



March 2002

## Eurybates, Odysseus, and the Duals in Book 9 of the Iliad

Bruce Loudon

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.colby.edu/cq>

---

### Recommended Citation

Colby Quarterly, Volume 38, no.1, March 2002, p.62-76

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by Digital Commons @ Colby. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colby Quarterly by an authorized editor of Digital Commons @ Colby.

## *Eurybates, Odysseus, and the Duals in Book 9 of the Iliad*

By BRUCE LOUDEN

IN BOOK 9 OF THE *Iliad* a desperate Agamemnon sends a delegation to Akhilleus. Since Akhilleus withdrew from fighting, angry at Agamemnon, the Greeks have suffered significant casualties, and the Trojans, with Zeus' aid, now threaten the Greeks, as never before in the nine-year war. The delegation, which hopes to assuage Akhilleus' wrath with Agamemnon's mammoth offer, consists of Odysseus, Aias, Phoinix, and two heralds, Eurybates and Odios. Thereafter, in a most notorious discrepancy, what Schadewalt called "Surely the greatest problem in the whole of the *Iliad*,"<sup>1</sup> the narrator repeatedly refers to this group of five using the dual number (9.182 ff). While many explanations have been proposed, none has proven persuasive, though significant contributions have been made, especially by Boll, Segal, Hainsworth, and Edwards. Boll first suggested the relevance of the passage in Book 1 (1.327-47) in which duals depict the heralds, Talthymbios and Eurybates, as they approach Akhilleus to claim Briseis.<sup>2</sup> Segal, building on Boll, argues that the Book 9 duals, like those in Book 1, refer to the two heralds, Eurybates and Odios.<sup>3</sup> Hainsworth suggests that the duals in Book 9 "survive from an archetype in which they were grammatically appropriate."<sup>4</sup> Edwards notes similarities between scenes in Books 1 and 19, "In structure the transfer of gifts [to Akhilleus in bk 19] is much like the restoration of Khruseis to her father."<sup>5</sup> I will show that additional significant parallels become evident when we bring all three episodes (1, 9, 19) together. Building on all of these observations, I also call attention to the existence of a specific type-scene in the poem, to the tendency for Odysseus to be depicted with duals throughout the *Iliad*, and to the herald, Eurybates, who is a key to at least a partial solution of the problem. I do not claim that my approach solves all aspects of this notorious problem but do hope to shed new light on many relevant issues.

1. Quoted in Griffin (1995) 51. There is a vast bibliography on this well-known topic, on which see Griffin 51-53. I have confined myself, however, to those pieces directly relevant to my argument. For a survey of earlier work see Lesky (1967) 103-05, as noted in Nagy (1979) 49.

2. Boll (1917/18); (1919/20).

3. Segal (1968).

4. Hainsworth (1993) 86.

5. Edwards (1991) 263.

First, we need to recognize that the Book 9 embassy is itself a type-scene within the *Iliad*. By noting the other instances of the type-scene, we can gain a surer sense of what is expected or unexpected in such a context, and which characters typically play parts in it. Having arrived at a clearer understanding of the basic function or purpose of the type-scene, we can better consider the possible referent of the duals. The underlying type-scene, which occurs not only in Book 9, but also in Books 1 and 19, may be characterized as a delegation, with the following rough shape, *Agamemnon dispatches Odysseus to lead a delegation to return a companion dear to Akhilleus*. In each case Odysseus leads the delegation shortly after an assembly or council has met which focuses on Akhilleus (1.57-305, 9.11-176, 19.45-276). In each case Odysseus leading the delegation is an attempt to solve a problem or reach a solution. I suggest that Odysseus' essential function in the *Iliad* and in the larger Trojan War saga is that of the successful problem solver, whether in devising the Trojan horse to end the war, or in his diplomatic skills, as in his dexterous handling of the disastrous assembly in Book 2, and in the instances of the type-scene under discussion. The delegation type-scene also accomplishes an additional purpose beyond the interaction with Akhilleus: the members perform a sacred function or purifying ritual.

We turn first to the final instance of the type-scene, the Book 19 delegation, which, since it is largely successful, best demonstrates what the type-scene is supposed to accomplish. At an assembly, Agamemnon dispatches Odysseus to deliver to Akhilleus the many gifts earlier promised him (in the parallel scene at 9.120-57), including Briseis. The verb Agamemnon uses for his order is ἐπιτέλλομαι ("I command": 19.192), which is employed in each case to set the delegation in motion (1.326, 9.179, 19.192). Agamemnon then gives a second command to his herald, Talthybios, to prepare a boar for sacrifice to Zeus and Helios (19.196-97). We will note that heralds feature centrally in the type-scene. Talthybios' and Agamemnon's sacrifice of the boar is the second function of the type-scene, which I have called sacred, a purifying ritual. Odysseus returns Briseis to Akhilleus (19.246, 279-82), as part of a public reconciliation, and Akhilleus will return to battle. After Odysseus carries out the exchange of gifts, including restoring Briseis, *a companion dear to Akhilleus*, to the protagonist, Agamemnon and Talthybios then perform the sacrifice before the assembled troops (19.249-68), and the enmity between Akhilleus and Agamemnon is officially over, the delegation scene a success.<sup>6</sup> The wrath of Akhilleus against Agamemnon is officially ended.

There are no duals used for the Book 19 delegation, though relevant duals do occur earlier in the Book 19 assembly, involving Odysseus (19.47: τῷ δὲ δύω σκάζοντε βᾶτην, "the two went, limping"), as will be noted below. Of the three parallel episodes in Books 1, 9 and 19, diplomacy is least necessary

6. Though the death of Patroklos and Akhilleus' desire for revenge against Hektor are probably more central to Akhilleus' change of heart than anything Odysseus and Agamemnon do.

in Book 19. Briseis is being returned to Akhilleus, who is presently more concerned with Patroklos and Hektor. Neither persuasion, as in Book 9, nor a show of force, as in Book 1, is necessary in this last instance of the type-scene, which segues quickly into the poem's most potent *aristeia*. This delegation is quite large. Seven helpers are specified (19.238-40), apparently selected by Odysseus himself.

In Book 1 the situation is more complex. The basic type-scene of *Odysseus leading a delegation to return a companion dear to Akhilleus* is bifurcated into two separate scenes (1.308-17, 1.318-48), two separate delegations. Odysseus leads the larger delegation (including twenty rowers) entrusted with returning Khryseis to her father, ἐν δ' ἄρχος ἔβη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς ("and much-devising Odysseus went as leader": 1.311). No duals are used to describe Odysseus' delegation. It is successful not only in returning Khryseis to her father, but in the even larger objective of appeasing the wrath of Apollo, provoked by Khryses' prayers to the god for his daughter's return. In this instance, then, Odysseus performs the sacred or purifying function which in 19 is assigned to Talthybios. There is a key difference from the usual type-scene, however. Odysseus restores the woman not to Akhilleus, but to her father, a priest of Apollo. Nonetheless, this first instance of the type-scene serves to parallel and predict the final instance in Book 19. In each scene Agamemnon has caused a drastic problem by insisting that he maintain possession of a woman who rightfully belongs somewhere else. He then releases the woman, and Odysseus restores her to the man with whom she belongs. Odysseus also performs hecatombs to Apollo, thus appeasing his wrath against the Greeks. The parallels suggest that Apollo and Akhilleus occupy similar positions in the type-scene, as the figure whose wrath causes great harm to the Akhaians until he is assuaged and made to forget his anger.<sup>7</sup> In more ways than this, of course, Akhilleus' wrath at Agamemnon takes on the dimensions of a divine wrath.

Yet immediately after this (which may mean that it is intended as a simultaneous event), Agamemnon sends the two heralds, Talthybios and Eurybates, to Akhilleus' tent to take away Briseis (1.320-26). To command them he uses the same word as will be used of the delegation Odysseus leads in Book 19 (1.326: κρατερόν δ' ἐπὶ μῦθον ἔτελλε, "and he placed a powerful command on them;" cf. 19.192: ἐπιτέλλομαι). We have, then, Agamemnon dispatching a delegation, just as in all other instances of the type-scene, but only here is Odysseus *not* the leader of the delegation which proceeds to Akhilleus' tent. He cannot be, since he simultaneously leads the larger, more elaborate, and time-consuming delegation to restore Khryseis to her father and to appease Apollo's wrath. Instead, we have two heralds, Talthybios, who performs the second, sacred function of the delegation in

7. Apollo's wrath thus anticipates and parallels the wrath of Akhilleus. Cf. Rabel (1997) 39, "Apollo . . . serves as the prototype of Achilleus in the formal pattern of strife sketched at the beginning of book 1." See Rabel 37-43 for further discussion of parallels between the wraths of Apollo and Akhilleus.

Book 19, and Eurybates, who is also a member of the problematic delegation of five in Book 9. Akhilleus, when he later recounts these events to Thetis, neatly juxtaposes the two delegations (1.389-92), revealing how easily they may be seen as complementary, bifurcated instances of the same type-scene. In Book 1, however, the usual function of restoring a companion to Akhilleus is reversed, almost an inversion or parody of the normal result of the type-scene: the heralds have been dispatched by Agamemnon to take away *a companion dear to Akhilleus*.

The two heralds are consistently referred to by duals as they carry out their task, taking Briseis away from Akhilleus (1.321: τῷ οἱ ἔσαν κήρυκε καὶ ὀτρηνῶν θεράποντε, "the two, who were his heralds and trusted attendants" 1.327: τῷ δ' ἀέκοντε βήτην παρὰ θῖν' ἄλός ἀτρυγέτοιο, "these two went unwillingly by the shore of the barren sea;" 1.328: ἰκέσθην, "the two arrived;" 1.330: τῷ; 1.331: τῷ μὲν ταρβήσαντε καὶ αἰδομένῳ, "the two, terrified and in awe;" 1.332: στήτην, "they both stood;" 1.338: σφωὶν δὸς, "give to these two;" 1.347: τῷ δ' αὖτις ἵτην; "then the two went back"). Not only are Eurybates and Talthibios frequently described by duals (no surprise, since they are two), but some of the duals are the same formulas which reappear, problematically, in the Book 9 delegation. Other formulas, apart from the duals, are also common to both scenes, as the following list demonstrates:

- a. 1.322: ἐρχεσθον κλισίην Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος  
9.166: ἔλθωσ' ἐς κλισίην Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος
- b. \*1.327: τῷ δ' ἀέκοντε βήτην παρὰ θῖν' ἄλός ἀτρυγέτοιο  
9.182: τῷ δὲ βήτην παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης
- c. \*1.328=9.185: Μυρμιδόνων δ' ἐπὶ τε κλισίας καὶ νῆας ἰκέσθην
- d. 1.329: τὸν δ' εὖρον 9.186: τὸν δ' εὖρον
- e. 1.334: χαίρετε 9.197: χαίρετον

Not only do we have a considerable number of parallel items,<sup>8</sup> but all of the common elements occur in the same order, suggesting that the same underlying sequence shapes each passage. The asterisked forms, the verbs in items b and c, include two of the problematic duals in the Book 9 episode.<sup>9</sup> Note further that in each instance, in Books 1 and 9, the duals designate a group which includes the herald, Eurybates. In the two bifurcated instances of the type-scene in Book 1, then, we have Odysseus leading the delegation most parallel to the version of the type-scene in Book 19, and the herald Eurybates taking part in the delegation closest in diction to the episode in Book 9. An additional thematic parallel links the visit of Talthibios and Eurybates with the delegation in Book 9. In both instances Akhilleus courteously greets the delegation when it first arrives (1.334-35, 9.196-98), whereas in Book 19 he is impatient or indifferent.

8. Most of these parallels were noted earlier by Boll and Segal.

9. Partly because of this, Segal argues that some of the Book 9 duals are correctly used in Eurybates' scene in Book 1 but that in Book 9, some of the duals refer only to the two heralds, as do those in Book 1.

The Book 9 delegation is a failure, and the most unusual instance of the type-scene. Because of Agamemnon's inconsistency, as he alternates between despair and arrogance, Nestor, only here, takes charge of the process of forming the delegation, selects its members, and is the one who dispatches (ἐπέτελλε [9.179]) the delegation, not Agamemnon or Odysseus. Nestor selects Phoinix, Aias, and Odysseus, and the two heralds, Eurybates and Odios (9.168-70). It is noteworthy that Talthybios, the herald who unequivocally belongs to Agamemnon, appearing in delegation scenes in both Books 1 and 19, does not take part in the embassy in Book 9. Hainsworth suggests, "The presence of Talthubios, Agamemnon's usual herald, might in this delicate situation have appeared provocative" (83). In terms of diplomacy and persuasion, the speeches and arguments, the delegation is a failure. Akhilleus will not return to battle, nor lessen his anger against Agamemnon. But Odysseus and the delegation end up leaving Phoinix with him, or, as we termed it in our sketch of the type-scene, *return a companion dear to Akhilleus*. Briseis and Phoinix, despite their different genders, fulfill parallel roles, both being versions of a common figure who shares an intimate emotional bond with Akhilleus and sleeps in his tent. Similar formulas link Odysseus' role in conveying Phoinix and Briseis to Akhilleus (ἦρχε δ' Ὀδυσσεύς: 9.657; Ὀδυσσεύς ... ἦρχ': 19.247-48; cf. ἐν δ' ἀρχὸς ἔβη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς: 1.311, of his conveyance of Khryseis). Odysseus leading Phoinix to Akhilleus, with the result that he will stay with him, anticipates Odysseus restoring Briseis to the hero in Book 19, and replays Odysseus leading Khryseis to Khryses in Book 1.<sup>10</sup> The sacred function of the delegation in this instance is performed by all members of the delegation, as, at Nestor's urging (9.171-76), water is brought so that all can wash their hands, pour libations, and make a prayer to Zeus. This scene is then the counterpart to the sacrifice of the boar, and prayer, in 19 (19.250-75) and, on a larger scale, the hecatomb and prayer to Apollo in 1 (1.309-17).

Let us briefly summarize the analysis thus far. The episode in Book 9 is one of four instances of a type-scene we have characterized as, *Agamemnon dispatches Odysseus to lead a delegation to return a companion dear to Akhilleus*. There are a few additional brief variants of the type-scene (retrospective instances embedded in character speeches), which will be noted below. We can summarize these four instances as, 1a: Odysseus returns Khryseis, 1b: Talthybios and Eurybates remove Briseis, 9: Odysseus returns Phoinix, and 19: Odysseus returns Briseis. The placement of these four instances is as follows:

1a (1.307-18), 1b (1.320-48)      9 (9.178-669)      19 (19.238-49)

10. Griffin (1995) 96 notes an additional unexpected parallel between Phoinix and Khryseis: Phoinix is surprisingly with Agamemnon, as Book 9 opens, unusual for a man soon to be depicted as having a specially intimate relationship with Akhilleus; Khryseis is unexpectedly captured in Thebe, not in her own city, Khryse.

These four scenes fall into ring compositional order, as so often in Homeric narrative. The first scene, 1a, most resembles and most closely anticipates the last, 19. In each scene Odysseus restores a young woman, whom Agamemnon has been holding, to her proper male, both times ending a wrath that has been ruinous to the Greeks. In both 1a and 19 no dual forms are used to refer to the delegations. The second scene, 1b, is closest in many respects to the second to last, 9. Akhilleus greets both delegations with similar courtesy (1.334, 9.197), a factor not present in 1a and 19. Dual forms are used to depict both of these delegations. A herald named Eurybates takes part in each scene. We might note this larger ring compositional arrangement as follows:

1a (1.307-18), 1b (1.320-48)      9 (9.178-669)      19 (19.238-49)  
1a > 19   1b > 9

It is time now for a closer look at the herald, Eurybates, who clearly occupies a significant position not only in the type-scene but in the controversial duals. He is one of the five characters comprising the delegation in Book 9 and he takes part in 1b, both of which delegations are referred to by duals. But who is he? A herald named Eurybates is three times mentioned in the *Iliad*, in the two scenes under discussion, in Books 1 and 9, and in the assembly in Book 2, as well as once in the *Odyssey* (19.244-48). In three of these four contexts, all but *Iliad* 1.320, Eurybates is clearly identified as Odysseus' own herald. In the aftermath of the disastrous assembly in Book 2, just before Odysseus restores order, Eurybates is depicted working closely with Odysseus, retrieving his cloak, which the hero throws off in haste, as he dashes to prevent the Greeks from running to their ships. Eurybates is here designated most unambiguously as ἰθακήσιος (2.184), suggesting that he has worked with Odysseus even since before the war began, functioning as the hero's own herald back on Ithaka. This is confirmed in Eurybates' one mention in the *Odyssey*, when Odysseus gives a detailed description of him:

γυρὸς ἐν ὤμοισιν, μελανόχροος, οὐλοκάρηνος,  
Εὐρυβάτης δ' ὄνομ' ἔσκε· τίεν δέ μιν ἔξοχον ἄλλων  
ὦν ἐτάρων Ὀδυσσεύς, ὅτι οἱ φρεσὶν ἄρτια ᾔδη.

stooped in his shoulders, dark-skinned, wavy-haired,  
his name was Eurybates; and Odysseus honored him beyond  
his other companions, because he knew sensible things in his heart. (19.246-48)

Since Odysseus here describes Eurybates because, while disguised as a vagrant, he intends to prove to Penelope his close acquaintance with Odysseus, his focus on Eurybates' appearance, and Odysseus' close relationship with him, must mean that Penelope herself is well acquainted with the herald, or why go into such detail about him? Thus, in the *Odyssey*, at least, Odysseus' relation with Eurybates predates the war. This suggests that Eurybates, though mentioned only a few times, may have deeper roots in Homeric epic than is generally realized.

A few particulars of this unique description suggest parallels between

Eurybates and Odysseus himself. While Odysseus describes Eurybates as μελανόχροος, “dark-skinned,” he himself is elsewhere described as μελαγχροῖς (*Od.* 16.175), a clear synonym. These are the sole occurrences of each word in the *Odyssey* (μελανόχροος occurs once in the *Iliad*, 13.589, of beans). Like Eurybates, Odysseus is also described as short of stature (*Il.* 3.193, 210). Priam likens Odysseus to a ram (3.196), and, though the comparison appears to be based on Odysseus’ movement, may also reflect on his hair, perhaps suggestive of οὐλοκάρηνος, “wavy-haired,” in the description of Eurybates. Antenor elaborates that Odysseus’ impressive speaking ability made the Trojans overlook his less impressive physical appearance (3.221-24). The same is implicitly true of Eurybates, a figure of diplomacy entrusted with highly important missions, though he does not conform to aristocratic ideals of physical beauty. In addition to these corporeal similarities, as Russo notes, the phrase ὅτι οἱ φρεσὶν ἄρτια ἤδη (19.248) suggests deeper parallels between Odysseus and Eurybates, an emotional or intellectual affinity.<sup>11</sup> In short, Odysseus has a fitting herald, one who in several ways resembles the Ithacan king. We can now better understand why Eurybates, like Odysseus in so many ways, is the one who takes part in the second delegation in Book 1, which takes Briseis away from Akhilleus, when Odysseus is elsewhere occupied leading the first delegation. In this instance, the only time Odysseus does not take part in and serve as leader of the delegation type-scene, a herald closely associated with him, and one who resembles him in several ways, does take part, and can be seen as occupying Odysseus’ usual slot.

However, commentators have traditionally, almost unanimously, assumed that the Eurybates at *Iliad* 1.320 must be a different character than Odysseus’ herald, some other herald with the same name, belonging to Agamemnon, though this is his only mention in either epic.<sup>12</sup> In support of this traditional interpretation is 1.321: τῷ οἱ ἔσαν κήρυκε καὶ ὀτρηνῶν θεράπωντε. The οἱ implies that, in this description, at least, both heralds, Talthibios and Eurybates, take orders from Agamemnon. The scholia on 1.320 also assert that this Eurybates is not Odysseus’ own herald. As far as I know, there is no evidence for this, other than the οἱ in 1.321, but the scholia’s assertion has been accepted without question by most Homerists for over two millennia. In spite of the οἱ, and against the traditional interpretation that the Eurybates at 1.320 is a separate figure, I argue that he is Odysseus’ herald, not a separate figure mentioned only here, but part of the larger nexus of thematic parallels we have been noting. The unquestioned assumption that the Eurybates of Book 1 must be a separate figure has helped prevent commentators from noting the thematic parallels among the scenes under investigation. The narrator may refer to Eurybates here as Agamemnon’s herald simply to emphasize the

11. Russo (1992) 90.

12. Griffin (1995) 96 is one of the very few who regard the Eurybates of Book 1 as the same as the one in Book 9.



king's authority as he forcefully sends this delegation to impose his will on Akhilleus. We have further support for this view when the heralds themselves are said to perform this task against their will, but compelled by Agamemnon (τῶ δ' ἄέκοντε: 1.327).

Among its many kings and several scenes of diplomacy, the *Iliad* has a prominent herald in Talthýbios, named nine times, closely associated with Agamemnon, and another herald, Eurybates, associated with Odysseus, a character who frequently carries out diplomatic functions. We noted above that Eurybates is also so closely associated with Odysseus in the *Odyssey* that Penelope finds convincing the disguised Odysseus' mention and description of him. Of his three occurrences in the *Iliad*, then, Eurybates is associated with Odysseus in two (2.184, 9.170), and in the third, the passage under discussion (1.320 ff.), he performs a task which parallels Odysseus' usual task, making part of a delegation to Akhilleus which in this case violates the expected pattern and takes away, rather than restores, a companion dear to the hero.

Having explored the type-scene that underlies these four episodes (1.308-17, 1.318-48, 9.165-657, 19.192-312), we note that Odysseus and Eurybates are the characters most frequently taking part, playing the central roles. However, before considering their possible relation to the problematic dual forms, we will first use some of the parallels observed among the different instances of the type-scene to help clarify another notorious ambiguity in the Book 9 delegation scene. Commentators since antiquity have famously disagreed on the referent of Akhilleus' remarks at 9.312-13,

For as hateful to me as the gates of Death is he  
who hides one thing in his heart, but speaks another.<sup>13</sup>

Some have assumed he means Odysseus, while others assume he means Agamemnon.<sup>14</sup> The close thematic parallels from the same type-scene in Book 1 strongly suggest that Akhilleus aims his remark at Agamemnon, not Odysseus.

In Book 1, when the heralds Eurybates and Talthýbios approach his tent in order to seize Briseis, Akhilleus is well aware that the two are on a mission ordered by Agamemnon. Accordingly, he bears no personal grudge against them, as he states,

Greetings, heralds, messengers of Zeus and of men,  
come nearer; you are not at all to blame in my eyes, but Agamemnon. (1.334-35)

Akhilleus is no fool. He correctly deduces that Agamemnon is behind their action, has ordered the heralds to do what they are now doing. He does not rejoice when he sees them arrive (1.330), but he fully understands why they

13. Homeric translations are my own.

14. Hainsworth (1993) 102 suggests Akhilleus aims the remark at *both* Odysseus and Agamemnon. Additionally, Akhilleus has a general referent in mind, "anyone who acts this way."

have come, bears no personal grudge against them, and, before either party utters a word, is specifically depicted as comprehending the situation, αὐτὰρ ὁ ἔγνων ἦσιν ἐνὶ φρεσὶ φώνησέν τε ("but he understood in his heart and spoke," 1.333).

Just as Akhilleus does not blame the heralds in 1.333-36, knowing Agamemnon is to blame, so at 9.312-17 he does not blame the Book 9 delegation, again fully cognizant that they are present as a delegation from Agamemnon. He greets them with full courtesy, in lines which partly parallel his greeting to the delegation in Book 1,

Greetings; very dear men have arrived. It must be urgent:  
these are my dearest Akhaian friends, even in my anger. (9.197-98)

Ushering them in and offering hospitality, Akhilleus repeats how close to him are the men who have come, "for these who have come into my chamber are my closest friends" (9.204). After they have feasted, Odysseus speaks first, a lengthy speech (9.225-306), most of which Akhilleus will easily recognize, as he does of the delegation in Book 1, as representing Agamemnon's point of view. In his reply, in which he will reject Agamemnon's offer, Akhilleus begins with his famous, ambiguous remark (9.312-13). In much of the rest of his own lengthy speech, Akhilleus repeatedly criticizes Agamemnon in very strong terms (e.g., μ' ἀπάτησε, "he deceived me," 9.344; ἐφύβριζων, "being arrogant," 9.368). Indeed, his characterization of Agamemnon as an arrogant deceiver would appear to support the view that 9.312-13 are aimed at Atreides. Recall as well that of the four instances of the delegation type-scene, scenes 1b and 9 are closely linked in a number of ways, as noted above, even in how Akhilleus receives and views the delegations.

To assume, then, that Akhilleus is criticizing Odysseus in his remark, presupposes a rather imperceptive, fairly unintelligent Akhilleus, unable to understand that Odysseus, like the heralds in Book 1, is here carrying out what he has been ordered to do by Agamemnon. Since Akhilleus knows that Odysseus is often entrusted with diplomatic missions of this sort (as at 3.205-24 and at 11.766-89, where Akhilleus himself is in the audience, cf. 2.272-73), it is highly unlikely that he would be unaware that Odysseus here serves a heraldic function, largely as a mouthpiece to represent Agamemnon's perspective. To assume Akhilleus is criticizing Odysseus also presupposes that the composer here introduces a new strife or wrath between Akhilleus and Odysseus, and risks defusing, and lessening, the force of the primary theme of the poem, and of Book 9 in particular, the bitter ἔρις between Akhilleus and Agamemnon. We should note further that Odysseus, though here given the responsibility for furthering Agamemnon's agenda, himself thematically criticizes the Greek king throughout the poem (see especially 14.83-101). In this sense, Akhilleus and Odysseus have considerable common ground as critics of Agamemnon. I argue, then, that Akhilleus in the Book 9 delegation scene perceives the larger moves of Agamemnon behind the scenes, that ὁ ἔγνων ἦσιν ἐνὶ φρεσὶ ("but he understood in his heart") in the Book 9 dele-

gation, just as at 1.333. The formula cannot be repeated in Book 9, however, because the scene needs to end on a more discordant note, with Akhilleus still refusing to accept Agamemnon's offer, the *ἔρις*, "strife," between the two men still smoldering.

I would argue that there is an anti-Odysseus bias in much Iliadic criticism, ancient and modern, or the perception that the poem itself has an anti-Odysseus bias. Such a bias has, perhaps, misled many commentators not only on the referent of Akhilleus' remarks at 9.312-13, but on Odysseus' whole role in the Book 9 delegation. I do not think the *Iliad* itself, however, has any such bias. In fact, other than their exchange of words in Book 19 (199-237), the *Iliad* goes out of its way to *minimize* conflict between Akhilleus and Odysseus, even when it could have developed such conflict, if desired. We have noted that in every version of the type-scene but one, Odysseus is the leader of the delegation. The only instance in which he does not lead is when the heralds, Eurybates and Talthybios, go to Akhilleus' tent to take Briseis away from him. It follows, however, that if the *Iliad* wished to depict strife between Akhilleus and Odysseus, the poem would have had Odysseus lead the delegation which takes Briseis away, giving Akhilleus a reason to harbor resentment against him in Book 9. Instead, the poem appears to have gone out of its way to minimize possible conflict between the two epic protagonists by having Odysseus not take part at all in the one delegation that proves offensive to Akhilleus. In my view, Odysseus in the *Iliad* is thematically presented as the hero who gets things accomplished, who keeps other characters on task, pursuing their chief objective. When he acts on his own initiative, as opposed to carrying out the orders of Agamemnon, he is thematically associated with success, both in the *Iliad* and in the larger Trojan War saga.

HAVING ESTABLISHED THE underlying type-scene, and the frequent involvement of Odysseus and Eurybates in it, we can now address a number of other specific aspects of the Book 9 scene, including the issue of the possible referents of the duals in Book 9. Let us note the variations found between the four different instances. In three of the four scenes Odysseus is the leader of the delegation, and so designated (ἐν δ' ἀρχὸς ἔβη πολύμητις Ὀδυσσεύς: 1.311; ἦρχε δ' Ὀδυσσεύς: 9.657; Ὀδυσσεύς ... ἦρχ': 19.247-48). The only instance in which he does not lead is the second scene in Book 1, in which Eurybates and Talthybios take Briseis away from Akhilleus. Odysseus cannot take part in this scene because it is apparently simultaneous with the delegation he leads restoring Khryseis to her father. This may be deliberate, a tactful move on the part of the composer, to not have Odysseus associated with the act which will so infuriate Akhilleus. In three of the four scenes a *companion dear to Akhilleus* is returned, and in the fourth, taken away. Khryseis is restored to Khryses, not Akhilleus, but her return occurs because of Akhilleus' intervention and will. Odysseus in Book 9 leaves Phoenix with Akhilleus, and, as the climax of the series, restores Briseis to him in Book 19. In three of four instances heralds are involved (Eurybates and Talthybios in 1,

Eurybates and Odios in 9, Talthybios in 19). Agamemnon dispatches three of the four delegations, but it is Nestor who does so in Book 9.

Let us now summarize the unusual aspects of the Book 9 delegation, other than the duals, when compared with the other three instances of the type-scene. The herald, Odios, appears only here (9.170) in all of Homeric epic. Aias has no counterpart in any of the other instances of the type-scene. Nestor, as noted above, is in charge of dispatching the delegation, whereas Agamemnon does so in all other instances. In the other three instances a woman is conveyed by the delegation (Khryseis, Briseis, Briseis), but here it is Phoinix. There is no distinction between the delegation conveying the companion dear to Akhilleus and those taking part in the sacred ritual. All five men perform both functions, whereas in Book 1 the two functions are bifurcated into entirely separate scenes (1.308-17, 1.318-48), and in Book 19 Odysseus leads the delegation, while Talthybios prepares the boar for sacrifice. Hence the large population of the Book 9 delegation: one delegation serves tasks performed by two separate delegations in 1, while in 19 Odysseus and Talthybios separate to handle the different tasks. In Book 19 neither of the heralds who took Briseis away, Eurybates and Talthybios, has a part in returning her, which, like Odysseus not playing a role in the taking away of Briseis, seems intentionally tactful. The parallels between the four instances of the type-scene suggest that the characters in the Book 9 delegation whom we should most expect to be there are Odysseus, Eurybates, and Phoinix, each of whom occupies a standard slot in the type-scene. Typically, however, commentators have sought to defend the presence of Aias, and find fault with Phoinix as a member of the delegation.<sup>15</sup>

Let us now restate the observations of earlier commentators on which we have built this argument. Boll was the first to note in detail the many parallel formulas, including some of the duals, used to depict Eurybates and Talthybios as they approach Akhilleus, and the delegation in Book 9 as it does the same. Segal, building on Boll, argues that the duals in Book 9 refer to the two heralds, Eurybates and Odios. While I do not agree with his argument, I find it helpful that he stresses the centrality of the heralds in the episodes. Hainsworth suggests that the duals in Book 9 “survive from an archetype in which they were grammatically appropriate,” that a stock type-scene is perhaps mishandled in Book 9. Edwards does not deal with Book 9 but notes similarities between the first instance of the type-scene in Book 1 and that in 19, “In structure the transfer of gifts is much like the restoration of Khryseis to her father.” Many other scholars, of course, have offered other solutions,<sup>16</sup> but except for those cited above, most proposed solutions have overlooked the parallels offered by the other three instances of the type-scene, neglecting what we know of the thematic nature of Homeric composition.

15. See Hainsworth's discussion (1993) 81-82.

16. See again Griffin's helpful overview (1995) 51-53.

As argued above, the parallels in the other instances of the type-scene suggest that the likeliest participants in the Book 9 delegation would be Odysseus, the usual leader, Eurybates, the herald closely associated with him, and Phoinix, *the companion dear to Akhilleus*. If this analysis is correct, we might expect the dual forms to refer, in some way, to these three characters. We have indirect suggestions that the duals refer to and include Odysseus because he is designated by duals thematically throughout the *Iliad*, regularly paired with a few different characters on different occasions. Rather intriguingly, two of these episodes are additional, retrospective, instances of the delegation type-scene. An embassy to Troy to attempt a diplomatic means for Helen's release consisted of Odysseus and Menelaos, which pair are described by a dual (ἄμφω δ' ἐζομένω, "when both were seated," 3.211, cf. 11.139-40). Consider that this delegation, no doubt sent by Agamemnon, led by Odysseus (3.216-224), conforms to the general shape of the delegation type-scene in the *Iliad*, except that its audience was Trojans, not Akhilleus. Both Menelaos and Odysseus make speeches (unsuccessful, as in Book 9). If the delegation had been successful, they would have taken Helen back to Greece, giving us the other usual theme of a female being conveyed, as with Khryseis and Briseis.

Book 11 contains a further retrospective version of the delegation type-scene when Nestor recalls to Patroklos how he and Odysseus had once visited Patroklos (and Akhilleus) before the war. In this instance Odysseus and Nestor are twice designated by a dual pronoun, νῶϊ (11.767, 776). The scene exhibits additional parallels with the Book 9 delegation. The audience is largely the same, Patroklos and Akhilleus receiving the delegation in both episodes. Akhilleus has the same reaction to the approach of the delegation in each case, ταφῶν δ' ἀνόρουσεν Ἀχιλλεύς ("Akhilleus stood up, astonished," 11.777 = 9.193). Though Odysseus is not specified as leading the delegation, he is certainly one of the subjects of the dual forms, who comes calling on Patroklos and Akhilleus to attempt to persuade them on a diplomatic mission, all also true of the Book 9 delegation. There is perhaps a further parallel in that since the delegation is successful, Patroklos, *a companion dear to Akhilleus*, will now go off with them. For the apparent oddity of Phoinix, a male, playing in the Book 9 delegation the role elsewhere assigned a female, we have only to consider another aspect of Patroklos, himself a member of Akhilleus' party, part of the audience for all four delegation scenes. In Phoinix' lengthy, paradigmatic tale of Meleager's wrath within the Book 9 delegation (9.529-99), as Kakridis noted,<sup>17</sup> Kleopatra plays the same role as will Patroklos himself in the "ascending scale of affection," the two characters' names both being reversed forms of the same compound. We have, then, Phoinix, himself in a role usually filled by a woman, telling the tale of a woman's action, which part of his audience, Patroklos, will shortly play himself.

17. Kakridis (1949) 28, noting that earlier commentators had already made the equation.

In other episodes, Odysseus is consistently paired with Diomedes, and in each instance, the pair are referred to by duals. Examples include the *Doloneia*, in which Odysseus and Diomedes are designated by duals at least six times (10.349: φωνήσαντε; 10.350: κλινθήτην; 10.354: τὼ μὲν ἐπιδραμέτην; 10.376: τὼ δ' ἀσθμαίνοντε κιχήτην; 10.377: ἀψάσθην; 10.469: τὼ δὲ βήτην προτέρω), and a brief episode in the Wounding of the Chiefs in Book 11 (11.313: τί παθόντε, "what has happened to us both"). Book 19 also uses sets of duals involving Odysseus and Diomedes (19.47: τὼ δὲ δύω σκάζοντε βήτην Ἄρεος θεράποντε; 19.49: ἔγχει ἐρειδομένω). We observe further that the formula τὼ δὲ . . . βήτην (19.47) is one of the problematic duals in Book 9 (9.182, 192) and is also used of the second delegation scene in Book 1 (1.327). Since these dual forms in Book 19 occur at the start of the assembly at which Odysseus will be ordered to perform the delegation, they are quite relevant to those in Book 9 and in Book 1. Because Odysseus leads three of the four instances of the type-scene, and even the earlier embassy to Troy before the war, it seems probable that the duals must then refer to him as one of their subjects.<sup>18</sup>

Having argued that Odysseus is one of the referents of the problematic duals, I will now proceed to argue that Eurybates, Odysseus' herald, is the other character most likely to be the subject of some of the duals in Book 9. In all of the thematically parallel scenes using duals, either Odysseus or Eurybates is involved. In Book 9, both take part. Outside of Book 9 the two characters are closely associated, both in the important scene in Book 2, when Odysseus halts the Greeks' flight toward their ships after Agamemnon's disastrous performance, and in the *Odyssey* as well (19.244-48). In Book 1 of the *Iliad*, the two characters perform closely parallel roles. Consequently, I argue that because of the underlying structures and parallels which form this type-scene, some of the Book 9 duals are based on formulas which, in another conception of the scene, referred to Odysseus and Eurybates, the characters that occupy these thematic slots in all instances of the type-scene.

Wordplay on the name Eurybates strengthens his close association with the duals used in these scenes. When Agamemnon dispatches the two heralds to take Briseis away from Akhilleus, his command is shortly followed by a dual form of βαίνω which echoes the name Eurybates, ἀλλ' ὃ γε Ταλθύβιον τε καὶ Εὐρυβήτην προσέειπε . . . / τὼ δ' ἀέκοντε βήτην παρὰ θῖν' ἄλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο ("but he spoke to both Talthybios and Eurybates . . . the two went unwillingly by the shore of the barren sea," 1.320-27). A similar collocation occurs in Book 9, κηρύκων δ' Ὀδῖος τε καὶ Εὐρυβήτης ἅμ' ἐπέσθων . . . / τὼ δὲ βήτην παρὰ θῖνα πολυφλοίσβοιο θαλάσσης ("of the heralds, let both Odios and Eurybates attend . . . the two

18. Those who have argued that Odysseus is *not* included in the duals, e.g., Nagy (1979) 49-55, and Martin (1989) 235-37, among others, have overlooked the significant parallels in Books 1 and 19.

went by the shore of the resounding sea," 9.170-82).<sup>19</sup> If it seems unlikely that Homeric epic would refer to a king and his herald with a dual, we have only to note the episode which will conclude the poem, in which a king and his herald, Priam and Idaios, are referred to with duals (τῶ μὲν ζευγνύσθην . . . κῆρυξ καὶ Πρίαμος, "the two yoked . . . the herald and Priam," 24.281-82), revealing the easy linkage in the composer's mind for such a formation. We might also adduce an even more parallel dual in the *Odyssey*, when τῶ βήτην (17.200) is used of Odysseus and his swineherd, Eumaios, another figure with more than a little in common with Eurybates. Since the alternate form βήτην (instead of βάτην) is also used in the *Iliad* (8.115, 12.330, 14.281, 14.285, 16.327, 17.492, 23.685), even an alternate form of the entire formula, τῶ δὲ βήτην (8.115, 17.492, 23.685), in place of τῶ δὲ βάτην, it appears that, when the character Eurybates is involved in the scene, the composer has intentionally selected the more effective form for the wordplay generated.

One of the formulas containing a problematic dual form can be seen as referring to all three characters we have suggested as the most expected participants in the Book 9 delegation, Odysseus, Eurybates, and Phoinix. In the verse, τῶ δὲ βάτην προτέρω, ἡγεῖτο δὲ δῖος Ὀδυσσεύς ("the two went first, but illustrious Odysseus led the way," 9.192), the dual could refer specifically to Eurybates and Phoinix, with Odysseus being specified as the third character. Could this line serve as an archetype for some of the other duals? The same line, since it does not specify any of the individuals involved except Odysseus (though wordplay on the name Eurybates is possible), could have been used in other epic for several instances of the type-scenes we have explored. The same formula could have been used even in a possible earlier version of the episode in Book 9, in which neither Aias nor Odios took part, as well as in other delegation type-scenes in pre-Homeric epic. I would suggest that many of the other duals would derive from formulas originally designating Odysseus and Eurybates when they were not conveying someone, or on their return from a successful conveyance, having left a third party, such as Phoinix, at his proper destination. More specific conjecture than this, however, is pointless.

Our analysis thus suggests that the composer is working from a delegation type-scene in which the expected participants are Odysseus, his herald, Eurybates, and a person dear to Akhilleus whom the other two are conveying. In Book 9 this is Phoinix, parallel to Briseis in Book 19, and Khryseis in Book 1. Traditionally, commentators have made Phoinix out to be one of the great problems, the least qualified to take part in the delegation. Our analysis, on the contrary, argues that he serves a typical function, parallel to Briseis, as *a companion dear to Akhilleus*. Phoinix will now even stay the night in Akhilleus' tent (9.617-21), as Briseis used to, and will again. There are fur-

19. See Louden (1995) for additional examples and further discussion of this type of wordplay in Homeric epic.

ther parallels between the two characters as speakers. While Briseis has no speaking part in the Book 1 scene, in Book 19 she makes an eloquent lament for Patroklos in (19.287-300), perhaps comparable, in some ways, to Phoinix' emotional speech in Book 9. Each speaker, Phoinix and Briseis, demonstrates a marked emotional intimacy to Akhilleus. Almost as if to underscore the parallels between the two characters, as Briseis finishes her lament for Patroklos (19.300), Phoinix is in close proximity (19.311), one of the few times he is mentioned outside of the embassy scene in Book 9.<sup>20</sup>

If Aias and Odios may not have been part of the original conception of the delegation in Book 9, why are they there? The one herald, Eurybates, has been doubled, as in Book 1 (where we have Eurybates and Talthibios), perhaps to suggest the additional importance of this, the most fully developed instance of the type-scene. It is possible that the pairing of heralds, both in 1b and 9, reflects Near Eastern influence. Gordon, in a comment on the two heralds in 1b, notes that sending messengers in pairs is common in Ugaritic epic (e.g., *The Baal Cycle*) and suggests a parallel in the Old Testament at 2 Kings 5.23.<sup>21</sup> As for Aias, if he is an addition, his presence undeniably deepens and strengthens the scene. Not usually known for either his speaking or his diplomacy in Homeric epic, he would seem to parallel Menelaos in the earlier delegation to Troy. The perceptive Antenor succinctly notes Menelaos' speaking style, when he came with Odysseus, before the war,

Indeed, Menelaos spoke forth rapidly,  
with few words, but very clearly, since he was not  
a man of many words, nor did he stumble in his speech. (3.213-15)

In Menelaos, the earlier delegation led by Odysseus thus featured a speaker with a style much like that of Aias, suggesting that such a speaker is a traditional element of a delegation scene. However, where both Menelaos and Odysseus proved ineffectual, we have considerable irony in that Aias, of the three speakers in the Book 9 delegation, is the most effective in persuading Akhilleus. After Phoinix' speech, Akhilleus softens his resolution from leaving immediately, to "tomorrow, when the dawn appears, / we shall *discuss* whether we are to return or stay" (9.618-19). But after Aias' shorter, more direct appeal, Akhilleus talks of returning to battle, if Hektor sets fire to the ships (9.650-53), a considerable concession. If Aias is the odd man out, the composer's decision to develop the Book 9 scene far beyond the others necessitated including an additional speaker, whose direct style of speaking prevents the delegation from being an entire disaster, but leaves Akhilleus just enough room to deepen his own tragic circumstances.<sup>22</sup>

20. Cf. Edwards (1991) 271 "The mention of old Phoinix is noteworthy; he rarely appears outside book 9."

21. Gordon (1965) 110.

22. An earlier version of this argument was presented as a paper at the CAMWS meeting in April 2001 at Provo, Utah. I thank the audience there for comments and questions which helped me to improve the argument.