

Ugo Mondini

## Composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς

### Macro- and microstructure of a Byzantine Homeric poem

To Paolo Pietrosanti

**Abstract:** The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, the first work written by John Tzetzes, consists of 1.676 hexameters and numerous *scholia*. It narrates the events of the Trojan war from the conception of Paris to the fall of the city. This paper analyses the poem and its structure. In his later *Exegesis to the Iliad*, Tzetzes states that the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς allows to “learn thoroughly, in every detail” the history of the war. Following this evidence, the macro- and the microstructure of the poem are analysed in order to understand how Tzetzes structured his literary work and to what end. The last paragraph deals with the title Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.

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I would like to thank Alberto, Luca, Martina, and Stefano for their support during the writing of this paper as well as the two anonymous reviewers for their remarks and suggestions. In this paper, I use the following abbreviations: Tz. *Carm. Il.* = P. L. M. LEONE (ed.), Ioannis Tzetzae Carmina Iliaca. Catania 1995, 1–99; *Schol. ad Carm. Il.* = *ivi*, 101–243; Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ = M. ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ (ed.), Ἐξήγησις Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζετζοῦ εἰς τὴν Ὀμήρου Ἰλιάδα. Athens 2007.

## 1. The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς within the *Exegesis to the Iliad*

In the ‘Homeric’ context of the Comnenian age,<sup>1</sup> the young John Tzetzes composed his first work, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς,<sup>2</sup> probably with the will to find a patron.<sup>3</sup> Although the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς gives some information about its context of production,<sup>4</sup> Tzetzes himself introduces his previous work and its features in the later *Exegesis to the Iliad*. The extensive analysis of this passage offers useful cues to understand Tzetzes’ hexametric poem (see §§ 3–5).

After telling the biography of Homer, his writings, and his death, Tzetzes begins reporting “the facts linked to the war” (τὰ ... κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον) “minutely” (λεπτομερέστερον).<sup>5</sup> Most interestingly, their account deals with the events be-

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1 See A. KALDELLIS, *Hellenism in Byzantium. The transformations of Greek identity and the reception of the classical tradition*. Cambridge 2007, 225–306, in particular 241–255 (the reception of Homer) and 301–306 (Tzetzes’ professional classicism). See also R. BROWNING, *Homer in Byzantium*. *Viator* 6 (1975), 15–34 and I. NILSSON, *From Homer to Hermoniakos: Some considerations of Troy matter in Byzantine literature*. *Troianalexandrina* 4 (2004), 9–34. The most important studies on Homer in twelfth-century Byzantine education are A. VASILIKOPOULOU-IOANNIDOU, *Ἡ ἀναγέννησις τῶν γραμμάτων κατὰ τὸν IB’ αἰῶνα εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον καὶ ὁ Ὅμηρος*. Athens 1971 and I. CH. NESSERIS, *Ἡ παιδεία στὴν Κωνσταντινούπολη κατὰ τὸν 12ο αἰῶνα*. Ioannina 2014.

2 The title *Carmina Iliaca* was first given to the text by the editor princeps Gottlob Benedict SCHIRACH (Ioannis Tzetzae *Carmina Iliaca*, Halae 1770) and it is accepted by Pietro Luigi Maria LEONE in his new edition of the text (LEONE, I *Carmina*, as footnote 0 above). Although it is broadly used by scholarship, P. L. M. LEONE, I “*Carmina Iliaca*” di Giovanni Tzetzes, *Quaderni Catanesi* 6/12 (1984), 377–405, here 382–386 proves that the original title of the poem should have been Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου τὰ πρὸ Ὀμήρου καὶ ὅσα παρέχει Ὅμηρος μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως ἧτοι ἡ μικρομεγάλη (legit Tychsen : μικρὰ μεγάλη codd. : μικρὰ καὶ μεγάλη dub. Hart) Ἰλιάς. For this reason, I use Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς (‘Little-big Iliad’) instead of *Carmina Iliaca*. See here § 6 and M. CARDIN, *Teaching Homer through (annotated) poetry*, in R. C. SIMMS, *Brill’s Companion to Prequels, sequels, and retellings of classical epics*. Leiden/Boston 2018, 90–114, here 94 note 12.

3 This opinion is explicitly shared by T. BRACCINI, *Erudita invenzione: riflessioni sulla Piccola grande Iliade di Giovanni Tzetze*. *Incontri triestini di filologia classica* 9 (2009–2010), 151–173, here 154–155 and P. A. AGAPITOS, *The politics and practices of commentary in Comnenian Byzantium*, available on Agapitos’ Academia.edu profile. Tzetzes composed the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς between 21 and 28 years old. See LEONE, “*Carmina Iliaca*” (as footnote 2 above), here 377–378.

4 Because of the lies of his deceitful wife, the sebastos Isaac casted Tzetzes out from Berroia. Therefore, John was obliged to go back to Constantinople and to find a new patron.

5 Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 58.1–3 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ: τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἐντεῦθεν λεπτομερέστερον λέγειν ἀρχόμεθα. Ὁν λεπτομερέστερον, see *infra*.

tween the conception of Paris and the beginning of Homer's narration (*Exeg. ad Il.* 58.3–67.1 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ). Tzetzes first says that Priam and Hecuba married and had numerous children, among them Paris. Then, he adds:

τὰ συμβεβηκότα οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε, τὸν ὄνειρον, τὸν δαλόν, τοὺς μάντις, τὰς ὑποκρίσεις, τὸν ἐκτεθέντα παῖδα, τὴν κλησιν τὴν Πάριδος, τὸν χρησμόν, ὃν ἔλαβε Πρίαμος ὡς τριακοντούτης ὁ Πάρις γενόμενος ὀλέσει Φρυγῶν τὰ βασίλεια, τὴν μετὰ τὸν χρησμόν ἐκείνον μετὰ κλησιν τοῦ παιδὸς εἰς Ἀλέξανδρον, τὴν εἰς ἀγροὺς ἔκθεσιν, ταῦτα πάντα οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε, ἴν' ὑμῖν περὶ τούτων προσδιαλέγωμαι.<sup>6</sup>

You do certainly know the events [*scil.* after the conception of Paris]: the dream; the firebrand; the prophets; their foretelling; the exposed child; the name of Paris; the oracle obtained by Priam for which if Paris turns thirty, he will destroy the reign of Phrygians; the changing of the child's name into Alexander after this oracle; the exposure in the countryside. You certainly know all these things; therefore, I can talk with you about them.

The interrelation between τὰ συμβεβηκότα οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε and ταῦτα πάντα οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε highlights the quoted section. By using the second-person plural form, Tzetzes depicts this section as a dialogue between him (the teacher) and his audience (his young students).<sup>7</sup> The audience maintains to know the facts reported by Tzetzes. However, the way in which their reaction is described, the *litotes* οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε, hides a powerful and ironic *pointe*. Tzetzes begins undermining their confidence by saying that he is speaking because the sources report these events in an ambiguous way (τὰ δ' ἔντεϋθεν ἐπεὶ καὶ ἀμφίβολα καὶ ἀλλήνᾳ ἰστορήται διέμι).<sup>8</sup> To prove his point, Tzetzes gives two different versions about the events between the exposition of Paris and his coming to Sparta. The first is the one widely known<sup>9</sup> and it would have confirmed the self-confidence of the audience if Tzetzes had not opposed what his best sources narrate in a more accurate way.<sup>10</sup> While reporting this second version, Tzetzes starts with the same events that he outlined before to offer an accurate account of what truly happened, from the pregnancy of Hecuba to the education of Paris.<sup>11</sup> Then, Tzetzes explains the actual meaning of the “judgement of Paris” beyond the allegory

<sup>6</sup> Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 58.9–16 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

<sup>7</sup> For the audience of the *Exegesis*, see its book epigram *Exeg. ad Il.* 3.1–5 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ: Βίβλον εἰς πραπίδεςσι γλαφυρολύττεραν Ὀμήρου / τήνδε παραφρασίησιν ἐμῶν ἐτάρων τολυπεύσας, / παισὶν Ὀμηριάδαις ἐρμήϊον ὥπασα δῶρον / γραμματικὸς περίαλλα μογήσας Ἰωάννης, / τὸν Τζέτζη καλέουσιν ἐπωνυμίην ἐρέοντες.

<sup>8</sup> Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 58.16–17 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.* 58.16–61.1.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.* 61.1–2.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.* 61.2–20.

and, in doing so, he manages to offer a glimpse of his own allegorical method for the interpretation of the Homeric poem.<sup>12</sup> Finally, he reports the second version of the return of Paris to Troy and of his voyage to Argos while Menelaus was in Crete.<sup>13</sup> Within the narrative of the section, Tzetzes underlines the fallacy of his audience's fragile knowledge by starting with the events that they have already maintained to know (*Exeg. ad Il.* 58.4–9 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ). Meanwhile, he clearly defines when “the facts linked to the war” start: some sources consider that the crucial event is the abduction of Helen, while the birth and the education of Paris are only a background story; on the contrary, the best sources – together with Tzetzes – state that the birth of Paris and the dream of Hecuba should be considered as the starting point of the whole story.

Nevertheless, the feedback of Tzetzes' audience is the same: they do know everything. Right after the reappearance of οὐκ ἄγνοεῖτε, Tzetzes provides a complete overview of the events until the beginning of the plot of the *Iliad* (*Exeg. ad Il.* 65.17–67.1 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ). The syntactical proceeding is the one he has employed for the events from the conception of Paris to his voyage to Argos. The passage is marked by two appearances of οὐκ ἄγνοεῖτε, together with its ironic meaning. The events are the direct objects of οὐκ ἄγνοεῖτε and the account of each of them is confined to a length of two-six words. Tzetzes dwells only on giving a correct duration of the war (*Exeg. ad Il.* 65.21–66.2 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ) and, much more, on speaking about Palamedes' unjust death (*Exeg. ad Il.* 66.8–17 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ).

Finally, Tzetzes reaches the starting point of the Homeric *Iliad*. The account does not proceed further:

Ἐπεὶ ταῦτα πάντα οὐκ ἄγνοεῖτε μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως, ὑμεῖς γὰρ τοῦτό φατε, τὴν θυραῖαν καὶ ὑπερόριον καὶ οἰονεὶ ἐξαγώνιον λαλιὰν ἐνταυθοῖ καταπαύω, καίτοι λεπτομερέστερον ὑπεσχρημένος διδάξαι τὰ τοῦ πολέμου μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως, χωρῶ δὲ λοιπὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βίβλου τὰ πρόθυρα. Οἷς δὲ φίλον τὰ περὶ τὸν πόλεμον μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν ἐκδιδάσκεισθαι, τῷ ἡμετέρῳ ἐντυγχανέτω ἐμμέτρῳ ποιήματι, κάκ τούτου κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν, ὅσον ἐθέλει, περὶ τούτου διείσεται.<sup>14</sup>

Since you do certainly know all these events that happened right until the fall of Troy – you are telling me that – I stop here the excessive and almost off-topic introductory speech. Although I have promised to teach in detail the events of the war right until the fall of Troy, I proceed to the beginning of the book. If anyone desires to learn thoroughly all the events

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. 61.17–65.1. On Tzetzes' allegorical method, see P. CESARETTI, *Allegoristi di Omero a Bisanzio. Ricerche ermeneutiche (XI–XII secolo)*. Milano 1991, 145–204 and 148–170 (on the *Exegesis to the Iliad*).

<sup>13</sup> Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 65.2–65.17 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid. 67.1–10.

of the war right until the fall of the city, in every detail, I suggest the reading of my literary work in verses. From this source, through an accurate account, they will know everything they want about this topic.

Despite his original promise, Tzetzes is asked by his audience to stop talking. After all, they “do know everything” (οὐκ ἀγνοεῖτε) about the Trojan war. At this point, Tzetzes openly takes distance from the belief of his presumptuous audience: through the clause “you are telling me that” (ὕμεις γὰρ τοῦτο φατε), the hidden irony of this litotes eventually comes to light. Although he thinks that this account is relevant because of the actual limited knowledge of his audience, he obeys to their calls and cuts up what appears to be an ‘excessive and almost off-topic introductory speech’. However, all this narrative has a plain rhetorical purpose. Tzetzes knows that the introduction to an exegesis to the *Iliad* should not include the events within or after its plot. When his account of the events directly before the *Iliad* comes to the wrath of Achilles, he stops. However, Tzetzes grounded his choice on a motivation (the will of his audience) that is ‘external’ to the text and, consequently, does not directly depend on him. In this way, Tzetzes makes clear that he could have proceed until the fall of Troy because he is deeply acquainted with this knowledge; at the same time, he proves to be a rhetor that pays attention to the needs of his audience of young students.<sup>15</sup>

However, Tzetzes encourages the keenest among them to search his previous work, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Within this reference, Tzetzes gives two significant pieces of information: the reader would learn the whole Trojan war κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν (‘through a minute division of the contents’); through the poem, he will know κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν (‘with accuracy’) everything he wants.<sup>16</sup> Although κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν and κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν are unquestionably connected and similar in their meaning,<sup>17</sup> they are not equivalent. Through κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν Tzetzes suggests that his work offers an account as accurate as the previous passage of the *Exegesis*; the text also revises the mistakes of the versions that everyone flaunts to know. As for κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν, the structure of this section of the *Exegesis* reveals its meaning. The section starts with τὰ δὲ κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον ἐντεῦθεν λεπτομερέστερον λέγειν ἀρχόμεθα and ends with καίτοι λεπτομερέστερον ὑπεσχημένος διδάξει τὰ τοῦ πολέμου μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως,

<sup>15</sup> Cf. *ibid.* 1.6–5.7.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.* 67.6–11.

<sup>17</sup> This perception is confirmed by the use of λεπτομέρεια/λεπτομερής and ἀκρίβεια/ἀκριβής in the scholiastic tradition, see e.g. *Schol. in Thuc.* VII 44.1.4–5 ΗΥΔΕ ὅτω τρόπῳ ἕκαστα ξυνηνέχθη· ἤγουν λεπτομερῶς, κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν.

χωρῶ δὲ λοιπὸν ἐπὶ τῆς βίβλου τὰ πρόθυρα. Through this structure, Tzetzes is saying that the section of the *Exegesis* has been written λεπτομερέστερον in the proper meaning of the adjective, *i.e.* composed of small parts and, for this reason, detailed. Precisely because the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is composed to narrate κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν, the reader will know everything he wants κατὰ ἀκρίβειαν, a quality that derives also from the clear disposition of the topics within the poem.

Everyone who reads this passage from the *Exegesis* with due attention knows how the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is structured. The poem starts from the pregnancy of Hecuba and ends with the fall of Troy. The events of the Trojan war are expected to be listed within a clear, comprehensive, and consequential account that dwells only on fundamental pieces of information and offers an accurate narration by emending the errors of the other sources. The issue is now to understand how these features are actually displayed by the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.

## 2. *Intermezzo: Scholia as a fundamental key to the understanding*

Although LEONE's edition is grounded on a solid philological analysis of the textual tradition, *scholia* are notoriously liable to variation and the ones to the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς are no exception to this general tendency.<sup>18</sup> LEONE had to rely on manuscripts which are highly contaminated.<sup>19</sup> Moreover, after a simple inspection of digital reproductions, Vat. gr. 915 (ms. A LEONE), Mutinensis gr. 244 (ms. F LEONE) and Par. suppl. gr. 95 (ms. H LEONE) – the three most ancient manuscripts of the tradition – evidently seem to follow the model of Palaeologan textbooks.<sup>20</sup> Since they could be used as proper textbooks, it is very un-

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**18** For a complete account of the textual tradition of Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, see not only LEONE, Ioannis ... (as footnote 0 above), V–XXXII but also his several papers on the topic: LEONE, “Carmina” (as footnote 2 above); IDEM, Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (IV). *Orpheus* n.s. 5 (1984), 357–381; IDEM, Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (III). *Byzantina* 13 (1985), 773–786; IDEM, Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes [I], in *Studi albanologici, balcanici, bizantini e orientali in onore di Giuseppe Valentini*, SJ, Firenze 1986, 295–346; IDEM, Sulla tradizione manoscritta dei Carmina Iliaca di Giovanni Tzetzes (II), *Athena* 80 (1989), 197–219.

**19** LEONE, Ioannis ... (as footnote 0 above), XXVIII.

**20** The three manuscript are dated to the early Palaeologan period, between the end of 13<sup>th</sup> century and the 14<sup>th</sup> century. See F. NOUSIA, Byzantine textbooks of the Palaeologan period. *Studi e testi*, 505. Vatican City 2016.

likely that Tzetzes' *scholia* had been loyally preserved: manipulation, contamination or both affected their transmission.<sup>21</sup>

Nevertheless, if the *scholia* to his own literary works are a constant characteristic of Tzetzes' production, the ones to the Μικρομεγάλη Ίλιάς play an even more crucial role. They are a primary feature of Tzetzes' imitation of Homer as their presence allows to replicate the usual *mise en page* of the Homeric *Iliad*.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, Tzetzes traces the pathway for the interpretation of this poem precisely through the *scholia*.<sup>23</sup> They are meant to display the constitutive features of the poem and they contain what is not included into its narration.

Their study is crucial to understand Tzetzes' literary operation: the poem and the *scholia* should be read in synopsis as part of a single authorial project that, luckily, has come to us.<sup>24</sup>

### 3. The macrostructure of the poem

The traditional structure of a Homeric poem implies that, after an opening invocation in which the topic is defined, the Muse herself speaks through the voice of the poet and narrates the plot. Following this traditional model of the epic genre, Tzetzes presents the content in the first lines of his poem (*Carm. Il. I 1–19*):

- Ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῖο  
 ἔννεπε, Καλλιόπεια, ὕφ' ἡμετέρησιν αἰοδαῖς,  
 ἀρχῆθε δ' ἐπάειδε καὶ ἐς τέλος ἐξερέεινε,  
 ἔξ ὄτεο Πρίαμος λοιγὸν Τρώεσσι φυτεύει  
 5 Δύσπαριν οὐλόμενον, ἀρχὴν πολέμοιο κακοῖο,  
 τὴν νόος οὐκ ἐρέεινεν Ὀμήρου κυδαλίμοιο.

<sup>21</sup> Examples of this complex situation could be several *scholia* in A and H, clearly derived from longer versions that are still preserved, see e.g. *Schol. ad Carm. Il. I 35a* LEONE (preserved by H) and its derivatives *Schol. ad Carm. Il. I 35b–36c* LEONE in ms. A.

<sup>22</sup> The ms. Vat. gr. 915 displays the opening *scholium* on the left margin of f. 249<sup>v</sup> and original *scholia* (often in an abridged version) by Tzetzes in margins and line-spacings. The same *mise en page* is displayed by F and H, with an identical disposition of the *scholia*. Consequently, Tzetzes' mimetic purpose likely affected the *mise en page* of the archetype of the tradition which should have appeared just like a standard Homeric manuscript, with the verses in the middle and the commentary all around or *inter lineas*.

<sup>23</sup> For a survey of Tzetzes' exegesis to Μικρομεγάλη Ίλιάς, see F. CONCA, L'esegesi di Tzetzes ai *Carmina Iliaca*, fra tradizione e innovazione. *Koinonia* 42 (2018), 75–114.

<sup>24</sup> This paper deals with several rhetorical *scholia*. In general, the rhetorical *scholia* to the Μικρομεγάλη Ίλιάς prove that Tzetzes drew on different rhetorical sources. However, their comprehensive analysis goes beyond the aim of this paper.

- "Ἐννεπε δ' Ἀργεΐης Ἑλένης ἐρόεσσαν ὀπωπὴν,  
 πῶς τέ μιν ἦγεν Ἀλέξανδρος Σπάρτηθε Τροίην.  
 "Ἐννεπε δὲ πλόον Ἑλλήνων καὶ νῆας ἀπάσας·  
 10 εἰπέ δὲ Πηλεΐδαο κότον καὶ ὄλεθρον Ἀχαιῶν,  
 Σαρπηδόντος Πατρόκλου τε καὶ Ἐκτορος οἴτον·  
 εἰπέ δὲ Πενθεσίλειαν, κούρην ἀντιάνειραν.  
 "Ἐννεπε δ' Αἰθίοπων στρατὸν, υἷά τε Ἥριγενεΐης.  
 Φράζεο δ' Αἰακίδαο πότμον δακρυόεντα·  
 15 Εὐρύπυλόν τε αἶειδε καὶ υἰέα Αἰακίδαο  
 μαντείας θ' Ἑλένου καὶ Ἀλεξάνδροιο φονῆα.  
 Εἰπέ δὲ καὶ πτολίπορθον Ἐπειοῦ δούρεον ἵππον,  
 εἰσόκεν ἤϊστωσε πελώρια τείχεα Τροίης.  
 Ταῦτά μοι εὐπατέρεια, Διὸς τέκος, ἔννεπε Μοῦσα.

Through my verses, sing, Kalliope, the great struggle of the painful war of Ilios from the beginning to the end, from when Priam generated the ruin of Trojans, the ill-fated and ruinous Paris, the origin of the awful war that the intellect of the illustrious Homer did not narrate. Sing the attractive appearance of the Argive Helen and how Alexander abducted her from Sparta to Troy. Sing the fleet of the Hellenes and all their ships. Tell about the wrath of the Peleides and the slaughter of Argives, about the death of Sarpedon, Patroclus and Hector. Tell about Penthesilea, the woman who fought men. Sing the Ethiopian army and the son of Erigeneia. Describe the fate of the Aeacides that leads to tears. Sing Eurypylus and the son of the Aeacides, and the prophecies of Helenus and the murderer of Alexander. Tell about the wooden horse of Epeius, the destructor of the City, until it destroyed the majestic walls of Troy. These events sing to me, Muse, daughter of a noble sir, child of Zeus.

At *Carm. Il.* I 18–19 the first section of the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* comes to an end. At that point, Tzetzes gives its rhetorical explanation through a *scholium*:

εἰσόκεν ἤϊστωσε· μέχρι τοῦδε τὸ σχῆμα προθεωρία, προῦφήγησις, ὑπόσχεσις, προκατάστασις καὶ προέκθεσις καλεῖται καὶ ὅσα οἱ ῥήτορες τοῦτο εἰώθασιν καλεῖν· ἔργον δὲ τὸ σχῆμα εὐκρινείας, ἢ δὲ εὐκρινεία σαφηνείας.<sup>25</sup>

εἰσόκεν ἤϊστωσε: the figure of speech used up to this point is named *προθεωρία*, *προῦφήγησις*, *ὑπόσχεσις*, *προκατάστασις* and *προέκθεσις* [= preamble] and all the ways in which the rhetors are used to call it. This figure of speech is a result of the limpidity of style as limpidity is of clarity.

25 Tz. *Schol. Carm. Il.* I 18a, 107.19–108.2 LEONE. Tzetzes attaches this *scholium* to *Carm. Il.* I 18 and not to I 19, where the first section actually ends, for a rhetorical reason. *Carm. Il.* I 1–19 is structured as a coherent *κύκλος* (cf. Hermog. *Inv.* 4.8, above all 4.8.2) and *Carm. Il.* I 19 only reproduces the wording of the first line, with a different order; consequently, it is only exploited to close the figure and does not add any further information.



This *scholium* marks the end of the first section of Tzetzes' hexametric poem, a clear imitation of epic proems. However, these lines are explained through the lens of rhetoric. Tzetzes underlines that rhetors do not offer a single definition of this specific figure of speech; therefore, he lists some of its possible names.<sup>26</sup> In doing so, he highlights his adherence to the epic tradition and proves his widespread knowledge of οἱ ῥήτορες and his ability to employ their rules.<sup>27</sup>

After the first section, the narration begins with *Carm. Il.* I 20–23. Here, Tzetzes quickly reports the two previous expeditions against Troy, the first led by Herakles, the second by the Amazons. The *scholium* to *Carm. Il.* I 20 offers a rhetorical explanation of these lines:

ἦτοι μὲν Τροίη· ἐντεῦθεν ἄρχεται ἡ διήγησις ῥητορικωτάτη μετὰ μικρᾶς τῆς προδιηγῆσεως. Τὸ γὰρ ἀπ' αὐτῆς τῆς διηγῆσεως ἄρχεσθαι ἀρητόρευτὸν τε καὶ ἄτεχνον, τὸ δὲ πόρρωθεν ἄρχεσθαι καὶ μὴ συντόμως εἰσβάλλειν εἰς τὴν ὑπόθεσιν κακία ἐστὶ διηγῆσεως· ἀσαφήνεια γὰρ ἐμποιεῖ. ἀρεταὶ γὰρ διηγῆσεως τέσσαρες· σαφήνεια, συντομία, πιθανότης καὶ ὁ τῶν ὀνομάτων ἑλληνισμός. ἔστι δὲ τὸ “ἦτοι μὲν” καὶ προσωποποιῶ· τὴν γὰρ ἰδίαν γνῶσιν ὡς Μοῦσάν τινα παρεισάγει λέγουσαν καὶ διηγουμένην.<sup>28</sup>

ἦτοι μὲν Τροίη: here starts the narration in the most rhetorical way, with a short introduction. An overly direct narration is non-rhetorical and unskilled. On the other hand, if one starts from a remote point and does not go straight to the topic of the text, this is a deficiency of narration because it causes obscurity. Four are the virtues of the narration: clarity, conciseness, persuasive plausibility, correct use of Greek words. ἦτοι μὲν is a *prosopeia*: it represents the individual knowledge as a Muse who speaks and narrates.

Here, Tzetzes introduces the first clarification of a Homeric allegory. The Muse is “the individual knowledge”<sup>29</sup> or, in other words, the knowledge that the poet obtained through study and that he is now exploiting in composing literature.<sup>30</sup> By attaching this *scholium* to *Carm. Il.* I 20, the author clarifies at once both the allegorical meaning of the Muse and the rhetorical device of *prosopeia*, that is

<sup>26</sup> The last of the group, *προέκθεσις*, is the one used by Eustathius to define the figure of speech underlying both the proems of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* (Eust. *Comm. ad Hom. Il.*, I 12.30–31 VAN DER VALK and *Comm. ad Hom. Od.* I, 24.9–16 CULLHED).

<sup>27</sup> For the sake of brevity, I will use the first definition of this figure of speech (*προθεωρία*) to refer to *Carm. Il.* I 1–19.

<sup>28</sup> Tz. *Schol. Carm. Il.* I 20a, 108.14–22 LEONE.

<sup>29</sup> Tz. *Exeg. ad Hes. Op.*, 29.13 Gaisford. In *Exeg. ad Hes. Op.*, 24–36 Gaisford, Tzetzes gives his own allegorical explanation of the Muses' meaning and significance.

<sup>30</sup> See CARDIN, Teaching (as footnote 2 above), 102 note 34.

the ‘goddess’ as the narrating voice throughout the entire poem. In this way, Tzetzes wants to attest his conformity to a structural *τόπος* of epic.<sup>31</sup>

As the Muse starts talking, ἦτοι μὲν Τροίη should mark the starting point of the narration, too. In fact, *Carm. Il.* I 20 is the first of four verses in which the two previous expeditions against Troy are mentioned: the marginality of these events is confirmed by their absence within the *προθεωρία*. Their presence is meant to introduce the *διήγησις* through a quick contextualisation. Tzetzes explains this choice in the *scholium*, where he underlines that a narration should not start *ex abrupto* but after a short introduction (*προδιήγησις*).<sup>32</sup> In a nutshell, Tzetzes wants to underline that the Muse of his poem, *i.e.* his intellect, has a deep acquaintance with the rules of rhetoric.

After the *προδιήγησις*, the proper *διήγησις* begins at *Carm. Il.* I 24 and lasts 1.624 out of 1.676 verses as a *carmen continuum*.<sup>33</sup> Within this narrative continuity, Tzetzes aimed to highlight the events explicitly mentioned in the *προθεωρία* through a consistent method:<sup>34</sup> the presence of some verses in which Tzetzes criticises his sources or gives more than one version of the same account;<sup>35</sup> frequently, an *εἰκονισμός* of the main characters of the given section is attached, too.<sup>36</sup> In this way, Tzetzes points out the most important events of the plot without breaking the cohesiveness of the *διήγησις* and he confirms his attention in giving a reliable and trustworthy account of the facts.

After the fall of the city, Tzetzes does not proceed further:

750 Στησίχορος δ' ἐρέησιν ἑοῖς ἐπέεσσι νόστον,

**31** In the paraphrasis of the *Iliad* by Manuel Moschopoulos, the beginning of the narration (*Il.* I 9) is marked by ἡ Μοῦσα, see S. GRANDOLINI, *La parafrasi al primo libro dell'Iliade di Manuel Moschopoulos*, in *Studi di onore di Aristide Colonna*. Perugia 1982, 134–149.

**32** *Herm. Inv.* II 1 where the structure is defined both *προδιήγησις* and *προκατάστασις*. Tzetzes reports only the first of the two, possibly because *προκατάστασις* is used as one of the definitions of the figure of speech underlying *Carm. I* 1–18 (*Schol. Carm. Il.* I 18a, 107.19–20 Leone, see above). This is only a possibility as the figure is called *προδιήγησις* and not *προκατάστασις* also in *Tz. Schol. in Herm., An. Ox.* IV 58.1–5 Cramer.

**33** On the basis of the textual transmission, LEONE, “Carmina” (as footnote 2 above) 385–386 proves that Tzetzes did not divide his poem into *antehomerica*, *homerica*, and *posthomerica*, as modern editors do, including LEONE.

**34** See *supra* the text of the *προθεωρία*. Hecuba’s pregnancy is the same starting point used in *Tz. Exeg. ad Il.* 58.1–3 ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, cf. § 1.

**35** On Tzetzes’ criticism, see CONCA, *L’esegesi* (as footnote 23 above) on the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* and M. SAVIO, *Screditare per valorizzare*. Giovanni Tzetze, le sue fonti, i committenti e la concorrenza, Roma 2020, 87–88 and, on the *Exegesis to the Iliad*, 89–125.

**36** On the *εἰκονισμοί* see F.V. LOVATO, *Portrait de héros, portrait d’érudit: Jean Tzetzes et la tradition des eikonismoi*. *MEG* 17 (2017), 137–156.

- ἤμην ὅσοι πελάγει φθάρεν ἠδ' ὅσοι ἤλυθον ἄλλῃ,  
 ἠδ' ὅσοι εἰσαφίκοντο φίλην περι πατρίδα γαῖαν.  
 Κεῖνος ταῦτ' ἐρέησιν ἀνήρ, γλῶσσα δ' ἄρ' ἐμεῖο  
 βουλή Ἰσαακίου δολόφρονος οἷ τε δάμαρτος  
 755 ἄρτου δευομένη καταίσχεται, οὐδ' ἐπαεῖδει  
 οὐδ' ἐθέλει πονέειν, περι ἄλγεισι θυμὸν ἔχουσα.  
 Καὶ τόδε τίς που εἴσεται ἀνὴρ ὄρθια κρίνων,  
 ὡς ἄρ' ἄτερ καμάτιο ὑμῖν κατὰ πάντ' ἐρέεινα.  
 Ἄλλ' ὑμεῖς, τέκνα μοιρηγενέων γενετήρων,  
 760 ἄλλοθεν Ἀργείων νόστον δίξεσθ' ἐπαεῖδειν.  
 Αὐτὰρ ἐγὼν ἐρέω, περι τέρματι Μοῦσαν ἐλίσσων,  
 Τροίην ὀππότε πέρσαν ἀρήϊοι νῆες Ἀχαιῶν.

In his verses, Stesichorus describes their return and reports how many of them died in the sea, how many turned up in another place, and how many came to their beloved homeland. This man tells these things. On the contrary, my tongue is without bread by decision of Isaac and his deceiving wife. It is tied, it does not keep on singing and it does not want to strain as the soul is weighted by sorrow. Anyone who can rightly judge will know that I would speak to you about all these things without difficulty. But you, sons of lucky parents, search elsewhere to have an account of the returns of Argives. I will explain when the bellicose sons of Argives destroyed Troy, making the Muse turn around the goal.

The complete absence of *scholia* to these verses is remarkable: Tzetzes probably believes that no addition is required. Under the veil of the ‘factual evidence’ about the end of Isaac’s patronage, the inner reason of Tzetzes’ self-delimitation is clear, after all.<sup>37</sup>

Tzetzes is undoubtedly aware that the νόστοι are perceived as a later stage of the Trojan saga. But they are excluded from the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς because their account would have spoiled the cohesiveness of the διήγησις and its proper topic as the νόστοι have an increasingly weak connection to the city of Troy and to its inhabitants.<sup>38</sup> This delimitation is silently clear from the first line of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Tzetzes starts with Ἀργαλέου πολέμοιο μέγαν πόνον Ἰλιακοῖο and ends his narration just after the fall of Troy, the end of the war and the departure of Achaeans. In doing so, he is imitating the Homeric example. The *Iliad* begins with μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος and ends up with the death of Hector,

<sup>37</sup> As scholars have (too) often highlighted, Tzetzes does not miss any opportunity to slander his former patron Isaac. On the topic, see M. SAVIO, *Polemica e invettiva nelle opere di Giovanni Tzetze: screditare i concorrenti e pubblicizzare l'“eccellenza tzetziana”*. *Rivista di Filologia e di Istruzione Classica* 146 1 (2018), 181–238 and EADEM, *Screditare* (as footnote 35 above). See also P.A. AGAPITOS, *Grammar, genre and patronage in the twelfth century. A scientific paradigm and its implications*. *JÖB* 64 (2014), 1–22.

<sup>38</sup> See here § 6.

the turning point of the war that was made possible only through the direct action of Achilles.<sup>39</sup> Tzetzes' choice is represented through the mention of the Muse. As said before, Tzetzes has aptly kept the presence of the Muse as an allegoric image of ἡ ἰδίᾳ γνώσις (*i. e.* ἡ διὰ παιδεύσεως γνώσις, using the definition in Tzetzes' *Exegesis to Works and Days*) ... λέγουσα καὶ διηγουμένη.<sup>40</sup> After coming to the end of his narration, he explicitly recalls the silent presence of the Μοῦσα/γνώσις at *Carm. Il.* III 761, because he has to move his intellect from the narration of the events to the chronology of the Trojan war.<sup>41</sup>

Within this structural coherence, the attack against Isaac makes the reader believe that Tzetzes had to limit himself for a reason outside the economy of the narration. Although he probably wrote the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* in Constantinople while searching for a new patron, it is also possible that Tzetzes is telling the truth and he was writing the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* under Isaac's patronage, but he had to stop.<sup>42</sup> Whether this biographical motivation is sincere or not, the rhetorical effectiveness of the attack against Isaac is not spoiled. Tzetzes only aims to ensure that the delimitation of the subject is grounded on a realistic and persuasive reason as the absence of patronage and funding.<sup>43</sup>

The following *coda* on the chronology of the Trojan war is a clever solution for the end of the poem. In this way, the general structure turns out to be ring-shaped. It begins with a *προθεωρία* of nineteen verses which summarises the topic of the *διήγησις*. The final section contains the same number of verses

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**39** The attention towards the information given by the first verse of a poem is confirmed by *Exeg. ad Il.* 72.6–9 ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, where Tzetzes speaks about the meaning of the first line of the *Iliad*. According to Tzetzes, if Homer's purpose was not the praise of Achilles, he would have started his poem with *Τρώων ἢ Δαναῶν λυγρὸν μόθον ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα*. On Tzetzes' explanation of the content of the *Iliad*, see § 4.

**40** Tz. *Schol. Carm. Il.* I 20a, 108.21–22 LEONE.

**41** The image of *Carm. Il.* III 760–761 is very effective. Tzetzes' Muse is represented as a chariot that was on its way to continue the run (that is, to give an extensive account of the νόστοι) but the charioteer Tzetzes and his authorial control have prevented any expansion of the narration beyond the limits imposed – *τέρμα* is here used with both its meanings, as the goal in the chariot races and, generally, any sort of boundary. After all, if a chariot does not turn around the goal, it crashes against the terraces of the stadium.

**42** BRACCINI, *Erudita invenzione* (as footnote 3 above) and AGAPITOS, *Politics* (as footnote 3 above).

**43** The same 'external motivation' lies behind the end of the account of "the facts linked to the Trojan war" in the introduction to the *Exegesis to the Iliad* (see § 1). As for the end of the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς*, the choice seems to be independent of the authorial will also in the *Exegesis*: Tzetzes claims to be obliged by the context – his audience of students. In this way, the inner rhetorical motivation and the outer cause – fictitious or not – fit totally together. Cf. A. RHOBY, *Ioannes Tzetzes als Auftragsdichter. Graeco-Latina Brunensia* 15/2 (2010), 155–170.

and gives a general chronology of the war in order to set the event within a precise historical frame. The cohesiveness of this structure is evident: the introduction points to the following narration, the conclusion goes back to the previous events. Furthermore, a four-verse προδιήγησις is placed after the προθεωρία, introducing the διήγησις; the attack against Isaac covers eight verses (the exact double of the προδιήγησις), explaining the end of the διήγησις and introducing the nineteen verses of the chronology.

To sum up, the macrostructure of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is the following:

1. *Carm. Il.* I 1–19: προθεωρία (19 verses)
2. *Carm. Il.* I 20–23: προδιήγησις (4 verses)
3. *Carm. Il.* I 24 – III 752: διήγησις (1.624 verses)
4. *Carm. Il.* III 753–761: reason of the end of the διήγησις (8 verses)
5. *Carm. Il.* III 761–780: chronology of Iliadic events (19 verses)

## 4. The plot of the Homeric *Iliad* within the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς

Moving back to *Carm. Il.* I 10–11 (see above, § 3), the position of Πηλεΐδαο κότον ... Ἐκτορος οἶτον at the beginning and the end of the distich signifies the boundaries of the Homeric *Iliad* within the continuous narration of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Without breaking the continuity of his διήγησις, Tzetzes does actually highlight the contents of the *Iliad*: first the wrath of Achilles, then the death and the burial of Hector.<sup>44</sup> However, this fact does not affect the structure of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς in the way that modern editions may suggest. In fact, the narration of Achilles' wrath does not begin with *Carm. Il.* II 1, but with *Carm. Il.* I 306–310:

Ἀρχὴν δ' αὐτῶν ἔχθεος εἶπω, τίς τοι ἐτύχθη.  
 Οὐ μὲν Ὀδυσσεὸς εἰκῆ μνήσομαι αὐτὸς ἀρότρου,  
 οὔτ' ἄρα Τηλεμάχοιο. Ψεύδεα πάντα τέτυκται·  
 αὐτὸς γὰρ συνάγειρεν Ἀχαιῶν πάντας ἀρίστους.  
 310 Ταῦτα δέ τοι ἐρέω νημερτέα, ὡς περ ἐτύχθη.

<sup>44</sup> The plot of the Homeric *Iliad* is summarised in a couple of verses of the above-mentioned προθεωρία (*Carm. Il.* 2.10–11).

I want to say what was the cause of their hate. I do not recall in vain the plough of Odysseus nor Telemachus. All these accounts are fake as Odysseus himself gathered all the best Argives. I report all these sure events as they happened.

Through these lines, Tzetzes introduces what turns out to be the narrative sequence about the wrath. The *scholia* confirm the role of the five verses: they are defined as a *προκατάστασις* (*Schol. ad Carm. Il. I 310a LEONE*), and the following verses are labelled as a *διήγησις* (*Schol. ad Carm. Il. 311a LEONE*).<sup>45</sup> After the *προκατάστασις*, Tzetzes first explains the origins of the hate between two characters, Odysseus and Palamedes: he is imitating the Homeric example, as the first book of the *Iliad* reports the events that caused the wrath of Achilles. So, in *Carm. Il. I 311 – II 227*, Tzetzes describes the real motivation of the wrath (Palamedes' death). In the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς*, Achilles flies into the rage because of the death of Palamedes that was caused by Odysseus' hate and Agamemnon's credulity.<sup>46</sup> Then, Tzetzes describes what happened until the death of Patroclus. Finally, the end of the narration of the wrath is marked as follows (*Carm. Il. II 228 – 233*):

Ταῦτ' ἄρα μῆνις ἔτευξε βαρῦφρονος Αἰακίδαο,  
 ἦν Παλαμήδεος εἵνεκα μῆνιεν Ἀργείοισι·  
 230 τὴν περ Ὅμηρος ἔφησεν, οὗ εἵνεκα εἶπε, γενέσθαι,  
 οὐκ ἐθέλων Δαναοῖς κακὸν αἴσχος τοῖον ἰάψαι,  
 οὗ χάριν οὐδ' ἐπέεσσιν ἐοῖς ὕμνησε τὸν ἄνδρα.  
 Ταῦτ' ἄρα μῆνις ἔτευξε, μέχρι καὶ Πάτροκλον εἶλεν.

The wrath of the resolute Aeacid caused all these events. Achilles harboured this wrath against the Argives because of Palamedes, although Homer tells that it was instigated by the cause he has reported. The Poet did not want to bring shame to the Danaans. For this reason, he did not praise Palamedes within his verses. The wrath caused these events until it took away even Patroclus.

<sup>45</sup> The two *scholia* are preserved in Vat. gr. 915 (ms. A LEONE) and in Mutinensis gr. 244 (ms. F LEONE). Even if they are not by Tzetzes, they testify that this structure was noticed by Byzantine readers, too.

<sup>46</sup> On the relevance of Palamedes in Tzetzes' works, see A. PIZZONE, The autobiographical subject in Tzetzes' *Chiliades*: an analysis of its components, in Ch. Messis/M. Mullett/I. Nilsson (eds.), *Storytelling in Byzantium: narratological approaches to Byzantine texts and images. Studia Byzantina Upsaliensia*, 19. Uppsala 2018, 287 – 304; S. XENOPHONTOS, 'A living portrait of Cato': self-fashioning and the classical past in John Tzetzes' *Chiliads*. *Estudios Byzantinos 2* (2014), 187 – 204.

In a nutshell, Tzetzes underlines the significance of these events during the wrath through a narrative sequence that is structured as a normal διήγησις. It is introduced by a προκατάστασις of five verses (*Carm. Il. I* 306–310, see *Schol. ad Carm. Il. I* 310a) and ends up with a close of six verses (*Carm. Il. II* 228–233).

Most interestingly, this narrative sequence does not include the whole plot of the *Iliad*, but it ends with the death of Patroclus. After the 333 verses on the wrath of Achilles, Tzetzes moves to the following events: the duel between Achilles and Hector, and the death of the latter (*Carm. Il. II* 234–274, Tzetzes offers two different versions of events); then, the meeting between Achilles and Priam, the return of Hector's corpse and his burial (*Carm. Il. II* 275–490). These last 255 verses are not linked with the previous sequence.

This structure turns out to be grounded on Tzetzes' interpretation of the *Iliad*. In the *Exegesis to the Iliad*, Tzetzes explains why Homer begins his narration from the last stages of the war.<sup>47</sup> First, Homer selected these events because they are not only the τελευταῖα, but also the ἀναγκαῖα.<sup>48</sup> Furthermore, the specific moral purpose of the *Iliad* is pointed out by its first word μῆνις: by showing the calamities that the wrath of Achilles caused to the Achaeans, Homer aims at teaching his audience not to fly into rage nor dishonour the noblest.<sup>49</sup> At the same time, Tzetzes says that the first line of the *Iliad* reveals also the main purpose of Homer, the praise of Achilles.<sup>50</sup> If Homer had narrated the events until the fall of Troy, he would have been obliged to speak about the death of Achilles and, thus, he would have spoiled his main purpose (τὸ τῆς ποιήσεως ὅλης κεφάλαιον).<sup>51</sup>

In the earlier Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, Tzetzes proves to follow the same interpretation of the *Iliad*. The structure of narrative sequence about the wrath is grounded on the moral purpose of the Homeric *Iliad*, as Achilles' wrath ends with its extreme and unintended consequence, the death of Patroclus. On the other hand, the death of Hector and the return of his corpse to Priam are part of the Homeric *Iliad* only because Homer wanted to praise Achilles. For this reason, Tzetzes does not keep this connection in his own poem<sup>52</sup> and, consequently,

47 Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 71.3–4 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

48 Ibid. 71.4–9.

49 Ibid. 71.9–20, in particular 14–17 εἰ γὰρ Ἀγαμέμνων μὴ ἄτιμον Ἀχιλλεῖα ἐποίησεν, οὐκ ἂν Ἀχιλεὺς ἐμνήσιασεν οὐδ' ὁ φίλος αὐτῷ ἀνήρητο Πάτροκλος οὐδὲ τοσοῦτοι ἔπεσον Ἕλληνες.

50 Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 72.6–9 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

51 Ibid. 72.18–73.7.

52 The extended title of the poem as reconstructed by Leone testifies this choice by Tzetzes. Τὰ πρὸ Ὅμηρου καὶ ὅσα παρέχει Ὅμηρος μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως divides the topic into two groups:

*Carm. Il.* II 234–490 are not structurally connected to I 306 – II 233, but to III 385–474, where the death of Achilles and his burial are narrated.<sup>53</sup>

In this way, Tzetzes proves to know how to handle the content of one of the most important pillars of Byzantine culture. He rectifies the motivation of the wrath of Achilles, the best champion of the Homeric *Iliad* (not only a matter of women and gifts, but the death of his friend Palamedes); he underlines the tragic consequence of his perseverance (the death of the beloved Patroclus); he reports his greatest deed (the death of Hector) as well as his piety (the embassy of Priam and the return of Hector's corpse). At the same time, Tzetzes does not preserve the features that are well grounded on the purpose of the Homeric narrative, but that would spoil the structure of his own poem. Therefore, he does not include the death of Hector within the events of the wrath of Achilles.

## 5. The microstructure of the διήγησις and its purpose

In the *Exegesis*, Tzetzes is not hinting at the macrostructure of the poem when he assures his reader that he will “learn thoroughly” (κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν ἐκδιδάσκεισθαι) through the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. In fact, Tzetzes is plainly talking about the content of the whole διήγησις that is the longest as well as the core section of the poem. The definition κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν accurately describes the method according to which the verses are arranged in the microstructure of the διήγησις, that is the way in which every single element of the narration is displayed.

The Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς has a considerable number of hexameters that begin with a conjunction. Their great majority are well attested in the epic sources that Tzetzes explicitly uses:<sup>54</sup>

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what is before the events of the *Iliad* and what παρέχει Ὅμηρος. The addition of μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως makes clear that Tzetzes is not preserving the self-delimitation of Homer, grounded on his will to praise Achilles, but he extends the narration until the end of the war.

**53** Tzetzes links the two heroes through a similar narration of their death. If Priam's embassy is omitted (*Carm. Il.* II 275 – 490), the two passages are identical: the description of their killing (II 243 – 257; III 385 – 430); the return of the body (II 295 – 407; III 401 – 430); funeral and burial (II 408 – 490; III 431 – 467). Both the heroes have an εἰκονισμός: Hector is described just after the account of his death (II 266 – 269); Achilles after his funeral (III 468 – 474).

**54** The *LSJ* abbreviation of the name of the author is followed by the number of times in which the clause is used within his work. As for Homer, the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are both taken into account. The conjunctions have been counted only when they are at the beginning of a sentence or of a verse.



ἀλλ' ἄρα (Hom. 14; QS 20); ἀλλ' ἦτοι (Hom. 25); ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ (Hom. 106; QS 19); αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ (Hom. 179; QS 4; Tryph. 1 αὐτὰρ ἐπειδή); αὐτίκα (Hom. 130; QS 16; Tryph. 5), αὐτίκα γάρ (Hom. 8; QS 1); noun/pronoun of person + δ' αὖτε (Hom. 191; QS 29); ἦτοι γάρ [τότε] (Hom. 2); ἦτοι ὃ γε (Hom. 7); καὶ νύ κεν (Hom. 35; QS 26; Tryph. 2); καὶ τότε (Hom. 46; QS 38; Tryph. 1); καὶ τότε δὴ (Hom. 37; QS 15); ὅς δὴ τοι (Hom. 6); οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδέ (Hom. 6; QS 4; Tryph. 1); τόρρα γὰρ οὖν (Hom. 3); εἰσόκεν (Tryph. 2)<sup>55</sup>

In addition to these conjunctions, Tzetzes puts the two nouns Τρῶες and Ἀργεῖοι (but never Ἀχαιοί or Δαναοί) at the line beginning whenever he wants to switch between the two different perspectives towards the same event.

These connectives are not on the same level of importance. Tzetzes divides his διήγησις into parts through αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ. These parts correspond to a certain stage of the Trojan war – e.g. the life of Paris in the countryside (*Carm Il. I* 32–45) and then his return to Troy (*Carm Il. I* 46–56); a phase of the battle (*Carm Il. II* 1–106); the beginning of a day of battle (*Carm Il. II* 192).<sup>56</sup> Between a first αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ and the following, the facts are organised in a consistent structure through other conjunctions.

In this way, the διήγησις is divided as follows:

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55 These conjunctions are actually rare within Tzetzes' *corpus*, if the Μικρομεγάλη is not taken into account, as clearly follows. Ἀλλ' ἄρα: *Carm. Il. 14* – *All. in Od. 1* [Homeric quote]; *Epist. 1*; *Exeg. ad. Il. 1* [Homeric quote]; ἀλλ' ἦτοι: *Carm. Il. 4* – *All. in Od. 2* [Homeric quotes]; *Exeg. ad. Il. 9* [Homeric quotes]; ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ: *Carm. Il. 14* – *All. in Il. 2* Hist. 1 [Homeric quote] – *Exeg. ad. Il. 1* [Homeric quote]; αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ: *Carm. Il. 31* – *Exeg. ad. Il. 8* [Homeric quotes]; αὐτίκα: *Carm. Il. 9* – *All. in Il. 7*; *All. in Od. 3* [Homeric quotes]; *Hist. 3*; *Exeg. ad. Il. 9* [5 Homeric quotes]; αὐτίκα γάρ: *Carm. Il. 4* – *All. in Il. 1*; *All. in Od. 3* [Homeric quotes]; *Epist. 2*; *Hist. 2*; *Exeg. ad. Il. 2*; noun/pronoun δε αὖτε: *Carm. Il. 47* – *De poem. gen. 1*; *All. in Od. 9* [Homeric quotes]; *Exeg. ad. Il. 5* [Homeric quotes]; ἦτοι γάρ: *Carm. Il. 9*; ἦτοι ὃ γε: *Carm. Il. 1* – *Exeg. ad. Il. 3* [Homeric quotes]; καὶ νύ κεν: *Carm. Il. 4* – *Hist. 1* [Homeric quote]; καὶ τότε: *Carm. Il. 38* – *All. in Il. 23*; *All. in Od. 2*; *Epist. 4*; *Exeg. ad. Il. 14* [4 Homeric quotes]; *Hist. 5*; καὶ τότε: *Carm. Il. 10* – *All. in Il. 1*; *Exeg. ad. Il. 3* [Homeric quotes]; *Hist. 1* [quote from the Palatine Anthology]. The conjunctions that do not appear here are used in the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς only. The same conjunctions are actually rare in the hexametric poetry of the Comnenian Age, for example in the two *corpora* by Theodore Prodromos and Michael Choniates: αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ (Theod.Prod. 3; Mi.Chon. 3); noun/pronoun of person + δ' αὖτε (Theod.Prod. 6; Mi.Chon. 3); καὶ τότε (Theod.Prod. 2); καὶ τότε δὴ (Theod.Prod. 2); the other ones do not appear.

56 Both *Carm. Il. II* and *III* in Leone's edition begin with αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ. This fact does not endorse the hypothesis for which the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς was originally divided into three parts (*antehomeric*, *homeric*, and *posthomeric*) as modern editions wrongly suggest to readers. In fact, the two αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ only mark important new phases of the war (the wrath of Achilles and the arrival of Penthesilea).

1. I 24–31: (I 24 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) time of peace for the Trojans; (I 27 οὐδ' ἄρα μὴν) this peace does not please the Moirai; the Trojans benefit from the peace until (I 30–31 τόφρα γὰρ οὖν ... εἰσόκεν) Paris is not alive.

2. I 32–45: (I 32 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Moirai turn the tide; (I 39 αὐτίκα γάρ) Priam and Hecuba conceive Paris; (I 40 πρῶτα δέ ... I 43 μάντιες δ' αὖ) Hecuba's dream and the prophets' response.

3. I 46–56: (I 46 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Hecuba gives birth to her child and calls him Paris; (I 48 αὐτὰρ ἄρα) Priam consults the famous prophet Apollo who predicts the Trojan doom.

4. I 57–75: (I 57 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Priam exposes Paris who is educated in the countryside; (I 65 αὐτὰρ ἐμοὶ δοκέει) Tzetzes' interpretation of the so-called 'judgement of Paris'.

5. I 76–128: (I 76 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) return of Paris to Troy; (I 86 εὔτ' ἄν ἔβδομον ... I 88 καὶ τότε) Priam sends him to Argos; (I 96 αὐτὰρ ὃ γ') Paris comes to Argos but Menelaus is in Crete (I 99 ὃς Μενέλαος) and digression on the name of Zeus given to kings; (I 107 ἦτοι ὃ γ') while he is in Crete, Paris falls in love with Helen (I 109 ὃς δὴ τοι) that loves him back (I 113 οὐδὲ μὲν); (I 115 ἦ γάρ) description of Helen; (I 125 αὐτὸς δ' αὔτε) description of Paris.

6. I 129–190: (I 128 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Paris and Helen flee from Argos; (I 135 αὐτίκα δ') Menelaus is informed of the abduction and goes back to Argos in vain; (I 139 κείνοι γάρ) they are in Troy; (I 141 Τρωϊάδες δέ) the Trojans are shocked at their arrival; after telling the right version of the myth, (I 144 ὡς πολέες φάσκουσιν) Tzetzes reveals the second variant (ἄλλοι δ' ἄλλ' ἐρέουσιν); (I 154 Ἀργεῖοι δ') the Argives send their ambassadors to Troy and they risk to be killed; (I 166 καὶ τότε δὴ) the Argives gather an army and go to Aulis; (I 174 οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδ') they do not forget Achilles.

7. I 191–253: (I 191 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) all the Argives are in Aulis but winter winds do not let them set sail to Troy; (I 194 καὶ τότε) Odysseus takes Iphigenia to Aulis; (I 197 ὡς δέ μιν) her father Agamemnon cries at her sight, for this reason he is made chief by the Argives, a deer saves Iphigenia; (I 210 Ἀργεῖοι δ') the Argives set sail to Troy; (I 212 Τρωσὶ δ' ἄρα) bad omens appear to Trojans and they display sentinels all around the city (I 216 Τρῶες δ' ὡς); (I 217 ἀλλ' ὅτε δὴ) arrival of the Argives; (I 221 δηρὸν δ' ὡς) death of Protesilaus; (I 230 νυμφίον ὡς γάρ ...) suici-

dal of Laodamia; (I 237 τῆν ἐγὼ αἰνέω) praise of faithful women, closed by I 253 αὐτὰρ δ' αὖ.

8. I 254–285: (I 254 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Trojans retreat, Cycnus and his men are killed by Achilles; (I 260 ἔκτοτε) some of the Argives build their camp, some others (above all Achilles and Palamedes) conquer the cities in the nearby; (I 268 σὺν τῷ πρῶτον) war with Telephus.

9. I 286–325: (I 286 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Argives appreciate Palamedes for his deeds; (I 297 αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεύς) Odysseus hates him and prepares his doom; (I 306 ἀρχὴν δ') Tzetzes wants to narrate the motivation of the wrath of Achilles and the losses of the Argives; (I 311 Ἀργείοις) digression about the signs that appeared to the Argives while sailing; (I 316 αὐτὸς δ' αὖ) Palamedes had reassured them; (I 321 καὶ τότε) the Argives praised him.

10. I 326–369: (I 326 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Argives come back to the camp after the facts of Telephus, Palamedes prevents the Argives to eat meat because a plague is approaching; (I 341 λοιμοῦ δ' αὐτίκα) the plague affects the Trojans but not the Argives that (I 343 καὶ τότε δὴ) praise again Palamedes; (I 345 αὐτὰρ ὁ ἐχθρός) Odysseus wants Palamedes to die and finds a pretext; (I 344 ἦτοι γὰρ) Palamedes and Achilles have conquered several cities and brought to the camp treasures and women; (I 350 αὐτὰρ Ἀχιλεὺς) Achilles has taken Ippodamia, the daughter of Brises; (I 352 ἀλλ' ἄρα) Tzetzes describes Ippodamia, who is kept away from the camp by Achilles; (I 363 καὶ τότε) Odysseus accuses Palamedes and orders a Trojan to write a fake letter.

11. I 370–406: (I 370 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) they trap Palamedes; (I 381 αὐτίκα γὰρ δὴ) the false letter is revealed to Argives and Palamedes is stoned to death; (I 390 Αἴας δ' ὡς ἐνόησεν) *pietas* of Ajax; (I 397 ἀλλ' ἦτοι) description of Palamedes.

12. II 1–106: (I 1 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Achilles learns about Palamedes' death and backs out from the war (II 4 αὐτὸς δ' αὖτ'); (II 5 πρὸς δέ γε) new pestilence; (II 8 Τρῶες δ' ὡς ἔμαθον) the Trojans attack the Argives, first crashes between the two armies and duel of Paris and Menelaus; (II 19 αὐτίκα γὰρ Μενέλαον) Pandarus hits Menelaus with a arrow; (II 26 ἐν δέ) description of the allegorical gods in the day of the battle; (II 35 αὐτίκα γὰρ) new crash between the armies and ἀριστία of Diomedes; (II 78 καὶ τότε) Sarpedon incites the Trojans to a battle that lasts until Diomedes wounds Hector.

13. II 107–191: (II 107 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) despite the fact that Hector is wounded and Diomedes is exhausted, the armies still fight without will; list of killings, Hector sacrifices twelve heifers to Athena and goes back to the battle; (II 137 ὃ σφέτλιοι μέροπες) invective of Tzetzes; (II 184 ἀλλ' ὄτε) end of the fight when the night comes, the Argives are defeated.

14. II 192–233: (II 192 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) a new day comes; (II 216 ἀντὰρ ἄρα) after a fist victory, the Argives lose the wall; (II 221 καὶ τοτ') Achilles sends Patroclus to battle but he dies soon after; (II 222 ἀντὰρ δὴ) battle around Patroclus' corpse, Achilles is informed of Patroclus' death and returns to battle; II 228–233 (II 227 ταῦτ' ἄρα μῆνις ... II 233 ταῦτ' ἄρα μῆνις) the wrath of Achilles ends.

15. II 234–308: (II 234 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) Achilles kills Hector; (II 240–241 ὡς ὁ γε ... οἱ δ' ἄλλοι) versions of the death of the latter; (II 266 ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ μορφῆν) description of Hector; (II 270 Πηλεΐδης δέ) after the funeral of Patroclus, Achilles denies the burial of Hector for twelve days; (II 275 ἀλλ' ὄτε δὴ) after twelve days, Priam wants to go to Hector (II 295 καὶ τότε μὲν Πρίαμος); after an omen, a procession of Trojans heads to Hector (II 306 καὶ τότε Τρωΐάδων).

16. II 309–404: (II 309 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) Priam and few others go to the Argive camp; (II 320 οἱ δ' ὄτε δὴ ... III 323 καὶ τότε) they implore the Argives and obtain to meet Achilles; Priam speaks to Achilles (II 327 πρῶτα γὰρ οἱ Πρίαμος); then Andromeda does (III 338 ἀντὰρ ἔπειτα), while her sons weep; Achilles is moved by their cry (II 365 τοὺς γὰρ ὀρών), Polyxena offers herself as a slave and the Argive hero lets them bury Hector; (III 395 ἀλλ' ὄτε δὴ) after a banquet, Achilles takes his ransom, accepts Polyxena as his future wife and (III 402 ἀλλ' ὄτε) asks Priam how many days of truce they need for the mourning.

17. II 405–481: (II 405 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Trojans obtain the corpse of Hector; (II 408 ἀλλ' ὄτε δὴ) prophecy of Cassandra; (II 425 λαοὶ δ') the Trojans gather for the mourning; the funeral lasts until night.

18. II 482–490: (II 482 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) burial of Hector.

19. III 1–29: arrival of Penthesilea; (III 26 ἀλλ' ὄτε δὴ) the Trojans receive her with joy.

20. III 30–193: (III 30 ἀντὰρ ἐπεὶ) after a long rest, Penthesilea and the Amazons go to battle, (δὴ τότε) after putting on their armours. She would have won the Argives if Kronos did not impede her victory (III 37 καὶ νύ κεν ... III 39 ἀλλά);

(III 43 ἦτοι γάρ τότε) description of the Trojan army and of Penthesilea's armour; (III 81 Ἀργεῖοι δὲ) description of the Argive army; (III 93 τοὶ μὲν γάρ) first impact against the Argives troops; (III 100 καὶ τότε) Penthesilea and her army slaughter the Argives; (III 116 ἀλλ' ὅτε) after three days of Trojan victories, during the fourth night bad dreams upset both Penthesilea and Priam; (III 136 εὗτ' ἄν δ') the fourth day begins; (III 140 καὶ τότε) bad omens to Penthesilea; (III 147 ἦτοι γάρ) the battle begins and first the Trojans prevail (III 155 καὶ νύ κε); but Achilles (III 166 ἀλλ' Ἀχιλεὺς) saves the day and fatally wounds Penthesilea; (III 176 ἐνθ' ἦτοι) several Amazons are killed and the Trojans (III 185 Τρῶες δ' ὡς οὖν) retreat.

21. III 194–233: (III 194 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Penthesilea is found whilst dying; (III 206 καὶ τότε δῆ) Diomedes throws her in the river Xantos; (III 215 ἀλλ' ἄρα) arrival of Memnon during the night; (III 230 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) when the light comes, Memnon's troops attack the Argives.

22. III 234–385: (III 234 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) description of the troops of Memnon; (III 241 καὶ τότε) Memnon orders to prepare to battle; (III 245 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) disposition of the troops and begin of the battle (III 248 εὗτ' ἄρ δ'); (III 258 καὶ τότε) the Trojans are winning against the Argives, Antilochus is killed by Memnon; (III 267 καὶ τότε δῆ) all the Argives withdraw except Nestor; (III 291 ἀλλ' ὅτε νύξ) the night comes and the troops cannot sleep; (III 298 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) when the light comes, the battle begins, Memnon is killed or by Achilles or by Ajax; (III 361 ἀλλ' ἄρα) description of the Trojans.

23. III 386–480: (III 386 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the death of Achilles is approaching; (III 391 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) the Trojans invite Achilles to a sacrifice, Paris kills him; (III 401 αἴψα δ' ἄρ) the murderers run away to the city; (III 409 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) the Argives go to the temple where Achilles is dying; (III 431 καὶ τότε) Achilles' funeral; (III 450 ἀλλ' ὅτε) Achilles' pyre and burial; (III 468 ἀλλ' ἦτοι) description of Achilles, Patroclus and Antilochus.

24. III 481–538: (III 481 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) death of Ajax; (III 492 ἀλλ' ἦτοι) description of Ajax; (III 498 καὶ τότε δῆ) Polyxena commits suicide; (III 504 ἀλλ' ἄρα) description of Polyxena; (III 509 Ἀργεῖοι δ' ἐπεὶ) after the deaths of Achilles and Ajax, the Argives begin to heed the oracles; (III 514 καὶ τῶτ') Odysseus and Diomedes steal the statue of Pallades from Troy, thanks to Antenor; (III 518 Εὐρύπυλος δ') arrival of Eurypylos; (III 523 καὶ τῶτ') arrival of Neoptolemus; (III 525 ἀλλ' ἦτοι) description of the two.

25. III 539–640: (III 539 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) Neoptolemus' ἀριστεία; (III 580 αὐτίκα δ') Philoctetes comes to Troy; (III 590 αὐτὰρ) death of Paris; (III 602 Ἀργεῖοι δ') new mission of Odysseus and Diomedes; (III 607 Τρῶες δ') Trojans want to end the war; (III 620 αὐτὰρ) attack against Isaac's wife; (III 629 ὡς δ' ἄρα καὶ τότε) Odysseus orders the construction of a wooden horse; (III 635 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) Epeius builds it.

26. III 641–675: (III 641 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) some Argive heroes enter the wooden horse; (III 651 ἀλλ' ἄρ') description of the Atridai and of other Argives.

27. III 676–683: (III 676 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the Argives withdraw from the camp.

28. III 684–685: (III 684 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) at dawn, the Trojans see the enemy no more.

29. III 686–743: (III 686 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) still at dawn, the Trojans go to the Argive camp, watch the wooden horse and take it inside the walls; (III 714 ἀλλ' ὅτε δῆ) after sacrificing, the night comes, and the Trojans fall asleep; (III 721 καὶ τότε δῆ) the Argives attack the city; (III 724 καὶ τότε δῆ) Argives' attack; (III 729 καὶ τότε δῆ) account of the events

30. III 744–759: (III 744 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ) the war ends.

As the overview shows, the inner structure of the διήγησις is clearly ordered through common adverbs, conjunctions, particles, and pronouns (ἄρα, αὐθις, αὐτε, γάρ, γε, δέ, εἰ ἤέ, καί, μέν, ὅς, οὐδέποτε, (τ)οὔνεκεν, τε, ὡς) together with the other conjunctions seen above. Every piece of information about a single event is given within the space of a hemistich or a verse. Whenever the event requires a longer account, it is divided into sequential moments which are connected by a standardised pattern of particles. These segments are disposed so that a general harmony is ensured within each part of the διήγησις. Let's take an example, *Carm. Il.* II 192–233:

**Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ** ἀγνὸν ἐξεφάνη φῶς Ἥριγενείης,  
πολλοὺς κρείων Ἀτρείδης καταέκτανε Τρώων.  
**Καὶ τότε** τὸν ἀπέπαυσε Κόων, δορὶ χεῖρα τορήσας,  
195 Σῶκος δ' αὐτ' Ὀδυσῆα, τὸν Αἴας ἐξεσάωσεν.  
**Αὐτὰρ** Ἀλέξανδρος κεραελκέα τόξα ἐρύων  
Τυδείδην βάλεν ἠδὲ Μαχάονα Εὐρύπυλόν τε.  
Νέστωρ δ' ὡς φορέεσκε Μαχάονα ἰητῆρα,  
Πάτροκλον ἦκεν Ἀχιλλεὺς ἐξερέοντα, τίς εἶη·  
200 ὃς δῆ Νέστορος ἐκ κλισίης παλινόρσοις ὀρούων

- Εὐρυπύλου βεβολημένου ἄγριον ἔλκος ἀκεῖτο.  
 Τεῖχος δὲ Τρῶες Δαναῶν ἔλον, οἱ δὲ φέβοντο.  
 Τοὺς δ' Ἐνοσίχθων Ἀργεῖους ἐσάωσε Ποσειδῶν,  
 πολλὰ δ' ἀπ' ἀμφοτέρωθε καρήατα πίπτεν ἔραζε.  
 205 **Καὶ τότε** Ἀτρείδης καὶ Νέστωρ σὺν τραυματίαισιν  
 ἐς πόλεμον κατέβαινον· ἐρίβρομος ἦν γὰρ ἰωή.  
 Ἥρη λεπταλέος δὲ ἀῆρ πυρρίεις, ἀνορούσας,  
 κράσιος, Ἀφροδίτης, παντερπέα κεστὸν ἐλοῦσα,  
 ὀμβροφόρων νεφῶν ἀνεμῶδεα ἤλασεν ὀρμῆς,  
 210 εἶαρ δ' ἀνθεμόεν ποιητρόφρον ἐξεφαάνθη,  
 πᾶμπαν δ' οὐ κατάεσχε, μετάρτροπος ἤθελε δ' εἶναι.  
 Τοῦνεκα λάθριον Ἥρης κοίτην φημίξαντο  
 ὕπνον τε Ζηνός. Νίκων δὲ Τρῶας Ἀχαιοί,  
 Αἴας δ' Ἔκτορα χάρμης παῦσε λίθου ὑπ' ἐρωῆς.  
 215 Κραιπνοσύνη δὲ ποδῶν Λοκρὸς ἔκτανε νήριθμον ὄχλον.  
**Ἄυτάρ ἄρα** Ζεὺς ἐγρόμενος κακὰ τεύχεν Ἀχαιοῖς·  
 Ἔκτορα γὰρ τ' ἀνέγειρε βεβλημένον, αἴμ' ἐμέοντα,  
 ὃς πολέας ὀλέσας νέα πρῆσε Πρωτεσιλάου.  
**Καὶ τότε** Ἀχιλεὺς Πάτροκλον ἤκεν ἀμῦναι Ἀχαιοῖς,  
 220 ὃς πολέας ὀλέσας Σαρπηδόνα τε Διὸς υἱόν,  
 ὕστατον αὐτὸς ὑφ' Ἔκτορος ἔκθανεν ἀνδροφόνοιο.  
**Ἄυτάρ δὴ** Μενέλαος χρυσοκόμην κατέπεφνε  
 Βουκολίδην Εὐφορβον, Ἀβαρβαρέης φίλον υἱόν.  
 Ἀργαλέου πολέμου γεγαῶτος δ' ἀμφὶ Πατρόκλω,  
 225 Ἀντίλοχον πέμπουσιν Ἀχιλῆϊ ἐρέοντα.  
 Ὅς δέ γε λυγρὴν ἀγγελίην τοίην ἐπακούσας  
 ἦεν ἐς πόλεμον καὶ ἦγαγε νεκρὸν ἐταῖρον.  
 Ταῦτ' ἄρα μῆνις ἔτευξε βαρύφρονος Αἰακίδαο,  
 ἦν Παλαμῆδεος εἵνεκα μῆνιεν Ἀργείοισι·  
 230 τὴν περ Ὅμηρος ἔφησεν, οὗ εἵνεκα εἶπε, γενέσθαι,  
 οὐκ ἐθέλων Δαναοῖς κακὸν αἴσχος τοῖον ἰάψαι,  
 οὗ χάριν οὐδ' ἐπέεσσιν ἑοῖς ὕμνησε τὸν ἄνδρα.  
**Ταῦτ' ἄρα** μῆνις ἔτευξε, μέχρι καὶ Πάτροκλον εἶλεν.  
**Ἄυτάρ ἐπεὶ ...**

When the pure light of Erigeneia appeared, the strong Atreides killed many Trojans. In that moment, Coon stopped him by piercing his hand with the spear. Socus did the same to Odysseus, but Ajax saved him from death. But Alexander was drawing his horned bow and hit Diomedes, Machaon, and Eurypylyus. When Nestor was carrying away the surgeon Machaon, Achilles sent Patroclus to ask him who he was. Machaon then rushed back from Nestor's tent and healed the bad wound of Eurypylyus who had been hit by Paris' arrow. Trojans took the wall of the Danaans who then fled in terror. But Poseidon Enosichthon saved the Argives and lot of heads fell to the ground on both sides. At this moment, the Atreides and Nestor with the wounded men went into battle and shouted loud. Hera, the delicate fiery air, after taking the all-delighting girdle of blending, that is Aphrodite, drove away the windy rushes of rain-bringing clouds and a flowery spring began, plenty of herbs.

But Hera was not steady at all as she delights in veering. For this reason, poets talked about the secret union of Hera and about the sleep of Zeus. The Achaeans were winning the Trojans. Ajax drew Hector back from the battle by throwing a stone. Ajax from Locris killed a huge crowd of people thanks to the velocity of his feet. But, after waking, Zeus prepared the ruin to the Achaeans. He reanimated the injured Hector while he was coughing up blood. Hector killed many people and burnt Protesilaus' ship. At his point, Achilles sent Patroclus to help the Achaeans. He killed the son of Zeus, Sarpedon, but later he was slaughtered by the man-slayer Hector. Menelaus killed the golden-haired Boucolides, Euphorbos, the beloved son of Abarbares. A fierce battle rose up around Patroclus. <The Argives> sent Antilochus to inform Achilles. After hearing the mournful news, he returned to war and took away the corpse of his friend. The wrath of the resolute Aeacid caused all these events. Achilles harboured this wrath against the Argives because of Palamedes, although Homer tells that it was instigated by the cause he has reported. The Poet did not want to bring shame to the Danaans. For this reason, he did not praise Palamedes within his verses. The wrath caused these events until it took away even Patroclus.

If only the translation of this passage is read and compared with *Exeg. ad Il.* 65.17–67.1 PΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ, the two texts look similar. They actually follow the same way of narrating the story: the happenings are itemised through short sentences, one after another. However, the direct reading of the Greek text highlights the major differences between the two texts: the metre and the language, that make the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς a 'Homeric poem', as well as the syntaxis, marked by conjunctions and particles.

In *Carm. Il.* II 192–201 the events are divided into distiches, the first and the last two about Argives' deeds, the central two about Trojans (II 192–193 ἀριστία of Agamemnon; II 194–195 wounding of Agamemnon and Odysseus; II 196–197 Paris hits Diomedes, Machaon, and Eurypylos; II 198–199 Nestor rescues Machaon; II 200–201 Machaon saves Eurypylos).

The following verse reports a decisive event, the conquer of the Achaean wall, that is the topic of the twelfth book of the *Iliad*. The importance of the event is preserved within the general economy of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς by the fact that Tzetzes stops his proceeding in distiches with a single verse that gives this piece of information (see *Schol. ad Carm. Il.* II 202a LEONE). This verse is followed by other two distiches (II 203–204, II 205–206) that outline the following events until the end of the thirteenth book of the *Iliad* (see *Schol. ad Carm. Il.* II 203 LEONE).

In *Carm. Il.* II 207–213, Tzetzes stops the description of the war to give the accurate motivation of the Achaean counterattack through the allegorical explanation of the fourteenth book. The style of II 207–213 is rather different from the previous verses. In the first five lines (II 207–211), Tzetzes reports a meteorological event that the ancient poets depicted as the union between Hera and Zeus and the sleep of the latter; then, in a verse and a half (II 212–213),



he explains the reason behind its allegorical description. The narration of the war effectively comes back at the feminine caesura of *Carm. Il.* II 214 and lasts for the next two verses. Apart from *Carm. Il.* II 222–224, the three following tris-tiches are almost identical: in the first verse, someone causes something to someone else (Zeus causes the ruin of the Achaeans; Achilles sends Patroclus to battle; the Argives send Antilochus to Achilles); the latter has to face another character (the Achaeans Hector; Patroclus Sarpedon; Antilochus Achilles); this character or someone else does something significant (Hector slaughters the Achaeans and burns Protesilaus' ship; Hector kills Patroclus; Achilles stops the battle by rescuing Patroclus' corpse).

This passage is only an example of Tzetzes' procedure in composing the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. However, Tzetzes wants to state clearly that there is much more to be said about the events he is reporting within his versification. If he had reported each event in its entirety, he would have spoilt the refined assessment of his poem and his aim. As every author, he “makes his choices”<sup>57</sup> about what has to be written in the poem. Whilst setting a certain event within the narration, he generally keeps the same significance that it had within his sources. What is omitted within the poem is reported in the *scholia*,<sup>58</sup> where Tzetzes gives an accurate summary and, sometimes, openly criticises his sources.

According to Tzetzes, this kind of microstructure allows the reader to be taught about the events of the war through a minute division of the contents (κατὰ λεπτομέρειαν ἐκδιδάσκεσθαι), hence to learn thoroughly.<sup>59</sup> This feature gives to the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς a strong and undeniable ‘didactic’ characterisation, despite its original purpose was not probably didactic *stricto sensu*. However, if the early poem by Tzetzes and its microstructure is compared to his later compositions in isosyllabic metres and with clear didactic purposes, differences are evident, and the microstructure of these poems turns out to be less strict.

This oddity is caused by the relation between the content and the metre of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς. Together with the pentameter, Byzantine hexameter is one of the two “most artificial metres of Byzantine poetry”.<sup>60</sup> Tzetzes' hexameters

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<sup>57</sup> CARDIN, Teaching (as footnote 2 above) 102 note 34.

<sup>58</sup> For the verses quoted here, see *Schol. ad Carm. Il.* II 193, 202b, 204, 215, 217, 219, 220, 223a, 223b, 226b LEONE.

<sup>59</sup> Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 67.4 PΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΠΟΥΛΟΣ.

<sup>60</sup> M.D. LAUXTERMANN, Byzantine poetry from Pisides to Geometres. Texts and contexts, 2. *WBS*, 24/2. Vienna 2019, 296.

do show a certain tendency to stress regulation before the feminine caesura,<sup>61</sup> but they are still not isosyllabic and do not have the rhythm of dodecasyllables and political verses.<sup>62</sup> Since Tzetzes decided to write the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* in hexameters,<sup>63</sup> he had to compensate the lack of these two features. Therefore, he strengthened the clarity of his narration by organising the content in a structure of consequential *κῶλα*, sentences, and verses that are rather short and consistent in their content. Consequently, the events during the various stages of the Trojan war are arranged in the long solid chain of the *διήγησις* and every important moment of the long-lasting war has its proper space. Fragmentation is avoided by using conjunctions and particles that interconnect the segments within a solid consequential logic. What is unnecessary to the economy of the main narration is confined to the *scholia*.

In this way, Tzetzes aimed at preserving the didactic characterisation of the poem and offers an account that gradually leads the reader from the conception of Paris to the victory of the Achaeans. *Mutatis mutandis*, the microstructure and the disposition of the Trojan matter became the reason for which the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* was later perceived – not only by Tzetzes – as a useful didactic *compendium* and, eventually, has been preserved.

## 6. Tzetzes' *Iliad*: the topic and the title

In LEONE's reconstruction, the complete title of Tzetzes' work is the following:<sup>64</sup>

Ἰωάννου γραμματικοῦ τοῦ Τζέτζου τὰ πρὸ Ὀμήρου καὶ ὅσα παρέχει Ὅμηρος μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως, ἧτοι ἡ μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.

*Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* is indeed a very suggestive title because of the oxymoric adjective *μικρομέγας*. However, its relevance is bound to the meaning of Tzetzes'

<sup>61</sup> *Ibidem*. Tzetzes isn't shy about praising himself for his outstanding skills in writing correct prosodic hexameters, with a proper poetic form and language, cf. *Schol. ad Carm. Il.* I 124a, 128.23 – 129.3.

<sup>62</sup> F. BERNARD, *Writing and reading Byzantine secular poetry, 1025 – 1081*. Oxford 2014, 238 – 240.

<sup>63</sup> Tzetzes was aware that the writings in hexameters and iambs were hardly appreciated over the ones in more common metres, see M.J. JEFFREYS, *The nature and origins of the political verse*. *DOP* 28 (1974), 142 – 195, here 148 – 157.

<sup>64</sup> CARDIN, *Teaching* (as footnote 2 above), 94 note 12.

poem and its literary significance. To understand the title, let's start again from Tzetzes' words about himself.

Ὁ παρῶν ποιητής, φιλοσύντομος ὦν καὶ τῆς ὠφελείας τῶν νέων φροντίζων, συνοπτικῶς τὴν πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ βίβλῳ ἐξέθετο.<sup>65</sup>

Since he loved brevity and took care of the benefit of the young, the present poet exposed synoptically the entire *Iliad* in this book.

This is the first sentence of a *scholium* that was likely meant to be written at the very beginning of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς.<sup>66</sup> The beginning ὁ παρῶν ποιητής plays a traditional deictic function (cf. ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ βίβλῳ) and refers to the individual that composed what stands right in front of the reader.<sup>67</sup> However, by calling himself ὁ παρῶν ποιητής, Tzetzes is evidently hinting at his role as the composer of the hexametric poem, despite being also the author of the *scholia*.<sup>68</sup> Because of the topic and the metre of the poem, ὁ παρῶν ποιητής consequently conveys a subtle but manifest allusion to Homer, ὁ ποιητής by definition and, obviously, to the primary model and source of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, the Homeric *Iliad*.<sup>69</sup>

When Tzetzes reveals that he “exposed the entire *Iliad* (τὴν πᾶσαν Ἰλιάδα) synoptically”,<sup>70</sup> the assertion is of utmost importance if seen within the Homeric tradition. Since ἡ πᾶσα Ἰλιάς clearly refers to the content of the poem, Tzetzes evidently includes in this definition both the antecedents of the war from the conception of Paris (*Carm. Il.* I 25 – 153) and what happened between the gathering of Achaean troops and the fall of Troy (*Carm. Il.* I 154 – III 749). As shown here in § 1, this is the same delimitation of the *Exegesis to the Iliad* where Tzetzes starts his account of “the facts linked to the war” (τὰ ... κατὰ τὸν πόλεμον) from

65 Tz. *Schol. ad Carm. Il.*, 101, 1–3 LEONE.

66 In Vat. gr. 915 (ms. A LEONE), Mutinensis gr. 244 (ms. F LEONE) and Par. Suppl. gr. 95 (ms. H LEONE), this *scholium* is at the beginning of the hexametric text.

67 The opening *scholium* shows structural similarities to Ar. *Ran.* 691–695 KOSTER, in which ὁ παρῶν ποιητής has the same meaning, but the use of παρῶν in opening *scholia* is widespread.

68 Whenever Tzetzes mentions the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς in his later works, he labels it exclusively as a poem, cf. Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 67.8 ΠΑΡΑΤΗΟΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ τὸ ἡμέτερον ἔμμετρον ποίημα (see § 1 above); *Schol. ad Ar. Ran.* 897a, 955 d3 KOSTER ἠρωϊκῆς μία. CONCA, *L'esegesi* (as footnote 23 above) 75; CARDIN, *Teaching* (as footnote 2 above) 95–96.

69 On the self-representation of Byzantine authors through Homer, see E. CULLHED, *The blind bard and 'I': Homeric biography and authorial personas in the twelfth century*. *BMGS* 38 (2014), 49–67.

70 The use of the adverb συνοπτικῶς in the opening *scholium* is very important for the didactic characterisation of the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς, cf. F. BERNARD, *Writing* (as footnote 62 above), 238–240.

Hecuba's pregnancy and explains why;<sup>71</sup> further ahead, he says that the reader of the *Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς* will learn “the facts of the war right until the fall of the city” (τὰ περὶ τὸν πόλεμον μέχρι καὶ τῆς ἀλώσεως).<sup>72</sup>

But, in order to understand why he calls these events ἡ πᾶσα Ἰλιάς, it is useful to take into account what Tzetzes says about the title of the Homeric *Iliad*:

Ἰλιάς ἡ παρούσα ποίησις ἐπιγράφεται, ὡς τὰς τῶν Ἰλιέων, ἦτοι τῶν Τρώων, συμφορὰς περιέχουσα ... Ὀμήρου δὲ πρὸς ἀντιδιαστολήν τῶν μικρῶν Ἰλιάδων· καὶ γὰρ Λέσχης <ὁ> Πυρραῖος, Κιναιῖθων τέ τις Λακεδαιμόνιος καὶ ὁ Ἐρυθραῖος Διόδωρος, Τριφιόδωρός τε καὶ Κόιντος ὁ Σμυρναῖος καὶ ἕτεροι Ἰλιάδας συγγεγραφήκεσαν.<sup>73</sup>

The present poem is entitled ‘*Iliad*’ because it describes what happened to the Ilians, that is to Trojans. [...] It is defined ‘by Homer’ to recognise it among other minor *Iliads*: Lesches of Phyrra, a certain Cynaethus the Lacedaemonian, Diodorus from Erythrae, Triphiodorus, Quintus of Smyrna and others composed *Iliads*.

Tzetzes starts his explanation of the *Iliad* from its very title, Ἰλιάς Ὀμήρου.<sup>74</sup> Tzetzes believes that the poem<sup>75</sup> is entitled *Iliad* simply because it describes the events linked to the Trojans. The presence of other poems about the same events necessitates the genitive Ὀμήρου in order to understand what *Iliad* is among the others. Consequently, it is evident that, for Tzetzes, Ἰλιάς is only a generic reference to the events linked to the Trojans, specifically the war between them and the Achaeans that led to the destruction of Troy.<sup>76</sup>

These observations confirm that, within the definition ἡ πᾶσα Ἰλιάς, the stress falls on the adjective πᾶσα. If every poem about the Trojan war has to

71 Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 58.1–3 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ.

72 Ibid. 67.1–11.

73 Ibid. 67.12–20.

74 Ibid. 67.10–11: ὑμεῖς δὲ τῆς ἐπιγραφῆς ἤδη τῆς βίβλου κατήκοοι γίνεσθε.

75 The presence of παρούσα seems to infer that the *Exegesis* was probably meant to be somehow attached to the text of the *Iliad*. See F. MONTANA, *The Oldest Textual Witness of John Tzetzes' Exegesis of the Iliad*, in M. Ercoles/L. Pagani/F. Pontani/G. Ucciardello (eds.), *Approaches to Greek poetry – Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, and Aeschylus in ancient exegesis. Trends in classics*, 73. Berlin/Boston 2018, 107–131 and IDEM, *Sugli excerpta dell'Esegesi all'Iliade di Giovanni Tzetzes nel Laur. Plut.* 32.3, in F. Conti Bizzarro (ed.), *Λεξικὸν γραμματικῆς. Studi di lessicografia e grammatica greca*. Napoli 2018, 49–65. The definition ἡ παρούσα ποίησις possibly depends on Hermog. *Progygn.* II 4–10.

76 In Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 73.10–4 ΠΑΡΑΘΗΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ, Tzetzes explains why Homer called his poem Ἰλιάς and not Ἀχιλλεῖα if his purpose was the praise of Achilles: he wanted to attribute to the hero alone the cause of Trojan catastrophe (τὸ αἴτιον τῆς Ἰλιακῆς συμφορᾶς).

be called Ἰλιάς, by adding πᾶσα Tzetzes underlines that his poem deals with *all* the events strictly connected to the Achaean siege of Troy, from the pregnancy of Hecuba to the fall of the city. This feature alone gives a first possible explanation of the title: Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is a poem rather short but covers all the events of the war.<sup>77</sup> However, the title conveys a much stronger meaning if considered within the frame of *Exeg. ad Il.* 67.12–20 ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ (see above). While Homer and the other authors of μικραὶ Ἰλιάδες confined their works to a delimited timeframe, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς includes all the events of the Trojan war and, consequently, covers the content of both the Homeric *Iliad* and all the other μικραὶ Ἰλιάδες. From Tzetzes' point of view, the Ἰλιάδες are divided into two groups, Homer's Ἰλιάς and the μικραὶ Ἰλιάδες. Therefore, the Μικρομεγάλη Ἰλιάς is a μικρὰ Ἰλιάς in comparison with the mighty Homer, but a μεγάλη Ἰλιάς among the μικραί.

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77 In his later *Exegesis to the Iliad*, Tzetzes underlines the same ability in composing a single, short and clear commentary, unlike his predecessors, see Tz. *Exeg. ad Il.* 3.6–9 ΠΑΡΑΘΟΜΟΡΟΥΛΟΣ and *passim*.

