Perfect, and no idea of State in either.)¹⁸ Yet his assumption that *State* could develop into prior action seems precisely what did happen from the Homeric (and I.E.) system, and not from Kurylowicz's, since one cannot understand why an Aspect of Punctuality would develop into one of State.¹⁹ His arguments can only be saved if one assumes that Aspect was originally not applicable to Stative verbs, but this, if correct, must have applied at such an early date as to be useless for consideration of the syntactic patterns of either Greek or Slavonic.²⁰

The major purpose of this chapter, then, has been to give a fairly full account of the system of Aspects operating in the Slavonic languages in order to show that the Aspects as they existed in the Homeric poems were very different in character, and that any attempt to reconcile the two systems must entail an oversimplification of one or both. Fig. 1 (p.218) sets out a diagrammatic comparison.

NOTES

¹ Jerzy Kurylowicz, *Inflectional Categories*; Comrie, *Aspect*; Crisafulli, *Aspect and Tense*; Lejnieks, *Morphosyntax*; Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, etc.

² Friedrich, *Aspect Theory*, pp.57 and 29-30.

³ Unbegaun, *Russian Grammar*; Forbes, *Russia: Grammar*, cf. Potapova,

Russian: *An Elementary Grammar*; Semënov, *New Russian Grammar*; Smirnitski, *Essentials*. Syntax, vol. 3 of A

- ⁴ Davis, *Making Progress in Russian*, p.48.
- ⁵ Duff and Makarov, *Russian for Adults*, p.195.
- ⁶ Meillet, *Le Slave Comun*, p.282.
- ⁷ Forsyth, *A Grammar of Aspect*, p.347.
- ⁸ Mirambel (*Grecque Moderne*), posits the existence of two other aspectual pairs, Determinate/Indeterminate and Perfective/Imperfective but points out that they are subordinated to the primary Aspectual distinction of Continuous/Simple.
- ⁹ Mirambel, *Grecque Moderne*, p.136; Thumb, *Modern Greek*, p.119.
- ¹⁰ Mirambel, *Grecque Moderne*, pp.154-5.
- ¹¹ There is also in Modern Greek a perfect which is formed from the verb *to have* and an indeclinable element derived from the Simple stem (and from the old Aorist Infinitive). This is rarely used in the spoken language but seems to be used in a manner very like the English perfect (Mirambel, *Grecque Moderne*; this opinion was endorsed by Kapsomenakis in a conversation with K.L. McKay). It is a much debated question whether the form is the true Aspect or not since it is formed from elements of both the others; Mirambel expresses his doubts, when he says (*Grecque Moderne*, p.140) "... le fait qu'il ne possède pas de thème propre, et qu'il n'est concevable que là où existent un présent et un aoriste, le subordonne à la structure morphologique du verbe au lieu d'en distinguer." However if an Aspect is not an Aspect because it is periphrastic, what is one to make of the Aspectual system in English or even of the distinction in Mirambel's own language between *Imparfait* and *Passé Composé*?
- ¹² See Lunt, *Old Church Slavonic Grammar*, p.69.
- ¹³ Matthews, *Russian Historical Grammar*, pp.237-8.
- ¹⁴ It must be noted here that Bulgarian, apart from strengthening the *Perfective/Imperfective* distinction, has kept much of the O.C.S. system intact, retaining the perfect, aorist and imperfect in both Aspects, and has even completed the pattern by introducing a Perfective present, one of whose realizations is habituality.
- ¹⁵ Kurylowicz, *Inflectional Categories*, pp.94-5.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p.92.
- ¹⁷ See Chapter 6 on the Future.
- ¹⁸ Kurylowicz, *Inflectional Categories*, p.93.
- ¹⁹ Kurylowicz seems right in pointing out, on the basis of such

facts as the apparently similar origin of the Perfect and medio-passive endings in Indo-European and the frequent interchange of active Perfect with medio-passive Imperfective/Aorist in the derived languages implied some sort of common *valor* for the two categories. However this topic is beyond the scope of my work.

²⁰ From the three-Aspect system of Greek one can also more easily explain the development which took place in Latin and Sanskrit. The Aorist of instantaneous or Total action develops into the idea of completed action and is used in Sanskrit for an action completed in the recent past, e.g. *tubhyam mayā rajyam adāyī*, *I have (just now) bestowed the sovereignty on you.* In Latin, however, it is divided between perfect Indicative and "imperfect" Subjunctive (both of which cover a wider range of meaning than perfect Subjunctive and imperfect Indicative respectively). The perfect of State resulting from past action gradually loses its Stative reference, placing more and more emphasis on prior action until in Latin it becomes submerged in a tense expressing merely action completed in the past, and in classical Sanskrit is used initially for actions in the remote past (in Vedic it had also been Stative) but eventually becomes the all-purpose narrative tense.

Greek			Slavonic	
Imperfective	1) In progress	o—o	1) In progress	Imperfective
	2) Repeated	o—o	2) Repeated	
	3) Habitual	o . o	3) Habitual	
	4) Attempted	o -o	4) Attempted	
	5) Extension from past	o—o	5) Extension from past	
	6) Circumstantial	o—o	6) Circumstantial	
	7) Background	o . o	7) Background	
	8) Parallel-Resumptive	o—o	8) Parallel-Resumptive	
	9) Recognition	o—o	9) Intentional	
	10) Immediate Future	o—o	10) Immediate Future	
	11) No reference to completion	o—o	11) Non-resultative	
	12) Timeless	o—o	12) General	
	13) Ingressive	o o	13) Unlimited	
	14) Ability	o o	14) Unspecified	
Aorist	1) Action pure and simple	o o	15) Action pure and simple	Perfective
	2) Totality	o o	16) Ex-state	
	3) Timeless	o o	17) Future-Intention	
	4) Ingressive	o o	18) Multiple Result	
	5) Punctual	o o	1) Ingressive	
	6) Succeeded	o o	2) Punctual	
	7) Completed	o o	3) Succeeded	
	8) Completion of a stage	o o	4) Completed	
	9) Consequent Action	o o	5) Completion of a stage	
	10) Repeated-series as a whole	o o	6) Consequent Actions	
	11) Specific Duration	o o	7) Repeated-series as a whole	
Perfect	1) Ex-state	o o	8) Specific Duration	Perfective
	2) Responsibility	o o	9) Responsibility	
	3) State/Condition of Subject	o o	10) Resultant state	
	4) Emotion-intensified state	o o	11) Accidental	
	5) Timeless	o o	12) Particular	
Future	1) Intention	o o	13) Limited	Perfective
	2) Will	o o	14) Expectancy	
	3) Likelihood (Eng. going to)	o o	15) Future possibility	
	4) Timeless	o o		

Fig. 1: A Comparison of Greek and Slavonic Aspectual Usage.

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