

Emotions and Narrative in Ancient Literature and Beyond

Studies in Honour of Irene de Jong

Edited by

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Metaleptic Apostrophe in Homer: Emotion and Immersion

Rutger Allan

ἔνθ' ἄρα τοι Πάτροκλε φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή

Then, Patroclus, the end of your life appeared.

HOM. *Il.* 16.787



On a number of occasions in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, the narrator-performer sheds his usual reticent persona and directly addresses a character by means of a vocative, a second person pronoun or a second person verb form, a phenomenon known as *metaleptic apostrophe*.¹ Metaleptic apostrophe is a subtype of apostrophe as it also involves *metalepsis*, a deliberate transgression of the boundary between the world of the narrator and the world of the characters.² The function of apostrophe in Homeric epic is debated.³ Roughly three approaches can be discerned: either the apostrophes are explained (1) as a narrative device to create pathos and to establish a feeling of closeness and sympathy for the addressed character;⁴ or (2) as a marker of turning points

1 For the terminology, see Richardson 1990: 170–173; De Jong 2009. The cases of metaleptic apostrophe in *Iliad* and *Odyssey* are: Patroclus (8 ×: *Il.* 16.20; 584; 692f.; 744; 754; 787; 812; 843); Menelaus (7 ×: *Il.* 4.127, 146; 7.104; 13.603; 17.679, 702; 23.600); Apollo (2 ×: *Il.* 15.365–366; 20.152); Achilles (1 ×: *Il.* 20.2) and Melanippus (1 ×: *Il.* 15.582); Eumaeus (15 ×: *Od.* 14.55, 165, 360, 442, 507; 15.325; 16.60, 135, 464; 17.272, 311, 380, 512, 579; 22.194).

2 Metalepsis has been put on the narratological map by Genette 1972: 243–245. An excellent introduction to metalepsis is Pier's entry in the online *living handbook of narratology* (LHN). For metalepsis and metaleptic apostrophe in classical literature and art, see Eisen and von Möllendorf 2013. In this volume, see also the contributions of Van den Broek, Heerink and Verhelst, and Finkelberg, n. 4.

3 Overviews of the debate are given by De Jong 2009: 94–95; Brügger 2018: 26–27.

4 This view goes back to the scholia; see also Parry 1972; Block 1982; Edwards 1987: 37–38; Yamagata 1989; Richardson 1990: 170–173; Kahane 1994: 104–113; Dubel 2011.

in the flow of the narrative;⁵ or (3) as a metrically determined phenomenon, rather than aimed at conveying a special effect.⁶

Each of these three accounts seems to have its own merit, and more importantly, they do not necessarily exclude one another. The metrical explanation is perhaps the least satisfactory of the three; it has been invoked particularly to account for the 15 cases of narratorial addresses of Eumaeus in the *Odyssey*. These 15 verses contain the vocative Εὐμαίε συβώτα and seem to be an adaptation of older formulae,⁷ created to accommodate Eumaeus' name into the second part of the verse, the nominative being less convenient for that purpose. However, even for the apostrophes of Eumaeus a metrical account does not tell the whole story. In 14.121 (τὸν δ' ἡμίβητ' ἔπειτα συβώτης, ὄρχαμος ἀνδρῶν) and 14.401 (τὸν δ' ἀπαμειβόμενος προσεφώνεε δῖος ὑφορβός), the poet uses third-person alternatives, which shows that the variant involving apostrophe is not merely metrically determined, but may also have been a conscious choice of the poet, for example, to express a sense of affinity with the sympathetic character of Eumaeus.⁸

Irene de Jong, while acknowledging the explanatory value of the three aforementioned approaches, points out an additional aspect of metaleptic apostrophe: their contribution to the well-known *enargetic* quality of epic poetry.⁹ In De Jong's words: 'the events are presented in such a way that they seem to take place before the eyes of the narratees. Addressing characters directly is as "enargetic" as the many speeches, when the narratees seem to actually hear the characters, impersonated by the narrator.'¹⁰ Taking my cue from De Jong's enargetic view, I will approach metaleptic apostrophe as a device contribut-

5 Block 1982: 8; Mackay 2001.

6 E.g. Bonner 1905; Matthews 1980; Yamagata 1989.

7 Heubeck and Hoekstra 1989: 195–196.

8 See Parry 1972: 21, who stresses the similarity between the apostrophized characters Eumaeus, Patroclus and Menelaus ('altruistic, loyal, sensitive, vulnerable'); see also Block 1982: 16; Kahane 1994: 111–113, 153–155. On a more general note, explanations in terms of metrical factors in fact provide an answer to a different question: why did the *extra-textual author/poet* took resort to the use of metaleptic apostrophe? This type of explanation does not address a *recipient/reader-response*-oriented question in which I am interested here: what effect did metaleptic apostrophe have on the *audience*? This same distinction should, of course, be carefully maintained for many other metrically determined textual features in Homer. Metrically determined textual features are not necessarily devoid of any significance for a recipient of the text.

9 Recent discussions of Homeric vividness/*enargeia*/visual style include Ford 1992: 54–56; Bakker 1993, 1997, 2005; Clay 2011; Tsagalis 2012; Allan *et al.* 2014, 2017; Grethlein and Huitink 2017; Allan 2019, 2020.

10 De Jong 2009: 95.

ing to *immersion*, ‘the experience through which a fictional world acquires the presence of an autonomous, language-independent reality populated by live human beings.’¹¹ For a brief and transient moment, the usually strictly observed boundary between the world of narration and the story world is suspended and narrator and character are staged as sharing the same space. As Clay formulates it: ‘The speaker momentarily turns his back on the audience, as it were, and is absorbed into the story world, directly addressing a Patroclus or a Menelaus as if they were standing here and now in the very space of a performance. The real world seems to recede as the past almost becomes palpably present.’¹²

The two worlds are not collapsed entirely, however. Bakker rightly points out that the narrator does not switch to a present tense, which signals that ‘the performer and the public remain aware of a distance between themselves and the event, no matter how vividly it is represented.’¹³

By directly addressing the story character, the narrator treats the character as a ‘real’ person, a person that can be spoken to and with whom one can entertain a personal relationship. In this way, the narrator creates a sense of intimacy with the character, at the same time encouraging the narratee, in his wake, to feel the same affective closeness: ‘By getting the narratee to cross the bridge that separates them onto the second narrative level, the narrator engages the narratee’s sympathy by establishing a close alliance between the narratee and the character who inspires the transgression.’¹⁴

11 Ryan 2015: 9.

12 Clay 2011: 20.

13 Bakker 2005: 103. It should be noted that Bakker (1997: 172–173; 2005: 103) conceptualizes the addressed Patroclus as being *outside* the story world, watching the action as if it were a movie, together with the narrator.

14 Richardson 1990: 173–174. Cf. also Block 1982. The apostrophes of Apollo, admittedly, do not seem to inspire much sympathy or compassion: he is addressed when he shows himself at his most powerful and violent. These two apostrophes may well have a different historical background, having been derived from a hymnic context (De Jong 2009: 95–96). The apostrophe of Achilles may be explained as a narrative turning point, as De Jong 2009: 95 thinks (he is about to return to battle for the first time). However, Achilles is certainly also worthy of our compassion, if ever he was: he has lost Patroclus, and his horse Xanthus has just emphatically prophesied his death (19.408–417), to which he expresses his awareness that he will die, far from home (19.420–422). The address to the minor character Melanippus (15.582) does not seem to involve much affinity of the narrator, either. However, the apostrophe still shows its power as an ‘enaretic’ device. The narrative is highly immersive: his near-death at the hands of Antilochus is told in a very suspenseful way, in vivid detail, underscored by two similes.

Immersion

Immersion can be defined as the feeling of being mentally transported to a virtual world to the extent that one experiences it—up to a point—as if it were the actual world.¹⁵ Immersion as a theoretical notion originates in virtual reality technology, referring to the feeling of a person of being immersed in a computer-generated, digital world, but it has also found its way into literary and cultural studies through the work of Marie-Laure Ryan.¹⁶ In her seminal book *Narrative as Virtual Reality* of 2001 (revised in 2015), she analyses how a fictional world—whether it is created by a literary narrative or by a computer game—is able to acquire a sense of presence, developing a ‘Poetics of Immersion’, an inventory of textual features and mental operations responsible for an immersive reading experience.

Drawing on Ryan’s ‘Poetics of Immersion’, it is possible to distinguish a number of linguistic and narratological features which immersive narrative typically possesses: (1) the text provides indications of the spatial arrangement of the scene (e.g. through spatial adverbs, prepositional phrases and motion verbs); (2) the text provides strategically selected sensorimotor details (physical objects or bodies and their movements) and refers to objects or settings that activate experientially rich cognitive schemas/frames or personal memories, enabling an embodied mental simulation of the sights, sounds and movements in the described scene;¹⁷ (3) the text shows an iconic temporal organization and a relatively slow pace (scene narration): no deviations from

15 Immersion is often described metaphorically as a movement of a reader towards the story world, using expressions as ‘being transported to’, ‘travel to’, ‘plunge into’, ‘being absorbed by’. It should be stressed that these are no more than metaphorical expressions. Immersion can also be conceptualized just as well as a transfer of the story world towards the immersed reader—enclosing (‘overwhelming’) the reader. Essential to immersion is only the resulting mental state: the immersed reader has a sense of presence of the story world, while the presence of the real world is felt less intensely—a certain self-awareness and awareness of the real world never disappear entirely. For this *dual awareness*, see Tan *et al.* 2017.

16 In literary studies, several terms are used to refer to phenomena related to immersion, such as *aesthetic illusion*, *absorption*, and *transportation* (see Wolf’s entry ‘Illusion (aesthetic)’ in *the living handbook of narratology* (LHN) online, and also Hakemulder *et al.* 2017).

17 There is considerable (and growing) empirical evidence for the role of embodiment (sensorimotor and emotional simulation) in language comprehension. Overviews of empirical research can be found in Zwaan 2004; Miall 2009; Sanford and Emmott 2012; Kaschak *et al.* 2014; Hakemulder *et al.* 2017. For embodiment approaches to Greek literature, see e.g. Grethlein and Huitink 2017; Huitink 2019; Allan 2019, 2020; and several contributions in Mocciano and Short 2019 and Grethlein *et al.* 2020.

chronological order (anachronies) or time compressions (i.e. summary narration); (4) the text contains a perspective-shift ('recentering'), inviting the recipient to vicariously experience ('view') the situation from a spatio-temporal or cognitive-emotional viewpoint located on the scene. This may be typically realized by a shift to an actorial, scenic standpoint or, more specifically, to an embedded focalizer, but it may also be effected by a shift to direct speech, dialogue or free indirect speech; (5) the text gives rise to an emotional response, either (a) by steering the recipient's emotional evaluation of the character's and their behavior (such as admiration, sympathy, pity or contempt), or (b) by arousing feelings of identification and empathy, 'a vicarious, spontaneous sharing of affect, (...) provoked by witnessing another's emotional state, by hearing about another's condition, or even by reading',¹⁸ or (c) by engendering plot-driven emotions, such as suspense, curiosity or surprise, which are generated by the interplay between the progression of narrated (represented) time and the dynamics of narrating time;¹⁹ (6) the text directs the recipient's attentional focus firmly to the represented scene; the focus does not shift towards 'offstage' elements such as the narrator, the text itself as a medium, and the extradiegetic discourse world.²⁰

Narrative immersion usually depends on a synergetic interplay of these textual dimensions: the intensity of the immersive experience will vary in the course of the narrative, depending on the presence of immersion-enhancing or immersion-disrupting textual features. This variability creates a profile of 'peaks and valleys', oscillating between a more immersive and a more detached, reflective readerly experience.

Metalepsis and Immersion

The question of whether metalepsis reinforces or disturbs immersion cannot be answered in a general way—it crucially depends on the particular type of metalepsis at issue. A general tendency appears to be that *descending* metalepsis, a move from the extradiegetic level (world of narration) to the intradiegetic

18 Keen 2007: 4.

19 For surprise, suspense and curiosity as the three universal effects of narrative, see Sternberg 1978.

20 For a discussion of immersive textual features in Greek literature, see also Allan *et al.* 2014, 2017; Allan 2018, 2019, 2020. In this volume, Van Gils and Kroon apply some of these to the narrative of Livy, and Kirstein demonstrates how elements of politeness in speeches of the *Odyssey* increase suspense.

level (story world), is immersive, whereas *ascending* metalepsis, a transgression from the embedded world to the embedding world (for example, a character emerging from the cinema screen in Woody Allen's *The Purple Rose of Cairo*) tends to be anti-illusionistic and therefore anti-immersive. That descending metalepsis tends to be more immersive can be understood by the fact that it involves a movement parallel to immersion, in that there is a transgression from the embedding world towards the embedded world.²¹ A partial explanation that Homeric metaleptic apostrophe does not produce an anti-immersive effect is that it is of the *descending* type: the narrator (and, in his wake, the narratee) briefly intrude into the story world, an imaginative movement coinciding with the experience of immersion.²²

Another relevant feature of Homeric metaleptic apostrophe is that, even though the narrator implicitly makes his presence felt as the voice addressing the character, he is not speaking about *himself*—thereby bringing *himself* as an extra-diegetic entity into full view—, but still about the *story world*. The audience's focused attention and emotional engagement therefore remain firmly directed towards the story world and its characters; there is no distraction to the extra-diegetic world and no emphasis on the fictionality of the narrative.²³

Homeric metaleptic apostrophe is a form of what Ryan (2004) calls *rhetorical* metalepsis, rather than *ontological* metalepsis. 'Rhetorical metalepsis interrupts the representation of the current level through a voice that originates in or addresses a lower level, but without popping the top level from the stack. ... Rhetorical metalepsis opens a small window that allows a quick glance across levels, but the window closes after a few sentences, and the operation ends up reasserting the existence of the boundaries.'²⁴ Homeric metaleptic apostrophe does not entirely and permanently collapse the ontological boundary between the story world and the discourse world. An important point is that the apostrophe of the narrator addressing the story character is a *one-way* form of

21 The relation between metalepsis and immersion is discussed by Fludernik 2003; Wolf 2013; Pier 2016.

22 For example, if Patroclus or any of the other addressed characters would have *responded* to the singer's apostrophes (a form of *ascending* metalepsis), this would have had a strong, 'postmodern', anti-illusionist effect.

23 In this respect, Homeric metalepsis is fundamentally different from the deliberately illusion-disrupting (i.e. alienating, sometimes comical, often foregrounding the fictionality of the work) type of metalepsis as we find it in post-modern literature and cinema; see also De Jong 2009: 91–92; Allan *et al.* 2017: 44; Grethlein 2017: 143–144.

24 Ryan 2004: 442. The ontological type of metalepsis, more strongly associated with post-modern literature, 'opens a passage between levels that results in their interpenetration, or mutual contamination'.

communication, which falls on deaf ears at that—Patroclus clearly does not hear the narrator predicting his death. Metaleptic apostrophe, in other words, is not intended by the narrator as an invitation to embark upon an actual conversation with the character.

In what way does metaleptic apostrophe contribute to narrative immersion? The key aspect of Homeric metaleptic apostrophe that makes it immersive lies in the fact that the addressed fictional character acquires, up to a point, the presence of a real live human being with whom one can interact as we do with our fellow human beings in real life. However, if we examine the occurrence of metaleptic apostrophe more closely, other aspects of immersion come into play as well. A major factor in the immersive effect of metaleptic apostrophe is its emotional dimension (cf. feature nr. 5 above): it often creates pathos and feelings of affective closeness and sympathy for the apostrophized character. But, as I will argue in the following section, the immersive power of metaleptic apostrophe does not depend on this particular emotional effect alone: it is also used to arouse plot-driven emotions such as surprise and suspense, and it typically shows an interplay with other immersive narrative techniques such as reference to sensorimotor ('vivid') details, simile, direct speech, scenic narration, and scene-internal perspective-taking.

It should be stressed, at this point, that metaleptic apostrophe does not always have an immersive effect. A classic example is the poet's address to Nisus and Euryalus in the *Aeneid*:

Fortunate pair! If my songs have any power, no day shall blot you out from the memory of time, so long as the house of Aeneas shall dwell on the immovable rock of the Capitoline and a Roman father shall hold sovereign power.

VERG. *Aen.* 9.446–449

Unlike the Homeric cases, this form of metalepsis has a strong anti-illusionistic effect: we are suddenly jolted out of the epic world, transferred to the poet's world, looking forward even further into the future of Rome. The narrator explicitly directs the audience's attention away from the story world, by referring to himself (*mea carmina*) in his role as an extradiegetic poet, and to his power to ensure the remembrance of the two heroes in the future Rome, which includes the poet's own time. Even though we are not immersed in the epic story world any longer, the effect of this apostrophe is no less invested with pathos, but with a pathos of a more reflective kind: the poet steps back from the tragic death of the two young heroes and meditates on its significance from a perspective distant in time: 'in his final comment on the Nisus and Euryalus story we see a

more Homeric idea ..., in the end the only lasting result of heroic struggle and death is undying *kleos*.²⁵

Patroclus' Death

As an illustrative example of how metaleptic apostrophe is combined with various other immersive techniques I will discuss the famous address to Patroclus in *Iliad* 18.787, the introductory chord of the sequence of events leading up to his death.

And Patroklos charged at the Trojans with murder in his heart. Three times then he charged like the swift war-god himself, shouting fearfully, and three times he killed nine men. But when for the fourth time he flung himself on like a god, *then, Patroklos, the ending of your life was revealed. Phoibos met you in the battle's fury, terrible god* (ἐνθ' ἄρα τοι Πάτροκλε φάνη βίοτοιο τελευτή· ἦντετο γάρ τοι Φοῖβος ἐνὶ κρατερῇ ὑσμίνῃ | δεινός). Patroklos did not see him moving through the rout. Apollo came against him hidden in thick mist, and stood behind him, and struck his back and broad shoulders with the flat of his hand, so that his eyes spun round.

HOM. *Il.* 16.783–792, tr. HAMMOND

In the lines preceding the apostrophe in 787, the narrative shows a mix of immersive and distancing elements. Contributive to immersion are sensorimotor details, which help the audience to mentally picture the situation: Patroclus flings himself swiftly on the Trojans like Ares, screaming fearfully; we are also informed of his emotional state (κακὰ φρονέων). The iterative mode of narration, on the other hand, signalled by the numerals τρίς and ἐννέα, is a form of time compression, and therefore points to a more distanced mode of narration.

The apostrophe in line 787 functions as a switch to a more suspenseful and therefore immersive mode of narration. The address to Patroclus is accompanied by several linguistic signs that we are dealing with a crucial turning point in the narrative (a Peak). The combination ἀλλ' ὅτε δή ('but the moment he ...', 786) frequently occurs at narrative breaks.²⁶ The anaphoric adverb ἐνθ' ('at that moment ...', 787) underscores the significance of the moment in the flow of the narrative. Patroclus' reversal of fortune is introduced by ἀλλ', marking that the

²⁵ Hardie 1994: 153. For a discussion of this apostrophe, see also D'Alessandro Behr 2005.

²⁶ See De Kreij in Bonifazi *et al.* 2016: 11.3.3 § 51.

following event counters the audience's expectation: the fourth time Patroclus strikes turns out differently.

The contribution of the particle ἄρα to the narratee's emotional involvement and immersion is more difficult to assess due to a lack of consensus on its precise function. If we follow Ruijgh's view in taking ἄρα as a marker of an interesting, often surprising, new fact,²⁷ we may take it as a subtle immersive device steering the narratee's emotional response to the event. The interpretation of ἄρα as a surprise marker aligns well with the counter-expectative function of ἄλλ' in 786.

If we accept Bakker's analysis of ἄρα as a marker of evidentiality,²⁸ we may interpret it as a signal to the addressee Patroclus, and indirectly to the audience, that it should be evident that his death is imminent, an interpretation which is in harmony with the import of the verb φάνη (which will be discussed below). Especially its indirect effect on the audience may be seen as immersion-inducing.²⁹

Returning to the passage at hand, the apostrophe in line 787 itself (τοι Πάτροκλε) prompts the audience to imagine that they are face to face with Patroclus for a fleeting moment.³⁰ As noted by the bT scholia on 16.787, the apostrophe expresses sympathy for Patroclus and effects pathos;³¹ in other words, it contributes to the audience's emotional immersion in the events.

The announcement φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή 'Then the end of your life came into view/became clear' raises questions as to its type of focalization. At first glance, the prolepsis announcing Patroclus' death suggests a *narrating* focalization, by a retrospective omniscient narrator who is in the know about what will happen next.³² However, the intriguing use of the verb φάνη points at a scene-internal *experiencing* mode of focalization. The middle verb φαίνομαι may refer to a process of becoming visible (perception), or of becoming epi-

27 Ruijgh 1971: § 350–353; De Jong [1987] 2004²: 63–64, 68.

28 Bakker 1993: 15–23.

29 If we interpret ἄρα as a marker of consequentiality (roughly 'then'), as proposed by George 2018, we might see the particle as a signal of a transition to a new narrative segment.

30 Note that the content of the apostrophe (φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή/ ἦντετο γάρ τοι Φοῖβος) is hybrid. Not only is it a form of what Benveniste 1966 calls *discours* (vocative, second person pronoun), it is also *histoire* (past tense): it introduces new information to the storyline, thus casting Patroclus also in the role of a narratee. This is typical of Homeric apostrophe and different from, for example, the apostrophe of Nisus and Euryalus in Virgil (*A.* 9.446–449), discussed earlier.

31 See Block 1982: 15–17; De Jong [1987] 2004²: 13; Janko 1992 *ad loc.*

32 For the distinction between narrating and experiencing focalization, see De Jong 2014: 65–68.

stemically evident (cognition). What is crucial, however, is the fact that φαίνομαι always requires a subject of consciousness: a person *for whom* the state of affairs becomes visible or evident. This person may be referred to by an explicit dative complement, but it may also remain implicit—as in our case. Φάνη, in other words, implicitly evokes an anonymous observing consciousness on the scene, and we might paraphrase φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή as ‘it became evident (to anyone who was present) that your death was approaching.’³³ (Note that Patroclus himself cannot be identified as the ‘implied dative’ of φάνη; Patroclus does not see Apollo coming and he is attacked from behind.) Φάνη contributes to the immersive effect of the apostrophe as it invites the audience to take the position of an anonymous bystander on the scene, who suddenly realizes that Patroclus’ death is now inevitable.

The presence of φάνη ‘came into sight’ makes it clear that Patroclus’ future fate was located between two poles: it was neither the case that Patroclus would die at that precise moment in time, nor was it still open at what moment in the more remote future he would die. The phrase φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή stresses the imminence of his death: the fatal mechanism inevitably leading to Patroclus’ death had been set in motion. His death had come into sight at the horizon, and would steadily and irreversibly come closer.³⁴ It goes without saying that not only the address itself but also its particular content increases the pathos and suspense of the moment.³⁵

Since the audience already know that Patroclus will die through several internal prolepses, we are not dealing with *What suspense*, but with *How suspense*: the way in which his death will come about is still unknown. However, this is not the only way this scene creates suspense. Also operative is a form of suspense which Baroni calls ‘suspense par contradiction,’³⁶ a tragic tension generated by a contradiction between cognition and volition—what the audience *know* about what will happen (*Patroclus will die*) and what they *want* to happen (*Patroclus will not die*).

After the apostrophe, the suspense is sustained. Apollo approaches Patroclus, menacingly. The emotionally-charged adjective δεινός, emphatically

33 The narrator’s evocation of an imaginary observing bystander is a form of *hypothetical focalization*. For this type of focalization, see De Jong 2014: 68–69, 212.

34 That φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή implies the inevitability of death is also shown by *Iliad* 7.104 (ἐνθά κέ τοι Μενέλαε φάνη βιότοιο τελευτή), where the counterfactual indicates that it did *not* come to the point where Menelaus’ death was inevitable. Indeed, he is saved by the Achaean kings.

35 See also Bakker 2005: 103–104.

36 Baroni 2007: 290.

placed in hyperbaton and enjambment, not only reveals Apollo's hostile intentions but also carries a sense of his menacing divine superiority.³⁷ The audience expects Patroclus to respond to the threat, an expectation which is contradicted in the next line: Patroclus did not notice (οὐκ ἐνόησεν) Apollo as he was covered in a thick cloud (ἤέρι γὰρ πολλῇ κεκαλυμμένος). With the anaphoric pronoun ὃ, the narrative returns to the third person reference to Patroclus. The dramatic irony arising at this point ('Watch out, behind you!') continues the pathos and suspense: we strongly empathize with Patroclus but are unable to rescue him.³⁸

These lines show a form of epic regression:³⁹ (C) Patroclus' death came in sight, (B) Apollo came to Patroclus menacingly, (A) Patroclus did not see him coming. (B) is a chronologically anterior event explaining (C), and (A) explains and is anterior to (B). Although this constitutes a deviation of the iconic chronological order of narrative, and therefore might be seen as detrimental to immersion, I would argue that, on balance, the effect is still immersive: the reverse order increases the suspense considerably.⁴⁰ The sequence now starts *in medias res* with a statement of the immediate threat posed by Apollo (C). Next, an answer is provided as to why Patroclus does not react: he had not seen him coming (B). Finally, we are informed why Patroclus had failed to notice Apollo: he was covered in a cloud (A). The explanations given by (B) and (A) function as a retardation, suspensefully delaying the answer to the question to (C) ('But what did Apollo do to Patroclus?') which is not provided until 791. Nar-

37 Although it appears attractive to interpret the imperfect ἦντετο as signaling an unbounded scene-internal viewpoint ('Phoebus was approaching you') and as evoking the gaze of an observing witness on the scene, this is not entirely warranted. The form ἦντετο in Homer frequently seems to express bounded events, thus functioning similar to an aorist (see *Lfgre* s.v.). The particle γὰρ has its general explanatory function: it introduces the facts on the basis of which one can conclude that Patroclus' death was indeed evident. More specifically, one can say that γὰρ here shows its narrative-embedding function, 'announcing an event and then going back in time and filling in the details as to how this event came about' (De Jong 1997: 179); see also Bakker 1997: 113.

38 For the counter-expectative function of presentation through negation, see De Jong [1987] 2004²: 61–68, who also discusses *Il.* 16.789–790. De Jong rightly analyses this type of negation as a form of narrator-narratee interaction. I do not consider this type of narrator activity as necessarily detrimental to immersion. Although there is an increased activity of the narrator, the narratee's attention remains firmly directed towards the story world (and its actors) and is not distracted to the persona of the narrator himself. To use an analogy, the narrator does not appear on stage as an actor but remains offstage, as the director of the play.

39 Bakker 1997: 114.

40 The suspense-increasing effect of epic regression is also observed by a *scholion* on *Il.* 11.671–761.

rating the events in their actual chronological order would have deprived the sequence of much of its suspense: (A) Apollo approached Patroclus covered in a cloud, (B) Patroclus did not see him coming, (C) Apollo came to Patroclus menacingly.⁴¹

In 791, the narrative resumes its chronological order: Apollo stands behind Patroclus, strikes Patroclus' back with his flat hand (791–792), demonstrating his godly superiority by overpowering a human hero—note the significant detail of Patroclus' broad shoulders—with his bare hand. The graphic detail of Patroclus' rolling eyes (792), expressed by the evocative compound verb *στρεφεδίγηθεν*, suggests a brief *close-up* standpoint, located in front of Patroclus, again suggesting a viewpoint on the scene.⁴² The narrative in lines 793–796 (not cited) continues in an immersive mode: graphically highly detailed, low speed (slow motion),⁴³ and suspenseful.

The example of Patroclus' death shows that Homeric metaleptic anastrophe is part of a larger immersive narrative strategy, in which an appeal to the audience's emotions is vital, not only through the apostrophe itself—by inspiring sympathy, for example—but also through a subtle play with scene-internal viewpoints and scenic narration, and through narrative elements such as pathos, suspense and graphic description. An interplay of immersive devices can also be observed in other Homeric cases of metaleptic apostrophe; for example, slow motion (*Il.* 4.127), close-up (*Il.* 4.146; 17.679), similes (*Il.* 15.365, 582; 16.583, 744, 754; 17.679), adjacency to direct character speech (*Il.* 16.20, 842; 17.744; all apostrophes of Eumaeus in *Odyssey*), ἄρα (*Il.* 15.365; 16.787; 17.702; 23.600), suspense-raising negation (*Il.* 4.127; 16.813; 17.702),⁴⁴ pathos-enhancing descriptions ('your beautiful thighs were stained with blood', *Il.* 4.146–147; ὀλιγοδρανέων 'weak, with his last breath', 16.843; 'when the gods called you to your death', 16.693), reference to the character's emotional state (*Il.* 15.367; 16.20, 754, 842; 17.702, 744; 23.600), and, as noted earlier, most cases occur at a particularly crucial (peaks, turning points) or otherwise suspenseful moment in the flow of the narrative.

As we have seen, according to Marie-Laure Ryan, immersion is 'the experience through which a fictional world acquires the presence of an autonomous, language-independent reality populated by live human beings.' Seen in

41 For epic regression functioning as suspense-increasing retardation, see De Jong 2001: xiv, 476. For γάρ in epic regressions, see De Jong 1997: 177.

42 For the various types of spatial standpoints in epic narrative, see De Jong and Nünlist 2004; De Jong 2014: 60–65.

43 Cf. Janko *ad loc.*; De Jong 2007: 38.

44 The suspense-creating function of negations is discussed by De Jong [1987] 2004²: 66–68.

this light, metaleptic apostrophe is indeed an immersive narrative technique. In speaking to a character the Homeric narrator-performer treats a fictional world and its inhabitants as if it is a ‘real’ world, and encourages the audience to follow in his wake. Metaleptic apostrophe is not employed as an immersive technique in an isolated manner: it shows an effective interplay with other immersive devices such as description of sensory details and movements, direct speech, scenic or close-up spatial standpoint, scenic (or even slow motion) narration—techniques geared towards reinforcing the audience’s spatial and temporal immersion. Metaleptic apostrophe also plays a significant part in effecting emotional immersion: as the ancient scholia and many modern scholars observed, it often creates a sense of pathos and engenders feelings of affective closeness and compassion with the addressed character. But this is not the only sense in which it contributes to the audience’s emotional response. Metaleptic apostrophe often also appeals to feelings of empathy by referring to the addressed character’s emotions, and—perhaps even more importantly—it is used at crucial junctures in the flow of the narrative, as an instrument to spark plot-driven emotions such as surprise and suspense.

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