

Casus belli: Causes of the Trojan War in the Epic Cycle

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What follows suggests an interpretative approach to the causes of the Trojan War in the Epic Cycle. Among the themes of the Epic Cycle, the Trojan mythical narratives are those of which we possess the fullest account and the richest literary evidence. This is, of course, mainly due to the fact that the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the two major epics related to the Trojan expedition, are totally preserved; yet another reason seems to be the fact that the rest of the literary sources, especially drama, but also iconography of the archaic and classical era, favored the stories related to the Trojan myth, most of which were included or alluded to in the Epic Cycle. Precisely because the preserved information is by far more abundant than the preserved texts in which this information was initially included, many problems emerge as to the way in which the poems of the epic cycle narrated the Trojan myth(s); scholars would definitely give a lot to regain some more fragments from the *Cypria*, the *Aethiopsis*, the *Little Iliad*, the *Sack of Ilium* and the *Nostoi*. For technical reasons, in this paper I tend to regard these poems as independent epic narratives and I will not try to elaborate on the issue of the manufacture of the Epic Cycle as a whole and on the consequent structural and chronological questions raised,¹ nor shall I elaborate on the large or narrow range of these poems in comparison to the Homeric epics.² One could reasonably suppose that, of all the poems mentioned above, the issue of the causes of the Trojan War was more developed in the *Cypria* because of this poem's larger thematic concept but also because of some particular narrative digressions focusing on numerous other aspects of the Trojan myth.³ This explains why, in the present article, special emphasis is given on the way the causes of the Trojan war are presented or alluded to in this poem.

In a general way, one could state that in the Epic Cycle the issue of causality regarding the Trojan War is sometimes expressed in generalizing and vague terms, sometimes in personalized or specific terms. The primordial causality, however, seems to be conveyed through scholion (D) on *Iliad* 1.5 in combination with the preserved prooimion⁴ of the *Cypria* (*Cypria* fr. 1 West, 1 Davies).

...ἄλλοι δὲ ἀπὸ ἱστορίας τινὸς εἶπον εἰρηκέναι τὸν Ὅμηρον. φασὶ γὰρ τὴν Γῆν βαρουμένην ὑπὸ ἀνθρώπων πολυπληθείας, μηδεμιᾶς ἀνθρώπων οὔσης εὐσεβείας, αἰτῆσαι τὸν Δία

¹ Davies 1989a: 2–10, 1989b, Burgess 2001: 12–46, Holmberg 1998.

² Nagy 1990: 70–79, 1996, Burgess 2001: 132–171.

³ Davies 1989b: 98, Burgess 1996: 91, Holmberg 1998: 463.

⁴ We consider these verses a prooimion although there is no evidence they were really the first lines of the poem; on this issue and on the absence of the formal invocation to the Muse, see Davies 1989a: 33.

κουφισθῆναι τοῦ ἄχθους· τὸν δὲ Δία πρῶτον μὲν εὐθύς ποιῆσαι τὸν Θηβαϊκὸν πόλεμον, δι' οὗ πολλοὺς πάνυ ἀπώλεσεν, ὕστερον δὲ πάλιν τὸν Ἰλιακόν, συμβούλῳ τῷ Μώμῳ χρησάμενος, ἦν Διὸς βουλὴν Ὅμηρός φησιν, ἐπειδὴ οἷός τε ἦν κεραυνοῖς ἢ κατακλυσμοῖς ἅπαντας διαφθεῖρειν· ὅπερ τοῦ Μώμου κωλύσαντος, ὑποθεμένου δὲ αὐτῷ γνώμας δύο, τὴν Θέτιδος θνητογαμίαν καὶ θυγατρὸς καλῆς γένναν, ἐξ ὧν ἀμφοτέρων πόλεμος Ἑλλησὶ τε καὶ βαρβάροις ἐγένετο, ἀφ' οὗ συνέβη κουφισθῆναι τὴν γῆν πολλῶν ἀναιρεθέντων. ἡ δὲ ἱστορία παρὰ Στασίνῳ τῷ τὰ Κύπρια πεποιηκότι, εἰπόντι οὕτως·

ἦν ὅτε μυρία φῦλα κατὰ χθόνα πλαζόμενα <αἰεὶ
ἀνθρώπων ἐ>βάρυ<νε βαθυ>στέρνου πλάτος αἴης.
Ζεὺς δὲ ἰδὼν ἐλέησε, καὶ ἐν πυκιναιῖς πραπίδεσσιν
κουφίσει ἀνθρώπων παμβώτορα σύνθετο γαῖαν,
ῥιπίσσας πολέμου μεγάλην ἔριν Ἰλιακοῖο,
ἄφρα κενώσειεν θανάτῳ βάρος. οἳ δ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ
ἥρωες κτείνοντο, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή.

Others have said that Homer was referring to a myth. For they say that Earth, being weighed down by the multitude of people, there being no piety among humankind, asked Zeus to be relieved from the burden. Zeus firstly and at once brought about the Theban War, by means of which he destroyed very large numbers, and afterwards the Trojan one, with Cavil [Momos] as his adviser, this being what Homer calls the plan of Zeus, seeing that he was capable of destroying everyone with thunderbolts or floods. Cavil prevented this, and proposed two ideas to him, the marrying of Thetis to a mortal and the birth of a beautiful daughter. From those two events war came about between Greeks and barbarians, resulting in the lightening of Earth as many were killed. The story is found in Stasinus, the author of the *Cypria*, who says:

There was a time when the countless races <of men> roaming <constantly> over the land were weighing down the <deep->breasted earth's expanse. Zeus took pity when he saw it, and in his complex mind he resolved to relieve the all-nurturing earth of mankind's weight by fanning the great conflict of the Trojan War, to void the burden through death. So the warriors at Troy kept being killed, and Zeus' plan was being fulfilled.

(translation by M.L. West)

As is known, both prooimias, of the *Iliad* and the *Cypria*, contain the phrase Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή (v. 5 in the *Iliad*, v. 7 in the *Cypria*).

Μῆνιν ἄειδε, θεά, Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,
πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
ἠρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἑλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν

οἰωνοῖσι τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,
ἔξ οὔ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε
Ἄτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς.

According to the scholion on *Iliad* 1.5, by this phrase Homer would mean the advice given to Zeus when he decided to destroy the impious race of men on Earth's request. Instead of using thunderbolt or flood, as he initially intended, he finally chose to follow Momus' suggestion and incite men to make wars which would drastically relieve Earth from the excessive burden. The consultation of Momus appears only in the scholion; the prooimion of the *Cypria* does not mention Momus at all.

Let us first analytically examine the version preserved by the scholion to *Il.* 1.5.

The scholion's initial hypothesis is that Homer mentions Zeus' *boulê* following a mythical narrative he has in mind. According to this narrative, there would be two main conditions prevailing on earth, not necessarily related to each other. The first is that the weight of men surpasses Earth's capacity to carry them and the second is that men have no piety at all. The first condition then explains in physical terms Earth's discontent and her request to Zeus, whereas the second condition explains in moral terms the decision of Zeus, who had no reason to pity the impious. In similar circumstances of men's impiety, Zeus was not at all reluctant to destroy them, as he did once with Deucalion's flood (the Greek version of the well-known Near Eastern/Mediterranean flood myth) and it is probably not by chance that the scholion here mentions the flood as a means of virtual destruction. The idea of impiety is also evoked in the second-century papyrus fragment P.Oxy 3829 ii 9 where Zeus, with Themis as his consultant, decides to destroy people, "finding the race of heroes guilty of impiety" (ἀσέβειαν καταγνοῦς τοῦ ἡρωϊκοῦ γένους, *Cypria*, Testimonia, Argumentum endnote 1, West). These ideas have been largely propagated in drama, especially in Euripides'.

In Euripides' *Orestes* both ideas, Earth being weighed down by the multitude of people and humankind being impious, are evoked by Apollo in verses 1639–42 and the gods are held responsible for the war aiming at Earth's relief:

ἐπεὶ θεοὶ τῶι τῆσδε (=Ἑλένης) καλλιστεύματι
Ἕλληνας εἰς ἓν καὶ Φρύγας συνήγαγον
θανάτους τ' ἔθηκαν, ὡς ἀπαντλοῖεν χθονὸς
ὑβρισμὰ θνητῶν ἀφθόνου πληρώματος

In Euripides' *Helen* (36–40) only the idea of an over-burdened Earth is mentioned, but in this case, the will of Zeus alone is held responsible for the war aiming at Earth's relief:

Τὰ δ' αὖ Διὸς
βουλεύματ' ἄλλα τοῖσδε συμβαίνει κακοῖς·

πόλεμον γὰρ εἰσήνεγκεν Ἑλλήνων χθονὶ
καὶ Φρυξὶ δυστήνοισιν, ὡς ὄχλου βροτῶν
πλήθους τε κουφίσειε μητέρα χθόνα

The idea of human impiety does not occur here, unless it is implied in the significance of ὄχλος.

As to the scholion itself, two points should be made:

1. The scholion directly infers that in view of Earth's relief two wars are forecast, the very same wars that eliminated the heroes of the fourth Hesiodic genos (*Op.* 161–165):

καὶ τοὺς μὲν πόλεμὸς τε κακὸς καὶ φύλοπις αἰνὴ
τοὺς μὲν ὑφ' ἑπταπύλῳ Θήβῃ, Καδμηίδι γαίῃ,
ὤλεσε μαρναμένους μῆλων ἔνεκ' Οἰδιπόδαο,
τοὺς δὲ καὶ ἐν νήεσσιν ὑπὲρ μέγα λαῖτμα θαλάσσης
ἐς Τροίην ἀγαγὼν Ἑλένης ἔνεκ' ἠυκόμοιο.

2. The scholion indirectly infers that the Theban War was decided by Zeus without consulting Momus, since the two prerequisites introduced by Momus (Thetis' alliance to a mortal and Helen's birth) can by no means be attached to Thebes.

If this is the case, then the Trojan War is more directly ascribed to human action than the Theban War. It is clear that Momus' advice transfers a great part of the responsibility for men's destruction to men themselves: it is no longer Zeus but men who decide to make the war, and it is men again who should therefore be held responsible for the disasters brought about by the war. This is as far as the scholion goes regarding human freedom or responsibility. But what is more, by relating Zeus' *boulê* to Momus' advice, the scholiast seems to overlook a more direct relation prevailing in the *Iliad* between Zeus' *boulê* and Achilles' wrath as well as Thetis' subsequent request, namely the two basic underlying mythemes in the plot of the *Iliad*. One could reasonably argue that, in the Iliadic prooimion at least, Zeus' *boulê* seems to have smaller range and cover only the consequences of Achilles' *mênis* for the Achaeans, without expanding to include the larger causality of the whole war.⁵ In terms of pure logic, if the main aim was to relieve Earth through the death of as many men as possible, then this aim could be achieved as well by Achilles' wrath as without it, perhaps even better so, with his killing activity. In the first case the loss of men would count against the Achaean side, in the second it would count against the Trojan side, but in both cases the relief of Earth could be taken for granted. Given the specific conditions set forth in the prooimion of the *Iliad*, the consequences of the *mênis* itself seem to be received in a more Hellenocentric spirit regarding the catastrophe experienced by the Achaeans. If a hint at the whole war's causality can be detected within the Iliadic context, this would not necessarily be located in the prooimion but,

⁵ See Kullmann 1956, 1960: 212–214, 225–226, 358–359, 1991, Allan 2008.

with much more probability, in Priam's words to Helen in 3.164–165, where the gods—and not Helen—are held responsible for the Trojan War:

οὐ τι μοι αἰτίη ἔσσι, θεοί νύ μοι αἰτιοί εἰσιν,
οἳ μοι ἐφώρμησαν πόλεμον πολύδακρυν Ἀχαιῶν

But even there, causality does not refer to Zeus's *boulê* alone but to the gods in general, and in this context it may equally refer to Apollo (who stirs up the quarrel and causes the plague), Aphrodite (particularly active in Book 3), Athena or even Hera (willingly consulting Zeus at the beginning of Book 4). It is then safer to suppose that Zeus' *boulê* in the prooimion of the *Iliad* is more closely associated with Thetis' subsequent request to Zeus and much less or not at all with Momus' advice, to say nothing of the fact that the story on Momus' intervention does not necessarily match what Homer knew or had in mind when he composed the *Iliad*. We will see further on in what way Thetis' request in the *Iliad* complies, if it complies, with the causality pertaining to the Trojan War in the epic Cycle and the *Cypria* in particular. For the time being let us say, regarding the relation between Achilles' wrath in the *Iliad* and Zeus' *boulê* mentioned at the end of Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* (a problem well noticed by many scholars and given various answers⁶), that it would be strange if Homer totally invented a theme as big as the quarrel between Achilles and Agamemnon without drawing from a relevant tradition, and equally strange if Proclus added it *ex nihilo* in his summary of the *Cypria* even under the influence of the *Iliad*. Still, there is no reason to search for complete agreement between the two epics, since we know that Homer often mentions or alludes to mythical narratives included in other epics, some earlier than his own (such as the Argonautic epic, for instance), by evoking and at the same time by modifying some salient points of these narratives. *Rebus hic stantibus*, one can only argue that the end of Proclus' summary of the *Cypria* merely informs us about the making of Zeus' decision, whereas the prooimion of the *Iliad* clearly mentions its sad results. Whether this *boulê* of Zeus was identical in the two epics remains uncertain. Furthermore, whether Thetis' request to Zeus was mentioned in the *Cypria* remains equally uncertain, but even if it were, it would more probably reflect its Iliadic antecedent rather than display the poet's genuine creativity.

To gain a further understanding of the causes leading to the Trojan War in the Epic Cycle, we will have to concentrate once more on the two prerequisites set by Momus for the War.

The first is, as we know, Thetis' marriage to a mortal. According to most sources, this marriage was the only way to avoid the birth of a new divine master of the world which would result if Thetis was to marry Zeus or Poseidon who both courted her. The alliance to a mortal, therefore, mainly preserved Zeus' divine power; its relation to the Trojan War emerges on a second level through Eris' intervention in the marriage of Peleus and Thetis and through the

⁶ Kullmann 1956, 1991, Davies 1989a: 48–50, Burgess 1996, 2001: 149–150, Marks 2002.

birth of Achilles, who was to play an important role in the war. Thetis' marriage was merely the occasion for the beginning of the war; as a cause it is subject to a different type of causality mainly attached to the preservation of the Olympians' power.

The second prerequisite of Momus' plan, Helen's birth, suggests a more obvious reason for the war since, theoretically at least, Helen's abduction by Paris could occur independently of Peleus' marriage. It is interesting to observe that both prerequisites concern the union of a god(dess) to a mortal and Zeus is personally involved, the first time in a negative, the second time in a positive way. In the first case a mortal (Peleus) sleeps with a goddess (Thetis) upon whom Zeus must not beget a male descendant; in the second case a god (Zeus) sleeps with a mortal (Leda) upon whom Zeus must beget a female descendant.

Let us now turn to the preserved prooimion of the *Cypria*.

The complex condition referred to in the scholion on *Iliad* 1.5 appears much more generalizing in the prooimion of the *Cypria*. The consultation of Momus is, of course, totally absent, and the action is subject to the general sequence resulting from Earth's overburdening. But this action is undertaken by Zeus himself who pities Earth spontaneously and not on Earth's request. According to Proclus, the marriage of Thetis and Peleus (Momus' first prerequisite) was celebrated somewhere at the beginning of the poem, but whether the capture of Thetis by Peleus and her metamorphoses, depicted in various literary and iconographic sources, were also mentioned remains unclear. What is clear, however, and even textually preserved in our fragments of the *Cypria* (fr. 10 West, 7 Davies) is Zeus' action aiming at the birth of Helen (Momus' second prerequisite). In the light of these verses we know that the *Cypria* did not follow the well-known version (related by Apollodorus, 3.10.7 and alluded to by Homer, *Od.* 11.298) according to which Leda was Helen's mother, but mentioned Nemesis as Helen's mother, whom Zeus had to pursue in spite of her various metamorphoses, her only and vain way to resist.

ἄλλοτε μὲν κατὰ κῦμα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
ἰχθύι εἰδομένην, πόντον πολὺν ἐξοροθύνων,
ἄλλοτ' ἄν' Ὠκεανὸν ποταμὸν καὶ πεῖρατα γαίης,
ἄλλοτ' ἄν' ἤπειρον πολυβῶλακα. γίνετο δ' αἰεὶ
θηρί' ὅσ' ἤπειρος αἰνὰ τρέφει, ὄφρα φύγοι μιν.

Sometimes in the noisy sea's wave, where she had the form of a fish, as he stirred up the mighty deep; sometimes along Ocean's stream and the ends of the earth; sometimes on the loam-rich land; and she kept changing into all the fearsome creatures that the land nurtures, so as to escape him.

(Translation by M. L. West)

Thetis' metamorphoses are often mentioned in literature and popular in vase painting and seem to correspond to a capacity often attributed to maritime deities (such as, for instance, Proteus in *Odyssey* 4.456–458). By contrast, Nemesis' metamorphoses are not attested in other narratives and it is quite possible that they have been created under the influence of Thetis' myth which is, together with Helen's birth, involved in the causality of the Trojan War and, in particular, to its very beginning. Metamorphoses are, anyway, a folk-tale theme rather popular in epic narrative. It is, indeed, tempting to see a brilliant use of the metamorphosis theme in Helen's voice-mimicry in *Odyssey* 4 (imitation of the voice of the Greek heroes' wives in front of the Trojan horse) a story with no relation either to Nemesis (who does not seem to be Helen's mother in the *Odyssey*) or to Thetis. As is well-known, a comparison between Thetis and Helen is sketched as early as Alcaeus' poetry.⁷ It is difficult to say whether the presence of Themis (all manuscripts of Proclus' summary read Thetis) in the origin of Zeus' *boulê* may have favored the choice of Nemesis for the role of Helen's mother and, consequently, the narration of her metamorphoses (be they a replica of Thetis' or not). In Pindar, however, Themis is the one who prevents Thetis' union to Zeus or to Poseidon (*Isthm.* VIII 29–38).

It is interesting to observe that in Hesiod's *Theogony* (214, 223, 225), not only Momus and Nemesis, but also Eris, are children of Nyx and brother and sisters to each other.⁸ If one takes the statement of v. 213 (οὐ τινι κοιμηθεῖσα θεὰ τέκε Νύξ ἔρεβεννή), where the enumeration of Nyx' children begins, to be valid for all the children of Nyx, including those enumerated after this verse, then Momus, Nemesis and Eris are not only brother and sisters to each other but also all fatherless (ἄπατορες). This is a common characteristic of practically all the descendants of Nyx (with the sole exception of the individuals mentioned in *Theog.* 125); consequently, Momus and Nemesis are excluded from any parental lineage or cosmogonic succession relating them to Zeus. Then if one again takes for granted that Hesiod has in mind the decisive role of Eris in the outbreak of the war, one realizes why in the *Theogony* the list of Eris' children comprises Ponos, Algea, Hysminai, Machai, Phonoï, Androktasiai, Neikea and Ate. One could fairly suppose that in the prooimion of the *Iliad*, where Eris appears only as a root of the word ἐρίσαντε (v. 6), the *algea* and the other mortal consequences of Achilles' wrath are very close to such a logical and genealogical attribution of causality as the one depicted by Hesiod. Further, one can hardly overlook the morphological and semiological affinity between *eris* and *mênis* in the prooimion of the *Iliad*, since the *eris* between Achilles and Agamemnon will give birth to the *mênis* of Achilles. In light of the above, a Hesiodic influence on the scholion to *Iliad* 1.5 seems rather plausible, whereas, on the contrary, the prooimion of the *Cypria* could hardly reflect any mythographic or thematic dialogue with the Hesiodic genealogic causality.

⁷ Burnett 1983: 190–97, Davies 1986, Maronitis 1999: 124–41.

⁸ On the genealogy of Nyx in general, see Ramnoux 1959.

One of the issues briefly associated by Hesiod with the Trojan War is, as already mentioned, Helen (*Works and Days* 165), but the relation of this issue to the war as a whole seems occasional rather than causal. We should note here that the theme of Helen's responsibility, which seems to be brought forward by Stesichorus and the lyric poets and to be fully elaborated in drama and rhetoric, appears in a very subtle way in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. It is not my purpose to expand here on such a major and often discussed issue. I will only inquire whether within the term "Helen's responsibility," in a Homeric context blame relates to her abandoning her home, her abandoning her land or the consequent Trojan War. In all Iliadic references, the abandoning of her home and her land is connected to the Trojan War not by relations of guilt but by relations of causality. Helen did not decide on any war by herself and, although she appears critical of her own actions, she does not plead guilty (and this means that she does not seek punishment for her actions), she only places the blame on herself (and this means that she assumes responsibility for those actions of hers that she disapproves). The Homeric epic feels no obligation to account for Helen's inclusion in the Trojan context where her pre-Homeric history had already placed her. If in the Homeric epic an aspect of "guilt" is noted in Helen, Homer tends to regard it as part of the baggage of Helen's past, so to speak, and leaves Helen to handle the issue herself, usually through self-accusation (except in 19.25).⁹ One wonders whether this entails the idea that the motif of Earth's complaint to Zeus about the weight of humans could be a pre-Iliadic causal pattern much more involved in the war's causality than Helen's own involvement. It is interesting to observe that, in a play where Helen's innocence is so emphatically proclaimed through the story of the phantom, Euripides' *Helen*, the cause evoked for the Trojan War, Earth's relief, once more (see text above), directly, and somewhat literally, reflects the causality displayed in the proimion of the *Cypria*.

Conclusions

Let us conclude by once more evoking the basic, but not automatically decisive, cause of the Trojan War: Thetis' involvement in the beginning and the action of the Trojan War. We should bear in mind that in the Epic Cycle—that is, probably, in the *Cypria*—mention was made of Achilles' concealment in Lycomedes' court as a girl and of the revelation of his true nature due to Odysseus' resourceful trick (*Cypria* fr. 19 West), according to the scholion D on *Iliad* 19.326. Proclus' summary alludes to this association of Achilles with Skyros, Lycomedes' kingdom, with no further details. As is known, the decisive consequence of Thetis' marriage to a mortal (an alliance heavy to bear, as she herself admits in *Iliad* 18.432–434) was the mortality of her offspring, a fate that Thetis tried to forestall in very many ways, either through an unsuccessful immortalizing procedure or through the temporary concealment in Lycomedes' palace. In the *Iliad*, it is clear that all the omens about Achilles' premature death and about Achilles' decisive role in the Trojan expedition are taken for granted and are often referred to

⁹ For a fuller account of this idea, see Christopoulos 2007.

in many episodes of the plot. If it is true that Thetis' request is the basic narrative lever to stir up the action in the *Iliad*,¹⁰ as Earth's request was the basic lever to stir up the whole war, then here lies also the main difference defining Thetis' action in the *Cypria* and Thetis' specific request to Zeus in the *Iliad*.¹¹ Thetis' main concern has been to prolong Achilles' life by preventing him from being exposed to circumstances which would threaten it; on the other hand, Achilles' preference has been for a glorious short life rather than an insignificant prolonged one. With Achilles' *mênis*, which leads the hero away from the battlefield, Thetis' priority to keep Achilles away from any vital threat is essentially accomplished, while Achilles' option of a short glorious life instead of a long inglorious one is essentially ruled out. If Thetis' wish was to be fulfilled, Achilles would stay away from the battle; if Achilles' option was to be pursued, Thetis would have to change her initial priorities. Thetis' request to Zeus abolishes the last possibility of preserving her son's life. Here lies, I believe, the most essential shift in the sequence of causality, since in the *Iliad* Thetis, through her request, is brought to shorten instead of prolonging her son's life and to forsake her maternal priorities to serve the narrative ones. The issue of Achilles' premature death was suspended as long as he remained far from the battlefield. In an ironic way, the one who would narratively "kill" him would be none other than the very one who was always seeking to keep him away from death, his own mother, who is now seeking to preserve not his life but, this time, his honor. What we have, then, is not a rupture between two sequences of Zeus' *boulê* in two different epics, but actually a more decisive rupture in Thetis' attitude as it is described in the plot of the *Cypria* and as it is described in the course of the *Iliad*. One wonders whether this Iliadic attitude could be an innovative use of Thetis' role introduced by the poet of the *Iliad* in contrast to the relevant traditional narrative patterns included in the poems of the Epic Cycle and the *Cypria* in particular, however later than the *Iliad* these poems may be. If this is so, then the final words regarding the causality of the Trojan War and Zeus' *boulê* are essentially the words spoken by Thetis in her request to Zeus in *Iliad* 1.503–510. It was that very event that defined the future: it was then decided that Achilles' glorious honor was to be reestablished and, subsequently, that his glorious life was to be terminated. If, in the long story of the Trojan War, the *Iliad* was just a brief episode, then it was intended that this episode would prolong, by a little longer, be it for some days only, the life of ὠκύμορος Achilles.

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¹⁰ On Thetis in the *Iliad* generally, see Slatkin 1991.

¹¹ The inevitability of Achilles' death in the *Iliad* displays a more tragic picture of him in comparison to the rest of the Epic Cycle; see Griffin 1977. On the relation of Zeus' plan in the *Cypria*, Zeus' plan in the *Iliad* and Thetis' request in the *Iliad*, see in particular Kullmann 1956, 1960: 212–214, 225–226, 358–359, 1991: 438, Holmberg 1998: 463, Burgess 2001: 137–138, Allan 2008.

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