



A Narratological Commentary on the  
**ODYSSEY**

Irene de Jong

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## A Narratological Commentary on the *Odyssey*

Whereas traditional commentaries tend to be comprehensive and micro-textual, this narratological commentary focuses on one aspect of the *Odyssey*, its narrativity, and pays lavish attention to the meso- and macro-levels. Drawing on the concepts of modern narratology as well as the insights of Homeric scholarship, it discusses the role of narrator and narratees, methods of characterization and description, plot-development, focalization, and the narrative exploitation of type-scenes. Full attention is also given to the structure, characterizing function, and relation to the narrative context of the abundantly present speeches. Finally, the numerous themes and motifs, which so subtly contribute to the unity of this long text, are traced and evaluated. Although Homer's brilliant narrative art has always been admired, this commentary aims to lay bare the techniques responsible for this brilliance. All Greek is translated and all technical terms explained in a glossary.

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## PREFACE

This commentary differs in a number of respects from traditional commentaries. The latter may be broadly defined as heterogeneous, problem-oriented, and micro-textual: they consist of philological, linguistic, literary, or historical notes on mostly small parts of the text which had been deemed difficult by previous commentators – a format which goes back to the historical forerunners of our commentaries, the lemmatic scholia. This narratological commentary covers the whole text, not only the problematic parts, deals exclusively with its narrative aspects, and includes a discussion of the macro-textual and meso-textual levels.

I use the term ‘narratological’ here in a broad sense. The word ‘narratology’ was coined in 1969 by Todorov, but the theoretical interest in narrative actually started much earlier, when novelists like Gustave Flaubert and Henry James set out to ‘defend’ their art by means of technical discussions. Next, it was the Russian formalists at the beginning of the twentieth century and the French structuralists of the nineteen-sixties who developed a set of refined tools to analyse narrative texts. When narratology was introduced into classical scholarship, one of the first texts to which it was applied was Homer, and this means that there exists a large body of narratological analysis of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. So much for narratology in the strict sense of the word. When dealing with the Homeric epics, however, there is much more. Through the ages Homeric scholarship has produced a wealth of information on narrative aspects of the poems. We have the exegetical scholia of antiquity, the interpretations by Unitarians, the analyses of type-scenes by oralists, and the close readings by non-oralists. Thus the methodological pillars on which this commentary rests include studies by narratologists like Genette and Bal, oralists like Edwards and Fenik, and non-oralists like Besslich and Lohmann. To some, this may seem like irresponsible eclecticism, but it has always been my firm conviction – one which I have defended at numerous places – that when analysing the storytelling in a text, the genesis of that text, though not irrelevant, is not of prime importance.

A commentary which is interested in the story, is by definition interested in the entire text: it will deal with the narrator and his narratees, the development of the plot, characterization, scenery, and aspects of time. Looked at in this way, passages which have never seemed difficult may require narratological clarification. Speech, which takes up no less than 66 per cent of the *Odyssean* text, also falls under the scope of this narratological commentary. Not only do the speakers of the *Odyssey* often function as narrators, but the relationship between speech and narrator-text is of prime interest also: how are speeches prepared for by the narrator, and how are the announcements made in speeches fulfilled? Speeches are also one of the prime means by which the Homeric heroes are characterized. Seeing that thus far there has been no study of the speeches of the *Odyssey* along the lines of Lohmann's book on the Iliadic speeches, I also pay considerable attention to the structure of speeches and sets of speeches. Not included in this commentary are (neo-analytical) discussions of possible relationships between the version of a particular narrative which we find in Homer and older ones. Readers interested in this diachronical aspect of the *Odyssean* narratives may fruitfully consult the recent study by Danek (1998).

True to its narrative focus, this commentary does not proceed word by word, but unit by unit. Thus, starting with the largest unit, an episode like the *Telemachy*, it gradually zooms in on a scene, a speech, a theme or a motif, even a word. Demarcating these units, in particular those on the meso-textual level, was not an easy task. For – as Mark Edwards warned me long ago – the Homeric text is a continuous stream, which is not easily divided up. Moreover, when one starts doing so, one discovers, first, that there are many ways of dividing the text, and second, that a passage can often be looked at from many different angles. I have therefore decided that, unlike the Homeric narrator, I will not hesitate to retrace my steps and, where necessary, discuss the same lines in different contexts. For my readers this means that when consulting this commentary for a particular passage, they would do well to cast their net wide, either, when hitting on a lemma which deals with a few lines, to read also the lemmata which precede, or, when hitting on a lemma which deals with many lines, to read also the lemmata which follow. For ease of reference I have retained the traditional book-divisions, but the books themselves are not analysed in terms of narrative units.

An obvious question at this point is why I have opted for the format of a commentary at all. Initially, I did toy with the idea of making a Homeric pendant of Heinze's *Virgils' epische Technik*, i.e., a paradigmatic discussion of Homer's narrative techniques. Upon reflection, I decided that it would be more instructive to offer a syntagmatic discussion, showing the workings of those techniques *in situ*, so to speak. This narratological commentary is therefore a meta-commentary, in the

sense that it does not provide assistance in reading the Greek text (though all the Greek is translated), but rather is intended to enrich the reader's understanding of the text, once he or she has read it.<sup>1</sup>

A few words about the organization. The Greek text quoted is that of Allen (Oxford Classical Text). I have chosen this text not because it is the best – Von der Muhll and Von Thiel are better – but because it is still the text most commonly used all over the world. Technical terms are explained in a separate glossary, to which the reader is referred by a dagger (†). A bold type-face, e.g., **'Oresteia' story**, signals a synoptic discussion, i.e., a comprehensive discussion of a certain topic, including a full bibliography. When the same topic recurs at another place, an asterisk alerts readers to the existence of a synoptic discussion, which can be located via the index. For reasons of space, the secondary literature is not discussed, but listed in footnotes. The lemmatic and running commentaries by Ameis-Hentze-Cauer, Eisenberger, Garvie, Heubeck et al., Jones, Rothe, Rutherford, Stanford, and Stürmer, which had a permanent place on my desk, are not referred to explicitly. In order to avoid ending up in a perpetuum mobile, no scholarship later than 1997 has been included. When listing parallel places I have employed the following strategy: wherever there were abundant Odyssean parallels, I have confined myself to those; where the phenomenon under discussion was rare, I have included both Odyssean and Iliadic places.

This commentary started in 1991 as a joint project with Scott Richardson of St John's College, Minnesota. At an early stage, considerations of time compelled him to withdraw, but I look back on our one year of collaboration with great pleasure and warmth. During the years I worked on the first version of the text I benefited enormously from the comments of Mark Edwards and Bas van der Mije; the latter supplemented his written comments with long talks on the structure and organization of the commentary. The second version was read through in part by Tijn Cuijpers and Douglas Olson, in its entirety by René Nünlist; I am particularly grateful to the latter, who at a late stage offered many apt corrections and improvements. I thank Roos Meijering for her supplements to my glossary. Kees Ruijgh helped me in many places by clarifying the basis of everything, the Greek. The cross-references and text-references were checked with great *akribēia* by Heleen Keizer. Barbara Fasting corrected my English with her usual accuracy and feeling. Of course, all remaining errors and idiosyncracies are mine. I thank the Royal Dutch Academy of Sciences for the senior fellowship (1988–92), during which I

<sup>1</sup> I discuss the principles of my commentary in more detail in *The Classical Commentary*, edited by R. Gibson and C. Kraus, Leiden 2001.

was able to initiate this project, Jan Maarten Bremer as the curator of the Van der Valk-Fund for the subvention which enabled Heleen to do her work, and the Netherlands Organization for Scientific Research for the grant which made possible the correction of my English. Working with the Cambridge University Press, in the persons of Pauline Hire, Michael Sharp, and Linda Woodward, has been a great pleasure.

I dedicate this book to my parents: ὥς οὐδὲν γλύκιον . . . τοκήων γίνεται . . .

## GLOSSARY

The aim of this glossary is twofold. In the first place, it explains the narratological and literary terms which are regularly used in the commentary. Whenever possible I have included the ancient equivalents of these terms, as found in the scholia. In the second place, it summarizes the most important narrative devices employed in the *Odyssey*. Readers of the commentary are referred to the glossary by a †.

**actorial motivation** ('psychologische Begründung'): the analysis of the 'why' of the story in terms of the aims and intentions of a character. An actorial motivation is usually explicit. Compare **narratorial motivation**.<sup>1</sup>

**ambiguity**: a character intentionally speaks words which for himself – and the **narratees** – have a different significance than for his addressee(s). Compare **dramatic irony** and **irony**.

**analepsis** (flashback, 'Rückwendung'): the narration of an event which took place before the point in the story where we find ourselves.<sup>2</sup> A distinction can be made between *internal* analepses (which recount events falling within the time limits of the **main story**) and *external* analepses (which recount events falling outside those time limits); between *repeating* analepses (narrating events also narrated elsewhere, producing a **mirror-story**) and *completing* analepses (narrating events which are not narrated elsewhere); and between *narratorial* analepses (by the narrator) and *actorial* analepses (by characters). Compare **prolepsis**.

**anticipatory doublet**: the foreshadowing of a coming event, theme, or scene by a minor replica of itself. The later instance is usually more fully developed, emotionally intense, and significant.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Stürmer (1921: 580).

<sup>2</sup> Hellwig (1964: 46–53), Genette (1980: 48–67), de Jong (1987a: 81–90), Richardson (1990: 95–9), and Reichel (1994: 47–98).

<sup>3</sup> Schadewaldt (1938: 127, 148, 150), Fenik (1968: 213–14, 1974: 101), and Edwards (1987a).

**appositive summary:** a **summary** of the type ὥς οἱ μὲν + imperfect, ‘thus they were . . .’, i.e., which both recapitulates the action of the preceding scene and, because of the imperfect, suggests that the action is continuing. It usually occurs at a **change of scene**.<sup>4</sup>

**‘argument’ function:** the function or significance which an **embedded story** told by a character has for the characters.<sup>5</sup> One of the most common argument functions is that of the hortatory, dissuading, or apologetic paradigm. Compare **‘key’ function**.

**‘catch-word’ technique:** when a character echoes, often at the beginning of his speech, a word or expression from his interlocutor’s speech, often with a different tone or meaning.<sup>6</sup>

**change of scene:** changes of scene in Homer can be brought about (i) by following a character who moves from place A to place B; (ii) by following a line of perception, when an event at place A is heard/seen by a character at place B; (iii) through a correspondence of action, when characters at place B are doing the same thing as those at place A; (iv) discontinuously, i.e., without any intermediary, perception, or correspondence, but at least by being prepared for by an **appositive summary**; and (v) abruptly, without preparation.<sup>7</sup>

**character doublet:** two characters who are similar in personality and actions.<sup>8</sup>

**characterization:** the presentation of a character, which includes his physical appearance, biography, and personality traits. Characterization may be *explicit* (a chunk of information is given – not necessarily at the first mention of a character – which is tailored to the direct context), or *implicit* (information, often pertaining to personality traits, is left to be inferred and assembled into a whole by the **narratees**). In the case of explicit characterization, we may further distinguish between *narratorial* characterization (given by the narrator) or *actorial* characterization (given by characters).<sup>9</sup>

**character-language:** words which are typically used by characters, i.e., which occur mainly or exclusively in speeches and **embedded focalization**.<sup>10</sup> The figures given in the commentary are based on both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

**‘continuity of time’ principle** (‘loi de la succession’): the **narrator** never retraces his steps, i.e., when he turns from storyline A to storyline B and back to A’ again, time ticks on and B takes over where A stopped, A’ where B stopped, etc. When

<sup>4</sup> Siegmann (1987: 168) and Richardson (1990: 31–4).

<sup>5</sup> Willcock (1964), Austin (1966), and Andersen (1987a).

<sup>6</sup> Lohmann (1970: 145), Macleod (1982: 52–3), and Rutherford (1992: 62).

<sup>7</sup> Bassett (1938: 48–56), Hölscher (1939: 37–41, 64–6), Heubeck (1954: 40–54), Hellwig (1964: 88–107), and Richardson (1990: 110–19). <sup>8</sup> Fenik (1974: 142, 172–207).

<sup>9</sup> Stürmer (1921: 592, 595–6), Camps (1980: 21–9), Griffin (1980: 50–80), and Richardson (1990: 36–50). <sup>10</sup> Griffin (1986) and de Jong (1988, 1992, 1997).

storyline B fills the foreground, storyline A usually remains ‘stationary’, i.e., nothing worth recounting is taking place (‘temps mort’).<sup>11</sup>

**description:** a passage in which features are ascribed to characters, objects, or locations.<sup>12</sup> In Homer descriptions rarely interrupt the story and thereby create a pause (see **rhythm**): explicit narratorial **characterization**, a static description of an object or **scenery** focalized by the narrator. As a rule, the description is integrated into the story: explicit actorial **characterization** (in a speech), dynamic description of objects (either in the form of an external **analepsis**, which recounts the history of the object, or of a **scene**, which shows its assembly or fabrication),<sup>13</sup> or **scenery** focalized by characters.

**‘domino’ form:** a new topic is introduced at the end of a speech, which is then picked up at the beginning of the next speech (A–B–C–C’–D–E–E’–F–G).

**double motivation:** when an action, thought, or quality is ascribed to both a god and a human being.<sup>14</sup>

**doublet:** a scene which in its structure repeats another scene.<sup>15</sup> Compare **anticipatory doublet**.

**dramatic irony:** a situation, action, or words have an additional significance for the **narratees**, one of which the characters are unaware. Compare **ambiguity** and **irony**.

**ellipsis** (κατὰ τὸ σιωπώμενον, gap, ‘Leerstelle’): information (concerning an event, action, motive, causal link, or personality trait) is left out and has to be filled in by the **narratees** themselves.<sup>16</sup> Compare **rhythm**.

**embedded focalization:** the representation by the **narrator** in the **narrator-text** of a character’s focalization, i.e., perceptions, thoughts, emotions, or words (indirect speech). Embedded focalization can be *explicit* (when there is a shifter in the form of a verb of seeing or thinking, or a subordinator followed by subjunctive or optative, etc.) or *implicit* (when such a shifter is lacking).<sup>17</sup>

**embedded story:** a story which is embedded in the **main story**. It is told either by the narrator or by one of the characters, who thereby functions as secondary narrator-focalizer. Embedded stories can also take the form of **embedded focalization**. They are external or internal **analepses** or – less often – **prolepses**. They may have an **argument** and/or **key function**. They are usually narrated in an

<sup>11</sup> Bassett (1938: 34–47), Delebecque (1958), and Rengakos (1995).

<sup>12</sup> Bal (1985: 129–34) and Hamon (1993).

<sup>13</sup> Lessing ([1766]1949: 67–8), Willenbrock (1944), Müller (1968), Krischer (1977), Richardson (1990: 61–9), and Becker (1995). <sup>14</sup> Lesky (1961).

<sup>15</sup> Fenik (1974: 142, 143–52, 172–207).

<sup>16</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 8.221 (‘it has been passed over in silence that Agamemnon has taken his mantle’), Meinel (1915), Genette (1980: 51–2), Iser (1984: 284–315), and Richardson (1990: 99–100). <sup>17</sup> Bal (1985: 100–18) and de Jong (1987a: 101–48).

allusive, elliptical style, the speaker concentrating on those aspects which are relevant to the message he wants to convey.

**epic regression** (ἐξ ἀναστροφῆς): a speaker mentions an event, person, or object, then moves back in time – typically with the particle γάρ or a relative pronoun – until a certain point, from which he again moves forward in time again until the point of departure is reached (C–B–A–B'–C'). The second time (B'–C') the events are usually told in more detail.<sup>18</sup> Epic regression is a form of multiple **ring-composition**.

**fabula**: all the events which are recounted in the **story**, abstracted from their disposition in the **text** and reconstructed in their chronological order.<sup>19</sup> For the fabula of the *Odyssey*, see Appendix A.

**'fill-in' technique** (τὸ διόκενον ἀναπληρώσας, 'Deckszenen'): the time required for one action (A) to be completed is filled with another action (B).<sup>20</sup> While in the *Iliad* A and B are usually not relevant to each other, in the *Odyssey* they are.

**focalizer** (λύσις ἐκ τοῦ προσώπου): the person (the narrator or a character) through whose eyes the events and persons of a narrative are 'seen'.<sup>21</sup>

**'free string' form**: a structuring principle of speeches and sets of speeches, whereby speakers simply add one element after another (A–B–C–D–E). It is often found in emotional contexts.<sup>22</sup>

**'if not'-situation**: 'there X would have happened, *if* Y had *not* intervened'. Often a pathetic or tension-raising device.<sup>23</sup>

**indirect dialogue** ('Übereckgespräch'): A talks to B about character C or about things which concern C (and which he intends C to hear) without addressing C.<sup>24</sup>

**'interlace' technique**: the technique of interweaving different storylines or scenes through regular switches between them.<sup>25</sup> Cf. Appendix B.

<sup>18</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 11.671–761 ('the story is told in reverse order. For in the case of longer stories to narrate from the beginning makes the hearing duller, but to begin at the main point is agreeable'), Schadewaldt (1938: 84), Krischer (1971: 136–40), and Slater (1983).

<sup>19</sup> Bal (1985: 11–47).

<sup>20</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 6.237 ('having filled the empty space of Hector's journey with the scene between Glaucus and Diomedes'), Stürmer (1921: 600–1), Schadewaldt (1938: 77–9), and Bassett (1938: 39–40).

<sup>21</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 5.408, Dachs (1913), Bal (1985: 100–18) and de Jong (1987a: 29–40).

<sup>22</sup> Lohmann (1970: 43).

<sup>23</sup> Fenik (1968: 175–6), de Jong (1987a: 68–81, 1993), Lang (1989), Richardson (1990: 187–91), Nesselrath (1992), Morrison (1992: 51–71), and Loudon (1993a).

<sup>24</sup> Schadewaldt (1959a: 16), Fenik (1974: 68–71), Hohendahl-Zoetelief (1980: 170–3), and Hölscher (1989: 128–30).

<sup>25</sup> Zielinski (1899–1901: 413, 'analysierend-desultorische Methode'), Schadewaldt (1938: 76–7, 'Klammertechnik'), Heubeck (1954: 54–63, 'übergreifende Verzahnung'), Hellwig (1964: 88–107), and Siegmann (1987: 134–43).



**‘interruption’ technique:** an action or idea is introduced, suspended for a while, and then resumed and completed.<sup>26</sup>

**irony** (εἰρωνεία): a character speaks words which he intends his addressee(s) to understand as having a different significance.<sup>27</sup> Compare **ambiguity** and **dramatic irony**.

**Jørgensen’s law:** characters, lacking the omniscience of the narrator, often ascribe divine interventions to Ζεύς (in general), to an unspecified god (δαίμων, θεός, θεοί), or to the wrong god.<sup>28</sup>

**juxtaposition:** the positioning of two similar actions, scenes, or stories next to each other, whereby the **narratees** are invited to note and appreciate the differences.<sup>29</sup>

**‘key’ function:** the function or significance which an **embedded story** told by a character has for the **narratees**. Compare **‘argument’ function**.<sup>30</sup>

**main story:** the events which are told by the **narrator** (minus external **analepses** and **prolepses**). The main story of the *Odyssey* comprises forty-one days (cf. Appendix A). Compare **embedded story**.

**mirror-story:** an **embedded story** which in its entirety reflects the **main story** (if an **embedded story** only reflects aspects of the main story, it is better to analyse these correspondences in terms of its **‘key’ function**) or another embedded story. A mirror-story can take the form of a repeating **analepsis** (ἀνακεφαλαίωσις).<sup>31</sup>

**misdirection:** the **narratees** are emphatically prepared for an event, which in the end does not occur, or takes place later (**retardation**) or differently.<sup>32</sup>

**motif:** a minimal recurrent narrative unit (e.g., ‘watchdog’ motif).

**narratees:** the representatives of the hearers/readers in the text. They are the addressees of the **narrator** (in full: the primary narratees-focalizees).<sup>33</sup>

**narrator:** the representative of the author in the text (in full: the primary narrator-focalizer).<sup>34</sup>

**narrator-text:** those parts of the text which are presented by the **narrator**, i.e., the parts between the speeches. We may further distinguish between simple narrator-text (when the narrator presents his own focalization) and **embedded focalization** (when the narrator presents the focalization of a character).

<sup>26</sup> Fenik (1974: 61–104).      <sup>27</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 1.410.      <sup>28</sup> Jørgensen (1904).

<sup>29</sup> Goldhill (1988: 19–24).      <sup>30</sup> Andersen (1987a).

<sup>31</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 1.366, Dällenbach (1989), Létoublon (1983), and de Jong (1985a).

<sup>32</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 13.219–39 (‘the listener, having heard “and then Poseidon became very angry”, expects a big fight. But the poet, loving changes, introduces other things’), Duckworth (1933: 109–10), Hölscher (1989: 235–42), and Morrison (1992).

<sup>33</sup> Prince (1973), de Jong (1987a: 53–9), and Richardson (1990: 174–8).

<sup>34</sup> Bal (1985: 119–27), de Jong (1987a: 29–40), and Richardson (1990).

**narratorial motivation** ('ökonomische Begründung'): the analysis of the 'why' of the story in terms of the aims and intentions of the narrator. In Homer the narratorial motivation always remains implicit. Compare **actorial motivation**.<sup>35</sup>

**paralepsis**: a speaker provides *more* information than he should, when the **narrator** intrudes with his superior knowledge into the **embedded focalization** of a character, or could, when a speaking character has more knowledge than is possible (**transference**).<sup>36</sup> Compare **paralipsis**.

**paralipsis** (παράλειψις): a speaker provides *less* information than he actually has; details or events are left out, to be told at a later, more effective place.<sup>37</sup> Special Homeric applications of this principle are the technique of the gradual revelation ('stückweise Enthüllung', 'Ungenauigkeitsprinzip'), when we are only gradually informed about the fulfilment of an announced goal;<sup>38</sup> and the technique of the piecemeal presentation, when a story is recounted in two or more tellings, each of which complements the other.<sup>39</sup>

**parallel form**: when speeches or sets of speeches are structured according to the A–B–A'–B' pattern.

**periphrastic denomination** (ἀντωνομασία): a reference to a character not by proper name but by a form of indirect description (e.g., 'father' or 'master' instead of 'Odysseus').<sup>40</sup>

**prolepsis** (πρόληψις, προαναφώνησις, flashforward, foreshadowing, 'Vorauswendung'): the narration of an event which will take place later than the point in the story where we find ourselves.<sup>41</sup> A distinction can be made between *internal* prolepses (referring to events which fall within the time limits of the **main story**) and *external* prolepses (which refer to events which fall outside those time limits), and between *narratorial* prolepses (made by the narrator) and *actorial* prolepses (made by characters). Compare **analepsis** and **seed**.

**refrain-composition** ('Ritornellkomposition'): the recurrence of the same word or phrase in a continuous series of passages dealing with the same subject (often a catalogue), strengthening the connection between them.<sup>42</sup>

**retardation**: either (i) a slowing down of the narrative **rhythm**, or (ii) the postponement of an announced event through the intervention of other, sometimes even

<sup>35</sup> Stürmer (1921: 580). <sup>36</sup> Genette (1980: 195–7) and de Jong (1987a: 108–9).

<sup>37</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 17.24 ('It is Homer's custom to leave out, παραλείπειν, some points and tell them later'), Geffcken (1927: 1–6), Genette (1980: 51–3), and Richardson (1990: 99–100).

<sup>38</sup> Schadewaldt (1938: 110, 112–13, 140) and Heubeck (1954: 18–19).

<sup>39</sup> Schadewaldt (1938: 85, n. 2), Heubeck (1954: 19–22), and Fenik (1974: 122).

<sup>40</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 13.154 and de Jong (1993).

<sup>41</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 11.604 ('the foreshadowing makes the listener eager to learn what the evil about to befall Patroclus will be'), Rothe (1914: 239–44), Duckworth (1933), Schadewaldt (1938: 15, 54–5), Hellwig (1964: 54–8), Genette (1980: 67–79), de Jong (1987a: 81–90), Richardson (1990: 132–9), and Reichel (1994: 47–98). <sup>42</sup> Van Otterlo (1944: 31–3).

downright opposite events (a form of **misdirection**). It is used to add weight and/or create tension.<sup>43</sup>

**reverse order** (τὸ δεύτερον πρότερον, Homeric *hysteron proteron*, ‘continuity of thought’ principle): when two persons, objects, or ideas have been mentioned, it is the second which is uppermost in the mind and is taken up first (A–B–B’–A’). The principle may determine the structure of speeches, sets of speeches, subsequent scenes (going to bed – rising), or speech and narrative (order – execution).<sup>44</sup>

**rhythm**: the relation between **text**-time and **fabula**-time. An event may be told as a **scene** (text-time = fabula-time), **summary** (text-time < fabula-time), **retardation** (text-time > fabula-time), or **ellipsis** (no text-time matches fabula-time). Finally, there may be a *pause*, when the action is suspended to make room for a **description** (no fabula-time matches text-time).<sup>45</sup>

**ring-composition**: when the end of a passage repeats its beginning (simple: A–B–A’, or multiple: A–B–C–B’–A’). The device is used mainly to enclose a chunk of explicit **characterization**, an **analepsis**, or a **description**, or as a structuring device in speeches and sets of speeches.<sup>46</sup> Sometimes the situation has evolved at the moment of resumption (progressive ring-composition).

**scene**: a narrative unit created by a combination of events or actions taking place at the same place and involving the same characters. A scene is usually told more or less mimetically, in that the text-time matches the fabula-time; see **rhythm**. When the same constellation recurs more than once (but is not as formalized as a **type-scene**), the scene is labelled, e.g., ‘farewell’ scene.

**scenery**: in Homer scenery is never described systematically or for its own sake; rather, we find **descriptions** or brief references when the story needs them; they derive almost exclusively from characters, in **embedded focalization** or a speech. Scenery descriptions either consist of a list of items connected via **refrain composition** (ἐνθα or ἐν) or have some form of spatial organization, or are a combination of the two.<sup>47</sup>

**seed** (προοικονομεῖν, hint, advance mention): the insertion of a piece of information, the relevance of which will only later become clear. The later event thus

<sup>43</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 15.390 (‘when he leads his story to a climax, he often uses changes of subject, so as to increase the tension of his listeners’), Austin (1966), Reichel (1990), and Morrison (1992: 35–49).

<sup>44</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 2.629 (‘Homer always deals with the later first’) and Bassett (1920, 1938: 119–28). <sup>45</sup> Genette (1980: 86–112) and Bal (1985: 68–77).

<sup>46</sup> Van Otterlo (1944), Lohmann (1970: 12–30), and Stanley (1993: 6–9).

<sup>47</sup> Hellwig (1964: 32–5), Müller (1968: 89–153), Elliger (1975: 103–65), Andersson (1976: 37–52), Hölscher (1989: 186–209), and Richardson (1990: 50–61).

prepared for becomes more natural, logical, or plausible.<sup>48</sup> Seeds are a form of **prolepsis**.

**silent characters** (κωφὰ πρόσωπα): characters who are present but do not speak.<sup>49</sup>

**simile**: a situation or scene, usually drawn from nature or daily life, which is introduced by way of comparison (X did Y, *as when* . . ., thus X did Y). The scenes/situations are usually omnitemporal (epic τε, present tense, gnomic aorists) and peopled by anonymous persons. The point of contact (*tertium comparationis*) between simile and narrative context is usually ‘advertised’ by means of a verbal echo. The *tertium* points up the *primary function* of the simile, which is to illustrate a particular detail of the narrative context. Similes often have one or more *secondary functions* as well: to make clear a contrast, draw thematic lines, foreshadow later events, or engage the narratees by making them share the feelings of one of the characters.<sup>50</sup>

**story**: the events of the **fabula** as dispositioned and ordered in the **text**. The story consists of the **main story** and **embedded stories**. In comparison with the fabula, the events in the story may differ in *frequency* (they may be told more than once, as in the case of repeating **analepses** and **prolepses**), **rhythm** (they may be told at great length or quickly), or *order* (the chronological order may be changed, see **analepsis** and **prolepsis**).<sup>51</sup>

**story-pattern**: a recurrent sequence of events or **scenes**, which is less formalized than a **type-scene** (e.g., the ‘delayed recognition’ story-pattern).<sup>52</sup>

**summary**: the narration of events in a compressed form, rather than scenically.<sup>53</sup>

See **rhythm**.

**summary priamel**: a priamel the foil of which does not consist of a series of items, but rather one summary term (‘there are many x’s, but X is the biggest’).<sup>54</sup>

**text**: the verbal presentation of the **story** (and hence **fabula**) by a **narrator**.

**theme**: a recurrent topic which is essential to the narrative as a whole (e.g., the theme of ‘cunning versus force’).

**transference**: a character displays knowledge of something which, strictly speaking, he cannot know, but which the **narratees** do know; the knowledge of the narratees is ‘transferred’ to the character.<sup>55</sup> Transference is a form of **prolepsis**.

<sup>48</sup> Scholia, e.g., *ad Il.* 2.272, Genette (1980: 75) and Bal (1985: 65).

<sup>49</sup> Scholion *ad Il.* 1.332 (‘Homer was the first to introduce the tragic device of the silent characters’), Besslich (1966: 94–5), and de Jong (1987c).

<sup>50</sup> Bassett (1921), Fränkel (1921), Coffey (1957), Lee (1964), Scott (1974), and Moulton (1977).

<sup>51</sup> Bal (1985: 49–118). <sup>52</sup> Lord (1960: 68–98, ‘themes’).

<sup>53</sup> Hellwig (1964: 41, 44, 116), Genette (1980: 95–9), and Richardson (1990: 17–21).

<sup>54</sup> Race (1982: 10–11).

<sup>55</sup> Scholion *ad Il.* 16.844–5 (‘what the poet knows, he has imparted to a heroic character’), Bassett (1938: 130–40), and Kakridis (1982).