

ZIELIŃSKI'S LAW AND ITS VALIDITY

ZIELIŃSKI'S LAW AND ITS VALIDITY:
TOWARDS A NARRATONOMY OF HOMERIC NARRATIVE

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Abstract

This thesis is a primer for future Homeric narrative studies. It is based on a discussion of possible approaches to Homer and suggestions of directions for future study, focusing on the presentation of the primary plotlines of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* according to Zieliński's Law.

Zieliński's Law holds that Homeric narrative eschews the simultaneous representation of events through three controversial narrative techniques. The research accomplished in this thesis is therefore twofold: a survey of the principal scholarship on Zieliński's Law, which discusses the methodological and terminological confusion engendered by Zieliński's three techniques, and a discussion of recent narratological approaches to the question of simultaneity in Homeric narrative. Zieliński's Law is found to be valid in both Homeric narratives, although its techniques are reformulated into two more functional and structural narrative methods, which are exemplified in the texts. Narratological approaches are found to be insufficiently text-based and are criticized. Narratology, a new approach to the Homeric narratives that follows from the discussion of the Law's techniques, is proposed. It involves quantifying what is readily observable in the text and disregarding interpretations that place an undue exegetical burden on the text.

The thesis concludes that it is quite probable that Zieliński Law's and its two structural techniques could be applicable to other textual and even non-textual narratives. In particular, Zieliński's Law is identifiable with one of Olrik's "epic laws", laws that he observed to have validity for a wide range of folktales and sagas from around the world.

Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to my *maître de pensée*, Dr. William J. Slater, on his retirement from McMaster University. He was the origin of the central idea behind this Master's thesis. Whatever of quality it may contain is a direct result of his intellectual perspicacity, his scholarly acumen and his valuable interest in *Realien*, three inestimable qualities that have contributed to making him one of the most distinguished classicists of the past four decades. May he continue his journey on the *via classica* for at least a few more.

I would also like to thank everyone who has had to endure reading this thesis in one (or more) of its incarnations (be it pre- or post-narratological). Indeed, everyone who has had to wait patiently during its many 'interruption sequences' deserves my utmost gratitude. These include: its committee readers, Dr. P. Murgatroyd and Dr. P. Kingston, and also Dr. G. Chamberland, who provided expert corrections and suggestions. Particularly worthy of mention is Lian J. Hall, whose editing talents are, in my opinion, unsurpassed. All of the persons mentioned above, of course, are not to be blamed for any of the errors, typographical or otherwise, which might remain in the document. I assume full responsibility for any mistakes I may have committed.

Last, but not least, I wish to thank my parents, Marie-France and Jan Carbon, without whose continuing support at home I would never have had the courage to complete this *monstrum de ratione narrationis*.

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General Introduction

An introduction written, like this one, after the completion of a project, necessarily foreshadows some of its conclusions. Without veering into a *petitio principii*, however, one can safely examine both the fundamentals and the implications of the topic at hand.

A. Aims

This thesis does not aim to provide a commentary on Homer, or any comprehensive survey of his narrative work. Rather, its aims are twofold:

It is a primer for Homeric studies, since it aims to establish the methodological and terminological grounds from which the Homeric narratives can most usefully be analyzed. In particular, it wants to return to a fundamental structuralist insight: that the structure of the narrative is its function, that its form inevitably controls its content.

This can be done through the detailed analysis of one Homeric narrative law, Zieliński's Law, which needs to be revised, because it has been the cause of much terminological and methodological confusion. Zieliński's Law, more coherently and comprehensively reformulated, can be shown to be useful as a structural and functional principle of Homeric narrative.

B. Definition of the Law and Identification of Two Problems

The original (1901) formulation of the Law by Zieliński himself was as follows:
Homer does not depict any simultaneous events qua simultaneous, but instead represents them consecutively according to three different methods (which will be defined at the beginning of Ch. I). The definition of the Law, however, has become less simple. In recent years, there have been many other formulations of the Law, created by scholars who want to propose their own terminologies and who follow different approaches to narrative simultaneity. Some of them believe that Zieliński was right, but usually misrepresent his Law; others, coming from a structuralist or narratological standpoint, argue that Homer is actually able to represent simultaneous events.

It seems necessary to show that these various formulations contain useful and insightful elements, but are in fact lacking in unity and coherence. The first chapter of this thesis, therefore, takes the form of a survey and critique of the relevant scholarship. This critique is mostly methodological and terminological, but it also involves the discussion of some problematic cases from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.¹

What will emerge from this survey and critique is that Zieliński's Law has a structural and functional utility in Homeric narrative. It will be argued that Zieliński's Law *expresses a certain set of the poetic conventions of Homeric narration: namely, that the plotlines of the story are told consecutively (i.e. never retracing their steps) and can*

¹ It is regrettable that more examples could not be discussed in full for lack of space.

*be intertwined according to two techniques: an interruption technique and a summarizing technique.*² This new formulation of the Law will be proposed as a useful starting-point for future studies of Homeric narrative.

The first chapter also demonstrates that the notion of simultaneity in Homer has, by comparison with Zieliński's Law, very little, if any, application. The first chapter will dismiss the so-called 'problem of simultaneity' in Homeric narrative as a false problem.

The first chapter, therefore, seeks to provide an answer to the Homerist's immediate reaction to Zieliński's Law: why study a century old narrative law? The answer that it provides is that the Law must be studied *because it works*.

The second chapter follows quite naturally from this discussion of simultaneity to analyze the closely linked 'problem of narrative time'. In fact, the purpose of this chapter is to debunk the concept of narrative time as expounded by modern narratologists. The notion of narrative time will be found to be a subjective construct, which lies at the root of the confusion caused by the 'problem of simultaneity'. Narratology, a new methodology that focuses on the *order*, *sequence* and *length* of the events and plotlines of the narrative will be proposed. Zieliński's Law will be confirmed as a valid 'epic law' that fits neatly into this new method and that has a wide-ranging utility. The second chapter will provide the venue for a critique of current narrative studies that will entail a generalization of Zieliński's Law's usefulness for the narratives of Homer and of other

² The two techniques, as with all technical terms adopted in this thesis, are defined in the Glossary. They will be introduced fully in the first chapter.

authors. The conclusion of this thesis will be that Zieliński's Law, by explaining the structural and functional framework of Homeric and other narratives, helps to form the basis of a systematic and precise poetics.

C. Scope and Preliminary Assumptions

Before beginning the task at hand, it is important to ascertain the limitations and preliminary assumptions of this thesis. The scope of the thesis will be explained and essential terms defined (narrative, plotline, etc.). This will be followed by a brief discussion of the orality of the Homeric texts, their authorship and date.

In considering Zieliński's Law as a structural and functional rule for Homeric narrative, one could mean that it applies to *all* of the narration that takes place in the Homeric epics. Indeed, it would be very plausible to argue that the epics were constructed according to a single and unified narrative rule, although narratologists, who distinguish between primary, secondary and tertiary modes of narration,³ would disagree *en masse*. In consequence, this thesis opts to avoid a contentious definition of 'narrative' and to limit the scope of Zieliński's Law to primary narration. Zieliński's Law, as it is presented here, applies *only to the narrative related by the Homeric narrator* and *not* to the secondary narratives expressed by the epics' characters. Character speeches form an integral part of the larger narrative, of course, and constitute events in the narrative as a whole. But the

³ Most recently, de Jong (2001: *passim*). Curiously, she does not attempt a specific definition of 'narrative'. Ch. II contains a detailed analysis of this and other narratological distinctions.

narration of events contained *within* character speeches will not be considered as defined by Zieliński's Law. Moreover, character speeches have already been the subject of specific analyses that have provided separate narrative laws explaining their structure and function.⁴

It is also necessary to define the key terms and basic notions that this thesis will be discussing. The definitions offered here⁵ are hopefully accurate for the purposes of this thesis, but they do not presume to be complete or exhaustive:

character: an acting persona, identified by a specific name.

event: the narration of a physical (whether speech or deed) or mental action performed by a specific character or group of characters.⁶

narration: the act of creating, constructing and furthering a narrative.

narrative⁷: the overall scheme of primary plotlines and events in a poem. There are two Homeric narratives: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

plotline: the series of events pertaining to a specific character, group of characters or place (*locus operandi*).

⁴ Cf. in particular, D. Lohmman (1970); M. Steinrück (1992) and C.J. Larrain (1987), all of whom analyze Homeric speeches and their narrative laws. Steinrück and Larrain offer discussions of simultaneity in character discourse which fall outside the scope of this thesis.

⁵ The definitions are also available in the Glossary, for the convenience of the reader.

⁶ For the purpose of simplicity, this excludes narrative passages and comments such as similes, appeals to the Muses and other extra-narrative addresses.

⁷ Although there does not seem to be any valid reason for making a distinction between the terms 'narrative' and 'story', such as the narratologists do, this distinction *is* useful here because the definition of narrative that I have adopted is very restrictive.

primary: refers to that which is narrated by ‘Homer’ (also called ‘the Homeric narrator’), who is the first authorial voice of both epics.

story: the complete text of the *Iliad* or of the *Odyssey*.⁸

This thesis asserts that *one cannot have any preliminary assumptions when working on the Homeric texts*. Although the Homeric question—the debate regarding who wrote the Homeric epics and when—is still a ‘hot topic’ in current classical scholarship, there has also been a growing realization among critics that one cannot take up a definitive position on this issue. The authorship and date of the poems cannot be confirmed by the available ancient literary and archaeological sources, and this compels a general admission of ignorance. The Homeric question is thus an idle debate, at least for the purposes of this thesis. One may call the poet and narrator⁹ of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* ‘Homer’ out of convenience, since, after all, that is what the Greeks called him, and one can safely presume that he composed at some point before the 5th century B.C.E.

⁸ Narratologists distinguish between text (the verbal presentation of the story), story (the events of the fabula as disposed in the text) and fabula (the story as it actually happened or could have happened, chronologically reconstructed); cf. most recently de Jong (2001: glossary). But obviously any variation in the text causes it to tell a different story, and so there does not seem to be any reason why one should make a distinction between the two. The text is the story and *vice versa*. The disastrous implications of the concept ‘fabula’ will be studied in detail in Chapter II.

⁹ There does not seem any reason whatsoever to make a narratological distinction between the ‘poet’ and the ‘narrator’ of the epics. De Jong’s recent formulation of the narrator as “the representative of the author in the text (in full: primary narrator-focalizer)” (2001: xv) seems hair-splittingly obscure in the case of Homer. Since we know nothing of this poet other than his texts, the dissociation of the author from the narrator is pointless.

(a generously late *terminus ante quem*, by any standards). But that is all that can be done unless better evidence comes to light.

The assumption that the Homeric poems are oral poems is equally open to scepticism. Although the work of Milman Parry and his successors has done much to increase the awareness of possible oral antecedents to the poems, the fact remains that both epics cannot conclusively be shown to be oral products. There are indeed certain demonstrably oral aspects to the poems, but that does not preclude the possibility of their being, ultimately, written and exclusively literary phenomena.¹⁰ All that has come down to us, in the end, is the text. Moreover, recent Homeric investigations have tended to downplay the oral aspects for the sake of the literary, especially when, as here, poetics are being considered. Most recently, D. Cairns has fittingly expressed this conclusion: “the real answer to a call for a distinct, non-literary, oral poetics is that no such thing is necessary. Certainly, all interpreters of Homer need to have orality constantly in mind (especially in order to account for the use of repetitions, type-scenes, themes, and formulas), but the constraints that this places on the forms of literary criticism chiefly employed today are minimal.”¹¹ One could even go so far as to say that the consideration

¹⁰ We should especially not be constrained by the consideration of the *performance* of the epics and fall into the ‘analytical trap’ of dissecting the poems into performable or audible segments. The texts that we have are continuous and unified, and each could easily be read over the course of one day. Admittedly, the existing book divisions of both epics are somewhat arbitrary, but since they represent the standard and convenient way of approaching the poems, they are retained here.

¹¹ D. Cairns (2001: 53). De Jong (1991: 408-9) contains a useful (if somewhat brief) survey of recent non- or anti-oral theory trends. Her own position is similar to Cairns’ compromise: “My answer is that on the level of interpretation, the origin of the text in which the story is contained, although not irrelevant, is not of prime importance” (2002: 56).

of oral constraints is practical but not mandatory, especially since any close interpretation of Homer is inevitably based on the analysis of the text *qua* text. While the possibility of oral influence on the structure of the poems can neither be ruled out nor confirmed, the discussion of Zieliński's Law presented in the following pages will avoid applying oral theory to the Homeric poems in a definitive manner, but will often make reference to the fact that the Law could be interpreted as a tool to analyze both the oral *and* the textual features of the poems.

Chapter I

A Critical Overview of the ‘Problem of Simultaneity’ in Homer

I. Introduction to the Survey

A detailed survey of the scholarship concerned with Zieliński’s Law is something that does not seem to have been previously attempted.¹² In fact, Zieliński’s Law, which, according to its original formulation, stipulates that Homer does not depict any simultaneous events *qua* simultaneous in his narratives, is not widely recognized among Homeric scholars.¹³ Therefore, one must first attempt to clarify the issue at hand by looking at Zieliński’s article, at the psychological reasoning that he used to arrive at his law. Secondly, works and articles that foreshadowed and anticipated Zieliński need to be briefly discussed. Thirdly, the few that accept (but frequently muddle) Zieliński’s views (often tacitly or without referring to Zieliński himself) must be considered. Finally, the many articles and books that have more recently sought to revise Zieliński’s Law or to deny its validity will be examined. All of these articles and books are presented in a

¹² Krókowski, Latacz (1977) and Rengakos all present a fairly extensive knowledge of the scholarship, but their surveys are nevertheless incomplete. This survey has the secondary purpose of making the overwhelmingly German scholarship on Zieliński’s Law accessible to Anglophone readers. While much of the quotations in the survey are in the original German, they are translated in the footnotes, paraphrased and/or made transparent through detailed explanation. Unless otherwise indicated, all translations are the product of the Teutonic toil of this author.

¹³ One of the critics, Patzer, also deplores this fact, saying that Zieliński’s Law is “jedoch bisher kaum für die Homerauslegung genutzt” (1996: 94). Many introductions to Homer do not even mention Zieliński: Edwards (1987), Latacz ([1985] 1996²), etc. Passing references are often mistaken, e.g. Alden (2000: 337).

roughly chronological order, but multiple works by one author and article-specific criticisms are logically grouped together.¹⁴

A brief note of explanation of the survey method adopted in this chapter is required. Some of the works summarized here are quite complex; it can only be hoped that brief outlines accurately synthesize the major thoughts and considerations that they present. The summaries contain many difficult philosophical or literary concepts, and original German terms have often been retained for the sake of accuracy. (A Glossary of critical and technical terms is appended at the end of the thesis, for the reader's convenience. It offers concise and hopefully lucid definitions of the many difficult notions and methods that are referred to in the discussion.)

The order of presentation adopted here is aimed at achieving an understanding of the original definition of the Law and its complementary methods from the ground up. It will also allow us to perceive the flaws in Zieliński's method that conditioned many methodologically unsound analyses of Homeric narrative. Hopefully, it will gradually become clear to the reader how much Zieliński's Law has been modified, both in useful and in detrimental ways, throughout the past century. Although we will ultimately be compelled to reject Zieliński's original formulation, the survey will confirm that his Law did stem from accurate observations of the structure and function of Homeric narrative. Inspired by the new methodological standpoint adopted in this thesis, a new and more

¹⁴ References to individual sections are made as follows: chapter/section/heading. For example, I.II.A refers to a discussion of the introduction to Zieliński's article and I.V.E refers to a section concerning Rengakos, a critic of Zieliński; II.A refers to the first section of Chapter II.

comprehensive version of the Law will be proposed in the conclusion to this chapter, which will retain his essential analysis while integrating the insights of the more useful critiques of the Law.

II. Zieliński's Law

Tadeusz Zieliński, in a turn of the 20th century article, discovered what he deemed to be a fundamental principle of Homeric narrative: that the poet *cannot* depict simultaneous events simultaneously, and must therefore resort to constructing his narrative in a sequential or a successive manner.¹⁵ This seems true even now for most narratives (with a few notable exceptions), but Zieliński's insight stemmed from the complex theoretical standpoint adopted at the beginning of his article *Die Behandlung gleichzeitiger Ereignisse im Antiken Epos* ('The Depiction of Simultaneous Events in Ancient Epic'). The psychological foundations for the Law will be examined first (A). This will be followed by a brief discussion of Zieliński's 'painted landscape' example, which he elaborated in order to demonstrate the validity of the psychological basis for his Law (B). A third section (C) is devoted to examining three methods for representing simultaneous events which complement Zieliński's Law, while a fourth section (D) explains how Zieliński tested his Law using particular cases from the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. A brief summary (E) concludes this first part of Chapter I.

¹⁵ Zieliński's 'discovery', as he acknowledges, is derived from Lessing's famous study on poetry (1766).

A. Psychological Foundations

In an introductory section entitled *Psychologische Grundlage*, Zieliński laid down the psychological, aesthetic and art-historical foundations for his work. His main axiom was that the Homeric representation of time is uniplanar (successive), not multiplanar (simultaneous). Time has two dimensions, according to Zieliński's theory: succession (*das Nacheinander*) and simultaneity (*das Nebeinander*), but succession is the more naturally perceived.¹⁶ Zieliński then proceeded to show how this axiom worked by using a visual analogy: if one equates bidimensional (2D) spatial perception (e.g. a picture seen frontally) with succession, and tridimensional (3D) spatial perception with simultaneity, one realizes that simultaneity is but a secondary correction of succession. In other words, he claimed that one perceives visually in 2D when at a standstill, and that one needs movement or another point of reference to realize that, in fact, one is in a 3D visual environment. Zieliński thus believed that tridimensionality was an 'illusion' created by a correction of our regular bidimensional visual perception. Likewise, Zieliński argued, simultaneity is a derivative perception, since it creates the illusion of two events happening at the same time.¹⁷

One can, at first, doubt whether Zieliński's analogy is appropriate. Can temporal dimensions really be equated with spatial dimensions? Zieliński's psychological criteria

¹⁶ 1901: 407.

¹⁷ 1901: 408.

are not scientifically valid. Tridimensionality is perceptible, since one rarely lacks a point of reference indicating depth: we live in a 3D world in which it is difficult to conceive of what a 2D world would be like. Likewise, simultaneity is not necessarily a correction in a subject's continuous, progressing timeframe, since simultaneous events can be readily perceived.¹⁸ Nevertheless, this is the foundation for Zieliński's psychological theory: succession, in his opinion, must be thought of as *the* primordial and natural perception of time, while simultaneity is an illusory, derivative perception.

B. Zieliński's Landscape Example

Zieliński did not limit himself to an abstract explanation of the psychological origins of these two temporal perceptions, but elaborated a lengthy, yet picturesque and quaint, example of their function using events that are painted in a landscape.¹⁹ It will suffice for our purpose to give the outline of his continuing psychological hypothesis and to explain how it provided the basis for the initial definition of his law.

Zieliński first tried to establish that constant or regular events (*gleichmäßige Vorgänge*),²⁰ which take place in a tridimensional landscape (e.g. country road, field and hill), can captivate one's attention entirely so as to make it 2D.²¹ A windmill moves

¹⁸ No 'illusion' is involved, for example, when one flips a page *while* reading a sentence, as the reader will be doing soon enough.

¹⁹ 1901: 409-18.

²⁰ Cf. Glossary.

²¹ 1901: 409-10. This is still stretching the logic of our 3D world and our correspondingly 3D visual perception.

regularly with the wind, and one temporarily forgets about the other dimension of the landscape, until one becomes bored by the constant movement of the mill. In the middle of one's observation of the windmill, one can simultaneously observe another continuous event (e.g. the arrival of a cavalry regiment). Our visual perception then becomes, again, 3D.

The situation gets more complicated with the introduction of plots into the scene.²² One of the cavalry riders is unhorsed, and the observer is forced to make a psychologically necessary choice between two plots: following the rider's fate or the horse careering away.²³ If one chooses, for example, to watch the rider's difficulty in getting up, one will inevitably fail to notice the (simultaneously occurring) encounter of the horse and the farmer at the mill. This is because a non-constant plot, as opposed to a constant event, has, according to Zieliński, the unique characteristic of captivating one's entire attention for its whole duration, so as to preclude the observation of other, simultaneously occurring events or plots. (Split-screen narratives on film prove the contrary, of course). A plot, Zieliński concluded, is temporally uniplanar (*einplanig*), while the constant event is uniplanar at its beginning and end, but multiplanar in its

²² 1901: 410.

²³ Dr. P. Murgatroyd kindly supplied the observation that "the horse could simply prance up and down while the rider gets up in front of it." This variation on Zieliński's example clearly shows how the perception of simultaneity does not necessarily involve a psychological dilemma. It does seem that the human brain can regularly perceive simultaneous visual phenomena *qua* simultaneous, although the theory of special relativity, which has led physicists to conclude that simultaneity is not absolute, but relative, could undermine all attempts to classify two or more events as simultaneous.

middle.²⁴ By this he meant that plots must be shown in succession, while constant events allow for the representation of simultaneity.

This led Zieliński to conclude that simultaneous plots are incompatible with our spatial (multiplanar) perception: “daraus folgt: mehrere gleichzeitige Handlungen sind für unser Schauen unvereinbar”.²⁵ In short, one cannot, due to psychological or mental constraints, perceive (and represent) two (or more) simultaneous plots *qua* simultaneous. This is the standard formulation of Zieliński’s Law: *das psychologische Incompatibilitätsgesetz*. This ‘Law of Psychological Incompatibility’, as Zieliński’s example attempted to demonstrate, is founded on “principles based rationally on the innermost nature of our ability to perceive and conceive”.²⁶ In fact, Zieliński’s axioms were unsound. There is no psychological incompatibility involved in the simultaneous perception and representation of simultaneous plots and narratives.²⁷

²⁴ 1901: 411.

²⁵ *id.*

²⁶ “um rationelle, auf dem innersten Wesen unsres Empfindungs- und Vorstellungsvermögens beruhende Gesetze handelt” (1901: 419).

²⁷ Cinema and other audiovisual media often employ simultaneous representations, which can involve texts. In strictly literary narratives, success in simultaneous depictions has been somewhat less forthcoming (e.g. Joyce’s streams of consciousness were effective, but not really simultaneous; Adam Hall’s car bomb explosion in the *Berlin Memorandum* (1965: 243) is about as close as text on the page will ever get). Recently, hypertext has opened up new possibilities for the simultaneous flow of plotlines. The most famous example of a versatile hypertext story is undoubtedly *Afternoon, A Story* by Michael Joyce (1987). Through a program called ‘Storyspace’, it offers 950 links that are hidden behind the words of the text, which the reader can click on to enhance and immediately modify his experience of the text. The versatility and immediacy of the hypertext presentation in this story verges on simultaneous representation, or at least, comes closer to it than hard-copy texts ever will. Michael Joyce’s story is available on CD-ROM, but more information can be obtained directly from the website of the designers of ‘Storyspace’ at www.eastgate.com/storyspace.

C. Zieliński's Three Methods and Their Uses

Zieliński's most important observations can be found in his exploration of the methods of narration that were (or so he believed) employed to resolve the psychological dilemma defined by the Law. He argued that one can at least have the *conscious awareness* that two (or more) simultaneous events took place, and thus outlined two principal methods that enable the partial representation of simultaneous events: 1) *die nachträgliche reproduciend-combinatorische* and 2) *die gleichzeitige analysierend-desultorische*.²⁸

The first method, the reproducing-combining, is the one Zieliński used to represent the simultaneity of the rider's fall and the farmer's encounter with the horse (above, I.II.B). It involves paying exclusive attention to one plot, then afterwards deducing the other (simultaneously occurring) plot from the available clues (e.g. if the farmer comes to meet the cavalryman with the horse, this must mean that he caught it while we were paying attention to the rider's recuperation from his fall; one could thus narrate the farmer's encounter with the horse based on this clue, but only *after* narrating the soldier's recovery). Still, according to Zieliński, one cannot be sure that the two plots were simultaneous, since one only perceived one and not both at the same time; they only

²⁸ I would like to warn the reader once again that Zieliński's terminology can be exceedingly difficult and inconsistent at times. The reader is advised that concise definitions for all the German terms are to be found in the Glossary. Some of Zieliński's definitions might be oversimplified here, but I hope that this will be forgiven, as it is done for the sake of clarifying what is all too often obscure in the original article. Cf. also the illustrative diagrams of Zieliński's methods, which are reproduced, with improvements, in the Glossary.

appear to be simultaneous. This method, he concluded, is thus entirely dependent upon the *possibility* of linking specific moments in two parallel plots so as to reveal them to be simultaneous, thereby creating “die Illusion des zeitlichen Nebeneinanders”.²⁹ This technique is inferred and applied implicitly by the reader.

The second method, the ‘analytic-desultory’, is, Zieliński argues, much more capable of capturing one’s attention. It involves the narrative flashing back and forth between two (or more) plotlines during the course of its narration, telling a segment of one followed by a segment of the other. For example, it oscillates between two plotlines, focusing on one when it progresses (in Zieliński’s terms, it is *fortschreitend*), while the other is left in limbo or in a constant event (it is retarded, *verharrend*).³⁰ To put it generally, one can give one’s attention first to a progressing event A, until it passes into the state of a constant event, and then turn one’s attention to event B until it does the same, then return to A, and thus continue oscillating back and forth between A and B.³¹ The transition from part of one plot to part of another and the repetition of this “flashing-over” (*überzuspringend*) creates a convincing illusion of *lasting* temporal simultaneity. The analytic-desultory method, Zieliński explained, is therefore much more immediate than the reproducing-combining method. The latter only allows the *post factum*

²⁹ “the illusion of temporal simultaneity” (1901: 412).

³⁰ The method is therefore desultory in a strict sense, meaning that it skips back and forth from one plotline to the next. It can, but does not usually omit and miss parts of the plotlines during this skipping or flashing, as the word ‘desultory’ might imply today.

³¹ 1901: 413.

reconstruction of a parallel plot, and does not provide vivid segments of both simultaneous plots like the former.³²

To add to the growing terminological complexity, Zieliński also introduced a third possible method for the poetic description of simultaneous events: the ‘reaching-back’ method (*zurückgreifende Methode*).³³ This wholly artificial method of narration involves relating an Event A to its end and then going *explicitly back in time* to tell the whole of a simultaneously occurring Event B. This method does not have the same psychological foundation as the reproducing-combining method, since it does not, in any naturalistic way, try to resolve the incompatibility defined by the Law. Rather, it avoids the psychological dilemma expressed by the Law by accepting the impossibility of simultaneous representation and by going back in time. It breaks or contravenes the Law, so to speak. Although it resembles the reproducing-combining method, the reaching-back method is differentiated by its direct step back in time, which does not leave any notion(s) of simultaneity to be inferred by the narrator or the reader.

Zieliński then proceeded to bring his painted (yet dynamic!) landscape example into the realm of poetry, and thereby tested the effectiveness of his methods in literary representations. He found that the two main psychological methods for the partial representation of simultaneous events, while practicable in painting, were generally

³² 1901: 414.

³³ 1901: 418.

ineffective in poetry because “die Poesie ist die Kunst des Nacheinanders schlechthin”.³⁴ According to Zieliński’s theory, poetic narratives must be told in the most direct way possible, that is, successively. The analytic-desultory method fails because it is too fragmentary and is subject to making errors in the duration of the two simultaneous events or plotlines that are to be narrated. In the painted landscape example, the mill wheel was in constant motion, but the rider’s fall and the horse’s gallop, which occurred as time-bound events, were of much shorter duration. If both durations were compared, one would inevitably find that the parallel plots were not perfectly simultaneous. This, according to Zieliński, is a frequent and natural mistake “weil die dauernde Gleichzeitigkeit in unsrem Bewußtsein ein Unding, eine Illusion ist”.³⁵ He found that the analytic-desultory method naturally tends to lengthen progressive (*fortschreitend*) events, such as the horse galloping, in order to equate them with regular and constant events: a mistake that Zieliński calls an erroneous lengthening (*fehlerhaften Dehnung*) and also ‘false synchronisms’.³⁶

That the analytic-desultory method has a tendency to create ‘false synchronisms’ immediately betrays some of its own flaws. The method seems to expect the fact that poetry has rigid chronological features where precise simultaneity can occur. This seems an unwarranted assumption, given that poetry is not usually thought of as being

³⁴ *id.*: “Poetry is the art of absolute succession.”

³⁵ “because lasting simultaneity is impossible, a mere illusion for our consciousness” (1901: 416). This also seems scientifically unsound.

³⁶ “fehlerhaften Synchronismen” (1901: 417); Zieliński, however, believes that this mistake is frequently turned into an advantage by many authors.

concerned with precise chronology, but rather with impressionistic time effects and timeframes. The validity of Zieliński's analytic method, especially for poetry, can be preliminarily questioned. But my criticisms here foreshadow what some critics of Zieliński have had to say about his methods; consequently, I will resume this discussion further on in this chapter.

In contrast with the fallibility of the analytic-desultory method, Zieliński found the reproducing-combining method to be fairly natural for poetry, since parallel events can easily be inferred or recapitulated after the fact, especially in direct speech. But this rather oblique method of narrating simultaneous events removes much of the immediacy that Zieliński thought was essential to poetry. The reproducing-combining method is, in fact, not especially relevant to our discussion of primary narration, although we shall later return to it when discussing the narrative technique of summaries.

On the whole, Zieliński believed that the two methods were ineffective for poetic narratives whose practical demands are for a direct succession of events. But the poetic analysis of the methods is entirely contradicted by Zieliński's own Homeric case studies, to which we shall now turn our attention.

D. The Application of the Methods to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*

Zieliński demonstrated through two primary cases (short constant events and long constant plotlines) that the main narrative method used by Homer in the *Iliad* is the

analytic-desultory technique.³⁷ Even though it is inaccurate and not very effective for poetry, Zieliński seems to have believed that it was the only practical method for Homer to use. Zieliński also listed the few, restricted uses of the reproducing-combining method to be found in the *Iliad*.³⁸ The reproducing-combining method was principally used as a means of recapitulating non-simultaneous events: events that were already told by the poet, and could be repeated (often in different terms) by the characters in direct speech or by the narrator himself. He also observed a variation of the reaching-back method that was solely used to communicate events from the prehistory of the poem. The events and stories related by means of this reaching-back method were thus beyond the scope of the poem and did not breach the Law by reaching back into the time of the narrative.

To illustrate these two cases, Zieliński originally used the *Iliad* and made a map of the plotlines of the entire epic with respect to their desultory structure, but he did not wish to commit “the monster” to print.³⁹ Instead, he included relevant extracts from this map to illustrate his discussion of Homer’s analytic-desultory method, but not his revisions of the other two techniques. In fact, the blurring of the definitions of the reproducing-combining and the reaching-back methods in Zieliński’s two test cases shows quite clearly that they

³⁷ 1901: 422. In many places in the *Iliad*, Zieliński observed that only the beginning and end of a journey or event are represented, according to the analytic-desultory method. This highlights Homer’s *horror vacui*, according to Zieliński, since the middle of a *verharrend* plot is seemingly empty. See the Glossary under that term and also under *temps mort*, concepts that were elaborated by many authors after Zieliński.

³⁸ 1901: 441.

³⁹ 1901: 419. It is a highly unfortunate fact that this plot-map of the *Iliad* did not survive the destruction of Zieliński’s library and archives in Warsaw during the Second World War.

were not practical in the first place. The reproducing-combining and the reaching-back methods cannot be useful if they are not employed in Homer, at least not in their original formulations. Only the analytic-desultory seems to retain some consistency and perhaps some validity, even though Zieliński deplores its imprecision in depicting simultaneous plotlines.

In the third and most controversial case for modern scholars, Zieliński concluded that when the poet wants to represent two simultaneous events in full (which, because of the Law, he cannot represent as parallel), “so berichtete er sie beide, aber nicht als parallele, sondern als aufeinanderfolgende Handlungen”.⁴⁰ The two simultaneous plots are, according to Zieliński, presented as fully consecutive. He also put it more succinctly, yet more questionably, as: “wirkliche Handlung-Nebeneinander, scheinbare Handlung-Nacheinander”.⁴¹ The real plots (*as conceived or perceived by Homer*)⁴² occurred simultaneously, but the corresponding apparent plots (*the ones that Homer portrays*) are depicted entirely successively. For an analogy, one can picture two separate plane crashes that occurred simultaneously, which are then shown successively in two separate photographs.

Zieliński calls this case the only possible ‘exception’ to the Law. One has to qualify the word exception with brackets here, because the examples offered by Zieliński

⁴⁰ “so he depicts them both, not as parallel, but as consecutive plotlines” (1901: 432).

⁴¹ 1901: 436.

⁴² Or, more accurately speaking, *what Zieliński thinks Homer conceived or perceived*. We will return to this point at the end of this section, I.II.E.

are not really exceptions to the Law at all. The Homeric narrator simply presents two simultaneous events *as fully successive*. This case does not, therefore, infringe on the Law in any way, but its unclear relationship to the ‘analytic-desultory’ method makes it necessary that we should at least include it in a group of ‘special cases’. Is this case an alternative to the analytic-desultory method, or is it a distortion of that method? As a matter of fact, the parallel plot is simply not intertwined with another for great lengths of the narrative.

Zieliński himself admits that this special third case is rather tricky: “Das ist einer schweriger und heikler Fall; mancher könnte geneigt sein, eine solche Unterscheidung einer scheinbaren und einer wirklichen Handlung a limine abzuweisen”.⁴³ Indeed, a reader could dismiss the whole case intuitively, for how can one make a distinction between ‘real’ and ‘apparent’, when all one reads is the *textual* plot? Yet Zieliński anticipated the objections of many of his critics, those who ask: are not the two (or more) events depicted one after the other *meant* to be seen as successive?⁴⁴ Zieliński maintained that his reconstructions of the ‘real’, simultaneous plots help to explain certain inconsistencies in the narrative.⁴⁵

In fact, neither Zieliński nor his potential critics are on sound footing if they attempt to discuss anything called Homer’s ‘real’ plot. A discussion of Homeric narrative

⁴³ “This is a difficult and tricky case; many could be inclined to dismiss such a distinction between apparent and real plots *a limine*” (1901: 432).

⁴⁴ 1901: 433.

⁴⁵ We shall frequently return to this questionable point in this chapter.

should not be concerned with what is *meant* or *implied* by Homer, since this is either lost or subjectively reconstructed by the reader. Rather, Homerists should be concerned with the way in which Homer *actually depicts* events and plots. Zieliński's term *wirkliche Handlung* ('real plot') will be avoided for the rest of our discussion because it is evidently wrongheaded to consider that Zieliński's reconstruction is the 'real plot' and Homer's presentation of it only the 'apparent plot'. That Zieliński's dichotomy is erroneous and cannot be maintained will be demonstrated in the survey below, especially in the discussion of Krischer (I.V.B).

Clearly, Zieliński has made an unwarranted assumption on the part of the poet. How can one know whether Homer imagined certain events as simultaneous or not, if he depicted them successively and without any intimations of simultaneity? It is Zieliński's own perception of the events (as simultaneous) that is here called the 'real plot', while the actual text is inappropriately termed the 'apparent plot'.⁴⁶ The questionable psychological and intentional basis of Zieliński's Law has engendered much critical discussion that will be discussed in detail below.

Zieliński's fourth case study of the *Iliad* dealt with difficulties in the application of the 'special cases' in which two very lengthy simultaneous events are expressed

⁴⁶ One could, of course, defend Zieliński's assumptions with an argument *ex silentio poetae* (e.g. isn't it possible that the poet simply does not bother to point out that events are simultaneous?) But such an interpretation is bound to be subjective and is also methodologically unsound in its appeal to the poet's intentions (or lack thereof).

successively.⁴⁷ He also analyzed the *Odyssey* with the four same cases and found that use of the analytic-desultory method was once again most prevalent. There was some application of the reaching-back method for the recapitulation of stories from the prehistory of the epic, but no examples of the reproducing-combining method could be found.⁴⁸ It may be noted that, in his conclusion, Zieliński had planned a sequel to his work in which he would investigate the meaning of his Law for the Homeric question, but this was never published.⁴⁹

E. Summary

In summary, Zieliński: 1) invented a law that precludes Homeric narrative from presenting two simultaneous events simultaneously; 2) outlined the analytic-desultory method, the Homeric technique through which this psychological impossibility is, at least partially, resolved for narrative composition; 3) discovered ‘special cases’ where simultaneous events are represented successively and in full, and finally 4) analyzed the specific and restricted use of the other two methods as techniques of recapitulation in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

Our critique has already revealed that much of Zieliński’s theoretical basis for his Law is unsound. To clarify this issue, it may be useful to present an outline of the

⁴⁷ 1901: 437-40.

⁴⁸ 1901: 443, 448.

⁴⁹ 1901: 449.

different methodologies that have been mentioned in context with Zieliński. These may be conveniently summarized in a table, as follows:

Fig. 1: Table of Narrative Methodologies for Homer

<u>Type</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Evidence</u>	<u>Mode of Analysis</u>
1	Perception of author	Lost	Subjective
2	Intention of author	Lost	Subjective
3	Perception of reader	Psychological and varied	Subjective
4	Text	Text-immanent	Objective

The first type was evidenced in Zieliński's conception of the Law as the psychological impossibility of perceiving two simultaneous plots. Types 2 and 3 were involved in the creation of the 'special cases' as well as in the idea that poetry has a chronology that is not simply illusory. Textual focus (type 4) remains the one objective option for Homeric narrative studies. It will be discussed in the examples offered in the survey below.

Clearly, though, Zieliński's psychological and intentional assumptions concerning Homer's conception of simultaneous events betray the subjective methodology and terminology of the Law, and some of his observations concerning the use of the analytic-desultory method do the same. As our survey of the scholarship progresses, it will become clear that the Law has contributed in both a useful and detrimental fashion to the discussion of Homeric narrative techniques.

III. Pre-Zieliński Intuitions

A. Aristotle's *Poetics*

Zieliński had been anticipated in the ‘discovery’ of his Law by at least a millennium and a half, as many Iliadic scholia reveal. Before we discuss these scholia, we must concern ourselves with the possibility that Aristotle, in his *Poetics*, had an intuition about the representation of simultaneity in the Homeric epics:⁵⁰

ἔχει δὲ πρὸς τὸ ἐπεκτείνεσθαι τὸ μέγεθος πολὺ τι ἢ ἐποποιία ἴδιον
διὰ τὸ ἐν μὲν τῇ τραγωδίᾳ μὴ ἐνδέχεσθαι ἅμα πραττόμενα πολλὰ
μέρη μιμῆσθαι ἀλλὰ τὸ ἐπὶ τῆς σκηνῆς καὶ τῶν ὑποκριτῶν μέρος
μόνον: ἐν δὲ τῇ ἐποποιίᾳ διὰ τὸ διήγησιν εἶναι ἔστι πολλὰ μέρη
ἅμα ποιεῖν περαινόμενα, ὅφ’ ὧν οἰκείων ὄντων αὔξεται ὁ τοῦ
ποιήματος ὄγκος.

The standard interpretation of this passage is that of D.W. Lucas, who believes that Aristotle postulates here what is essentially a form of Zieliński’s Law.⁵¹ Lucas comments that ἅμα must be taken with πραττόμενα in this passage: “Two events which happened, or are supposed to have happened, at the same time cannot be represented as so happening on the stage (...) The point which Aristotle makes here is that in epic, which is narrative, it is possible to describe in rapid succession a number of different events which happened at the same time; hence the complexity of some of the battle scenes of the *Iliad*.”⁵² Lucas then goes on to point out how infrequently simultaneous events are explicitly mentioned in Homer: “In the interests of clarity he avoids doubling back in

⁵⁰ *Poetics* 1459b 24-26; ed. D.W. Lucas ([1968] 2001²). Cf. also R. Kassel (1965: *ad loc.*)

⁵¹ Strangely, de Jong disagrees (1997: 322 n.23), on the basis that this passage of Aristotle contrasts with the scholion at M 1-2. These two insights, however, are not contradictory, but complementary: schol. M 1-2 discovers the impossibility of presenting two simultaneous events *qua* simultaneous, which is the basic substance of Zieliński’s Law; Aristotle, on the contrary, has an idea of how Homer *does in fact* choose to represent simultaneous events: successively.

⁵² [1968] 2001²: 222-223.

time, and prefers to make events which naturally have occurred simultaneously follow one after the other”, and he references Zieliński’s ‘special cases’ to that effect.⁵³

However, the text of the *Poetics* is not particularly lucid at this point, and a new interpretation has recently been proposed by A. Rengakos, who takes this Aristotelian passage to be in clear antithesis to Zieliński’s Law.⁵⁴ He argues that the passage is evidence against Zieliński’s Law, since it demonstrates that Aristotle believed that simultaneous events *are* represented in Homer: “Die Homerforschung, welche die Existenz gleichzeitiger Handlungen im Epos leugnet, steht also in klarem Widerspruch zur aristotelischen Auffassung...”⁵⁵ Rengakos would have us believe that, *pace* Lucas, Aristotle is claiming that explicit simultaneity is one of the highlights of epic poetry.

In fact, it seems that neither Rengakos nor Lucas has encompassed all of Aristotle’s intelligible meaning in this passage. Aristotle is opposing the manifold parts or plotlines of epic narrative to drama’s ‘single part’ and its recourse to messenger speeches for relating ongoing or recent events.⁵⁶ This is argued, however, in order to show that *epic has the distinct attribute of increased length and magnitude*, a fundamental point in Aristotle’s comparison between epic and drama. Aristotle does say, as Rengakos maintains, that some sort of simultaneous representation is responsible for the ὄγκος of

⁵³ *id.*

⁵⁴ Rengakos (1995: 5-8). See I.V.E for a full treatment of his argument.

⁵⁵ “Homeric research, which denies the existence of simultaneous events in the epics, has taken up a position which is diametrically opposite to Aristotle’s”, (1995: 5).

⁵⁶ I.J.F. de Jong seems to agree with this interpretation of the passage, although she does not make this point clearly (2001: 589 n.1).

epic, but he does not specify how this simultaneous representation is put into effect. So Lucas' interpretation remains equally probable, since it is not even clear that what Aristotle is referring to here is explicit simultaneity rather than the depiction of successive and intermittent plotlines. Aristotle's text, therefore, must remain somewhat ambiguous, *but it cannot be held as a definite source for explicit simultaneity or for Zieliński's Law in Homer.*

B. Homeric Scholia

A similar lack of clarity is found in most of the Iliadic scholia that mention simultaneous events. Many have noticed that Aristonicus *ad Hom. Il.* M1-2 can be read as anticipating Zieliński's Law.⁵⁷ Here, the poet is switching between the narration of Patroklos tending the wounds of Eurypylos and that of the ongoing battle between Greeks and Trojans. The text reads that as the pair were in the tent (᾽Ως ὁ μὲν ἐν κλισίῃσι), so the men fought (οἱ δὲ μάχοντο). Aristonicus' *diple* reads:

ὅτι τὰ ἅμα γινόμενα οὐ δύναται ἅμα ἐξαγγέλλειν. ἐν ὅσῳ δὲ οὗτος ἱᾶτο, ἐκεῖνοι ἐμάχοντο.

The referent in this quotation is left unclear. Is this statement to be interpreted as referring to the poet? Or is it an impersonal expression that gives a general statement

⁵⁷ Cf. Erbse, *ad loc.* Belzner (1912: 24 n.1) discusses this case and goes on to point out its implications for Homeric narrative in general, as well as for the Telemachy and the beginning of the *Odyssey* (24-9). See also W. Bachmann (1904: 7-8) and N.J. Richardson (1980: 267, n.6).

about Homeric narrative? We would need to know to what or to whom οὐ δύναται refers to, before deciding precisely how this comment can be related to Zieliński's Law.

As it stands, the quotation from Aristonicus speaks of an unattributed inability to describe two simultaneous events *qua* simultaneous, and of their successive representation, using a μέν-δέ link. We should not push this exploration too far, since there is no explanation of any narrative *method* in the scholion. Perhaps Aristonicus is referring to some well known Aristarchean 'rule of thumb', which turns out to be practically analogous to Zieliński's Law, but this cannot be ascertained.

It turns out, however, that Aristonicus' comment is preceded by another scholion *ad* M 1, which offers an interesting discussion of what Zieliński called 'false synchronization'. Patroklos has been tending to the wounds of Eurypylos since the end of book Λ, and the scholia (AbT) comment as follows:

εἰ δὲ ἐπιμηκεστέρα γέγονεν ἡ ἐπιμέλεια, μὴ θαυμάσης: διαφορῶν
γὰρ πράξεις ἐν ἐνὶ λέγειν καιρῷ ἀδύνατον.⁵⁸

According to the scholiast, one should not be amazed if Patroklos' care of Eurypylos seems to have taken so much time, "because it is not possible to relate different events occurring simultaneously". Here the scholion employs the neuter ἀδύνατον, which makes it clear that a formal narrative law, roughly equatable to Zieliński's Law, is being expressed.

⁵⁸ Erbse, *ad loc.*

The scholion is correct that something akin to a ‘false synchronization’ has occurred, but the term ἐπιμηκεστέρα is misleading. The ‘false synchronization’ does not involve a temporal delay, since Patroklos and Eurypylos seem to be left in limbo during the battle at the ships. No time has really gone by for them; their actions are simply retarded. This point will be further clarified when we discard the term ‘false synchronization’ as being non-functional at the conclusion of this chapter.

Rengakos (1995, 6), however, disagrees with the idea that the scholion *ad* M2 has anything to do with Zieliński’s Law, adducing the scholia at K 25a, 299 and Θ 53 as evidence to support his argument.⁵⁹ Rengakos contends that the μέν-δέ links in these cases, as well as in M 1-2, are *meant* to be interpreted by the reader as simultaneity *expressis verbis*. In his opinion,⁶⁰ the scholion at K 299(a & b) shows that two events occur and are presented at the same time (*zur gleichen Zeit*) in the narrative:

οὐδὲ μὲν οὐδὲ Τρῶας <ἀγήνορας εἶασεν Ἑκτωρ>: ἡ διπλῇ, ὅτι οὐχ ὥς ἡ τῶν ἐπῶν ἔχει τάξις, οὕτω καὶ τὰ πράγματα: οὐ γὰρ προεληλυθότων ἤδη τῶν περὶ Ὀδυσσεῆα καλεῖ τοὺς προβούλους ὁ Ἑκτωρ, ἀλλὰ καθ’ ὃν καιρὸν καὶ ὁ Ἀγαμέμνων: οὕτω γὰρ καὶ ἑαυτοῖς συμπεσοῦνται οἱ ἀπεσταλμένοι: διὸ καὶ ἀντιδιασταλτικῶς λέγει "οὐδὲ μὴν οὐδὲ ὁ Ἑκτωρ εἶασε τοὺς Τρῶας εὔδειν". (A, Aristonicus) ὑπὸ τὸν αὐτὸν χρόνον ἀμφοτέροι τοὺς κατασκόπους πέμπουσιν: συντυγχάνουσι γὰρ ἀλλήλοις ἰόντες. ἀλλ’ ὁ ποιητῆς ἐτίμησε τὸ Ἑλληνικὸν τῇ προτέρᾳ τάξει τοῦ λόγου. (bT, ex.)

Clearly, the scholiast here *believes* that the two assemblies in the Doloneia, as well as the missions of Odysseus, Diomedes, and Dolon, were *conceived* and *intended* as

⁵⁹ Cf. also Erbse *ad* E 28, Θ 1 and 66, for similar scholia.

⁶⁰ Rengakos (1995: 6-7).

simultaneous. Yet it remains true that ἡ τῶν ἐπῶν ἔχει τάξις presents these assemblies *seriatim*. According to any definition, μέν-δέ links do not express simultaneity, but rather allow for the successive representation of two different aspects of a situation or scenario.⁶¹ The rest of Rengakos' argument will be discussed in more detail below (I.V.E), but it is already clear that his insistence on finding the idea of explicit simultaneity evidenced in these scholia puts undue stress on their exegeses. The scholia in most cases only provide some fairly loose and subjective readings, a good example being bT's comment in K 299b on Hellenic priority. It should suffice to say that these particular scholia reflect an ancient preoccupation with the representation and conception of simultaneous events in the *Iliad* and that, through their selective and subjective insights, they paved the way for Zieliński's article.

C. Nineteenth-Century German Scholarship

A few German scholars also had intuitions concerning the substance of the Law before it was formulated by Zieliński. In the 1860's I. Bekker noticed how Homeric poetry does not have the same capacity for the successive presentation of simultaneous events as Romantic poetry: "wie denn der Homerischen Poesie keine Aufgabe weniger gelingt als die für den romantischen Dichtung so leichte, Gleichzeitiges neben einander

⁶¹ Cf. LSJ s.v. and also Fränkel ([1930] 1960²: 2).

fortzuführen.”⁶² This runs contrary to what Zieliński argued, but it demonstrates an early consideration of the problem nonetheless. P. Cauer (1892) expressed the basis of the Law when he referred to Homer’s sloppy and primitive conception of all narrative events as successive: “er [Homer] hatte noch nicht gelernt die mannigfaltigen Stufen von einander zu unterscheiden, sondern stellte die Ereignisse, die er erzählte, sorglos nebeneinander.”⁶³ And E. Drerup, in his *Homerische Poetik*,⁶⁴ tried to show that Homer avoids the explicit representation of simultaneous events in his narrative not because he *cannot* represent them, but because he does not *want* to. This ‘Homeric idiosyncrasy’ amounted to an epic convention of its own, since it was to provide the model for the study of other, succeeding epics.⁶⁵

Nevertheless, Zielinski remains the first to have analyzed in detail the notion of simultaneous events in Homer, and he established a fundamental Law that was (often carelessly, as we shall see) adopted by a significant number of scholars throughout the twentieth century.

⁶² “... for Homeric poetry no function is less successful than that which is so easy for Romantic literature, continuing simultaneous events one after the other” (1863: 130). A reference to what Zieliński would call his ‘special cases’, exceptions to the analytic-desultory method favoured by Romantic literature.

⁶³ “he [the Homeric poet] has not learned to distinguish the myriad levels (of his story) from one another, but he places the events which he narrates carelessly one after the other” (1892: 78). Cauer confirms the successive structure of the Homeric epics, as defined by the Law’s psychological impossibility.

⁶⁴ 1913: 465-6, n.1; he makes only a few references to Zieliński’s article, and I have included him here because his type of analysis is very much grounded in the scholarship of the preceding century.

⁶⁵ For more on the origin of Drerup’s ‘Homeric idiosyncrasy’, cf. Krókowski (1951: 8). But to claim that Homer does not ‘want’ to represent simultaneous events is just as intentionally fallacious as to claim that he ‘is unable to’. It involves a type 2 subjective methodology (cf. Fig. 1).

IV. Direct and Indirect Followers of Zieliński

A. Cauer

Our survey begins with Paul Cauer (1902), the first to praise Zieliński's achievement by calling his article "eine ausgezeichnete Arbeit, die hoffentlich starken Einfluss auf den weiteren Gang der Forschung ausüben will".⁶⁶ This hope, unfortunately, was but partially fulfilled. Throughout the last century, many scholars who concerned themselves with the notion of simultaneity in Homer have neglected Zieliński's article altogether. Cauer's later work (1921/1923), on the contrary, reveals a commendable appreciation of Zieliński's article and provides its own examples for discussion.⁶⁷ Cauer makes perceptive observations concerning the 'special cases', noticing, as we already have, that while one may conceive of events or plotlines as simultaneous, the 'special cases' always represent them as temporally *successive*.⁶⁸

B. Schadewaldt; Krókowski

Schadewaldt and Krókowski agree with Zieliński's Law, but both wish to modify its designation and application. W. Schadewaldt ([1943] 1966²) notices many new instances of Zieliński's analytic-desultory method, but believes that they represent the use

⁶⁶ Cauer (1902: 48): "an excellent piece of work, which will hopefully exert an influence on future [Homeric] research". A look at Finsler's work (1924: 253) reveals that Zieliński's Law was almost universally accepted in the earlier quarter of the 20th century, but this is no longer the case.

⁶⁷ 1921/3: 446-8.

⁶⁸ 1921/3: 447-8, esp. the following quotation: "gleichzeitig gedacht; um sie nacheinander, wie es doch nicht anders möglich war, erzählen zu können, habe [sic] Homer sie zeitlich getrennt." See above I.II.D for preliminary objections to Zieliński's designation of 'special cases'.

of a more important narrative technique in Homer, which he calls the *Klammertechnik* or the *Episodentechnik*.⁶⁹ The difference between Zieliński's and Schadewaldt's methods is that Schadewaldt explicitly denies that one ought to seek the *conception* of simultaneous events in the poems. He believes that the Homeric narrative is not concerned with abstract or practical temporality, but rather with the interplay of chains of events (*Ereignisketten*).⁷⁰ This is an important objection to the original formulation of Zieliński's Law. The Law expects that the epics take place within a rigid timeframe, but Schadewaldt argues that Homer's interest in precise chronology is not readily apparent. Schadewaldt's insistence on the lack of simultaneous conception in the many Homeric cases of his *Episodentechnik* undermines the terminological formulation of Zieliński's analytic-desultory method, while reinforcing its validity as a method of narration. In his close study of the text of *Iliad* Λ-M, Schadewaldt emphasizes the structural and functional aspects of the Law and downplays its intentional and psychological assumptions.⁷¹ By using a methodology of type 4, instead of the Law's types 1 and 2, Schadewaldt foreshadows the redefinition of Zieliński's law proposed by Krischer (I.V.B) and Patzer (I.V.D), and creates a basis for our own practical redefinition of the Law (VI).

⁶⁹ [1943] 1966³: 76. This 'framing technique' foreshadows Latacz's work on 'Rahmen' in the battle scenes of the *Iliad* (I.V.I). Cf. 77-8, for his useful list of 'intermittent episode' cases (=Episodentechnik), which was in part anticipated by Arend's discussion of *temps morts*.

⁷⁰ "Man darf dabei aber nicht die Frage, wie und wie weit der Dichter gleichzeitiges Geschehen darzustellen vermag [ref. to Zieliński] in der Mittelpunkt rücken. Das abstrakte Zeitmoment ist für Homer Nebensache. Es kommt vielmehr auf das Neben- und Ineinander der konkreten Ereignisketten und der durch sie dargestellten Wirkungszusammenhänge an" ([1943] 1966³: 79 n.1).

⁷¹ It was impossible to do justice to Schadewaldt's ultrasophisticated analysis of the two books of the *Iliad* by merely looking at a few examples here. Anyone who has picked up *Iliasstudien* will easily realize this impossibility. It is better to reserve our criticisms for the specific case studies of later scholars.

Jerzy Krókowski (1951) presents a useful survey of the early scholarship on Zieliński's Law up to his own time, as well as a detailed summary of Zieliński's article and methods.⁷² He confesses that he himself is thoroughly convinced by Zieliński's investigations: "re investigationi diligenti eidemque subtilissimae subiecta id nobis persuasit".⁷³ Krókowski's purpose, however, is to extend the applicability of the Law to Virgil's *Aeneid*, specifically to books VIII-X.⁷⁴ To meet this aim, he cites the testimony of Plüss (1910), Drerup (1913) and Friedemann (1910), who have found the Law applied in more recent romanesque fables.⁷⁵ By analyzing specific cases from the *Aeneid*, he wishes to disprove Zieliński's assertion that the validity of his Law breaks down in later epic.⁷⁶ Since this study is not concerned with the *Aeneid*, Krókowski's examples will be left untouched, although the general conclusion will attempt to show that the application of Zieliński's Law to other epics is a valid subject for future research.

C. Delebecque, Arend and Fenik

The greatest monograph that has been directly inspired by Zieliński's investigations is É. Delebecque's *Télémaque et la structure de l'Odyssée* (1958). In this

⁷² 1951: 6. He also reveals a very accurate appreciation of the 'special cases' to the Law (7): "Quodsi poeta unam actionem parallelam vel eius partem suppressere noluit, sed utramque accurate enarrare in animo habuit, ita rem adornare, ut earum, quae eodem tempore gestae sunt, hac descripta illam demum et temporis ordine subsequi iusserit [etc.]"

⁷³ 1951: 5.

⁷⁴ 1951: 10-11, following the work of R. Heinze, *Virgils epische Technik* (377ff).

⁷⁵ 1951: 7-8.

⁷⁶ Zieliński (1901: 447).

study, Delebecque reiterates Zieliński's Law for the purposes of his detailed chronological study of the *Odyssey*, renaming it "la loi de la succession".⁷⁷ He defines it as a

"[l]oi rigoureuse qui interdit au poète de mener de front deux actions se déroulant simultanément en deux secteurs séparés [...] Il ne développe les actions de plusieurs personnages que suivant un seul fil chronologique, et ces actions diverses, ne pouvant être présentées ensemble, ne peuvent l'être qu'à la file. Il s'ensuit que l'action d'un personnage entraîne l'inaction d'un autre, ainsi plongé dans ce que l'on appelle un « temps mort ». Il s'ensuit également que là où les nécessités du poème obligent à faire connaître des faits antérieurs à l'action actuelle [...] l'auteur ne peut échapper aux interdits de la loi de la succession qu'en plaçant dans la bouche d'un personnage un « récit »." ⁷⁸

This is a fairly accurate reformulation of Zieliński's Law in all of its aspects and implications, even though it needlessly adds to existing terminology.⁷⁹ Delebecque follows Zieliński in assuming that the poet is psychologically unable to represent simultaneous events simultaneously, but, like Cauer, he primarily emphasizes the fact that Homeric narrative presents *one single chronological succession of events*. This tendency to emphasize the successive structure of the epics and to avoid discussion pertaining to the simultaneous conception of events reflects a successful trend in the scholarship, which leads to an effective refinement of the Law's definition.

⁷⁷ This is a term that has become current among today's scholars, but it is an unnecessary duplication of terminology. 'Zieliński's Law' or 'the Law' will do just as well for the purposes of our study.

⁷⁸ 1958: 145. A more succinct formulation occurs at 109. The final lines of the quotation make a reference to the recapitulatory aspects of Zieliński's reproducing-combining method in direct speeches.

⁷⁹ De Jong, inexplicably finds that there is a "crucial difference between Delebecque's and Zieliński's version of the 'law of succession' " (1997: 322 n. 24, referencing, in particular, Apthorp's argument). What this "crucial difference" is (other than the term 'law of succession'), this author cannot begin to surmise.

Delebecque's reformulation also mentions the use of the analytic-desultory method as a primary method of Homeric narration, but his designation of this method focuses on what he calls *temps morts*. These represent what happens to those plotlines in the analytic-desultory method that are discontinued only to be resumed later. While another plotline is narrated, they are left in limbo or in a *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*. It is obvious then that these *temps morts* can be called by a variety of other names. In fact, these particular features of the analytic-desultory method have been studied and differently named by W. Arend and B. Fenik.

Walter Arend (1933), in his study of type-scenes in Homer, has noticed that only departures and arrivals are narrated in Homer, and never travelling itself: "Nur Aufbruch und Ankunft werden erzählt, die Schilderung des Weges fehlt".⁸⁰ The example he uses to illustrate this observation is the length of Hector's journey to Troy in *Iliad* Z, which is taken up by the Glaukos-Diomedes episode, vv. 119-236.⁸¹ In the type-scenes of travelling, then, the *temps morts* can be called *gleichmäßige Vorgänge*.

B. Fenik (1974) has also concerned himself with *temps morts* in the *Odyssey*,⁸² which he calls 'interruption sequences', defining them as cases which "may be called the temporary arrestment of an incipient action"—where *nothing happens*.⁸³ The terms of Fenik and Arend, combined with those of Delebecque, betray the terminological

⁸⁰ Arend (1933: 28).

⁸¹ 1933: 31-2; his n.1 contains many other examples, which cannot be analyzed here.

⁸² But Fenik mistakenly believes that some of his cases can be explained by Fränkel's arguments. See I.V.A below.

⁸³ 1974: 53, 61-104; quoted here: 71.

confusion involved in describing one phenomenon: the temporary discontinuation of a plotline by Zieliński's analytic-desultory method. This confusion will be resolved when we refine the Law and its techniques in section VI, but the original variety of terms will be retained in the following discussion as well as in the Glossary.

Perhaps to create a complement to Zieliński's lost plan of the *Iliad*, Delebecque has also mapped out the entire 40-day chronology of the *Odyssey*. More recently, Delebecque's *Construction de l'Odyssée* (1980) proposes a summary appreciation of the chronology of the poem (la loi chronologique, 1-33) and reaffirms the unity of the 40-day layout of the poem that Delebecque had put forward in 1958.⁸⁴ Importantly, Delebecque's newer work contains an esthetic insight into the nature of *temps morts*. He finds that moments of *nothing happens* precipitate the actions of one character and then the next, thereby pushing the whole poem relentlessly forward. Thus these passages, which could be seen as one of Homer's flaws, can be thought of as one of his most useful tools:

"En dépit des apparences, et si l'on met à part les phases, en soi très brèves, d'action et d'inaction dans les deux camps de bataille finale, les temps morts, loin d'arrêter le cours des événements, le précipitent. Et c'est peut-être bien leur vrai rôle, car ils interdisent tout retour en arrière contre le fil des jours. Ils ont l'avantage de donner de l'impulsion au récit en empêchant de tout dire, en produisant du secret et des silences, en obligeant à deviner ce qui se passe ailleurs. (...) Il est donc probable que les temps morts, chez Homère, sont voulus plus que subis."⁸⁵

Delebecque argues that *temps morts* are intended by Homer as devices that increase the pace of the plots, which in turn creates gaps that heighten the interest of the reader or

⁸⁴ Delebecque's 1980 book also contains many useful chapters on the 'inner' stories of Odysseus and how they fit in the chronology of the poem, as well as a chapter on how Odysseus' encounters with women (Circe, Calypso and Nausicaa in particular) link the poem together.

⁸⁵ 1980: 64.

listener. This esthetic insight into the nature of the *temps morts* of Homeric narrative, while clearly derived from an intentional reading (type 2 method on Fig. 1), will be referenced in the examples discussed in this chapter.

D. Apthorp

M.J. Apthorp (1980), the principal follower of Delebecque's chronology of the *Odyssey*, discusses in particular the question of why Telemachus stays for a month in Sparta (Bks. δ–ο), awaiting his return to Ithaca, while Odysseus travels to the Phaeacians and back to Ithaca. Apthorp's discussion of this particular case provides us with a venue for discussing Delebecque's chronology of the *Odyssey*, from a methodological standpoint.

Apthorp argues that in this wide-reaching Odyssean case, time “exists only as a measure of the duration of [the regular] events in which Telemachus is engaged”.⁸⁶ This observation demonstrates Apthorp's belief that Zieliński's Law is valid,⁸⁷ at least for this specific example. The narrative here avoids the psychological impossibility of a simultaneous depiction of the Odyssean and Telemachean plotlines. Apthorp argues that, instead of simultaneous depiction, what we can infer is that Telemachus is engaged in a constant event (feasting in Sparta) until he is allowed to return to Ithaca; this, therefore,

⁸⁶ Apthorp (1980: 2). His notion that Homer's concept of time is, in this case, “only [...] a measure of [...] duration” hearkens (unintentionally) back to Fränkel. On Fränkel's biographical analysis of Homer's lack of a practical concept of time, see I.V.A.

⁸⁷ 1980: 2, n.14; he qualifies the Law with the unnecessarily redundant, yet relatively precise term ‘paratactic synchronization’.

represents the narrative's use of a protracted *gleichmäßiger Vorgang* while another—Odysseus'—plotline is being told. Apthorp follows Krischer (I.V.B) in refuting Hölscher's and Page's idea (following Fränkel, see I.V.A) that Telemachus is left in a *temps mort* and does absolutely nothing in Sparta during his stay, which they believe is impossible.⁸⁸

However, Apthorp does not provide any sound structural explanation for the narrative's use of a constant event lasting 10 whole books (!), as his final insight into the value of Telemachus' journey demonstrates:

“[...] what is of greater interest and importance is his [the poet's] evident determination to solve problems posed by the chronology in a manner consistent with his higher literary goals. Not only does he strive to preserve liveliness, plausibility, and consistency in both characterization and action, but his use of the detention and temptation themes in the Calypso and Circe episodes is integrated with the recurrence of these themes elsewhere within the wandering of Odysseus, and it is the resulting amalgam which itself becomes the basis for the re-enactment of these same themes in the Journey of Telemachus in a way which blends harmoniously with the numerous other parallels between the wanderings of the father and the expedition of the son. These complex echoes play no small part in the rich and subtle literary symphony which is the *Odyssey*”.⁸⁹

Apthorp's method is clearly of the second and third type here: it involves an intentional reading of the *Odyssey* as the product of the poet's “higher literary goal”, where parallels are to be drawn between the wanderings of the father and the son. This reading may be correct, if it is justified by a close textual reading (type 4 method).

⁸⁸ Apthorp's main reasoning (1980: 2) is that “in accounting for Telemachus' long delay in Sparta, the poet employs certain motifs and devices which reappear in his treatment of some of the obstacles to Odysseus' return”. So Telemachus has to endure being delayed in Sparta, just like Odysseus was stuck on Calypso's island. Apthorp also follows most of Delebecque's account of Telemachus' stay, arguing for the appeal of Spartan *dolce far niente* on the young man (14). But this last argument is evidently too subjective.

⁸⁹ 1980: 22.

But what we are concerned with here is the type 3 method by which Apthorp explains the retention of Telemachus in Sparta for 10 books. The assumption of this method is that the reader and the poet need to solve problems posed by the chronology of the poem. It is surmised, in other words, that Homeric narrative follows a strict chronology (an idea that stems from both Zieliński and Delebecque), which is reconstructed by the reader from the temporal indications present in the text. But one may reasonably ask: are we really to suppose that Telemachus has been staying a whole month in Sparta? Is the narrative bound by such a strict chronological parallelism between the Odyssean and Telemachean plotlines? It initially seems that trying to explain and rationalize Telemachus' retention in Sparta is creating a false problem. It might be more simple and faithful to the textual evidence for one to reason like Hölscher and Page and argue that Telemachus is simply left in a standstill for 10 books (type 4 reading). This discussion of the failings of type 3 readings paves the way for the structural and functional redefinition that will be offered at the end of this chapter, and for the considerations of Ch. II.

E. Hellwig

Brigitte Hellwig (1964) is concerned with narrative links between events and plotlines in Homer, and with the overall expression (*Ausdruck*) of simultaneously

conceived events (type 1 and type 2 methods).⁹⁰ Hellwig analyzes the duration of simultaneously conceived events in the *Iliad*, and proposes that in many cases time can be extended to whatever duration suits the poet. Zieliński is referenced in these instances of false synchronization, but Hellwig thinks that his terminology, “fehlerhafter Dehnung eines gleichmäßig fortschreitenden Vorgangs”, is too critical of Homer. The duration of the lengthening, according to Hellwig, is “gleichgültig für die Dichtung”.⁹¹ In claiming that false synchronisms can be of indeterminate length, Hellwig is casting doubt on the idea, adopted by most followers of Zieliński, that Homeric narrative is bound by a strict chronology. We shall see in section V that this foreshadows a fundamental aspect of the recent critique of Zieliński’s Law.

Still, Hellwig follows closely in the footsteps of Zieliński, noticing, in particular, the Odyssean manifestations of the Law. Hellwig specifically concurs with Delebecque’s 40-day chronological plan of the *Odyssey* in general.⁹² Hellwig also notices applications of the analytic-desultory method (without explicitly naming it), when she specifies the general nature of time-links for the *Iliad*: “[s]o baut er [der Dichter] aus den beidenseitiger Aktionsmomenten einen einheitlichen Vorgang auf. Der Vorgang ist das

⁹⁰ Hellwig (1964: 115-25). By ‘simultaneously conceived’ events, Hellwig means events that *Homer* conceived of as simultaneous; yet strictly speaking, she is only stating that she herself believes that these events were simultaneously conceived. Her intentional methodology is similar to Zieliński’s and is equally suspect.

⁹¹ “indifferent for the poem [as a whole]” (1964: 117 n.140). Whether one sees this type of false synchronism as truly ‘mistaken’ or simply ‘indifferent’ remains an open esthetic debate. Whatever one concludes, one must agree that this ‘lengthening’ is governed by Zieliński’s Law.

⁹² 1964: 117-9.

Entscheidende. In ihn sind die Figuren gebunden. Es wirkt umso lebhafter, je rascher die Bewegungen ablösen, d.h. je öfter der Blick von einer zur anderen wechselt. Kaum kann man von einem regelrechten Wechsel sprechen”.⁹³ A linking technique much like the analytic-desultory method is adopted by Hellwig, but her important observation is that its ‘flashes’ from one plotline to the next are ‘irregular’.⁹⁴ According to Hellwig, the same applies to the *Odyssey*, but she concludes that this epic innovates in its use of lengthy ‘special cases’, which allow for a figurative or ‘impressionistic’ representation of spatial distance in the poem. It will be seen in some of the examples in this chapter that lengthy ‘special cases’ are possible in the *Iliad* and that their application is equally effective there as in the *Odyssey*.

F. Whitman and Scodel

R. Scodel and C.H. Whitman⁹⁵ are specifically concerned with the events of *Iliad* N, Ξ and O and with how the structure of these books is, rather loosely according to their view, explained by Zieliński’s Law. Scodel expounds a version of the Law which is essentially correct, if not quite true to the spirit of Zieliński’s article: “no two actions in

⁹³ “so [the poet] builds a unified event out of two mutual action-moments. The event is what is decisive. The characters are bound to it. He works ever so vividly, ever so swiftly to follow the motions; that is, he often switches his gaze from one event to the next. One can hardly speak of a regulated change” (1964: 122).

⁹⁴ It can easily be shown that this observation generally holds true in both poems: the flashes back to Ithaca in book 4 of the *Telemachy* are a good example. However, certain battle scenes of the *Iliad* involve regular changes or ‘flashes’ from one scene to the next. A representative example will be discussed below.

⁹⁵ The article is based mostly on the former’s views (1981: 1, n.1).

the epic are ever presented as simultaneous, for the narrative never twice traverses the same temporal space. Where two actions would occur at the same time, one is artificially placed after the other, sometimes with explicit false synchronism.”⁹⁶ This puts the Law into plain words, making use of the ‘special cases’ in which two simultaneous events are reported in full one after the other. Nonetheless, in the next paragraph Scodel correctly refers to Zieliński’s analytic-desultory method.⁹⁷

In particular, Scodel adopts Zieliński’s distinction between ‘real’ and ‘apparent’ plot when she attempts to explain the five shouts in books N-O of the *Iliad* as links between various scenes: “In the apparent time of the narrative it [the shout] links the scene behind the lines to the battle, while in “real” time it marks a shift. In repeating the earlier motif it suggests the earlier moment [...] The shift backward is signalled, but left implicit; the repeated shout allows it to be fitted smoothly into an apparently continuous line.”⁹⁸ This is a special case of the Law (simultaneity—succession) formulated in more perplexing terminology.⁹⁹ Scodel’s analysis is further proof of the lack of clarity and

⁹⁶ 1981: 3.

⁹⁷ 1981: 3-4, adopting Delebecque’s notion of a *temps mort* without explicitly mentioning him (under the guise of espousing the explanation of Krischer, I.V.B). The terminological confusion in the scholarship becomes quite staggering at this point.

⁹⁸ 1981: 4-5, although this notion of a ‘shift backward’ in the ‘real’ sequence must of course be treated with caution.

⁹⁹ To give a further outstanding example of this confusion, at one point Scodel mistakenly identifies the Law with the reaching-back method: “The poet gives us the choice between the apparent sequence of events in a linear progression and a “*real*” sequence in which time can be *reversed or repeated*” (1981: 8, my italics). According to Zieliński’s Law, neither the real sequence of events nor the apparent sequence can ever be reversed or repeated! Rather, the Law’s psychological incompatibility can be resolved through the use of the analytic-desultory method or of the ‘special cases’. The only cases of repetition occur in direct speeches that employ the reproducing-combining method.

transparency already present in Zieliński's terminology. Although the case of the 'five shouts' is quite complex, one can say, by way of preliminary critique of Scodel's adoption of Zieliński's special cases, that her method is unsound since it presumes that Homer's is the apparent and not the real text.

In fact, one can find many irregularities in Scodel's analysis of the 'real' chronology of books N, Ξ and O of the *Iliad*. I will explain just one of her principal examples, which occurs after the Trojans have broken through the wall in book M and the Achaeans have rallied in response in N. At the opening of Ξ, Scodel writes (4), "Nestor is roused by hearing a shout which we cannot but assume is the shout of [the Achaeans in] the immediately preceding lines, N 834-837. Yet when he goes outside his tent, the situation that he sees is not that of the end of the previous book, but most closely resembles that of M 471/N 41, before the [Achaean] rally (Ξ 13-15)":

τάχα δ' εἴσιδεν ἔργον αἰκῆς,
τοὺς μὲν ὀρινομένους, τοὺς δὲ κλονέοντας ὀπισθε
Τρώας ὑπερθύμους: ἐρέριπτο δὲ τεῖχος Ἀχαιῶν.

Scodel continues: "One might then argue that it is, in fact, this earlier shout which Nestor hears, and that the narrative here goes back in time [to show the simultaneous event]." The simultaneous depictions would here presumably be a case of the reaching-back method, not a special case.

Scodel's argument is an attempt to reconstruct the chronology of the books according to some of the textual information provided. But her reading is too insistent on

reconstructing the chronology of the text to be fully supported by the text itself. What takes place at the beginning of Ξ and what the reader immediately understands, as Scodel herself admits, is that Nestor has been roused by the shout of the Achaeans at the end of N. This is the logical and thematic connection that the narrative literally describes. There is no notion in the text of a step back in time to the shout of M 471/N 41; Nestor seems to be roused only by the preceding Achaean rally. The passage (Ξ 13-15) that Scodel quotes as evidence that “what Nestor sees is obviously not the evenly matched battle at the end of the preceding book”, can simply be considered to be a summary of the situation that Nestor perceives as he is coming out of the tent, having been absent (i.e. left in limbo) for the past two books. The lines that seem like a step back in time to Scodel can more literally be interpreted as a brief (three-line) recapitulation of previous events, which itself takes place as an event in Nestor’s perception and which therefore follows the shout at the end of book N.

Scodel’s interpretation of this example makes it dawn on us that the type 3 method (reader reconstruction) that is used to derive the simultaneity of the special cases does not seem to do justice to Homer’s text, since it is too easily influenced by subjective considerations which derive a non-literal interpretation from certain passages of the text. This conclusion will find further confirmation in other analyses presented in this chapter.

G. Richardson

S. Richardson's position is in agreement with Zieliński, but only to a certain extent. He mentions only the 'special cases' of the Law, and cites Krischer's summary of the Law as "non-reaching-back".¹⁰⁰ Neither of Richardson's definitions of Zieliński's Law encapsulate its original definition and its methods, and his use of Krischer's summary is rather simplistic. Nevertheless, he agrees with Zieliński's general intuitions. He believes that

"it is true on a broad enough scale that we can accept Zieliński's "law" as a tendency reflecting the narrator's attitude toward his role in the preservation and alteration of the story's order. What Zieliński observes to be a practice that falsifies the true chronology on the story level I consider an indication that, in this respect, Homer chooses to conceal his power of manipulating the temporal arrangement of events and to maintain the illusion of a steady chronological course of events in the discourse."¹⁰¹

This is precisely what Zieliński contends: he does notice that the observance of his Law can involve a falsifying of the chronology of events, yet he does not stress that it maintains an illusion of chronological presentation.¹⁰² Richardson's insistence on the illusory effect of the Law can be profitable, because it warns against the notion of chronological reconstruction (type 3 method) that, as we have seen, is the source of many problems for the followers of Zieliński.

Richardson also tries to emphasize a narrator-focused variation of the Law.¹⁰³ But this leads him into the same methodological quagmire as previous scholars (including

¹⁰⁰ 1990: 91.

¹⁰¹ *id.*

¹⁰² Cf. I.II.A and I.II.C, above.

¹⁰³ This is revealed in his analysis of three famous 'exceptions' to the Law (1990: 91-2).

Zieliński himself, of course). His assumption that “*Homer chooses* to conceal his power of manipulating the temporal arrangement of events...” (my italics) is not constructive because it presumes to divine the intentions of the poet (type 2 methodology).

It also seems that Richardson cannot help but fall into the same terminological trap as R. Scodel, since he claims that by falsifying the ‘true’ temporality of the story, “[t]he result is that the reader is led through the same time period twice without realizing it”.¹⁰⁴ This represents a serious misunderstanding of the Law, confusing the special cases with the unhomeric reaching-back method. Richardson does recuperate well from his mistake and concludes that at least for ἑτεροί-ἑτέρωθεν and ὄφρα-τόφρα types of simultaneity, which he calls explicit simultaneous links, “there is no noticeable reversal in time”.¹⁰⁵ In other words, he tries to confirm the impossibility of Homer stepping back in time to tell a second simultaneous event *post factum*.¹⁰⁶ Nonetheless, the psychological assumptions involved in this assertion of the Law seem to be unsound.

¹⁰⁴ 1990: 94. Further (and somewhat better) qualified at 95: “(The event) does bring us back in time, but only slightly and the emphasis is never on the simultaneity of the actions; the second action captures our attention and we forget that it is synchronic with the first. As always, the impression is of a succession of events, never going over the same time period twice.” The second event, in fact, never brings us back in time at all according to Zieliński.

¹⁰⁵ 1990: 95; these cases of ‘obvious synchronization’ are further discussed below (I.V.E.).

¹⁰⁶ Although Richardson more confusingly maintains that the narration of so-called explicit simultaneous events does involve an (admittedly slight) step back in time: “Except for the narration of simultaneous events and the *epische Regression* of the *Iliad*’s proem, the chronological [and successive] sequence of events within these bounds remains intact” (1990: 101).

Overall, Richardson's standpoint on simultaneity in Homer can generally be said to agree with Zieliński's.¹⁰⁷ But both their explanations of the Law, just like those of most of the exponents of Zieliński, share similar terminological confusion and methodological flaws. Even Aristonicus and Aristotle seem to have been interpreting narrative simultaneity in subjective terms. It is now necessary to look at how critics of Zieliński have revealed similar terminological and methodological flaws in discussing the problem of simultaneity in Homer.

V) Zieliński's Critics

A. Hölscher, Mehmel, Fränkel and Page; Bassett

At about the start of the Second World War, Zieliński fell out of favour with German scholars and was conveniently forgotten.¹⁰⁸ Two of these scholars, Hölscher and Mehmel, did not therefore make any reference to Zieliński and his work¹⁰⁹ when they claimed that Homeric narrative never implies that events are simultaneous. They argued instead that the narrative *needs* to be in a *status perseverandi*, because Homer cannot depict events otherwise.¹¹⁰ With this concept of a necessarily progressive Homeric

¹⁰⁷ In his discussion of 'Events Retold', he also concurs with Zieliński by stating that Homer mainly uses the reproducing-combining method in direct speech: "[w]hile the Homeric narrator is loath to exploit his privilege to travel at will back and forth through story time and prefers to give the reader the impression of straightforward chronological presentation, he manages to effect the same movement backward in time through the expedient of direct speech" (1990: 95).

¹⁰⁸ See Krókowski (1951: 8) and the biographical Appendix I.

¹⁰⁹ Except one brief ref. to Zieliński's 'gl. verharrenden Zustand' by Hölscher (1939: 31).

¹¹⁰ Hölscher (1939: 2), quoted fully in Krókowski (1951: 9): "Es gibt im hom. Epos keine eigentlich gleichzeitigen, d. h. zeitlich sich deckende Geschehnisse, alles was geschieht, geschieht in der

narrative, they were foreshadowing the work of Patzer (I.V.D) and countering Zieliński's assumption that Homer conceives of certain events as simultaneous.

Hölscher and Mehmel based their arguments on the work of one indirect critic of Zieliński, Hermann Fränkel, who was the first to assert that Homeric narrative *must be* continuous and successive (*stetig fortschreitet*). Fränkel wrote an article in 1931 that attempted to prove that Homer did not have a working concept of time (he had a *fehrender Zeitsinn*) while composing his epics, and that this is what compelled him to depict events as strictly successive.¹¹¹ Fränkel's notion that Homer lacked a concept of time stands in diametrical opposition to the consummate formulations of Homeric chronology detected by Zieliński and Delebecque. Fränkel's position has been supported by Page and others.¹¹²

Form des 'nacheinander', in der Folge in der es erzählt wird. Es gibt also kein gemeinsames Medium, das zwei Begebnisse umfassen könnte. Gäbe es das, wie leicht würde es dem Poeten, rückgreifend zu erzählen was gleichzeitig geschah..." Thus Hölscher concludes that simultaneous events would be most easily represented by the reaching-back method; but this does not seem to be feasible (cf. the discussion in I.V.E and I.V.H below). Mehmel, for his part, anticipates Patzer (I.V.D) by claiming that what appears to be simultaneity in Homer is in fact simply 'parallelism': "Daß es wahre Gleichzeitigkeit bei Homer nicht gibt, bedarf keiner langen Untersuchung. Was wie Gleichzeitigkeit aussieht, ist gedankliche Parallelität... Die Parallelität liegt im Inhaltlichen, im Gegensatz der Personen und Geschehnisse; wenn an Zeit gedacht wird, ist sie jedem einzelnen Falle als Gegenwart vorgestellt" (1940: 75). Mehmel's inference of conceptual 'parallelism' (instead of 'simultaneity') does much to neutralize the issue of the 'problem of simultaneity', but the fact that his starting assumptions were based on those of Fränkel does much to undermine his method of arriving at these conclusions.

¹¹¹ Fränkel ([1931] 1960²: 99) for the *stetig fortschreitet* theory.

¹¹² Page (1955, 64ff., 77, n. 11). Page does agree with Zieliński's presentation of 'special cases', as well as other aspects of the Law, but his perception is nonetheless dominated by Fränkel's idea of a lacking *Zeitsinn* in Homer (65). Page's examples of Odyssean simultaneity=succession demonstrate his point of view quite clearly. Also in agreement with Fränkel is Kullmann (1968: 1), who argues that Homer has at least "ein Gefühl für die zeitlichen Zusammenhänge der epischen Geschehnisse"; but Kullmann's main purpose is to observe how the future and the past are alluded to in the *Gegenwart* of the *Iliad* and to show that this epic offers what seems to be a complex and wide-ranging temporal construction. Nevertheless, Kullmann also finds himself in agreement with Hölscher's formulation of Fränkel's argument (17).

The suggestion that one can determine that Homer did not have a concept of time is questionable because it attempts a certain primitivization of Homer, which is an obviously unfair standpoint from which to approach his texts. In fact, Fränkel's argument has been sufficiently refuted by Krischer, Rengakos and Seeck respectively (see below I.V.D; E; F). The fact that Fränkel *posits* a lack of a concept of time for Homer is not acceptable, as it immediately betrays the subjective flaws of the type 1 method (on Fig. 1). Nothing at all is known about Homer and nothing at all can be presumed about his mental capacities from the text, for one cannot know whether Homer's avoidance of precise chronology in his narrative reflects an inability or a choice.¹¹³ Rengakos in particular has shown how illegitimate it is to conclude that an author does not have a practical concept of time simply because his text does not conform to what we consider to be 'real' time, when he asks: "Should future generations conclude from James Joyce's *Ulysses*, which takes place on one extraordinarily long day, that the author must have had an undeveloped sense of time?"¹¹⁴ Admittedly, Fränkel's argument does serve as a warning not to presume that Homer's chronology works precisely like ours. With only the text as evidence, however, one cannot and should not attempt to determine Homer's concept of time.

¹¹³ Nor can one generalize from any widespread lack of temporal concepts among the ancient Greeks.

¹¹⁴ Rengakos (1995: 11, n.35): "Sollten künftige Generationen aus dem Roman 'Ulysses' von James Joyce, der sich an einem einzigen 'überlangen' Tag abspielt, schließen, daß der Autor einen unentwickelten Zeitsinn gehabt haben muß?" But Schadewaldt ([1943] 1963³: 79) had already correctly noted that "das abstrakte Zeitmoment ist für Homer Nebensache".

But was Fränkel's investigation worthwhile? Although Fränkel's method is flawed and has led its proponents to hold a similar bias, his main argument does contain valuable insights. For the reader's convenience, Fenik's accurate translation of the core of Fränkel's argument follows:

"There does not exist as yet (for Homer) any solid temporal framework to encompass events in the epic and to anchor each act in his proper place. Incidents are placed in relation to each other only in a factual sense: certain persons belong together; the result of an occurrence is that somebody reacts to it; somebody meets or observes something and consequently intervenes. It is this sort of factual connection, rather than a temporal connection that is expressed by the Homeric "meanwhile" or "when" or "after". Things do not require the medium of time in order to group themselves or establish their relation to one another. Rather, one thing touches another directly, and each passes by the eyes of the observer with remarkable sharpness and clarity, within a temporal vacuum".¹¹⁵

The observation that Homer organizes his narrative factually, not chronologically, seems to be valid, although Fränkel's notion of a "temporal vacuum" is too forceful since imprecise temporal indications are present in the texts. We have noticed in our discussion of false synchronisms, created by the analytic-desultory method and by the special cases, the weakness of the idea that the Homeric epics are organized according to a precise chronology. Essentially, it may be concluded that Fränkel and his followers' investigations are useful. In stating that time does not seem to play an important role in the structure of the plot, they are making a claim that enables us to eliminate the psychological and subjective biases of Zieliński's Law and to reaffirm its structural and functional validity according to a type 4 textual method.

¹¹⁵ Fränkel ([1931] 1960: 2), quoted and translated in Fenik (1974: 60).

Bassett (1938) is another scholar who agrees in essence with Zieliński's Law, but also with Fränkel's position: "The use of our commensurable concept of time in the analysis of the Homeric poems has been one of the most naïve errors of the *historische Methode*".¹¹⁶ Homer has a primitive concept of time, he argues, and this is why "two actions are never narrated as parallel" (i.e. as *simultaneous*). But Bassett partially escapes from the subjective flaws inherent in this reasoning by arguing that Homer "is bound by no law or technique of narration", that "[h]e is guided only by the universal principle of art whether primitive or advanced, the use of the best means for the most perfect result".¹¹⁷ That one should always assume that the narrator knows best seems clear enough. Yet for Bassett, Zieliński's Law only represents part of the "intuition of the good narrator [who] sacrifices the reality of the reason to gain the illusion of reality in imagination, and preserves the impression of the onward movement of time."¹¹⁸ Bassett's argument inevitably falls back into the subjective trap by assuming that Homer's *stetig fortschreitend* narrative represents a conscious choice of illusion over reason. In fact, Bassett's notion of an "Epic Illusion" (philosophically renamed by Bassett as "Human Life Writ Large", 56), can readily be compared with Zieliński's Law: the Law is concerned with the psychological incompatibility of representing two simultaneous

¹¹⁶ Bassett (1938: 33). For his agreement with Zieliński, cf. 34. He reduces the Law to a *stetig fortschreitend* principle, for example when he claims that: "[t]he action of the Homeric narrative is like a river, ever flowing onward". But Bassett does notice a few instances of the reaching-back method (37-8) and does outline some cases of explicit synchronization in Homer (38-43), while also discussing what he calls 'flat stretches': i.e. *temps morts* in the analytic-desultory method where nothing happens.

¹¹⁷ 1938: 35.

¹¹⁸ *id.*

events simultaneously, and with the creation of an illusion of simultaneity through the analytic-desultory method. Both the Law and the “Epic Illusion” are methodologically flawed, as they assume that the poet’s perception of time has directly influenced his compositional methods (type 1 method). One certainly cannot, like Bassett, follow Fränkel *et al.* and assert that the illusion of a “perpetual onward movement of time” is created by the lack of a fixed concept of time in Homer.

B. Rothe; Krischer

Before we turn to Krischer’s revisions to Zieliński’s Law, we must discuss the critical work of Carl Rothe (1910), which laid down the groundwork for these revisions. Rothe, discussing the scene which occurs between Achilles and Athena in *Iliad* A, found that the poet cannot represent simultaneous events, but must instead pay attention to one scene at a time. The poet, according to Rothe, is not concerned with what happens to Agamemnon and the rest of the assembly while Achilles is accosted by Athena:

“Ebenso wissen wir jetzt, daß der Dichter stets sein Augenmerk nur auf eine Szene richtet und wenig bekümmert ist, ob diese gerade auch zu den anderen stimmt. Die homerische Dichtung ist, in Auslehnung an die Volksdichtung, ‘einsträngig’, um einen Ausdruck von Olrik [...] zu gebrauchen, d.h. der Dichter kümmert sich nur gerade um die Personen, die Träger der Handlung sind; was inzwischen andere machen, die sonst mit der Handlung in Beziehung stehen, ist ihm gleichgültig”.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ 1910: 152-3; “Just so, we now know that the poet only pays attention to one scene [at a time] and is little preoccupied with how precisely one scene harmonizes with another. Homeric poetry, to borrow an expression from folkpoetry (from Olrik’s studies), is single-stranded, i.e. the poet preoccupies himself only with persons who are actors in events; what other characters, who are often connected with the plot, are doing in the meanwhile, is irrelevant to him.”

Although his method is somewhat akin to the type 1 method of the Fränkel school, Rothe has expressed the structural foundations of Zieliński's Law, without, however, making any explicit reference to Zieliński himself.¹²⁰ Rothe notes that the poet narrates one event or plotline after the next, paying little attention to whether these are actually chronologically successive. He calls the Homeric narrative single-stranded, and conveys a strong impression of the analytic-desultory method as the primary technique of narration (without using Zieliński's terms, of course).

It is most noteworthy that Rothe's concept of the analytic-desultory method eschews any notion of simultaneity. He simply states that the poet seems to concern himself with one event or plotline at a time, and leaves the other plotline in limbo. The poet is indifferent to the latter, until he turns his attention to it again. He does not seem to be at all interested in telling the reader what happens in the meantime. Rothe has thus indirectly proven that simultaneous conception is not a necessary aspect of the structural rules of Homeric narrative. His work neatly sets up Krischer's redefinition of Zieliński's Law.

T. Krischer's article (1971) proposes a fundamental reconsideration of Zieliński's views that has done much to renew interest in the problem of simultaneity in Homer.¹²¹

¹²⁰ Rothe instead mentions Hedwig Jordan, *Der Erzählungsstil in den Kampfszenen der Ilias* (Diss. Zürich) 1904: 47, who seems to have first noticed how a character must drop out of the poet's focus before another character can become the center of his attention, a variation of the analytic-desultory method.

¹²¹ Cf. in particular the praises of Patzer (1990: 153). The convenient term 'problem of simultaneity' was invented by Rengakos (1995: 3).

Krischer, as we shall see, is one of the few critics of Zieliński concerned with eliminating this problem on methodological grounds.

Krischer suggests that Zieliński's psychological foundations for the Law are biased because they presuppose a way in which the Homeric narrative should behave: "Zieliński, in spite of his attempt at a differentiation, has obviously succumbed to the error [of asserting] that each representation which follows the Law he discovered is necessitated by the conditions of Homeric style, when just the opposite ought to be true: each [so-called] 'Homeric' representation follows Zieliński's Law."¹²² Krischer is correct to question Zieliński's psychological foundations, since they do presuppose that a true Homeric account lies beneath the apparent narrated story. This notion was already questioned in the preliminary discussion of the special cases (in I.II.D), where we noted that the psychological foundations discussed by Zieliński are based on an incorrect account of the human perception of simultaneity, and do not provide a firm methodological standpoint for his Law. On the contrary, these foundations reveal that Zieliński's Law is conditioned by an altogether subjective method, which interprets the perception of the poet (a type 1 method). The Law supposes that Homer conceives of certain events or plotlines as simultaneous when, in fact, the text only shows events and

¹²² Krischer (1971: 92): "Er (Zieliński) ist offensichtlich trotz der Ansätze zu einer Differenzierung dem Irrtum erlegen zu meinen, daß jede Darstellung, die den von ihm entdeckten Regeln folgt, den Bedingungen des homerischen Stiles genüge, wo doch nur die Umkehrung behauptet werden darf: jede 'homerische' Darstellung folgt dem Zielinskischen Gesetz"; cf. also 97: Zieliński's theory claims that "a good narrator must tell his events/plots, just as he perceives them" ("ein guter Erzähler müsse seine Handlung so darstellen, wie ein Beobachter sie wahrnehmen würde").

plotlines as consecutive. A closer look at Krischer's argument will make Zieliński's methodological error even more clear.

Krischer begins his critique by claiming that Zieliński's distinction between *wirkliche* and *scheinbare Handlung* is relative and *sekundärer Natur* to a more important technique of representation in the narrative, which he will elaborate later.¹²³ His method then involves the reduction of Zieliński's Law and its analytic-desultory method to a lower common denominator, in order to explain away the problem of simultaneity in Homeric narrative. He proceeds by highlighting cases of Zieliński's analytic-desultory method where the depiction of supposedly simultaneous events can be more successfully explained as simple narrative changes of scene (*Szenenwechseln*), bringing the listener from one meaningful event to the next.¹²⁴ This makes perfect sense of what is in the text: the narrator switches back and forth between one plotline and the next, and there is no obvious notion of simultaneity involved in this method of narration.

A perfect example to illustrate this point is one that was already mentioned. It comes from book Z of the *Iliad*, when Hector's journey to Troy is interrupted by the Diomedes and Glaukos scene (119-236). Hector departs from the battlefield at line 116 (ἀπέβη) and at line 237 he is described as arriving at the Scaean gates (Ἐκτωρ δ' ὥς

¹²³ 1971: 93.

¹²⁴ 1971: 97. He also points out that instances of so-called false synchronization can be explained "aus dem extrem langen Verzögerung des zweiten Handlungsstranges" (96). False synchronisms, which assume that Homeric narrative has a precise chronology, can thus be more aptly explained as interruptions or retardations of whichever plotline is discontinued. These retardations are done for varying verse lengths, but do not imply any notions of strict chronology or simultaneity. Note, therefore, that the observation of these retardative effects does help to explain away the 'problem of simultaneity'.

Σκαιάς τε πύλας καὶ φηγὸν ἵκανεν). Is the Diomedes and Glaukos scene clearly simultaneous with Hector's journey here? Not necessarily: the reader may suppose that the journey is some sort of *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*, which is not narrated. But will this implicit *gleichmäßiger Vorgang* create an illusion of simultaneity in the reader? We can already see how this line of questioning will lead us away from the textual evidence. There is no problem of simultaneity in this example, because there is no simultaneity explicit or implicit. Hector sets off and he arrives; these are two narrated events that seem to be sufficient in the text for the depiction of his journey. It seems that the narrative uses a sophisticated interruption sequence that avoids what could be a lengthy description of Hector's travel back home by interposing the narration of another plotline: the fighting on the battlefield exemplified by the encounter of Diomedes and Glaukos. What we are dealing with here, if we follow Krischer's reasoning, is clearly structural and not temporal complexity.

Krischer's third claim is more problematic. He believes that the Law's assertion of the narrative's impossibility to reach back in time (the *zurückgreifende Methode*) is untenable. The narrator, according to Krischer, has perfect leisure and opportunity to tell a second simultaneous event completely after the fact.¹²⁵ This claim directly contradicts Zieliński's Law and the assertion that Homeric narrative is strictly progressive, and has influenced recent critics to state that the reaching-back method is indeed used by the

¹²⁵ cf. esp. 97, where Krischer calls the Homeric exclusion of the reaching-back method a "fragwürdige Prämisse".

Homeric narrator. We will deal with this assertion below, when we discuss the relevant cases proposed by Nünlist (I.V.H.).

Krischer's fourth claim has been alluded to in our critique of Zieliński's article.¹²⁶ The claim relates to the Law's combination of the special cases with the analytic-desultory method: why are certain lengthy plotlines told in full, one after the other, while others are intertwined and not so lengthily retarded? To quote Krischer's own words: "Aber könnte der Dichter nicht oefters hin- und herwechseln und damit die sinnlose Verzögerung vermeiden [...]? Sein Verfahren was doch ohnehin 'desultorisch'!"¹²⁷ In other words, why could the poet not use the analytic-desultory method to avoid the huge interruptions (Krischer calls them "meaningless retardations") found in the special cases?¹²⁸ Krischer presents a variety of examples to try to illustrate his point that special cases could have been narrated according to the analytic-desultory method. He is of course entirely correct in stating that the Homeric narrator could just as well have narrated these cases in an analytical and desultory fashion. But it is useless to discuss Krischer's examples here, because *the point is that the text does not depict these cases*

¹²⁶ It was already mentioned in our discussion of Zieliński's methods (I.II.C.) that the relationship of the special cases to the analytic-desultory method was unclear.

¹²⁷ 1971: 99, emphasis in the original: "But couldn't the poet switch back-and-forth more often, in order to avoid the meaningless retardation [of the other plotline]? His procedure was not, anyhow, desultory!"

¹²⁸ He also asks the following misleading question: "Wo ist dann aber der Unterschied zur 'reproduzierend-kombinatorischen' Methode?" (*Id.*: 100, "What is the difference [here] with the reproducing-combining method?"). It has already been seen that there is a fundamental difference between the special cases and the reproducing-combining method. The reproducing-combining method attempts to tell a simultaneous event after the fact from whatever clues can be gathered, but the exception cases present a pair of simultaneous events *as actually successive*. Again, terminology is the cause of much confusion.

according to Zieliński's analytic-desultory method. Krischer's assumption that the interruptions or retardations caused by the special cases are necessarily meaningless is particularly unfortunate, since these interruptions could well be viewed as self-justified structural phenomena.¹²⁹ Nevertheless, this misleading assumption on the part of Krischer does not detract overmuch from his following explanation of the special cases, to which we shall soon turn our attention.

Krischer also refutes Fränkel's claim that the Homeric narrator does not have a defined concept of time.¹³⁰ Krischer's rebuttal uses a simple analogy to show that Fränkel's argument is absurd: could not a supervisor assign his workmen separate tasks to be performed individually and simultaneously, even if he does not have a precise working concept of time?¹³¹ So too could Homer compose simultaneously, even if he did not have a precise concept of a temporal dimension! Yet Krischer sees some value in Fränkel's argument that the epics are not concerned with precise chronology or the expression of simultaneity.¹³² He thinks that Page's idea, that epic singers "treat time simply as the measure of the duration of particular events", is essentially correct: "[f]ür den improvisierenden Sänger stellt dieses Synchronisieren ohne Zweifel eine ungeheure

¹²⁹ This idea will form an integral part of the redefinition of Zieliński's Law proposed at the end of this chapter.

¹³⁰ cf. I.V.A.

¹³¹ 1971: 101.

¹³² Fränkel, as it was mentioned, does not make any specific mention of Zieliński, yet his theory has been widely held, especially by his exponents, to contradict Zieliński's law.

Belastung dar.”¹³³ The improvising poet, according to Krischer, cannot accurately coordinate the synchronization of the various plotlines of his epics. This might very well be an accurate statement, but what is not so certain is whether Homer was indeed an improvising oral poet.¹³⁴ Although Krischer’s argument can be thought to rest on the questionable premise of orality, he does refine Fränkel and Page’s idea that the Homeric epics lack a precise chronology into a more sophisticated notion. He calls the Homeric epics “thematically connected”.¹³⁵ According to this view, it is a matter of purely subjective speculation whether or not two plotlines appear to have been conceived of as simultaneous. More important is the fact that these events and plotlines are narrated successively, and that this succession can be thematic and thus functional.

This discussion leads Krischer to develop a theoretical replacement for the special cases and the analytic-desultory method of Zieliński’s Law: the technique of “announced ramification” (*angekündigte Verzweigungen*) for two or more plotlines (*Stränge*).¹³⁶ The four special cases which he uses to demonstrate the use of this technique of Homeric

¹³³ 1971: 102; cf. 102, n. 5.

¹³⁴ Cf. the General Introduction and also Latacz (1996: 15-20), who attempts to show that Homer is “the founder of western textuality”.

¹³⁵ Krischer (1971: 92) speaks of *Sinnzusammenhang*. Thematic is indeed a more sophisticated and useful term than factual in a literary context, because factual leads one into the dangerous realm of terms such as realism, whereas thematic more accurately describes the interplay of various narrative subjects which can obviously be found in Homer.

¹³⁶ 1971: 103. I have not found a better way to translate this complicated German term. See the Glossary for an illustrative diagram based on Krischer’s schema and for a complete definition.

narrative are: O 49ff. and 142ff.; Ω 74-140; Θ 485-I 9ff.; α 80-ε 42.¹³⁷ In Krischer's opinion, these cases do not betray any notion of simultaneous conception, but rather announce the branching out of the plot. They also serve as signals for the listener to pay attention to one plotline and await the other, retarded plot thread.¹³⁸ Krischer adds to this ramification technique the opposite unification of the plotlines,¹³⁹ and also the "nicht angekündigte Verzweigungen" technique.¹⁴⁰ The technique of unification, according to Krischer himself, is unhomeric and can be eliminated from our discussion. The technique of not-announced ramification can be very roughly equated with the analytic-desultory method, since it comes into play when the narrative branches out into various plotlines and switches back and forth between them. Krischer's main error is that he does not make it clear just how this method is intended to replace Zieliński's analytic-desultory method.

Krischer's purpose in proposing all of the redefinitions, however, is quite clear.

He means to conclude that each Homeric epic is a net of plot ramifications, a "Netz

¹³⁷ These four special cases all date back to Zieliński's investigation; they are repeated in many of the articles still to be discussed. They will often be simply referred to as the four cases, and will constitute an important part of the case studies presented in the discussion of Rengakos' argument, below (I.V.E.).

¹³⁸ "Der Hörer soll wissen, daß die Handlung nun in zwei getrennten Strängen verläuft, damit er, während der erste Strang abläuft, den zweiten erwartet" (1971: 104).

¹³⁹ 1971: 113-7, for "Vereinigung", the unification of two plotlines, which is avoided in Homer because the poet cannot represent this without synchronizing of two "Stränge"; instead, this dilemma is resolved by the introduction of a new plotline ("einfügung eines neues Stranges"). This aspect of Krischer's discussion is altogether too reminiscent of Zieliński's psychological impossibility to have much value as a redefinition. Krischer has not fully relinquished the type 1 method before proceeding on to a structural analysis of the Homeric epics.

¹⁴⁰ 1971: 109-113. "Not announced branching-out" is a technique used mostly in the battles and duel encounters of the *Iliad*. It involves a branching-out that is only identified by a repetition of a certain motif or by a brief but unspecific summary.

Verzweigungen”¹⁴¹ which establishes “die Koordinaten von Raum und Zeit” of the epics. He believes that announced ramification is a necessary function of the narrative because it helps to orient both the oral poet who needs to remember the disposition of his plots and the listener who needs to understand it.¹⁴²

Krischer’s new branching-out technique (and its corollary, the non-branching-out method) successfully integrates most of the structural features of the narrative that Zieliński’s Law describes, without being entirely based on a similar psychological or intentional bias. It explains away the problem of simultaneity by focusing on the successive, ramified structure of the narrative plotlines.¹⁴³ It also attempts to explain the narrative function of the supposedly “meaningless” retardation of plotlines present in the special cases, arguing that this is an oral convenience for the poet and the listener of the epics.

Krischer concludes that his new theory concerning Homer’s narrative techniques relieves the poems of the burden of precise chronology and explains so-called *Deformationen* in the structure of the poems. We have seen, like Krischer, that Zieliński’s idea of special cases (i.e. cases where a poet who depicts an apparent plot instead of his

¹⁴¹ cf. 117, where he comments: “die homerische Erzählung nahezu gänzlich aus Verzweigungen aufgebaut ist”.

¹⁴² 1971: 104. He explains in greater detail how these nets work, using diagrams (118) which represent the retarded plotline as the continuative and dominant one (*koordiniert*) and the branched-out plotline as secondary and not retarded (*subordiniert*). He goes on to explain how the “loose ends” (non-terminated ends) of subordinate plotlines are dealt with in the narrative (120).

¹⁴³ Germain’s review of Krischer (1974), while favouring the view of Bassett (whom Krischer does not mention) on the problem of simultaneity, agrees with Krischer’s emphasis on how Homeric narrative develops through a ramification-technique “dont « le filet remplace les coordonnées de lieu et de temps ».”

real plot) was conditioned by the idea that the poet is bound to strict temporal representation. Yet we may question to what extent Krischer's own "Netz Verzweigungen" is bound to what he himself calls "die Gesetze der Wahrnehmungspsychologie".¹⁴⁴ Any esthetic flaws in his theory, he claims, are inevitable (false synchronization included), but are justified by the necessity of the oral poet, who needs to compose narrative solely with the aid of announced and non-announced ramification techniques. These necessities of the oral poet are questionable in the case of Homer, and Krischer's use of oral conventions in defence of his techniques borders on the psychological and intentional (methods 1 and 2).

In elaborating his own narrative principles, Krischer believes that he has resolved an esthetic problem caused by the retardations or interruptions in the special cases, but he has in fact only partially explained the function of these retardations. He has not explained their precise structural and thematic function. He has also failed to properly integrate the analytic-desultory method into his scheme of announced and non-announced ramification techniques. This is in part because he does not consider in detail what such a differentiation between two ramification techniques entails or why this difference is necessary in the first place. The problem of retardation in the special cases was subsequently taken up and reanalyzed by many others and so we shall postpone the discussion of relevant examples until later in this section.

¹⁴⁴ 1971: 125.

We should not be too critical of Krischer's efforts, since he managed to propose a convincing structural revision of Zieliński's Law, which focuses primarily on the objective text (method 4), rather than on a subjective interpretation of its events as simultaneous (methods 1-3). Yet we may conclude this discussion of his new theory with a brief critique of his terminology. The ramification techniques that he construes as narrative principles are twofold and, as we have seen, subsidiary to what Zieliński's Law expresses as a single concept. Moreover, they run the risk of confusing the terminology of the Law even more (especially for English speakers). If the Law, as Krischer interprets it, is a valid structural and functional principle, why should it not remain a law of Homeric narrative? To change its denomination entirely is unnecessary.¹⁴⁵ It also does justice to its original 'discoverer' to allow it to remain known as 'Zieliński's Law'.

C. Patzer

H. Patzer (1990) puts forward a careful and accurate survey of the investigations of Zieliński and Krischer.¹⁴⁶ His agenda, however, is to revise both scholars' findings in order to derive his own Homeric narrative law. He begins by correctly claiming that the difference between real and apparent plot, as formulated by Zieliński and reluctantly

¹⁴⁵ Note that Krischer does not actually argue for the term's disappearance, but he tacitly lets it slip away from his discussion.

¹⁴⁶ Patzer (1990: 154-6, 164-72).

adopted by Krischer, is an obscure distinction when taken from an objective point of view: “eine entscheidende Unklarheit”.¹⁴⁷

Patzer next observes that when events in Homer are depicted successively, they are *meant* to be understood as successive: “in den fraglichen Textstellen der Dichter *Nachzeitiges darstellen wollte und nur solches meinte*”.¹⁴⁸ We have already seen that this *stetig fortschreitend* claim originally stems from the work of Fränkel and his immediate followers (see I.V.A), but Patzer does not reference them closely. Rather, Patzer attempts to validate the *stetig fortschreitend* principle by carefully looking at the four cases that both Zieliński and Krischer analyzed.

Patzer essentially agrees with Zieliński that Homer cannot reach back in time (*zurückgreifen*) to depict simultaneous events, but he concludes from his own observations that Zieliński’s Law must be corrected. Homer, according to Patzer, presents a single, continuous line of events (“*eine stetige Linie*”, 166). This line, however, allows imaginary (*imaginär*) simultaneous plots to accompany it without detracting from its individuality and continual progression. The notion of imaginary simultaneous plots can be eliminated from our consideration on methodological grounds, because this idea is metaphysical and not objective. The narrative is contained in Homer’s text in which no such imaginary plots are possible.

¹⁴⁷ 1990: 156.

¹⁴⁸ 1990: 156f., emphasis in the original.

Patzer strengthens his notion of a single continuous line of events in Homeric narrative by emphasising the inherent unity of Krischer's techniques of ramification and unification, which both draw the unique plot ("*einer Handlung*", 167) further onwards.¹⁴⁹ Essentially, Patzer seems to be correct in observing that Homeric narrative is purely successive (this is the basic structural aspect of Zieliński's Law, as it has become clear), but his insistence that this succession represents the poet's intention or compulsion is too forceful.

In a chapter of his 1996 book *Die Formgesetze des Homerischen Epos*, Patzer has both recapitulated and expanded his earlier point of view. He concurs more strongly with Zieliński, affirming that Homer employs a continuous and successive narrative as well as the analytic-desultory method (with use of *gleichmäßige Vorgänge*). He also revises his previous argument, which claimed that only imaginary simultaneous events could be presented concurrently with the main narrative line. He now argues that the depiction of regular or constant events does allow for the representation of simultaneous events in the narrative:

"Dann aber macht es keine Schwierigkeit, gleichzeitig verlaufendes *Dauer-* und *Ereignisgeschehen* vorzuführen, indem jenes, wenn die Erzählung es nach seinem Beginn verlassen hat, als weiter gültig *vorgestellt* bleiben kann. Davon wird in homerischen Epos

¹⁴⁹ Patzer illustrates this claim with Krischer's own diagram (170); he shows that Krischer's "Netz von Verzweigungen" really represents a single, unique narrative line ("*Ab-Zweigung*" is the word-play he uses). The only type of ramification that Patzer allows is imaginary simultaneous branching out; but this metaphysical notion has already been discredited. Cf. Patzer's third diagram (171) that attempts to tie up the loose ends of Krischer's ramifications, which makes clear the imprecision involved in his subjective speculations.

reichlich Gebrauch gemacht, und der Dichter kann so im Wechsel von Dauer- und Ereignisgeschehen viele gleichzeitige Geschehenslinien *nebeneinander* laufen lassen”.¹⁵⁰

According to Patzer, Homer can show events occurring in one plotline simultaneously with another plotline that is durative or kept at a standstill (what he calls respectively *Dauer-* or *Ereignislosgeschehen*, but which are elsewhere called *gleichmäßige Vorgänge* and *temps morts*). Surprisingly, Patzer has radically modified his position to make it agree completely with Zieliński’s analytic-desultory technique as a method for the partial depiction of simultaneous events.

Patzer also agrees with Zieliński that the simultaneous representation of two (or more) simultaneous events is impossible: “Darstellung gleichzeitigen *Ereignisgeschehen* ist bei Homer prinzipiell nicht möglich und kommt nicht vor”.¹⁵¹ Patzer concedes that as a compromise, events or plotlines that are conceived of as simultaneous can often be represented as noticeably parallel, but structurally successive: “*Parallelgeschehens* [...], wenn bestimmte Umstände eingeführt werden, die seine *Ausführung* im Nacheinander gebieten”.¹⁵² Traces of simultaneous conception are thus termed “parallelism”. Supplying but a few examples of such cases, Patzer concludes that these simultaneously conceived events are rarely depicted in the *Odyssey* and the *Iliad*. Zieliński thought that several traces of simultaneous conception could be identified, but most critics, except for Patzer

¹⁵⁰ Patzer (1996: 95).

¹⁵¹ 1996: 96. He does not quite adopt the notion of the psychological impossibility of simultaneous representation, but rather an equally fallacious authorial impossibility.

¹⁵² *Id.*, italics in the original. This hearkens back to F. Mehmel’s idea of latent parallelism, cf. I.V.A.

and Rengakos, have denied their existence altogether. When we discuss Rengakos' point of view and an example from the four cases (I.V.E.), it will be seen that we can object to the precise identification of parallelism in the narrative on methodological grounds.

D. Olson

S. Douglas Olson's 1995 chapter on the "Internal Chronology of the *Odyssey*" is largely out of date because it does not make use of the most recent scholarship on the problem of simultaneity.¹⁵³ Olson, while not really a critic *per se* of Zieliński's Law, believes that he can establish another precise chronology of the events of the poem and make Telemachus' and Odysseus' wanderings accord (i.e. be represented as perfectly simultaneous rather than consecutive), *contra* Delebecque who has Telemachus wait in Sparta for a month in a relative *temps mort*.¹⁵⁴ Olson finds both Zieliński's and Delebecque's (followed by Apthorp's) treatments of the chronology of Odysseus' and Telemachus' travels to be inadequate.¹⁵⁵ This, as we have seen in the brief discussion of Apthorp's example (I.IV.D), is essentially correct.

Olson's argument, however, is based upon a one-day flaw in Delebecque's chronology that, according to Olson, makes Delebecque's argument "along with all its

¹⁵³ Excluding his references to the relatively early Krischer (1971).

¹⁵⁴ Olson (1995: 91).

¹⁵⁵ "In fact the 40-day hypothesis is incompatible with the Homeric text, and as a result there is no lost month in Sparta and no need to re-evaluate Telemachos' character on that basis. Zielinski's conception of the poet's treatment of time is nonetheless fundamentally correct, although he did not argue his case as effectively or as completely as he might have" (1995: 95).

troubling circumstances, crumble [...] away to nothing”.¹⁵⁶ By arguing that there is a precise chronological flaw in Delebecque’s *Odyssey* plan, Olson is arguing from a similar standpoint as Delebecque himself and commits to a subjective type 3 method. There can be no flaw in the chronology of the text, since the text, as we have seen, is not bound by a strict chronology.

Olson’s intentions, as it turns out, are diametrically opposed to those of Patzer. Olson wants to show that Odysseus and Telemachus’ wanderings are *meant* to be interpreted by the reader as simultaneous, *not* as successive and simultaneously conceived.¹⁵⁷ Olson’s theory that the voyages of Telemachus and Odysseus are intentionally and precisely simultaneous is methodologically flawed and purely speculative (method 2), because the text presents only two successive sailing voyages whose textual treatment is not at all equatable (Odysseus: 13.18-92, or 74 lines; Telemachus: 15.495-557, or 63 lines).

E. Rengakos

Antonios Rengakos (1995) is concerned with differentiating between what he sees as three different varieties of Zieliński’s Law in the works of its critics: 1) The poet is incapable of representing simultaneous events; 2) Events conceived of as simultaneous

¹⁵⁶ 1995: 97. Delebecque anticipated such an objection and dealt with the *jour blanc* of Odysseus in Eumaios’ hut, cf. his earlier work (1958: 31-42).

¹⁵⁷ Examples at 102-14; cf. also 118, where he proposes a hypothetical table of how the stories should correspond according to Athena’s alternating presence in each. Olson’s argument also hinges on an appreciation of Telemachus’ character and its development (119).

are represented successively; and 3) Homeric narrative never steps back (here: *Rückschritte*) in time, and never goes through the same segment of time twice.¹⁵⁸

Rengakos diagnoses this multiplicity of expressions of the Law as symptomatic of the problem of defining the *Zeitgestaltung* of Homeric epic, and then provides his own definitions and clarifications. His main argument is that Homer does in fact represent simultaneous *qua* simultaneous and also reaches back in time at certain points in the narrative.

Rengakos begins by tracing the development of what he calls the “problem of simultaneity” from Lessing’s treatise on poetry (1766) up to studies on the novel of the early 20th century.¹⁵⁹ He rather sarcastically concludes that Zieliński’s view that Homer uses the analytic-desultory method is surprisingly modern. The method, Rengakos claims, is a product of the late nineteenth century invention of cinema and of modern literature.¹⁶⁰ Rengakos certainly intends his survey of modern theories of simultaneity to show that the analytic-desultory method is not an ancient invention. Although Rengakos’ objection can be accepted, the many examples of analytic-desultory structure in the narrative still remain of value. What is most striking about Rengakos’ survey of modern theories of simultaneity and chronology is that it also succeeds in showing how recent these

¹⁵⁸ 1995: 1-2. These distinctions, while apparent in the frequent conceptual divisions and misunderstandings of Zieliński’s Law in the work of critics, are not, in fact, present in Zieliński’s own article. 1), 2) and 3) are all *aspects* of the original formulation of the Law.

¹⁵⁹ 1995: 3, where he offers a very useful and complete discussion of the ‘problem of simultaneity’.

¹⁶⁰ “Doch überraschenderweise hat auch ihr Ahnherr Homer dieselbe quälende Besorgnis empfunden” (1995: 4).

theoretical trends are. Can we not turn Rengakos' argument on its head, then, and wonder whether these modern interests in precise chronology and simultaneity have influenced scholarly interpretations of the Homeric epics? It is probable that Rengakos' own survey undermines his "modern"¹⁶¹ theory that the Homeric epics do represent precise simultaneous events.

Rengakos next proceeds to explain the different varieties of Zieliński's Law that have arisen during the last century. One of these explanations consists in thinking that the basis of much of the scholarship on Zieliński's Law stems from Fränkel's article.¹⁶² This paper, as we have seen, presents a so-called primitive conception of the Homeric narrator, who only interests himself in durations of time and not in precise chronology, (the *fehlender Zeitsinn* theory).¹⁶³ According to Fränkel, the representation of simultaneous events is impossible in Homer: events can either be factually linked or paralleled.¹⁶⁴ Rengakos follows Krischer's lead and dismantles the argumentative methods of both Fränkel and Mehmel by examining examples in which he believes Homeric characters

¹⁶¹ Here we need to qualify "modern", because Rengakos does attempt (albeit unsuccessfully) to adduce Aristotle and numerous ancient scholia as evidence for explicit simultaneity in the Homeric epics. See the discussion above in I.III.A.

¹⁶² Cf. I.V.A above.

¹⁶³ Rengakos (1995: 12), quoting Fränkel: "Es besteht so gut wie kein Interesse an Chronologie, weder an relativer noch gar an absoluter (S.2)".

¹⁶⁴ Rengakos mentions: "sachlichen Zusammenhang" (1995: 14) and "inhaltliche Parellelität" (14 n.25): quoting Mehmel; cf. I.V.A.

explicitly speak of two events occurring simultaneously or in which simultaneous events are, he argues, simply and directly presented by the poet.¹⁶⁵

These hypothetical cases of explicit simultaneity merit our attention. It can first be objected, *contra* Rengakos, that cases in which characters speak of two events as having occurred simultaneously do not actually entail that these events were presented simultaneously in the narrative. Moreover, these cases fall under a discussion of direct speech which is not included in the scope of Zieliński's Law either under its original formulation or in this thesis.

Cases of explicit *narrative* simultaneity are, according to Rengakos, usually presented according to the analytic-desultory method and with links of the μέν-δέ or ὅφρα-τόφρα types.¹⁶⁶ Once again, one can make preliminary objections to this claim. The analytic-desultory method was not designed by Zieliński to account for the simultaneous depiction of simultaneous events, but only for their partial, successive representation. Thus Rengakos, in arguing that the analytic-desultory method allows for the simultaneous representation of events, contradicts Zieliński's original definition. In addition, he does not take into account the use of *temps morts* and of constant events that make the narration according to the analytic-desultory method entirely successive. Rengakos' theory that μέν-δέ links are simultaneity links is unfounded, since they are in fact used in successive, not simultaneous representations (I.III.A).

¹⁶⁵ 1995: 17-9; cf. 14-5 for some of his cases of simultaneous ὅφρα-τόφρα.

¹⁶⁶ 1995: 29-31.

The ὄφρα-τόφρα types of links are somewhat more difficult to handle. A brief example will readily show that what is designated by these links is not simultaneity, but rather a thematic or consecutive connection. Rengakos (7-8) believes, following Aristarchus, that the following is the chronology of the beginning of Book 8 of the *Iliad*: a new day begins; the gods gather for an assembly and Zeus departs for Ida (Θ 1-52); simultaneously the Achaeans prepare for battle, eat a meal, and begin the battle itself (all of this is described *after* the divine assembly and Zeus' trip to Ida in Θ 53-65). According to Rengakos, the following ὄφρα-τόφρα passage makes this simultaneity clear and explicit (Θ 66-7):

Ὅφρα μὲν ἡὼς ἦν καὶ ἀέξετο ἱερὸν ἦμαρ,
τόφρα μάλ' ἀμφοτέρων βέλε' ἤπτετο, πίπτε δὲ λαός.

It is clear, however, that this ὄφρα-τόφρα passage does not express a simultaneous depiction. The text simply provides an approximate duration for the battle: "So long as the dawn was in the sky and the daylight rose, so long men were weapons' victims and people died." There is no suggestion that the divine assembly was conceived or meant to be interpreted as simultaneous with this battle. Both of Rengakos' methods of analysis, methods 1 and 2, fail here when they are compared with the textual evidence. It can safely be surmised that, contrary to what Rengakos would have us believe, there are no explicitly simultaneous plotlines in Homer.

Nevertheless, according to Rengakos, the cases discussed above are the *only apparent* ones in which the poet depicts simultaneous events. He criticizes Zieliński's

idea of a real plot in which events are conceived of as simultaneous, but presented as successive in an apparent plot. Rengakos, as Krischer and Patzer did before him, makes his criticism effective by discussing the same special cases *in extenso*.¹⁶⁷ Rengakos inevitably finds that a more precise reading of the text yields a result similar to that of Patzer: the events in all cases are clearly represented as progressive/successive, and can most readily be interpreted as one *fait accompli* following another. One notes that Rengakos' method and terminology is admirably not focused on surmising the intentions of the narrative; this strengthens the value of his conclusions concerning the successive structure of the special cases.

We must now take a close look at these special cases, after having seen the various arguments of scholars concerning them. The four main cases discussed by scholars since Zieliński are O 49ff. and 143ff.; Ω 74-159; and Θ 485ff.-I 9ff. and, in addition, an important *Odyssey* case: books 1-5. For the sake of brevity, I have chosen to discuss *Iliad* O 49ff. and 143ff., the most representative case, but the same reasoning and argumentation could be applied to the others.

In O 49ff. Zeus has learned that during his sleep, induced by Hera during the *Dios Apate*, Poseidon has managed to help the Greeks fend off the Trojans and to wound Hector. To rectify the situation, Zeus sends Hera to call Iris and Apollo to him, on Mt. Ida. Both gods arrive and Iris receives her mission first (158ff.). Her errand is narrated

¹⁶⁷ 1995: 20ff.

until it is complete and then, finally, Apollo receives and accomplishes his mission (236ff.). The two errands in the narrative are purely successive in this case; the conjunction καὶ τὸτ' in line 220 makes this quite clear. However, the subjective feeling that the divine missions *seem as though they should have been simultaneous* has led to much debate about the proper interpretation of this passage.

Zieliński (1899-1901: 434) believed that the two divine errands were *conceived* as simultaneous, but *depicted* as successive. Krischer comments: “Man sieht, diese zwei Vorgänge sind als gleichzeitig gedacht: keiner von beiden duldet einen Aufschub, und schon die Zweizahl der Boten legt den Gedanken nahe, daß beiden Aufträge gleichzeitig ausgeführt werden soll”.¹⁶⁸ We have already seen that this type of argumentation, the distinction between a real and an apparent plot, reflects Zieliński’s fallaciously psychological methodology. Of course, one cannot strictly deny that Homer conceived of these two plots as simultaneous. That can never be proven or disproved, and so one should not be concerned with this line of speculation. Instead one should analyze the textual narration of these plotlines, their structure and their function. Zieliński’s observation of the fact that both divine errands are presented as successive is correct, but it does not explain the narrative techniques involved in this presentation.

¹⁶⁸ “One can see that these two events are conceived *qua* simultaneous; neither of the two tolerates a delay, and already, the fact that there are two messengers offers the thought that both instructions ought to be carried out simultaneously” (1971: 95).

Zieliński is not alone in his methodological bias and in his unwarranted assumptions. Patzer believes that the two missions must be *intended* as successive, because Iris' mission is more urgent for two reasons: Poseidon must be made to listen to his brother Zeus; otherwise, his actions could become excessively rebellious. Apollo can thus only intervene for the Trojans *after* Poseidon has stopped helping the Greeks.¹⁶⁹ Patzer argues that Zeus has to wait to see with his own eyes Poseidon leaving the battlefield (O 220). Only *then* can he send Apollo to Hector and the Trojans (221). While this seems a plausible assumption in its own right, it applies a notion of guiding intention to this narrative succession, which is simply not apparent in the text. We might well think that Iris' mission is the more urgent, but this does not mean that Homer *intended* the text to be read in this way.

Rengakos (1995, 21) agrees with Patzer about the necessity for Apollo's mission to come second. He believes that if Zieliński were correct, and the two missions had been conceived as simultaneous, then Homer would have used the analytic-desultory method (an interruption method) to show both missions in successive parts. This is perfectly correct reasoning, but it does not contribute much to our discussion, since the assumption of a simultaneous conception is not useful. All that has been ascertained so far is that the

¹⁶⁹ 1990: 157-8: "Beide Aufträge müssen nacheinander berichtet sein, da der eine (der erste) die notwendige Bedingung des anderen ist. Apollo kann nicht mit dem Risiko aufgebrochen sein, daß der mächtige Oheim Poseidon sich geweigert hätte, das Kampffeld zu verlassen. In welche Schwierigkeit wäre er mit seinem Auftrag geraten!"

two missions are presented successively and not simultaneously. What needs to be looked at more closely is how this successive representation is put into effect.

In this passage, the use of both an interruption technique and a summary technique can be observed. Krischer believes that this passage offers us a “sinnlose Verzögerung”, a lengthy and meaningless retardation of Apollo’s mission: “In der Realität hat diese Verzögerung keinen Sinn, denn Zeus hat keinerlei Grund, Apollon warten zu lassen”.¹⁷⁰ So Krischer asks: why should Apollo wait? Such a question or consideration might make logical sense to us, but it is in fact misleading: the narrative is not necessarily organized and structured according to our present logic. Narrative conventions may or may not make sense to us today, and consequently, we should not expect the narrative to function in terms of verisimilitude.

Krischer is also incorrect when he claims that the retardation of Apollo’s mission can be eliminated by reconstructing the events in a more believable fashion, following Zieliński: “Wir nehmen daher mit Zielinski an, daß die Verzögerung ausschließlich durch die Darstellungform bedingt ist und also wegfällt, wenn man die Handlung in einer beliebigen anderen Form erzählt”.¹⁷¹ He is right that the retardation is conditioned by the necessities of the narrative, but his idea of “making the narrative more believable like Zieliński” does not seem to be leading him in the right direction. One can only try to *explain* the narrative structure of the passages. One cannot make it more *believable*,

¹⁷⁰ 1971: 95.

¹⁷¹ *Id.*

because this implies that the text is not, in and of itself, sufficiently credible. Here again, structural interpretation is at stake, not *vraisemblance*.

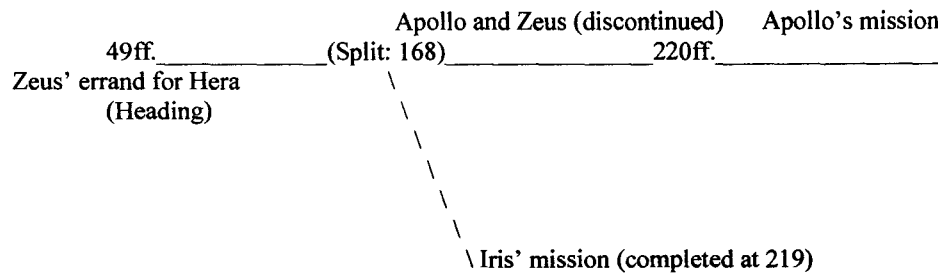
Krischer's accusation of "meaningless retardation" can easily be dismissed by the following two considerations. First, Apollo does not strictly *wait* or spend time waiting. He is not mentioned until his mission begins and the Mt. Ida plotline is thus discontinued throughout Iris' mission, according to the interruption technique.¹⁷² The retardation of his mission does not involve a chronological delay in narrative time. Secondly, Apollo's mission is described successively, after Iris' mission, because it is more important for the rest of the narrative. Iris' mission is perhaps more urgent, but it simply removes Poseidon from the battlefield. Apollo's, on the contrary, introduces a new plotline: a Hector-led Trojan battle which rages on for another 100 lines. Zeus' speech on Mt. Ida functions as a heading that introduces these two new plotlines¹⁷³ and, by indicating that Apollo's mission will come successively after Iris', allows the narrative to lead into the new Trojan plotstrand and to continue its overall progress.¹⁷⁴ The retardation of Apollo's mission is not meaningless, since it is structurally and functionally efficient.

¹⁷² Patzer's (1990: 157) claim that only a few minutes have gone by expects too rigid a chronology from the narrative: "Mit dem kurzen Wortwechsel zwischen Iris und Poseidon könnten nur wenige Minuten vergehen". The retardation of Apollo's mission does not take up any narrated time for him. The missions are depicted successively for the purpose of the continuity of the narrative.

¹⁷³ Krischer (1971: 103) also argues that O 55-60 announces a ramification of the plotlines (*angekündigte Verzweigung*), but he does not really notice all of the implications of this structural observation: namely that it accounts for the so-called "meaningless retardation" of Apollo's mission.

¹⁷⁴ This observation is based on Krischer's discussion of Apollo's plotline as the coordinating plotline in the ramification. The following diagram is inspired by Krischer's theoretical graphic design of *Ereigniskette* (1971: 118). He does not give any concrete examples (such as the one offered here) in his work.

The following is a graphic representation of these techniques:



This diagram helps one to visualize how the summary technique works. It is announced in Zeus' command to Hera. The announcement prepares the reader or listener for the narrative split, which occurs when Iris leaves Ida on her mission (168). The plotline concerned with Apollo and Zeus is discontinued and resumes upon the completion of Iris' mission. This interplay of both plotlines clearly represents the use of an interruption method, in this case conditioned by the heading technique and its planning of which plotline must come second in order to continue the flow of the narrative. In sum, this case confirms the structural and functional validity of Zieliński's Law, since these two techniques for successive construction are used at this point in the narrative. This is, therefore, not at all a special case of the Law. Much the same could be said about the other special cases that have so long troubled scholars.

Rengakos, in the final section of his article, makes the remarkable and controversial observation that each instance of so-called explicit simultaneity in Homer's plot contains some sort of reaching-back (*Zurückgreifen*) into the time of the narrative, since one simultaneous event must necessarily be told after the other and must therefore

reach back in time to be told as simultaneous.¹⁷⁵ Thus, Zieliński's Law (in its third definition, according to Rengakos) is countered by this intrusion of the reaching-back method into the narrative.¹⁷⁶ This is patently incorrect: the reaching-back technique is incompatible with the successive presentation of events in the narrative (as explained according to Zieliński's Law) and this holds true in all of the cases examined above, be they μέν-δέ or ὄφρα-τόφρα links.¹⁷⁷

F. Seeck

Gustav-Adolph Seeck (1998) is not entirely a critic of Zieliński, but he deserves to be included here in our survey because he proposes a brief, incisive rebuttal of Rengakos' position, as well as a complex discussion and refinement of the problem of simultaneity in Homer. Seeck first offers a careful explanation of Zieliński's Law and concludes that it is essentially correct.¹⁷⁸ Seeck disagrees with the conceptual basis of Zieliński's investigation. He correctly notes that the psychological basis for the Law is unfounded, especially since the perception of the poet and his actual narration are different matters:

¹⁷⁵ Rengakos links this in particular with Latacz's work on battle scenes of the *Iliad* (1977: 32-3). See below I.V.I.

¹⁷⁶ Although Rengakos does not make this very clear: his argument ends a bit *en queue de poisson* and he does not postulate a formal conclusion (1995: 33).

¹⁷⁷ Patzer and Rengakos's views have been recently criticized along the same lines (albeit briefly) by Ernst-Richard Schwinge (1999: 490 n.3): "Dieser (Patzner) hat in seinem entscheidenden Punkt, der homerischen Gestaltung gleichzeitiger *Ereignisse* [...], inzwischen die Zustimmung von A. Rengakos erfahren [...], ist aber m. E. gerade in diesem Punkt diskussionsfähig" (original emphasis). Schwinge therefore concurs with the critique of Patzer and Rengakos presented above, noting that their theory that the Homeric epics present some events as explicitly simultaneous is questionable.

¹⁷⁸ Seeck (1998: 131-2).

“Der grundlegende Fehler, der im Zielinski's Theorie des homerischen Erzählens steckt, ist nicht dies von ihm konstatierte Gesetz, sondern seine Meinung, aus einem psychologischen Gesetz des “Schauens” müssten sich natürliche Regeln des Erzählens ergeben. Dabei wird erkannt, dass “wahrnehmen” und “erzählen” ganz verschiedene Dinge sind. Wie auch immer Wahrnehmung zustande kommt, Erzählen ist auf jeden Fall ein nachträgliches intellektuelles Registrieren”.¹⁷⁹

According to Seeck, one must therefore make an important distinction between the poet's perception of events and his actual narration of them: i.e. between methods 1 and 4 on Fig. 1. In Seeck's opinion, the problem does not lie in whether the poet conceives the events that he narrates as simultaneous, but in whether he represents them as such.¹⁸⁰ This is the obvious conclusion of the critique of Zieliński's and his critics' psychological and intentional methods which has been presented in this survey, that *the problem of simultaneity should not concern the original conception or intention of the text, but rather the techniques of narration evidenced in the text itself.*

Seeck's investigation also leads him to formulate many¹⁸¹ distinctions and definitions, of which the most insightful are the following:

narrated time vs. objective narrative time: time as it takes place in the narrative, as opposed to the time of the narrative as reconstructed by philologists. Herein lies a problem with Zieliński and his followers, in the opinion of Seeck: “Der Erzähler selbst ist offensichtlich nicht daran interessiert, die objektive Zeitspanne extensiv und intensiv

¹⁷⁹ 1998: 132.

¹⁸⁰ *Id.*: “Die Frage ist allein, ob er sie [gleichzeitige Ereignisse] auch darstellen will und kann”.

¹⁸¹ 1998: 133ff. Perhaps too many for the sake of clarity; I count 32 different definitions in his 13 page-long article! Many of his terms, in my opinion, are redundant or mere terminological variants; they are consequently omitted.

genau zu quantifizieren”.¹⁸² Seeck assumes that the poet is not interested in a precise chronological order for his story—a reasonable assumption as this has become clear—and he argues that one commits what he calls the “documentary fallacy” if one tries to reconstruct the real events or real story behind the literary text. It has already been evidenced that any reconstruction of the text beyond what it actually presents can be misleading. However, Seeck argues that there is an important difference between what the poet does narrate, what the conventions of epic poetry allow him to narrate (*erzählte Zeit*), and what can be conceived to be the time of events of the plot (*objektive Gegenstandzeit*).¹⁸³

objective (or conceived) vs. narrated (or vague) simultaneity: this differentiation applies the distinction made above to the problem of simultaneity. According to Seeck, since Homeric narrative is not interested in precise chronology, we can only speak of a vague, general simultaneity in the narrative, as opposed to the type of exact or specially synchronous simultaneity that an objective representation would require.¹⁸⁴ According to Seeck’s example, one should observe that the narrative is not interested in a precise synchronization of the return journeys of Telemachus and Odysseus, but that it intends for them to arrive at Ithaca more or less at the same time. Unfortunately, this is a bad example, as we have seen, because Telemachus actually arrives two books after

¹⁸² “The narrator himself is not interested in precisely quantifying (either in an extensive or intensive fashion) the objective timespan [of the poem]” (1998: 134).

¹⁸³ 1998: 135.

¹⁸⁴ 1998: 138.

Odysseus. This is very vague synchronization indeed. The necessary conclusion is that this notion of vague simultaneity (also called parallelism by Seeck and by Patzer) may perhaps be discerned by the reader or listener, but that since its consideration is speculative and subjective, it should not be a factor in an objective investigation of Zieliński's Law as a poetic rule.

Seeck's two distinctions lead him to the conclusion that the problem of simultaneity in Homer is a false problem.¹⁸⁵ Since the narrative time is the only time in the text, and since it is used impressionistically, there can only be vague notions of parallelism present in the narrative. The structure of the narrative remains generally uninfluenced by considerations of time and chronology.

Seeck then draws his distinctions to their logical conclusion. He revalidates Zieliński's Law as a sort of doubly focused rule that allows for the representation of vague simultaneous events, but also compels the narrative to focus on one plotline at a time¹⁸⁶ and to show events in an entirely successive manner.¹⁸⁷ However, he creates a terminological and methodological mess because of his too numerous redefinitions and distinctions. For example, Seeck observes a *desultorische Verschränkung* (desultory crossing from one storyline to the next) in certain cases, an observation that is compatible

¹⁸⁵ But, for the sake of terminological simplicity, the precise formulation of Seeck's distinctions need not be retained in the rest of our discussion.

¹⁸⁶ 1998: 138, emphasis in the original: "Dass die Geschichten gleichzeitig spielen, ist nicht das Problem, sondern dass die Erzähler sie in seiner nach wie von *einen* Erzählzeit unterbringen muss"; also, 139: "Der Erzähler muss sich entscheiden, welcher Erzähllinie er sich jeweils zuwenden will".

¹⁸⁷ 1998: 136, where he argues that there are no cases of reaching-back into the time of the narrative in Homer.

with Zieliński's analytic-desultory method. Again, though Seeck considers that some plotlinks in the epics indicate precise and explicit simultaneity,¹⁸⁸ he also argues that these links must be timeless (*achron*), otherwise they would interrupt the continuity of the narrative. He calls this general process *achrone Gleichzeitigkeit* and explains that the reader or listener *explicitly recognizes* it as simultaneity. Seeck's notion that these simultaneity links are timeless or take up no time in the narrative seems accurate, and it specifically contradicts Rengakos' idea that the depiction of simultaneity necessarily involves reaching back into the time of the narrative (I.V.E). Still, timeless simultaneous representation, according to his definition of narrative time, is hypothetical and can only be defined by subjective interpretation; it represents a redundant term that Homerists can undoubtedly do without.

Seeck's elegant, but methodologically unsound conclusion is that one must not choose between Zieliński's Law and Patzer's *stetig fortschreitend* principle, because Homer's narration is a compromise between the representation of simultaneity and the necessity for a continuous narrative. He calls this a double representation: "eine Art Kompromiss zwischen der Gleichzeitigkeit der erzählten Zeiten und der kontinuierlichen Nachzeitigkeit (Sukzession) der Erzählung. Man könnte auch sagen: Homer wollte einfach—wie jeder geübte Erzähler—das den glatten Erzählfluss störende Wörtchen

¹⁸⁸ ὄφρα-τόφρα, μέν-δέ, etc. (1998: 139-40). As to how these links are not obviously simultaneous, see the previous discussion in I.V.E.

“inzwischen” vermeiden”.¹⁸⁹ Homer, according to Seeck, wants to avoid saying ‘meanwhile’ and thus to break the continuity of the narrative, but still wishes to indicate when simultaneous events take place. In fact, this compromise of Seeck’s conception is a dangerous product of the conceptual method of Zieliński’s Law. If the narrative is only concerned with continuity and presents events in a strictly successive fashion, why should we concern ourselves with the problem of simultaneity in the text? Even if there are traces of (subjectively observed) parallelism in a few cases, this does not mean that we should interpret them in terms of simultaneity. Seeck concludes that the simultaneity and succession of the Homeric narrative are mutually inclusive and that the poet balances them “durch eine freiere Erzähltechnik”.¹⁹⁰

In sum, Seeck’s revisions to Zieliński’s Law are necessarily inconclusive, because his observations begin with important methodological revisions only to succumb to the methodological errors that they are designed to prevent. Nevertheless, his important distinction between the perception of simultaneity by the poet and his actual narration of simultaneity is immensely valuable. It helps to solve the problem of simultaneity in Homer, since we can eliminate an excessively psychological and intentional consideration of the poet’s representation of simultaneity as a factor in objective, textual interpretation. The impression of simultaneity (also called vague simultaneity or parallelism) is all that seems to remain, but even it does not find much evidence in the text.

¹⁸⁹ 1998: 143.

¹⁹⁰ 1998: 144.

G. de Jong

One of I.J.F. de Jong's recent articles (1997) provides a useful and succinct introduction on "Narratology and Homer", which has some elements to contribute to our discussion.¹⁹¹ Chapter II will provide a detailed critique of narratology that will make frequent reference to de Jong's position. Here, we shall concern ourselves with de Jong's specific arguments against Zieliński, as presented in her article and in her new commentary on the *Odyssey* (2001).

De Jong (1997) begins by examining the basics of Zieliński's argument and conflates it under Delebecque's rubric of the "law of succession".¹⁹² She disagrees with Zieliński's Law as a whole: "Since Zieliński's extended version of the 'law of succession' was better known than Delebecque's more moderate version, the—in my opinion, incorrect—idea that 'successive=simultaneous' became canonical".¹⁹³ Her distinction between Zieliński and Delebecque's versions of the Law, however, is unfounded.¹⁹⁴ Delebecque's version of the Law is not more moderate than Zieliński's, but also presupposes that "simultaneous=successive" to put it into de Jong's equation.¹⁹⁵

¹⁹¹ An insightful, but insufficient critique of narratology's validity for Homeric studies can be found in W. Kullmann's review of Latacz's *Gesamtkommentar* (Kullmann, 2001: 649-50).

¹⁹² De Jong, 1997: 322. We have already seen that "law of succession" is a limiting and generally redundant term.

¹⁹³ *Id.*, she even cites Krischer as evidence of this pervasive adoption of the Law, but, as we have seen, the adoption of the Law is not widespread and hardly makes it "canonical".

¹⁹⁴ Cf. I.IV.C and n.64.

¹⁹⁵ Note that her idea that the Law means "successive=simultaneous" is implausible. Zieliński most certainly did not assert that all the successive events of the narrative were originally simultaneous events!

De Jong also represents Patzer's challenge to the Law and attempts to justify his argumentation: "The successive presentation may look a little strange to us, it may originally be the result of some technical handicap (just as the difficulties involved in— orally—maintaining indirect speech over a long stretch of text led to a restricted use of this form in Homer), but *in the end the Homeric narrator has made it clear that this is what he wanted*".¹⁹⁶ We have already seen that this type of argument is inherently flawed, both in its assumption of an orally constrained narrator and in its divination of the Homeric narrator's intentions (method 2). The core of Patzer's *stetig fortschreitend* principle might be correct, but de Jong's faulty methodology does not strengthen the case.

I.J.F. de Jong's new *Narratological Commentary on the Odyssey* (2001) offers, amidst pages of haphazard miscellany in the guise of "meta-commentary",¹⁹⁷ new contributions and terms for discussing the problem of simultaneity (specifically in the *Odyssey*). Her Glossary (xi-xix) provides an overwhelming wealth of definitions of narrative techniques, some of which are specifically narratological.¹⁹⁸ But most of the definitions that relate to Zieliński's Law are either redundant or inexplicably repetitive. A few examples:

¹⁹⁶ 323 (my italics).

¹⁹⁷ This is defined as a commentary that "does not provide assistance in reading the Greek text [...] but rather is intended to enrich the reader's understanding of the text, once he or she has read it." One wonders whether there is actually a difference between understanding and reading, and reading and understanding. It is not really clear how a meta-commentary can be different from a philological and exegetical commentary. In her subsequent attempt at a justification (2002: 62-3), she does not convince the reader that her approach does not provide a noticeable improvement on standard lemmatic and systematic textual studies.

¹⁹⁸ I count 55 different definitions in her Glossary, which certainly does not represent an improvement on Seeck's terminological chaos (see above, I.V.F.).

De Jong renames the Law as the “continuity of time principle”, and defines it as follows: “the narrator never retraces its steps, i.e. when he turns from storyline A to storyline B and back to A’ again, time ticks on and B takes over where A stopped, A’ where B stopped, etc. When storyline B fills the foreground, story line A usually remains ‘stationary’, i.e. nothing worth recounting is taking place (‘temps mort’).” As can be readily noticed, de Jong’s definition is not only incomplete, since no explanation of narrative *methods* or *techniques* is integrated into it, but it also fails to refine the definition of the Law in any way. In fact, it obscures it by claiming that the Law both demands strict chronological succession (“time ticks on”) *and* employs *temps morts*.

De Jong also renames the structural function of the analytic-desultory method, calling it the “interlace technique”: “the technique of interweaving different storylines or scenes through regular switches between them”, but she distinguishes this from two other techniques that actually form an integral part of this “interlace technique”: the “fill-in technique” (*Deckszenen*): “the time required for one action (A) to be completed is filled with another action (B).” This is in fact the analytic-desultory method’s narration of an event A while event B is in a *gleichmäßiger Vorgang* or even in a *temps mort*; and the “interruption technique”: “an action or idea is introduced, suspended for a while, and then resumed and completed”. This is also part and parcel of the analytic-desultory method

and involves the use of *temps mort* for the interruption¹⁹⁹ of the action in question. It becomes apparent that de Jong's new definitions do not provide a terminological refinement on the whole, since both the terms "interruption technique" and "fill-in technique" could be used to replace the designation "interlace technique".

In the commentary itself, de Jong makes a few passing references to the Law and its techniques, but she also believes that explicit simultaneity is sometimes possible in the narrative.²⁰⁰ More importantly, she offers two different plans of the chronology of the *Odyssey* in her appendices A and B. Appendix A (587-8) is a reconstruction of the fabula of the *Odyssey*, its original story conceived in a rigid chronological order (method 3). For the most part, de Jong follows Delebecque's 41-day plan of the narrative. We have already seen many times that such a strict chronological interpretation of Homeric narrative is neither necessary nor warranted.

Her Appendix B (589-90) is more successful in showing how the narrative of the *Odyssey* is constructed, since it looks at the textual application of the interlace technique and the Law (here known as de Jong's "continuity of time principle"). She also concludes, like Patzer, Rengakos and Seeck, that interlaced plotlines are better thought of

¹⁹⁹ She also adds to the confusion by calling this method of interruption a retardation at xvi: "the postponement of an event through the intervention of the other, sometimes even downright opposite events..."

²⁰⁰ She finds about a dozen or so cases of this explicit simultaneity (2001: 212). We cannot analyze them here; it must suffice to say that they can be interpreted as textually successive much like Rengakos' cases of so-called explicit simultaneity.

as parallel rather than simultaneous.²⁰¹ This parallelism or even the illusion of simultaneity is subjectively conceived by the reader/listener and is not explicitly textual. De Jong's analysis of the interlace technique, apart from these methodological failings, seems successful. Yet she also finds three cases where the continuity of time principle is not observed (590). All three of these cases (13.185-9, 16.1-3, 17.492-3) are neither cases of reaching back into the time of the narrative, nor breaches in a precise chronological scheme, but are most easily explained as interruptions in her interlace technique.

H. Nünlist

Nünlist (1998) follows in the tracks of de Jong and Rengakos, assuming in particular that the former has shown that Homer's work is not significantly different from other narrative literature, in that it explicitly represents simultaneous events.²⁰² This assumption leads Nünlist to try to show that Homeric narrative employs a multiplicity of temporal techniques. Nünlist agrees with Rengakos (and others) that Zieliński's examples do not really involve simultaneous events, but rather factually successive ones (*tatsächliche Sukzession*).²⁰³ Moreover, he concurs with Rengakos's claim that Homer

²⁰¹ 590: "Because of the continuity of time principle, i.e. the narrator never returning in time, the storylines are better not thought of as simultaneous, but as parallel." But she contradicts this somewhat, when she asserts on the same page that "the repeated use of the 'interlace' technique at a short distance may create the illusion of simultaneity..."

²⁰² "das Homerische Epos sich nicht kategoriell von anderer Erzählliteratur unterscheidet" (2), referencing in particular de Jong's 1987 book *Narrators and Focalizers*.

²⁰³ 1998: 2. We have already noted, though, that a thematic connection is a more appropriate term than than a factual one.

frequently presents explicitly simultaneous events, and that these are carefully signalled, as in other narrative literature.²⁰⁴ (The same objections that were made in the case of Rengakos can be made here.)

But Nünlist *suo Marte* takes Rengakos' argument one step further, to see if Homer actually does not pass through the same stretch of time twice and reach back into narrative time, a technique which goes against Zieliński's Law.²⁰⁵ He proposes that the primary narrator does infringe on the Law by occasionally stepping back in the narrative time. Nünlist bases his argument on certain small exceptions discovered by Lesky,²⁰⁶ in order to show that the narrator of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* does retrace his steps on many occasions. It is important to note that Nünlist's argument relies mainly on the "obviousness"²⁰⁷ of postponed or repeated events and their capacity for being interpreted as steps back in time. But it is not immediately obvious whether postponed or repeated events actually do step back in the time of the narrative or whether they simply serve to further the narrative's progression. In short, instead of being complacent like Nünlist, we must ask whether these steps back are truly explicit or only implicit and found in

²⁰⁴ "in der Frage der Behandlung gleichzeitiger Ereignisse erweist sich der Homerische Erzähler als durchaus 'normal'", 3.

²⁰⁵ This technique is variously called *Rückwärtsschreiten*, *Zurückgreifen* and *analepsis* by Nünlist, in yet another case of terminological confusion. Nünlist is primarily taking up a position against Patzer's redefinition of the Law as a *stetig fortschreitend* principle, 1998: 3. Nünlist references in particular Delebecque's *loi de la succession*, but this for him is the equivalent of de Jong's more recent "continuity of time principle".

²⁰⁶ Quoted (4): A. Lesky, "Homeros", *RE Suppl.* 11 (1967). 36.

²⁰⁷ "offensichtlich", 1998: 5.

structurally successive cases. The latter is certainly the case in a narrative that is not precisely chronologically determined.

The most significant example of this reaching back in narrative time, according to Rengakos and Nünlist, is *Iliad* 15.390-4:

Πάτροκλος δ' εἶος μὲν Ἀχαιοὶ τε Τρῶές τε
τείχεος ἀμφεμάχοντο θαάων ἔκτοθι νηῶν,
τόφρ' ὃ γ' ἐνὶ κλισίῃ ἀγαπήνορος Εὐρυπύλοιο
ἦστό τε καὶ τὸν ἔτερπε λόγοις, ἐπὶ δ' ἔλκεϊ λυγρῷ
φάρμακ' ἀκέσματ' ἔπασσε μελαινάων ὀδυνάων.

Patroklos has been tending to the wounds of Eurypylos since 11.842, a section which we have already mentioned and which concludes:

Ὡς δ' ὃ μὲν ἐν κλισίῃσι Μενoitίου ἄλκιμος υἱὸς
ἰᾶτ' Εὐρύπυλον βεβλημένον: οἱ δὲ μάχοντο...

Thus, it would seem that Patroklos tends to the wounds of Eurypylos for almost four whole books (ca. 2500 lines). But on a more textual level, the beginning of the O passage serves as a convenient summary of what has happened ('Patroklos tended the wounds of Eurypylos') which links it with the passage in book 12, reminding the reader/listener of what has happened. This functional aspect of the passage, which can be termed a summary, is not a step back in time but a heading that introduces further developments in a particular area of the plot.²⁰⁸ J.A.

Notopoulos (1951: 91-2) calls such summaries "retrospections", but does not

²⁰⁸ This concept is analogous to Schadewaldt's (1966³ [1943]: 76) linking-technique (*Verknüpfungstechnik*: the narrative creates a side passage (*Nebenweg*) for new events to happen), as well as to Krischer's (1971: 113-7) "introduction of a new plotline" (*Einfügung eines neuen Stranges*).

consider that they involve a step back into time.²⁰⁹ In fact, he has shown that a recapitulation summary plays an important role in maintaining the successive structure of Homeric narrative:

“By applying retrospection to events within the story itself, as we have seen, *the poet is able to ensure the continuity in the story with the previous parts, whose narration was interrupted*. Even as modern popular magazines present at the beginning of each monthly serial story a résumé of the antecedent portion of the story so does the oral poet use the device of retrospection *to tie together the parts of his story as he progresses linearly in his narration*. This is necessary not only for members of his audience, who were present at each of his recitations, but even for new members in his audience who need such threads of connexion to get their bearings in the present stage of the story.”²¹⁰

One need not even entertain the notion of an oral poet, improvising as he composes, to agree with Notopoulos.²¹¹ The technique that he describes can be applied to the *Iliad* as a lengthy literary text. Recapitulation summaries contribute both structure and function to the narrative by linking the new scene with the antecedent scene and making it consecutive, as well as by serving as a reminder of what was taking place when a particular thread was left off. It is useful, even illuminating, for the reader today to be reminded of where he left Patroklos approximately four books earlier, especially if he has not been reading the *Iliad* in one sitting.

Therefore, much more efficient textual interpretation can be placed on Nünlist's cases of hypothetical reaching back in narrative time. They are not breaches in the chronology of the poem, but are structural and functional narrative summaries.

²⁰⁹ Notopoulos (1951: 93) makes it explicitly clear that he views recapitulation only as an “important phase” of retrospection.

²¹⁰ 1951: 92, my italics.

²¹¹ Notopoulos (1949 and 1951: passim) believes that Homeric narrative is paratactic (=consecutive) precisely because it is an oral product.

Nevertheless, Nünlist argues that Homer does step back in time like other narrators, and that he uses this technique to provide relief (*eine Erleichterung*) for the listener and himself when changing from one strand of the narrative to the next.²¹² This functional purpose of the reaching-back technique is not clear and remains suspect. The technique, according to Nünlist, is more simple than the painfully precise consideration of time that Zieliński's analytic-desultory method affords. Yet it seems very tenuous to argue that reaching-back demands any less chronological precision than the analytic-desultory method, since both methods, in their original conception by Zieliński, were intended as techniques that attempted to be at least partially chronologically accurate in the depiction of simultaneous events.

In conclusion, while Nünlist thinks that the observations of Zieliński and his successors were rather precipitously raised to the status of a law and must be downgraded to a simple *Erzählprinzip* complemented by other narrative techniques including the reaching-back method, his argument does not cast a substantial doubt on the validity of Zieliński's Law as a structural principle. The revisionist argument that aims at a change of terminology, does not have a concrete alternative to propose. Why not simply call this law or narrative principle Zieliński's Law?

²¹² 1998: 7.

I. Latacz

Latacz (1977), much like Krischer, proposes that a more important narrative principle replace Zieliński's Law in the case of the representation of battle scenes in Homer.²¹³ Latacz presents a fairly complete survey of the scholarship on Zieliński's Law,²¹⁴ but he believes that the Law is of secondary importance to a more fundamental framing technique (*Rahmentchnik*) used in complex melee-battles (*Massenkämpfe*). According to him, there is a fundamental difference between Zieliński's explanation of the special cases (which involve a form of dislocated simultaneity in two parallel events) and the complex melee-battles (which employ simultaneity, but over the totality of the battle and its individual components):

“Bei der Erläuterung der erzähltechnischen Auswirkungen des sogenannten ‘zeitlichen Inkompatibilitätsgesetzes’ hatte es fast ausschließlich simultane *dislozierte* Vorgänge im Auge. Hier dagegen geht es nicht um die Darstellung zweier dislozierter Parallelhandlungen, sondern um die Veranschaulichung eines einzigen einplanigen Handlungskomplexes sowohl in seiner Totalität als auch in seiner Einzelkomponenten.”²¹⁵

The Law, while useful in governing dislocated and separated events, would be insufficient when it comes to describe an event-complex or a unified series of events, in

²¹³ Cf. also a later article, Latacz (1981), in which seemingly arbitrary durations (ἐννῆμαρ and the like), explained by Zieliński as a ‘rein technische Formel’, are observed to be in fact *required* by the narrative (74ff.). Latacz goes on to dispute many of Zieliński's explanations of the special cases of the *Iliad*, arguing that they imply an unpleasant *Erzählschwäche* (62, n.22; 63). But there can be no “weakening of the narrative” in these matters, because it is not concerned with establishing a precise chronology. This observation also renders obsolete much of Latacz's narratological explanation of the twelve days in *Iliad* A 304-495.

²¹⁴ Latacz, 79, n. 20.

²¹⁵ *Id.*, emphasis in the original: “The explanation of the narrative-technical aspects of [Zieliński's Law] focuses almost exclusively on *dislocated* simultaneous events. Here, however, we are not dealing with the representation of two displaced parallel plots, but with the depiction of a singular, uniplanar plotline, in its totality, as well as in its individual components.”

its totality and in its various parts. Melee-battles, according to Latacz, imply a series of minor non-narrated duels, some of which are described simultaneously with narrated duels as they subsumed under a framework (*Rahme*) established at the beginning of the battle description.²¹⁶ The purpose of this framework or heading, according to Latacz, is to give the impression of many dead and wounded, while only a few duels are consequently described.²¹⁷ Latacz illustrates his theory about the narrative structure of melee-battles in three diagrams²¹⁸ and proceeds to verify his “reconstruction of the battles” (82-93).

Some of his quite complex examples cannot be discussed here, but it is also possible to question some of his assumptions. Latacz’s theory that the complex battle-scenes begin with a framework or heading that allows for the depiction of simultaneous non-narrated duels is concerned with an esthetic effect rather than with the problem of explicit simultaneity in Homer. His criticisms of Zieliński’s Law are groundless because the framework heading of complex battle-scenes has a structural, not a chronological function in the text: it simply provides a starting point for the successive description of multiple individual duels.

²¹⁶ 80, emphasis in the original: “Die Erkenntnis, daß zwei der geschilderten Einzelkämpfe realiter simultan verlaufen, ist für den Hörer von sekundärer Bedeutung, außerordentlich wichtig aber ist es, ihm zu suggerieren, daß gleichzeitig mit den geschilderten Einzelkämpfen insgesamt (seien diese z. T. simultan oder nicht) über die ganze Front hin ungezählte ähnliche, nicht geschilderte Einzelkämpfe ablaufen.”

²¹⁷ Cf. esp. 81, where he concludes that “[d]iese Täuschung des Hörers ist das Ziel der Darstellungstechnik.”

²¹⁸ 80-1. His fig. 1 is especially clear about this *Rahmen* theory: “Die Einzelhandlungen (Vorgänge) [...] muß der Hörer als Füllung in den noch im Gedächtnis haftenden vorgegebenen Rahmen hineinsehen.”

Joachim Latacz's *Prolegomena* to the new K.G. Saur *Gesamtkommentar* and edition/translation of the *Iliad* (2000) contains a section by Nünlist and de Jong on "Homerische Poetik in Stichwörtern". This contains a definition of the *Prinzip der Kontinuierlichen Zeit*, roughly equated with Zieliński's Law as a law of succession, which is held to be one of the two *Sukzessionsprinzip*s of Homeric narrative.²¹⁹ Yet again Nünlist and de Jong deny the validity of Zieliński's Law, and claim that "[v]on einem Gesetz sollte man nicht sprechen, da das Prinzip nicht ausnahmslos gilt".²²⁰ They believe that the term law has pejorative connotations, denoting a constraint that is placed on the poet rather than, what is more proper, his compositional guidelines. The term law will be retained in this thesis for the sake of consistency, and will be shown to be useful in its own right in the General Conclusion.

VI. A Practical Redefinition of Zieliński's Law

It is now time to take stock of what this survey has revealed about the methodology and terminology of Zieliński's Law. Overall, four principal categories of criticism of Zieliński's Law can be identified:²²¹

²¹⁹ 167; the section is in general confusing and improperly organized. For example, cases of the analytic-desultory method (to use the example provided, the Glaukos-Diomedes in Z during Hector's journey to Troy), are treated simply as *Deckszene* "die für eine im Hintergrund ablaufende gleichförmige Handlung die nötige Zeit verstreichen läßt" (161). Is this not clearly a use of the same analytic-desultory method?

²²⁰ 167, n.47, citing Patzer (1990), Rengakos (1995) and Nünlist himself (1998) as critics who have refuted the Law's validity.

²²¹ This summary excludes specific cases of terminological confusion, which have already been discussed throughout the survey.

1. Methodological objections to Zieliński's Law (esp. Krischer, I.V.B; Seeck, I.V.F).

These maintain that Zieliński had a psychological and intentional bias when he discussed simultaneous perceptions that are only conceived by the poet and never actually represented as simultaneous. Methods 1 and 2 from Fig. 1 have been proven to be misleading. The problem of simultaneity created by Zieliński's Law is thus non-existent. It can be redefined as the question of whether the narrative does or does not represent explicitly simultaneous events in the text, a question that is answered in category 4.

2. Homer does not have a practical concept of time (Fränkel, Bassett, *et al.*, I.V.A). This notion has been shown to be highly questionable on methodological grounds, since it is derived according to the subjective method 1.

3. The theory that, *contra* Zieliński, Homeric narrative *is meant to progress successively* and does not represent simultaneous events as such (e.g. Patzer, I.V.D; de Jong, I.V.G). This notion is also questionable on methodological grounds since it assumes that Homer reveals his intentions in the structure of the text, where no such intentions are to be found (the intentional fallacy is conditioned by method 2). Essentially, however, the idea that the narrative is strictly successive (*stetig fortschreitend*) agrees with the structural principles expressed by Zieliński's Law (cf. Seeck, I.V.F).

4. The idea that Zieliński's Law is broken by the existence of explicitly simultaneous events and of the reaching-back method (in particular, Rengakos, I.V.E; Nünlist, I.V.H). This has been sufficiently refuted through the discussion of relevant examples.

To sum up more generally: few scholars seem ready to deny that Zieliński's Law is valid as a structural principle of the succession of events in Homer. Moreover, because of Seeck's elimination of the original problem of simultaneity and of the consideration of objective chronology in Homeric narrative (points 1 and 2 above), it can logically be concluded that we should view Zieliński's Law as a purely structural and functional narrative rule. Thus, we can formulate a new working definition of the Law, taking into account the Law's techniques in their most practical formulations, but avoiding terminology that is confusing for English speakers:

*Homeric narrative is structurally successive, presenting its events and plotlines in an exclusively consecutive manner, never retracing its steps. It uses two subsidiary techniques to render this narration functionally effective: the summary technique and the interruption technique.*²²²

²²² See the Glossary for a new definition and explanation of these technical terms.

The summary technique seems a convenient and uncomplicated way of expressing announced ramifications and how Zieliński's Law allows the recapitulation of certain narrative events. The interruption technique, taking up Fenik's precise term, seems the best way to refer to the analytic-desultory method in all of its manifestations (*gleichmäßige Vorgänge, temps morts*, etc.). It has also been shown that both of these techniques can account for the structure of the so-called special cases of Zieliński (I.V.E.).

In order to confirm the validity of Zieliński's Law as a structural and functional law of Homeric narrative, we need to eliminate the root of the problem of simultaneity that is to be found in the assumption, often noticeable in the survey which has just been completed, that Homeric narrative is bound by a precise chronology. We have already noted the valuable insight that Homeric narrative is organized with respect to theme rather than within a rigid chronological framework. This was especially well articulated by Krischer (I.V.B), but we have also seen this insight in Schadewaldt (I.IV.B) and in Fränkel and Bassett's notion of a factual connection (I.V.A). False synchronizations are the inevitable result of a too strict analysis of the time of the narrative. Seeck (I.V.F) has also convincingly demonstrated that the Homeric narrative is not bound by the strict and objective chronology that the theories of Zieliński, Delebecque and others require. We must now consider that behind the false problem of simultaneity lies an even wider problem, the problem of narrative time, which is conditioned by method 3. In order to

fully discuss and eliminate this problem, we shall have to perform a detailed critique of its methodological basis, which is supported by narratological theory. This is the purpose of what now follows.

Chapter II

The Problem of Time: A Narratological Critique

This chapter proposes a twofold critique of narratology. We shall first define narratology as a field of study (A) and analyze its advocates' symptomatic avoidance of the analytical method (B); then move on to a discussion of its particular philosophical and epistemological standpoint by looking in detail at one of its most prevalent, but confusing concepts: the fabula (C); next, we shall examine how the concept of the fabula leads to methodological and terminological confusion in the analysis of time in the narrative, both from a theoretical and a practical standpoint (D); the practical failings of other aspects of narratological theory will be examined in more detail in section E; and finally, the analytical method will be applied to narratology in order to attempt to alleviate its theoretical and practical failings, thus proposing an alternative way of studying narratives (F). This new mode of narrative study will be shown, in the General Conclusion, to be aptly complemented by Zieliński's Law *qua* narrative law.

For the sake of simplicity, this chapter only makes use of a few of the basic manuals of narratology (Bal, Abbott, Rimmon-Kenan), which, when considered together, provide adequate summaries of the topics to be discussed. A great debt is owed to these introductory works for their useful and frequent quotations of the primary sources and for their inestimable synthesis of the vast contemporary scholarship on narratology. In cases where the vividness and clarity of thought of the original researches were of value, I went

back to the primary sources. These primary sources involved mostly the basic texts of the French schools, such as those of Barthes (1970) and Genette (1972).

It has also been necessary for the sake of brevity to avoid a detailed discussion of some important issues (the definition of character, the importance of context, etc.), but it may be said that narratologists have been unsuccessful both in defining character and in analyzing the way in which a story is precisely defined by its context. It is odd that many literary critics view the notion of independent characters as dead, while they persist in viewing story as an ideal, human correlative of the text. As we shall see, this is but one of the many inconsistencies of narratology as a theory.

A. Defining Narratology

Narratology typically defines itself as the study of narratives or narration, but the definitions of these key terms vary among narratologists. So we may rightfully ask, as many narratologists have: what is a narrative and what is narration?

Rimmon-Kenan (2) explains that “the term *narration* suggests (1) a *communication* process in which the narrative message is transmitted by addresser to addressee and (2) the *verbal* nature of the medium used to transmit the message.” The second distinction is not accepted by several narratologists, who would argue that narration is a multimedia phenomenon. Thus films, pictures, and the like are narratives

according to these scholars. Abbott and Bal, in particular, support this view. But the fact that narratives come from various media cannot in itself tell us what narratives are.

Rimmon-Kenan's first distinction actually seeks to define what a narrative is, and this definition is shared by most narratologists. The narratological school of thought, as we shall see, views narrative as the process of communication of a story or message (visual or verbal), a process that necessarily involves a narrator (someone who tells the story) and a narratee (someone who is the recipient of this story).

But for those who look closely at narratives, this definition will also seem tenuous. In most cases, it seems that the addresser and addressee of a narrative are not specified, nor is a communication process apparently involved. Narratives, it will be found, do not necessarily communicate in the usual sense or in as much as a communication process involves at least two (usually human) agents: one who communicates a message and one who receives it. Narratives are not, strictly speaking, communicating *agents*. They are, in fact, an inherent part of their medium. Therefore, they only communicate to the extent that they tell a story and consequently impart information on a recipient.

This doubt concerning the communicative aspect of narrative partly explains why yet another, more structural definition of narrative has been put forth. Abbott has defined narratives in the following manner (12): "narrative is *the representation of an event or a series of events*"; and again (3-4): narratives function by "*allowing events themselves to*

create the order of time". This definition proposes that a narrative is the representation of a temporal succession of certain particular events, and that narratology is the study of narratives in all of their aspects.

B. The Dread of the Analytical Method

As precise as this definition may seem, the purpose of narratology as a mode of thought is much harder to define. We need to ask: what is narratology's methodology? How does it go about studying narratives, as communication processes or as temporal successions? In fact, narratology is characterized by a wide variety of methods and by what could most kindly be described as erratic terminology.

Narratologists often insist that their approach is objective: "narrative interpretation is no different from analysis in most other fields in which meaning must be culled from the data" (Abbott, 90). The original studies of the Russian formalists contained strong notions of scientific rigor and, as originally formulated by Todorov, narratology was meant to be a science.²²³

However, this original scientific terminology and methodology can only be found residually in the narratological studies of recent decades. There are many apparent reasons for this, but the most frequently invoked is a general dislike of the scientific approach and the concomitant accusation that scientific methods are not appropriate for

²²³ Cf. Rimmon-Kenan (136): "Under the aegis of structuralism and its formalist progenitors, the endeavour to construct a theory carried connotations of 'objectivity', 'neutrality', even 'scientificity' (Todorov: 1969; Hrushovski: 1976)."

the study of narrative. Bal, for example, claims that narratology as a theory “cautions against the illusion of objectivity, both in story-telling as witnessing and in analysis as the scientific discovery of the truth.”²²⁴ Rimmon-Kenan (138-41), who has surveyed the attacks against rigorous structuralism and against the application of science to literature in general, comments: “Description, it has been argued in different quarters, is neither independent nor neutral, the two activities on which it depends most heavily being interpretation and ideology”; “even ‘neutrality’ can be considered an ideological agenda, motivated by the desire to give narratology a scientific aura.”²²⁵

Another salient reason appears to be the notion that narratives are too complex for scientific study and that they cannot be interpreted objectively. Rimmon-Kenan (4) alleges that a scientific approach is obsolete when it comes to studying narratives: “Analysis requires emphasis on the issue under consideration, but texts are richer than any such isolation of aspects can yield.” Barthes was the original proponent of this anti-structuralist movement.²²⁶ Science is accused by narratologists of being too restrictive an ideology to be fit for the study of complex and varied narratives.²²⁷

²²⁴ Bal, 222-3, in her Afterword on the future of narratology.

²²⁵ Barthes (17) had already echoed this sentiment: “L’objectivité est un remplissage du même ordre: c’est un système imaginaire comme les autres...”

²²⁶ Barthes, 9, deploras in particular the uniformity and lack of diversity of the structuralist model: “ce qu’auraient bien voulu les premiers analystes du récit: voir tous les récits du monde (il y en a tant et tant eu) dans une seule structure: nous allons, pensaient-ils, extraire de chaque conte son modèle, puis de ces modèles nous ferons une grande structure narrative, que nous reverserons (pour vérification) sur n’importe quel récit: tâche épuisante [...] et finalement indésirable, car le texte y perd sa différence [...] Il faut donc choisir: ou bien placer tous les textes dans un va-et-vient démonstratif, les égaliser sous l’œil de la science in-différente[sic], les forcer à rejoindre inductivement la Copie dont on les fera ensuite dériver; ou bien

In response to this distrust of structuralist scientificity and its objective methods, narratology has developed a freely subjective standpoint. Its method of exegesis has become relatively non-textual, even at the risk of suspending its bearing on reality.²²⁸ As Bal (x) explains it: “interpretation, although not absolutely arbitrary since it does, or should, interact with a text, is in practice unlimited and free.” Narratology has incorporated three theoretical alternatives to scientific, purely textual study: deconstruction theory, intention-oriented theory and response-oriented theory. All of these alternatives, as we shall see, can be maintained concurrently in a coherent narratological theory.

Derrida is the founding father of deconstructionism. His original formulation of the theory held “a view of meaning as infinitely deferred and therefore infinitely unreliable as a foundation for any clear certainty of reference to the world that lies beyond it.”²²⁹ Derrida’s theory is, in a sense, a radical form of relativism, which holds that meaning fluctuates and varies from instant to instant and from subject to subject. As applied to narrative, this theory entails that “careful reading [is] a process that has no real

remettre chaque texte, non dans son individualité, mais dans son jeu, le faire recueillir, avant même d’en parler, par le paradigme infini de la différence...”

²²⁷ Of course, science cannot be an ideology. Ideology, rather, can be the science of ideas, their means and method of dissemination. We shall come back to this point when we propose a scientific alternative to narratology in section F.

²²⁸ Bal (181), speaking in a different context of the relationship of narratology to anthropology as a discipline, has, nonetheless, betrayed the gulf that has developed between narratology and the reality of the text: “The methodological issue is in the suspension of reality that narratological analysis entails.”

²²⁹ I follow the analysis of Abbott (98) for the sake of bibliographical simplicity.

conclusion”; each reading or visualizing of a narrative is purely subjective and its meaning is different from that of the next reading or visualization.

While opponents of deconstructionism have attacked its relativism and lack of precise quantifiers, narratologists like Abbott have argued that these are two virtues of the theory:

“lack of closure, far from being morally nihilistic, is the basis of any ethics of reading. It is ethical because it not only rests in an acknowledgment of the nature of all communication—its semantic porosity—but it also prevents the appropriation of a text to one monolithic meaning. It liberates readers to exercise their creative reading power in response to the full potentiality of narrative.”²³⁰

Deconstruction theory is therefore good currency for narratology because it enables a reader-oriented study of narrative.

Another non-objective trend in narratological theory is intentional reading. Abbott (95) is one of the exponents of this system, which is based on the assumption that narrative is a process of communication: “we usually assume that a narrative, like a sentence, comes from someone bent on communicating.” Abbott and others who adopt this intentional standpoint have posited that each narrative has an implied author and an implied reader, an author-figure or function that defines the perspective or point of view from which the narrative is told and a reader-figure who is the ideal or hypothetical addressee of this narrative. While one would tend to think of this concept of implied authorship/readership as symptomatic of the biographical/intentional fallacy, Abbott (96) argues that intentional reading is a common narratological method: “An additional appeal

²³⁰ Abbott (173), citing J. Hillis Miller and others.

of intentional interpretation is that it provides one of the few widely accepted standards by which interpretations can be evaluated.” We shall return to this concept of intentional reading below, in section F, when we consider the negative impacts of narratology.

Reader-oriented or reception theory is the natural companion of the first two theories. The basic claim of this aspect of narratology is, as Bal (11) has expressed it, that “it is the reader who ‘makes’ the meaning” of narrative. It is quite clear that this is a theory that agrees nicely with narratology’s bias against objectivity and its leanings towards subjective interpretations.²³¹

This new trend towards “the reciprocal relations between text and reader” (Rimmon-Kenan, 118), stems in part from the work of Iser (1971). His primary assumption was that: “a text can only come to life when it is read, and if it is to be examined, it must therefore be studied through the eyes of the reader.”²³² Eco’s work (1979: 2) followed this line of reasoning, as is demonstrated by one of his section titles: “How to produce texts by reading them”. He apparently meant that readers produce new texts (interpretations) of a text whenever they read it, and so that there can be no wrong reading; but his title could also imply that readers, when they read, create new texts that have little to do with the original.

This is precisely what has occurred in the case of Barthes’ study of Balzac’s *Sarrasine*, entitled *S/Z* (1970). Barthes incorporated both a form of deconstructionism and

²³¹ Bal, who is manifestly against intentional readings, also comments (78): “the aim of textual analysis is not to account for the process of writing, but for the conditions of the process of reception.”

²³² Quoted in Rimmon-Kenan, 118.

reader-reception theory into his analysis of the short story. He expounded a rather loose concept of text to ground his study (12): “[le] texte est une galaxie de signifiants, non une structure de signifiés; il n’a pas de commencement; il est réversible. [...] les codes qu’il mobilise se profilent à perte de vue, ils sont indécidables (le sens n’y est jamais soumis à un principe de décision, sinon par coups de dés)...” Text for Barthes is plural and can therefore be deconstructed into various, subjective parts.²³³ While Barthes was fundamentally against the idea of poetic laws, he opted for a system that described many non-structural layers in a text, which he called *codes* (they are symbolic, cultural, semantic, heuristic, etc.). These were qualified according to a selective reading, at random. Bits of text (called *lexies*) were chosen haphazardly, even if they formed incomplete sentences, and they were analyzed in order to reveal these codes. This was done because Barthes believed that each reading was different and that only an infinite number of readings could actually exhaust the meaning of a text.²³⁴

In the end, however, his analysis of *Sarrasine* betrays his flawed method. As anyone gazing at the end of his work will notice, the simple Balzacian short story he had taken apart had been reconstructed into a monster of intertwining codes. By dissociating his approach from the philological approach, Barthes has alienated the norms and regularities of the text. His concept of the *lexie* is particularly problematic since it ignored

²³³ Barthes (23) says that by subjectively rereading the text one obtains “non le ‘vrai’ texte, mais le texte pluriel: même et nouveau.” The text is still the same, but each time one rereads it, one observes new things or allows new concepts to influence our reading, thus creating a *new* text.

²³⁴ Barthes (157) has expressed this opinion even more succinctly: “dans le texte seul parle le lecteur.” The text is seen as an infinite source of readings.

textual and linguistic conventions such as sentences, paragraphs, even words, which form the basis of understanding of a text. Barthes' deconstruction/reconstruction of *Sarrasine* shows to what extremes a reception-oriented reading can be taken and also revealed the theory's most patent flaw: that it takes inadequate account of the original structure of the text.

The theoretical background of reception theory had to be more solidly justified by narratologists. Rimmon-Kenan (119), in particular, has tried to provide a stronger basis for reader-reception theory. She places the concept of literature in Ingarden's category of heteronomous objects (as opposed to autonomous objects), explaining that:

"heteronomous objects do not have a full existence without the participation of consciousness, without the activation of a subject-object relationship. Since literature belongs to this category, it requires 'concretization' or 'realization' by a reader." A narrative, therefore, could not exist without being read by a reader or visualized by a viewer. However, it will become clear that the 'narrative as heteronomological' argument does not support either reader-reception theories or narratology. Rather, it raises epistemological questions: how do we know narrative? Can a narrative exist without a reader/viewer? Before answering these questions objectively, however, we must look at narratology's own answer: the concept of the fabula.

C. The Fable of the Fabula

One of the most terminologically confused concepts of narratology is that of the fabula. Its most prevalent definition is that of Bal (5): “A *fabula* is a series of logically and chronologically related events that are caused and experienced by actors”.²³⁵ The fabula is an abstract version of the *story*,²³⁶ which is the fabula presented in a specific way in the *text*.

This narratological theory holds that all narratives have three aspects: text (the material aspect), story (the events as told in the text) and fabula (the events reconstructed in the order in which they would have taken place).²³⁷ All three of these narrative aspects are, according to most narratologists, readily experienced during the reading of a text. None of these aspects takes any real precedence over the others.²³⁸

²³⁵ Rimmon-Kenan lists only some of the other denominations: “the Formalists’ *‘fabula’* v. *‘sjuzhet’* (e.g. Tomashevsky 1965, p.66), Todorov’s *‘histoire* v. *‘discours’* (1966, p.126), Chatman’s *‘story’* v. *‘discourse’* (1978, p.19), Barthes’ *‘fonctions’*, *‘actions’*, *‘narration’* (1966, p.6), and Bal’s *‘histoire’*, *‘récit’*, *‘texte narratif’* (1977, p.4-8).” Rimmon-Kenan (3) herself follows Genette (71-6) in calling the fabula “story” (*histoire*) and defines it as follows: “‘Story’ designates the narrated events, abstracted from their disposition in the text and reconstructed in their chronological order, together with the participants in these events.” The use of brackets betrays the unwarranted stress that is laid on the word story if it used to designate the fabula. Abbott (12) also uses only the terms “story” and “narrative discourse”: “The difference between events and their representation is the difference between *story* (the event or sequence of events) and *narrative discourse* (how the story is conveyed).”

²³⁶ Rimmon-Kenan (6): “[Story] is a part of a larger construct, referred to by some as the ‘reconstructed’ (or ‘represented’) world (or ‘level’) (e.g. Hrushovski 1976a, p.7), i.e. the fictional ‘reality’ in which the characters of the story are supposed to be living and in which events are supposed to take place.”

²³⁷ The fabula has notably been called the “deep structure” of the narrative text, on which see Bal (125) and Rimmon-Kenan, s.v. I see no reason for plaguing the reader with these terminological excesses.

²³⁸ Bal (172): “Barbara Herrnstein Smith has long ago cautioned against the presupposition that fabula pre-exists the story (1980).” Rimmon-Kenan (4) shows how the aspects are interrelated: “Of the three aspects of narrative fiction, the text is the only one directly available to the reader. It is through the text that he or she acquires knowledge of the story (its object) and of the narration (the process of its production). On the other hand, however, the narrative text is itself defined by these two other aspects: unless it told a story it would

Yet the fabula is clearly defined as a metaphysical aspect of narrative, in that it takes place in the minds of the readers or viewers. As Bal (25) succinctly puts it: “The fabula is fictitious, invented.” The text is the medium through which the reader receives the story, which he/she reconstructs in the mind.²³⁹ The fabula is, in short, the prime focus of narratological theory, because it is subjective and because its analysis involves reception theory.

In fact, the concept of the fabula seems to stem from two theories: the Aristotelian notion of mimesis and reception-oriented theory. Aristotle held that narratives seek to imitate the action and events of real life: a process known as mimesis. It has long been realized that no narrative can imitate life precisely,²⁴⁰ although modern virtual reality simulators seem to come close to achieving a perfect mimesis. The concept of the fabula developed by structuralists and narratologists seems to provide a satisfying response to the necessity for mimesis. Narratologists claim that narrative succeeds mimetically because it enables the reader/viewer to reconstruct a logically or chronologically ordered fabula in the mind. In other words, a mimetic resolution is conditioned by the response of the reader to the narrative. The Aristotelian need for mimesis and reader-response theory therefore work hand-in-hand to justify the utility of the fabula as a narrative concept.

not be a narrative, and without being narrated or written it would not be a text. Indeed, story and narration may be seen as two metonymies of the text, the first evoking it through its narrative content, the second through its production.”

²³⁹ Bal (xv): “It is by way of the text that the reader has access to the story, of which the fabula is, so to speak, a memorial trace that remains with the reader after completion of the reading.”

²⁴⁰ Genette (1972: 185-6), for example, argues that since language signifies without imitating, no *narrative* text ever imitates the action it represents.

The concept of the fabula is a natural product of the influence of reader-reception theory on narratology. The main assumption of the fabula theory is, as Abbott has expressed it, that “without our willing collaboration, the narrative does not come to life.” The fabula is thus entirely reader-dependent, as Bal (9) has made clear: “The fabula is really the result of the interpretation by the reader, an interpretation influenced both by the initial encounter with the text and by the manipulations of the story.”²⁴¹ Reader-reception theory is psychologically determined in the case of the fabula, because “where the narratives actually *happen* is in the mind.”²⁴²

In order to make this reader-centric approach more accessible, narratologists have posited two other aspects of the narrative: the implied author and the implied reader.²⁴³ Rimmon-Kenan (87-90), who has thoroughly analyzed the work of both Booth (1961) and Chatman (1978) on this subject, defines the implied author as follows: “the implied author is the governing consciousness of the work as a whole, the source of the [narrative] norms embodied in the work.” Abbott (77) comments on the fictionality of the construct: “the implied author is also, like the narrative itself, a kind of construct that among other things serves to anchor the narrative.”²⁴⁴ The implied reader is a cognate concept: it is the

²⁴¹ Abbott (17-9), expresses much the same thought.

²⁴² Abbott (27).

²⁴³ Again, the terminological variety is staggering. Cf. Rimmon-Kenan’s (119-20) list of the terms used by narratologists: “ ‘Actual Reader’ (Van Dijk, Jauss), the ‘Super-reader’ (Riffaterre), the ‘Informed Reader’ (Fish), the ‘Ideal Reader’ (Culler), the ‘Model Reader’ (Eco), the ‘Implied Reader’ (Booth, Iser, Chatman, Perry), or the ‘Encoded Reader’ (Brooke-Rose). . . .”

²⁴⁴ Rimmon-Kenan (88) has also noticed that “the implied author must be seen as a construct inferred and assembled by the reader from all the components of the text”; that it “is best considered as a set of implicit [narrative] norms rather than as a speaker or a voice (i.e. subject)” (89).

intended audience of a text. It is the hypothetical mechanism that allows the reconstruction of the fabula.

To justify the designation of these concepts, Abbott (79) attempts to argue that readers naturally suppose that narratives have an author as well as an intended audience: “We tend not to see a film as put together accidentally or by chance, but by intention.” Intentional reading is, for him, the “common approach”. It should be noted that this argument *e consensu omnium* is not in and of itself valid, although it is grounded in reader-reception theory.²⁴⁵ It is clear that the implied author and reader are metaphysical constructs that are entirely unsubstantiable, just like the fabula itself. They have not made the concept of the fabula more convincing.

We can see that doubts readily emerge about the validity of the fabula as a narratological concept, even when we simply begin an analysis of its applicability to the text. What, in fact, is the fabula’s precise relationship to text? Is there such a thing as a reconstructed version of a story for the reader?

Rimmon-Kenan (9), for one, attempts an unworkable compromise between fabula and text, by calling story (here=fabula) a “transverbal” aspect of narrative, yet “homologous (i.e. parallel in structure) to natural language”. She creates a duality of meanings for the fabula: it is non-textual, yet parallel to the language of the text. One fails

²⁴⁵ Moreover, it has been argued that the concept of an implied author is redundant and not necessary for interpretation, since narrative text is to be “understood as the organization of a set of cues for the construction of a story”, D. Bordwell in *Narration in the Fiction Film*, (Madison, 1985, 62), quoted by Abbott (78).

to see how this makes sense or how this can work. Some of Rimmon-Kenan's conclusions are more reasonable. She notes (14) in particular that "[e]ven less work has been done on the transition from narrative structures to linguistic structures (if indeed there is such a transition)".²⁴⁶ It seems as though narratologists, in seeking to find a fabula, might have been pursuing a red herring. Yet Rimmon-Kenan maintains (8) that "the preliminary assumption that story-structure [i.e the fabula] is isolatable must be made at least as a working hypothesis."

While Abbott and Rimmon-Kenan seem more or less resigned that the fabula *qua* concept will always remain imprecise and metaphysical,²⁴⁷ two good arguments against the fabula have been proposed (often unwittingly) by narratologists themselves: the first is common-sensical, which argues that readers simply do not reconstruct a fabula from the text, and that this is not common reading practice; while the second argument is textual and asserts that the fabula is neither psychological (in the reader's mind) nor metaphysical (located somewhere outside the text).

Readers do not seem to naturally create a fabula, as reader-reception theory holds. Bal (6) herself admits that regular readers do not distinguish between the three aspects of narrative, as defined by narratologists: "Naturally, the reader, at least the 'average

²⁴⁶ She also quotes Lipski's pessimistic opinion of this area of narratology: "Despite the variety of models, there is as yet no clear method of traversing the path from concrete text to the abstract narrative structure, without either qualitative or quantitative gaps intervening," Lipski (1976: 202), quoted in Rimmon-Kenan, 28. She admits that "the situation has not changed significantly to date".

²⁴⁷ Abbott (23): "there are, and will always be, gray areas in a field like narrative that has so much to do with subjective response."

reader’—not the analyst—does not make such a distinction [between text, story and fabula].” Abbott (16) has gone much further than Bal, by pointing out that it is customary practice for readers to think of story or fabula simply as the text: “When in casual conversation, English speakers say they’ve heard a “good story,” they usually aren’t thinking of the story as separate from the telling of it. When a child wants you to read her favorite story, she often means by that every word on every page. Leave a word out and you are not reading the whole story.” Since the child’s or the reader’s natural instinct is probably correct, Abbott’s reasoning does lend credence to this argument against the notion of fabula. Yet this common sense argument remains somewhat weak because, as Abbott has remarked (84), “we have little clear understanding of what exactly the mind does when it reads”; the same could be said about hearing responses. It is just as difficult to refute fabula as a psychological construct as it is to validate it, because both of the arguments involved are based on our scanty knowledge of the mental processes involved in reading.

The textual argument is much stronger, since it is not clear that the fabula can realistically be a more accurate account of the story than the textual story itself. According to Culler (1980: 29) making the distinction between fabula and story “involves an operation which can certainly be questioned: the heuristic definition of a “true

sequence of actions” which narrative discourse is then said to present.”²⁴⁸ If only narrative discourse (text, etc.) is actual, then the fabula, as a purely metaphysical construct, is bound to remain an unascertainable, redundant factor in interpretations of narratives in general.

We shall return to this second argument at the conclusion of this chapter, but it is now time to consider an even stronger argument against the fabula: that it is an impractical concept and that it fails in particular when the chronological structure of narrative is analyzed.

D. Killing Time: Narrative Time Debunked

Before we proceed to define what narratologists mean by the different times of the narrative, we must first look at their conceptions of what an event is. While the *OED* defines an event simply as a “thing that happens”, Abbott (17) believes that it is impossible to define an event without an “entity” that acts. This notion is important, because most narratologists seem to think that an actor and a series of events are the minimum requirements for a story to qualify as a narrative.

Rimmon-Kenan, for example, thinks that temporal succession is a minimal requirement for a story (19). But she confesses that “temporal succession in itself is a rather loose link” and adds a different definition of an event (15), more like the *OED*’s:

²⁴⁸ Although he argues that the fabula thereby becomes a tropological construct, which provides the evaluative devices of the narrative, he does end by concluding that these elements of the fabula are “embedded in the action itself” (36), presumably meaning that the fabula is an aspect of the story or text.

“when something happens, the situation usually changes. An event, then, may be said to be a change from one state of affairs to another.”

This makes events—basic situation changes—the minimal building blocks of narrative. It is important to note that these events could be spatial or logical changes, and not exclusively temporal changes. “Lightning struck” is such a minimal story that it could be interpreted either as spatial change or temporal change (or both). It is a brief and dull story, but still, one event is all it takes to make a narrative.²⁴⁹

Narratologists, as a general rule, differentiate between two types of time in the narrative, text-time, and story- or fabula-time.²⁵⁰ Text-time is determined according to the time indications (event durations, etc.) specifically mentioned in the text, whereas fabula-time is the reader-reconstructed time and chronological order of events as they would have taken place in reality.²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Of course, even this event could be subdivided into a series of infinitesimally smaller events: “Lightning struck the first particle of air, then the second...” etc. But this does not affect the story-sentence as presented. It does not signify anything than *one* singular event.

²⁵⁰ Abbott (3) goes so far as to define narrative as a function of time: “*narrative is the principal way in which our species organizes its understanding of time.* [...] As we are the only species on earth with both language and a conscious awareness of the passage of time, it stands to reason that we would have a mechanism for expressing this awareness.” Similarly Tomashevsky in the words of Rimmon-Kenan (15): “a story-paraphrase arranges events according to a chronological principle. If the content-paraphrase abstracted from a text is organized according to principles other than chronological then it is not a story-paraphrase and the text in question is not a narrative. Descriptive or expository propositions, for example, are distinct from narrative ones in that they are thought of as simultaneously valid according to some *spatial* or *logical* principle that is relatively or ideally independent of temporality (Tomashevsky 1965, p.66. Orig. publ. in Russian 1925).” But, as we shall see, spatial and logical modes of textual organization are better suited to narrative than temporal ones.

²⁵¹ On fabula-time, see Bal’s elucidation (80): “[the] chronological sequence of the fabula [...] is a theoretical construction, which we can make on the basis of the laws of everyday logic which govern common reality.”

The fabula-time is developed according to two narrative principles: “1. The events are arranged in a sequence which [sic] can differ from the [textual] chronological sequence. 2. The amount of time which is allotted in the story to the various elements of the fabula is determined with respect to the amount of time which these elements take up in the fabula” (Bal, 8). The fabula-time is to be thought of as the time that the reader/viewer reconstructs according to the text-time, arranging events in a chronological sequence and estimating their duration on the basis of textual clues; it is the ideal chronological order of the story.

This concept of fabula-time has led some narratologists to argue that text-time is not a representative time at all. As we have seen in Chapter I, a notion of fabula-time, or of a similar extra-textual time, prompted scholars to argue that text-time, while linear, in fact *means* to represent simultaneous events that would have really taken place in the story. Non-explicit simultaneous events of this kind would be classified as belonging to fabula-time.

In opposition to this view, it has been argued by some narratologists that textual chronology is *conventionally* linear. Rimmon-Kenan (17), as it turns out, is an exponent of this view: “In fact, strict succession can only be found in stories with a single line or even with a single character. The minute there is more than one character, events may become simultaneous [...] Strict linear chronology, then, is neither natural nor an actual characteristic of most stories. It is a conventional ‘norm’ which has become so

widespread as to replace the actual multilinear temporality of the story and acquire a pseudo-natural status.”²⁵² This is in agreement with Zieliński’s Law in its original formulation, but we have already seen in Chapter I that this original formulation is fallacious because of its excessively psychological and intentional motivations.

The notion of fabula-time is in many ways problematic. This is because it is in near perpetual conflict with text-time, and not only in the case of simultaneous events. Chronological deviations between fabula-time and text-time are so frequent that narratologists have created special case studies for them. They are called anachronies: “Differences between the arrangement in the story and the chronology of the fabula we call chronological deviations or anachronies” (Bal, 83). Genette (1972: 77-182) was the first scholar to begin the study of these temporal discrepancies.

The first type of anachrony is that of the prolepsis and the analepsis, which respectively involve a flashforward and a flashback into the time of the fabula.²⁵³ Bal provides a good treatment of these anachronies that were first noticed by Genette (1972). The distinction between fabula-time and text-time allows for the creation of three types of analepses: external, internal, and mixed (Bal, 90). The very fact that mixed analepses are hypothesized suggests that the distinction between fabula- and text-time is imprecise.

²⁵² Although she later (120-1) contradicts her useful remarks by saying that “a successive perception of bits of information...” is sometimes imposed upon the reader “... even when these are meant to be understood as simultaneous in the story.”

²⁵³ But Bal (91) also speaks of the “explanatory function” of these anachronies, which would tend to imply that there are not exclusively temporal phenomena.

A second type of anachrony involves the observation of gaps or interruptions in the fabula-time, which do not correspond with the continual flow of the text-time. Bal (108) presents an unnecessarily complicated version of this idea: “It goes without saying that a [descriptive] pause has a strongly retarding effect; on the other hand, the reader easily forgets that the fabula has been stopped...” If the text keeps going, we may simply presume that events take place even in descriptive passages, when, theoretically, the fabula-time is stopped. There seems to be no such thing as a descriptive pause.

A third type of anachrony is the ellipsis, which involves the omission from the text of an event that would have taken place in the fabula.²⁵⁴ Yet again, the simplest explanation for this supposed anachrony might be the best. Since an omitted event is not actually in the text, it might simply be a non-event.²⁵⁵

There are many other types of supposed anachronies that we have no space to discuss here (repetitions, dialogue scenes, etc.), but it may be said that all anachronical formulations are suspiciously imprecise. Bal (87-89), for example, speaks of such things as “nuances of anachrony”, “subjective” or “conscious” anachronies, as well as “unreal” anachronies. It is clear that there is no way to identify these anachronies unless they are explicitly textual. If they are purely reader-reconstructed, then they cannot be precisely

²⁵⁴ According to Rimmon-Kenan (53) ellipsis is omission.

²⁵⁵ Moreover, as Rimmon-Kenan demonstrates (56), an ellipsis is usually equal to an information gap. This supports the view that ellipsis is not an anachrony at all, but rather a fact or theme that is lacking in a non-chronological narrative.

ascertained in the text. One example will suffice to show that anachronical theorizing is an ineffectual derivative of the fabula.

The practical failings of fabula-time are well illustrated by the close study of one of Bal's examples of anachrony (92). In this particular case, she analyses an analepsis: "If a letter states: 'Last year, I went to Indonesia for a month.' the span of the retroversion is a month, while its distance is a year." In fact, the case is not so simple. The brief piece of text does not offer us a precise chronology, in particular since the letter is undated and its timespan is not actual. One may also justifiably ask if the reader really gets the impression of a fairly distant past trip that lasted for a month? Instead, it might seem that the statement simply conveys a very brief (1 line/9 words) recollection or mention of a past event. The interpretation of the analepsis is debatable. Yet, on the face of it, if one comes down to the facts, what we have is a text that merely indicates a statement of some sort (whether it is actually a recollection or not is also unclear). The trip to Indonesia might or might not have taken place. What is put forth and what is in evidence is the *allegation* that a trip took place, *which constitutes an event in and of itself*. Therefore, we might not be dealing with an analepsis at all, but merely a statement that counts as a textual event, which might not even be temporal.

Let us resume the narratological assumption of fabula-time and its relationship to text-time by quoting a variation of this assumption expressed by Bal (81): "In a narrative text, it is even possible to speak of a double linearity: that of the text, the series of

sentences, and that of the fabula, the series of events.” Once again, one notices the methodological and terminological confusion prevalent in other types of narratological analyses; terminological confusion, because Bal speaks of “linearities” when she means times; and methodological confusion, because it seems that the so-called series of events ought to be textual and inseparable from the series of sentences. Linguistically, at least, form defines content. Perhaps Bal’s confusion is actually pointing us in the right direction: towards a revision of text-time and fabula-time, which reduces the dichotomy to one spatial or logical linearity: the text.

It should be noticed that text-time is not really a time at all; it is an order defined by the presentation of events, which defies precise chronology.²⁵⁶ Abbott (5), in particular, has made this clear in his definition of narrative time (=text-time): “Narrative time, in contrast [to conventional time], relates to events or incidents. And while clock time is necessarily marked off by regular intervals of a certain length, narrative time is not necessarily any length at all.” Abbott is entirely right that text-time cannot be measured, save by measuring textual length. How then are we supposed to compare it with or derive from it a chronological fabula?

Günther Müller’s solution to the lack of chronological comparison between text-time and fabula-time was an alternative method of measurement: “the amount of time

²⁵⁶ Cf. Bal’s (97) notion of *achrony*, “a deviation of time which cannot be analyzed further [for want of information].” This is symptomatic of the lack of chronological consistency in the text. At p.99, she also speaks of Proust’s narratives, where one can find: “the grouping of events on the grounds of other than chronological criteria, without any mention of chronological sequence.”

covered by the fabula can be juxtaposed with the amount of space in the text each event requires: the number of pages, lines, or words.”²⁵⁷ Fabula-time can therefore be compared with the space taken up by events in the text.²⁵⁸ This is a good solution to our problem, but it turns out to be impractical in the long run precisely, as narratologists like to argue, because textual narratives are so varied. In many cases, as in Homer, the so-called fabula cannot be consistently compared with the text. One day, for example, might take a few lines to describe at first, and then a full page further on. These are variations of pace, but they also offer erratic references to time that will puzzle those who wish to reconstruct a fabula. Can nine empty days related in a single line really be placed between two full days that take many pages to relate? Is this what the reader reconstructs in the mind?

No. What the Müller school of thought has produced is comparative norms for the representation of events *within* the text. The number of words, lines, pages, etc. devoted to a certain event or motif, are thus indicative of a textual length which can be compared with that of other events or motifs. This brings us to a rather remarkable conclusion: that time is not a function of narrative at all. Temporal indications within the text are only

²⁵⁷ Bal’s analysis (100-1). While commenting on scene-time (105), she disagrees with the strategies of the Müller school: “The point is not [...] simply to count pages and gauge the significance of an event by means of figures. Such an investigation would *only* yield *clues* about the internal relations between various tempi” (my italics). Notice the narratologist’s distrust of science, which once again rears its ugly head.

²⁵⁸ See also Rimmon-Kenan (52) who agrees that there is “no way of measuring text-duration”, but argues that ‘norms’ can be established within a text, which are measured “between duration in the story (measured in minutes, hours, days, months, years) and the length of text devoted to it (in lines and pages), i.e. a temporal/spatial relationship. The measure yielded by this relation in general is pace (or speed).”

markers of verisimilitude, which makes the concepts of both text-time and fabula-time obsolete.²⁵⁹

Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* mocks the impossibility of describing real time.

Tristram spends a year trying to write the first day of his life in full. But the point of Sterne's parody has not been taken: time is never a part of narrative. Does Tristram's first day really end up being a narrative of a day? The paradox that it takes a year to write down a day makes it clear that narrative cannot even hope to emulate time in any of its guises. It can only create a tenuous illusion of time.

Rimmon-Kenan (44) has also noticed that text is a spatial rather than a temporal dimension of narrative: "What discussions of text-time actually refer to is the linear (spatial) disposition of linguistic segments in the continuum of the text." And while she concluded that "both story-time [here=fabula-time] and text-time may in fact be no more than pseudo-temporal", she insisted on retaining these theoretical concepts. It will hardly do, as we shall see in the next two sections, to retain this concept of a fabula and its pseudo time. A spatial, logical and causal²⁶⁰ investigation of events in the text seems to be

²⁵⁹ Temporal ordering and delay is one of the focal points of the analysis of Rimmon-Kenan (126-9), but her comments make clear (128) that temporal devices in the narrative are motivated "artistically or realistically", but not structurally and functionally. Barthes has spoken of the *vraisemblabilisation* of narrative, but in a different context.

²⁶⁰ Causality is a thorny issue for narratologists, but Rimmon-Kenan (18) has usefully distinguished two types of narrative causality: teleological and archaeological. Teleological causality comes into play when events happen for the purpose of the plot; this is the causality that drives the events of the story to its conclusion. Archaeological causality is "logic of verisimilitude", where events happen because they are consistent with the characters and/or events of the rest of the story. Teleological causality is the only one that can be studied objectively: events happen and the story unfolds. And while Rimmon-Kenan

the best possible solution, since it can yield objective data about the text: the length of description and the sequence of events.²⁶¹

E. Practical Narratology for Homer and Other Texts

We have seen that fabula-time is a highly objectionable concept. A study of the practical applications, or rather misapplications, of the fabula in general will show that the concept is pernicious.

Let us begin with a fairly straightforward example from Bal (21). I quote her analysis of one sentence in full: “ ‘Steyn’s deep bass resounded in the vestibule’. In this sentence we may distinguish: 1. An event in an (in this case fictitious) fabula: the sounding of a voice belonging to Steyn; 2. Someone who hears the voice resound, who is sensitive to the timbre of that voice and to the specific (hollow) resonance that sounds acquire in a vestibule. 3. A speaking agent that names the event and its perception.” Bal argues that in reading or hearing this sentence, one reconstructs an event that took place in a story, the sounding of a voice, and that, moreover, one presumes that a listener was present to hear this voice and that a person is telling us this information (perhaps the same listener who heard the voice resound).

questions whether causality can always be projected onto temporality (19), it seems that teleological causality can be successfully discussed in a text that is treated as a spatial series of events.

²⁶¹ A text, once complete and unmodified, exists in a sort of temporal stasis and remains, like a perfectly preserved image, an atemporally analyzable object. Its story must be read in some sort of chronological order; however, the text itself remains spatially immutable.

Bal's last two qualifications are questionable at best. Does the reader ask who is speaking here? Must there be a speaker for this statement? Any reader's straightforward answer has to be that *the text itself is speaking* and nothing else. It is also clear that no one needs to be hearing the voice of Steyn for the description of it to take place. The text simply states that the voice resounded, even if no one was there to hear it.²⁶² Hence, no narrator or narratee is to be distinguished in this passage. The assumption that this event has happened or can be reconstructed as having happened in real time places unnecessary stress on the text. The text contains no evidence of a communication situation that takes place in a fabula and involves a metaphysical speaker and listener.²⁶³ The simplest and most accurate explanation of the event "Steyn's deep bass voice resounded in the vestibule" is that it takes place in a story directly configured by the text, not in a metaphysical fabula.

De Jong has come up with some more specific examples which show that the narratological model is relatively without value for Homer. The first example concerns the notion of focalization and its applicability to Homer. Focalization is the perception of the fabula by a character or narrator, a perception that modifies it into the story that is

²⁶² Dr. G. Chamberland has suggested the following extension of Bal's example, which shows quite cleverly that no addressee or narratee need be implied by a narrative statement: "Even after 20 years, Steyn's deep bass voice resounds in the cave, but his only audience are the ageless and impassive stalagmites."

²⁶³ Compare Bal's questionable assertion (22): "In principle, it does not make a difference to the status of narration whether a narrator refers to itself or not. As soon as there is language, there is a speaker who utters it; as soon as those linguistic utterances constitute a narrative text, there is a narrator, a narrating subject."

presented (de Jong, 1987: 31). It involves the point of view as well as the mental and verbal perspectives of characters. De Jong (1991: 409) makes the distinction between three main types of focalization that are present in Homer, and her examples are quoted here *verbatim*:

“Simple narrator-text: ‘Diomedes killed many Trojans.’
Complex narrator-text: ‘Aeneas saw Diomedes wreak havoc among the
lines of his men’.
Character-text: ‘Aeneas said: ‘I see that Diomedes kills my men.’”

According to de Jong, the focalization of each of these statements is different and each can be interpreted in different, subjective ways. Character-text is often thought to reflect the direct perceptions and actions of a character, while complex narrator-text reflects the perceptions of the narrator, which are also coloured by the perceptions of a character (or characters) involved in the description.

But is there really a difference of focus involved in these three examples? First, it is important to note that de Jong’s examples are somewhat flawed because they do not really contain the same text: “killing many Trojans” and “wreaking havoc” might not have the same connotations in the text or might refer to different events altogether. Still, this should not prevent us from taking the analysis and comparison of de Jong’s examples one step further. The simplest question to ask of these examples is: what are the actual events depicted in them? The narrator-text is a simple statement of an event: “Diomedes killed many Trojans”. This statement does not seem to involve any sort of narratorial colouring. The complex narrator-text is another statement of an event: “Aeneas saw

Diomedes killing Trojans”. It is completely unclear whether we are to assume Aeneas’ point of view, or the narrator’s, or a combination of both.²⁶⁴ The text remains noncommittal in this respect: it simply describes that Aeneas is looking at or has caught sight of Diomedes. Here, as always, what we get is *the text’s point of view*. The character-text is equally non-focalized. It reports a statement on the part of Aeneas, which is another, different textual event: “Aeneas said: ...”²⁶⁵ When all of these supposedly focalized statements can be analyzed in a strictly factual or thematic manner, it becomes difficult to believe that a focalization of the fabula is taking place in any of them. In sum, all of the statements might be thought to contribute to Diomedes’ or Aeneas’ character (taking this term in the sense of a running tally of deeds and attributes), but none of them are coloured or influenced by specific points of view.

The narratological theory of focalization, dependent on that of the fabula, is based on reception-oriented theory.²⁶⁶ In the case of Homer, as we have seen in the General Introduction, whether or not the text has a specific narrator and addressee is debatable. De Jong (1991: 417) herself admits that the addressee of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*, the “primary narratee-focalizee [is]... a semiotic function”, and therefore a metaphysical concept. The fact is that Homer does not mention or call upon a specific addressee in the

²⁶⁴ The notion of secondary (character) focalization might seem in and of itself nonsensical, since the text only presents us with one integral and coherent set of points of view.

²⁶⁵ In fact, arranging these events in order will show that they could form a linear, textual narrative of their own, without any notion of a fabula coming into play: 1) Diomedes kills Trojans; 2) Aeneas sees Diomedes; 3) Aeneas comments on Diomedes.

²⁶⁶ Bal (163) testifies to this: “focalization is [...] an interpretation, a subjectivized content.”

Iliad and in the *Odyssey* (except the Muses, but that might be a purely rhetorical form of address). The text does not need to have a narratee, just as a narrator figure is not essential to its understanding.²⁶⁷ Both concepts are pernicious derivatives of the fabula that are unaccounted for in the text.²⁶⁸

De Jong's analysis of one of the most important problems of the *Odyssey*, the retardation of the Odysseus plotline until Book 5, reveals how the concept of the fabula can be misleading (2002: 54). Commenting on the lengthy arrival of Hermes on Calypso's island, she notes that "we have been waiting for Odysseus to enter upon the stage for a full five [sic]²⁶⁹ books, and now the narrator one last time teases us, just as we are certain of seeing him at last." This is an altogether too subjective interpretation of the event sequence developed in the Telemachy and at the arrival of Hermes on Calypso's island. The text involves no narrator who is teasing us and is retarding the appearance of Odysseus. Rather, it has chosen to present the shorter Telemachy first in order to be able to concentrate its full attention on the lengthier Odysseus plotline without interruption until Bk. 15. The notion of a narratorial interpretation of a fabula obscures the text and its structural function.

²⁶⁷ When the text says "I", the simplest explanation is that it is the text itself that is speaking, not a narrator figure that has specific perceptions. But to argue this point in detail would involve another dissertation's work.

²⁶⁸ Bal (52-3) has also noted that the notion of embedded texts causes the narrator/actor dichotomy to fail. The notion is thus imprecise, perhaps because there is no distinction between narrator/actor to be made at all in the text.

²⁶⁹ The correct number of books is four; the Odysseus plotline begins in Bk. 5.

These are but a few examples of the doubtful value of the fabula for Homeric interpretation. To make an anti-fabula argument stronger, one must revisit the bias that narratologists, and in particular de Jong, hold against objectivity. De Jong (1991: 406) wrote after her pioneering 1987 work on the applicability of narratology to Homer that: “It turned out that these [narratological] theories were indeed applicable to the *Iliad* and their application yielded, apart from the desired arguments against the dogma of objectivity, new insights into the poetic use of oral devices.” It seems that, for de Jong, objectivity is a dogma against which arguments must be expounded, and subjectivity is an inevitability that must be embraced. Her recent *Narratological Commentary of the Odyssey* (Cambridge, 2001) adopts the same perspective.²⁷⁰ She now explains her position as follows (2002: 60): “my own narratological interpretation will no doubt strike some as over-interpretation. Personally I have no problem with the unavoidable subjectivity of the commentator, as long as it is candidly acknowledged.”

But the question remains: should one not try to do something about the problems of subjectivity? It seems too easy to throw one’s arms up in the air like de Jong and to accept relativism as an inevitable philosophy, too easy to start over-interpreting in terms of a fabula. A proper narratological study needs to base itself in objectivity as the scientific, empirical basis for any literary study. Only objectivity can create a successful poetics of narrative, since only it can reveal what is and what is not textual fact.

²⁷⁰ It is interesting to note that de Jong’s mentor, Mieke Bal, thinks that complete narrative grammars, such as the one that de Jong’s commentary presents, are obsolete (13).

F. A Burden Too Great: Narratology Deconstructed

We have come full circle from our introduction and definition of narratology to reconsider its first principles: we have found that narratology's concept of a fabula, conditioned by reader-reception theory, is impractical when applied to narrative texts both in terms of chronology and in terms of focalization. Instead, we have found that it generally seems best to study narrative texts as texts.²⁷¹

We must now confirm this insight by criticizing the foundations of narratology in reader-reception theory. Reader-reception theory, to put it briefly, holds that narratives necessarily involve a communication process between an author and an addressee.²⁷² We noticed in our preliminary discussion of this theory that what it attempts to answer is an epistemological question: what is a story and how do we know it?

There is, in fact, a simple answer to this question, which is not that of the reader's reception. The answer is that a story is simply and exclusively determined by its medium (in our case, text). That this is the valid philosophical definition of a story can be proven by analogy, as well as empirically.

To ask whether a narrative remains a narrative even if it has no addressee is tantamount to the old paradox of the branch falling in the woods where no one is there to hear it: does it make a sound? It would be too anthropocentric to answer this query

²⁷¹ This agrees with Barthes' genial, but unfortunately misused, insight that (219): "il n'y a pas d'*objet* du récit: le récit ne traite que de lui-même: *le récit se raconte*."

²⁷² To quote only one example, Rimmon-Kenan (89): "In my view there is always a teller in the tale, at least in the sense that any utterance or record of an utterance presupposes someone who has uttered it."

negatively. The logical, factual answer is that the branch does make a sound. Our inductive reasoning tells us so. The same reasoning can, of course, be applied to narratives. For example, one could ask: if texts exist in a library where no one can read them, do they still retain all of their inherent properties? A positive answer is both logically and factually necessary.

The empirical argument is even more convincing. One cannot simply argue *ex silentio* that some narrator is telling a tale if that tale does not have an explicit narratorial figure. The same goes for the addressee.²⁷³ Most narratives are therefore characterized by what could be called *non-narratorial* and *non-addressed* narration. For example, as I write this, the text of my thesis on my computer is simply a text. It is being presented and read by a word processing program, which is neither narrator nor narratee, but an electronic textual medium.

Reader-reception theory is therefore an unsatisfactory and unsuccessful basis for narratology, because it presupposes that narrative always involves a communication situation, which it does not. A definition of narrative can therefore be reduced to the following: *a presentation of an event or a series of events in a medium, be it visual or linguistic.*

In a sense, we have used Occam's razor to slash away at the so-called *differentia specifica* of narrative fiction, to use Rimmon-Kenan's phrase. We have found that

²⁷³ Chatman (1978: 150) notes: "just as there may or may not be a narrator, there may or may not be a narratee."

narratives are organized spatially or logically, and not temporally, in texts and in other media.²⁷⁴ We have isolated the text or medium as the poetic center of narrative, to the detriment of the reader's interpretation, favouring the objective over the subjective. This is not to say that the deconstructionist concept of an "ethics" of reading is invalid. It is simply not useful or practicable, because it is neither objective nor quantifiable. While it may seem that stories establish "not truth, but verisimilitude",²⁷⁵ it remains a proven case that texts have a logical and spatial truth of their own, which deserves to be studied separately from the psychological and as yet undetermined aspects of reading.

To conclude: narratology, in its present state of development, does not provide good tools or methods for investigating narratives.²⁷⁶ It would in fact be much more useful to create a science called *narratonomy*, which could concern itself with observing narrative techniques and measuring their effects within texts, and build its set of axioms *only as a result* of these investigations. This new term would create an appropriate distance between the scientific investigation of narratives and the haphazard,

²⁷⁴ Rimmon-Kenan is only one among many narratologists who persist in seeing a "dual temporality" as definitive for narration (147): "Narratives are governed by a dual time-scheme owing to the ontological gap between the succession of signs and the temporality of events (in whatever expanded definition)." She conditions her statement more carefully than most, however: "I am aware, of course, of the postmodern questioning of such a metaphysical assumption, but it seems to me that even after collapsing hierarchy and primacy [presumably meaning fabula- and text-time, respectively], there remains at least a difference in manifestation between what are perhaps only aspects of the same signifying chain." Notice, once again, the unnecessary terminological complexity.

²⁷⁵ Abbott (162), quoting Jerome Bruner, *Actual Minds, Possible Worlds*, Cambridge MA, 1986: 11.

²⁷⁶ Rimmon-Kenan (among other narratologists) would like to retain narratology as a non-scientific "working hypothesis" (146) for the study of narrative. This is a *non sens*. To use a working hypothesis, and to revise it if it does not work, is what the analytical method is all about. Subjective narratology, by definition, only creates more hypotheses.

metaphysical, theory-first approach of narratology. The distinction between these two schools of thought is analogically based, of course, on the difference between astronomy and astrology, and on the evolution of a sophisticated empirical science from a psychological and metaphysical trade.

General Conclusion

Although this thesis was conceived of as a simple investigation of some specific narrative laws in Homer, it ended up as something quite different. Its scope, for one thing, became much wider as the thinking and writing progressed. The text, as Barthes said, tells itself. Let us briefly look back on what it hopes to have achieved.

The aim of Chapter I was to criticize the various terminologies and methodologies that classical scholars employ when they study the structure of the Homeric epics. It was found that the exegetical and analytical methods commonly used were unsound, being of three different subjective varieties. Chapter I succeeded in revalidating Zieliński's Law, originally conceived in terms of a false problem of simultaneity, as a principle of the linear succession of events in the text, which explains how narrative plotlines alternate according to interruption sequences and summary techniques.

Chapter II had much the same result, except on a wider, more theoretical scale. It proved that narratology, as a non-objective model for the study of narratives, was impractical and unfit as a theory because it does not pay close enough attention to the textual or medium-based meaning of narratives. Instead, scientific, quantitative textual study, under the name of *narratology*, would be a more profitable way of looking at narratives. Zieliński's Law, as a structural and textual narrative principle, fits neatly into such a plan of study.

Therefore, what started as an investigation of a century old problem of classical scholarship has, in the end, produced a sort of *Manifesto for the text of Homer*. What is needed is for Homerists and narratologists in general to return to a close study of narrative texts.

In fact, one of the original methodologies for the study of Homer was that of “explaining Homer out of himself”.²⁷⁷ One of the aspects of this type of study was the creation of epic laws, such as Zieliński’s Law. The rationale and justification for epic laws has been established since A. Olrik’s study of their validity for Danish sagas and folktales. He defines an epic law as follows:

“In popular narrative, storytellers have a tendency to observe certain practices in composition and style that are generally common to large areas and different categories of narratives, including most of the European narrative tradition. The regularity with which these practices appear makes it possible for us to regard them as “epic laws” of oral narrative composition.”²⁷⁸

Interestingly, one of Olrik’s epic laws is entirely equivalent to Zieliński’s Law, “the single-strandedness of the plot”:²⁷⁹

“The plot of a narrative consistently moves toward the next causal or temporal step. It does not break off in order to turn to something that has previously happened...”²⁸⁰

²⁷⁷ *Ομηρον ἐξ Ὀμήρου σαφηνίζειν. This value of this phrase was reinstated by Ann Amory Parry, “Homer as Artist,” *CQ* 21(1971): 1-15. But A.A. Parry’s justification does not seem to have had a widespread appeal among Homeric scholars.

²⁷⁸ 1921: 41.

²⁷⁹ C. Rothe (1910: 152) also observes that Homeric narrative is single-stranded (*einsträngig*) and references earlier work of Olrik to that effect.

²⁸⁰ Olrik 1992² [1921]: 48, noting that “The more developed categories of saga form an exception either (1) by interweaving a new story in the form of a speech, or (2) by explicitly stopping the main plot at a suitable point of closing to introduce new plots, which only at their conclusion flow into the main plot.” Category (2) resembles Zieliński’s *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*. Olrik also references W.H. Hart (1967² [1907]: 39) who maintains that for simple ballads, “synchronistic events are exceptional, and synchronism is never

Zieliński's Law is thus valid for Homer and perhaps even for other epic narratives, such as Virgil's *Aeneid*. It seems unwise to dismiss a law that has such potential versatility and widespread applicability.

Moreover, Zieliński's Law is useful precisely *because* it is an empirical law. A law, with well-defined, provable rules, is useful in its own right because it serves a solid basis for future investigations, a touchstone that enables further observations to be clarified and analyzed according to the text itself.

It can only be hoped that this proposed *retour aux sources* will have some wider import for future research. The textual approach outlined in this thesis can provide a solid theoretical and practical basis for future narrative studies, be they concerned with the epics of Homer or with any other narratives.

necessary for the working out of the plot" (with examples). This brings further justification to this thesis' claim that the problem of simultaneity in Homer is a figment of scholarly imagination.

Glossaries

Two glossaries are offered here: one that contains the terms that are used mostly by Zieliński and his critics, and the other, the technical terms that are adopted and tested in this thesis.

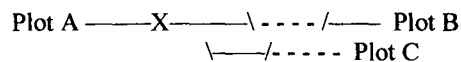
Critical Terms

analytic-desultory method (also called: *Episodentechnik*, *Klammertechnik*): one of the three techniques for the representation of simultaneous events or plotlines elaborated by Zieliński; it depicts the events or plotlines successively and discontinuously, flashing over from one to the next. It abandons one plotline (thereby becoming *verharrend*) and picks up a new or previously discontinued plotline (now becoming *fortschreitend*) to narrate it.

Plot A - - - - / — — \ - - - etc.
Plot B — — / - - - - \ — — etc.

- - =discontinued plotline (also see: *temps mort* and *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*)
— =narrated plotline (in which events are told)
\ =narrative switch or link

angekündigte Verzweigung (announced ramification): this technique, elaborated by Krischer to replace Zieliński's special cases, holds that long segments of plotlines can be explained according to the following scheme:



X = announcement in text (by a character or narrator) that the plot is about to branch out into two new plotlines

- - =discontinued plotline (see also: *temps mort* and *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*)

— =narrated plotline (in which events are told)

\ =narrative switch or link

Krischer also develops a technique called *unangekündigte Verzweigung*, where the ramification is not announced in the primary plotline. This technique therefore appears to be equatable with Zieliński's analytic-desultory method, although Krischer has left this point unclear.

Ereignisketten: chains of events that form continuous or intermittent plotlines within the poem as a whole, according to the analytic-desultory method and the special cases. These plotlines can intertwine or become subordinate to one another so as to form a nexus of chains. This theory is also adopted by Krischer's techniques (see *angekündigte Verzweigung*).

false synchronism (*fehlerhafter* or *falscher Synchronismus*): the erroneous lengthening or synchronizing of a plotline or event in order to make it appear perfectly simultaneous with another, in fact longer, event or plotline. This is an error that, according to Zieliński, occurs frequently in the use of the analytic-desultory method. But, in fact, it demonstrates how false attempts at synchronizing the events of the Homeric epics really are.

fortschreitend: a progressive plotline in which events are taking place.

gleichmäßiger Vorgang: a regular, repeated or constant event, such as the rotation of a wheel. This is roughly equatable to a *temps mort*.

gleichzeitige Handlungen: simultaneous events or plotlines.

Nacheinander: succession, consecution.

narratology: the theory that holds that: (1) all narratives involve communication processes and (2) that narratives have a metaphysical aspect (variously called the fabula or the story) which is temporally ordered and realistically reconstructed in the reader's mind.

Nebeneinander: simultaneity; often used to refer to the mental conception of simultaneity.

problem of simultaneity: originally, the question of whether certain events were or were not conceived as simultaneous by Homer. This has been shown by Seeck (I.V.F) to be an unsound and unanswerable question. He reformulates the problem of simultaneity as the question of whether or not Homer actually depicts simultaneous events in his text.

psychologische Incompatibilitätsgesetz (also called: the law of succession, the law of parataxis, the continuity of time principle): Zieliński's Law in its original formulation; it stipulates that the poet is psychologically unable to represent two or more simultaneous events or plotlines *qua* simultaneous, and must instead employ one of the two main methods outlined by Zieliński (the analytic-desultory method and the reproducing-combining method).

reproducing-combining method: one of the three techniques for the representation of simultaneous events or plotlines; it depicts one of the events or plotlines in its entirety and then goes on to reconstitute the other one after it is complete. This reconstitution after the fact can be done directly by the narrator or can be left to the inference of the reader.

Plot A — x_3 - - x_4 - \
Plot B — x_1 — x_2 — x_3 — x_4 - etc.
Reconstructed Plot A

— =narrated plotline
- - =theoretical end of untold plotline
\
 x_n =elements common to both plotlines that can be used to reconstruct the untold plotline after its completion; this can be done either by the narrator or in direct speech, or it can also be left for the reader to infer.

special case or exception case: this designates a particular depiction of two events or plotlines (perhaps simultaneously conceived) as fully successive, one after the other. There is no explicit (or even implicit) simultaneity mentioned in these cases, but Zieliński believed that they were best explained as being originally simultaneous. Therefore, he devised an erroneous distinction between a real plot where events were originally simultaneous and an apparent plot where they are depicted as fully successive. The so-called exceptions do not really constitute exceptions to the Law at all, since they do not actually involve the (psychologically impossible) representation of simultaneous events. These cases simply specify the successive presentation of two *long* plotlines and so the term special case is the most preferable for designating them.

Real narration

Plot A —————

Plot B —————

Apparent narration

Plot A - - - - - / ————— etc.

Plot B ————— / - - - - - etc.

— =narrated plotline

- - =discontinued plotline

/ =narrative switch or link

stetig fortschreitend principle: the argument according to which events in the Homeric narrative *must be* purely successive and can only be *intended* as such. The observation that Homeric narrative is successive agrees with the structural explanations of Zieliński's Law, but the method that is used to derive this observation is fallaciously intentional.

temps morts (variously called: intercalary sequence, interruption sequence, fill-in technique, *Deckszene*): an undescribed passage which occurs between the beginning and the end of a *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*, and is usually filled in with a scene from another plotline. This phenomenon is a direct product of the analytic-desultory method and is especially frequent when a regular event such as *travel* is described, cf. e.g. *schol. ad* Λ 619-43: αὐτοὶ μὲν ῥ' ἀπέβησαν. καιρὸν δίδωσι τοῦ βαδίζειν Πατρόκλω. τὸ διάκενον οὖν τῆς ὁδοῦ πληροῖ. (bT, ex.) ταῦτα μέσον ἐνθείς. (b, ex.)

verharrend: a discontinued or retarded plotline, usually left in a *gleichmäßiger Vorgang*.

reaching-back method (*zurückgreifende Methode*): one of the three techniques for the representation of simultaneous events or plotlines. It is a wholly artificial method, which, contrary to the other two techniques, contravenes the Law. After having described a

particular plotline, the narrator *goes back into time* to narrate as *explicitly simultaneous* another plotline or event, which had originally occurred simultaneously with the first event or plotline. This method, according to Zieliński, is psychologically incompatible with human perception, because it involves an impossible step back in time.

Plot A - - - - V ———
Plot B ——— V - - - -

— =narrated plotline
- - =discontinued plotline
V =explicit step back in time

Technical Terms Adopted in This Thesis

character: an acting persona, identified by a specific name.

event: the narration of a physical (whether speech or deed) or a mental action, which can, and is often, caused by a specific character or group of characters.

interruption sequence/technique: (also called the interlace technique) this technique involves the intermittent narration of two (or more) plotlines, and demonstrates that the narrative is successive and can only focus on one plotline at a time (to the exclusion of all other plotlines). The narrative flashes back and forth between one plotline and the next (at varying frequencies and lengths). Essentially, one or more plotlines are discontinued or interrupted while another is being told. The discontinued plotline(s) can (but need not) be resumed further on in the narrative, having been left in abeyance until its/their resumption. This technique can be used to create various non-technical, aesthetic effects

(such as suspense, tension, etc.). The term interruption sequence represents a more accurate and less problematic way of referring to Zieliński's **analytic-desultory method**.

narration: the act of creating, constructing and furthering a narrative.

narrative: the overall scheme of primary plotlines and events in a poem. There are two Homeric narratives: the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.

plotline: the series of events pertaining to a specific character, group of characters or place (*locus operandi*).²⁸¹

primary: refers to that which is narrated by Homer (also called the Homeric narrator), who is the first authorial voice of both epics.

story: in our case, the complete text of the *Iliad* or that of the *Odyssey*.

summary/summarizing technique: this involves the concise narration of a few *faits saillants* of an event or plotline: a recapitulation for the purposes of resuming it (if it had been discontinued) or a heading for beginning it (if it will be told in more detail in the upcoming verses or if it is about to branch out into multiple plotlines). Essentially both of these functions are the same and can be referred to collectively as summaries. The summarizing technique represents certain aspects of Zieliński's reproducing-combining and reaching-back methods; it is also a better, more broad and practical term than Krischer's ramification technique. By definition, the summary is textually shorter than the event or plotline that it purports to describe and this concision ratio can be precisely

²⁸¹ Cf. Rimmon-Kenan (16): "A story-line is structured like the complex story, but unlike the latter it is restricted to one set of individuals."

measured. In some cases, events seem to be only presented in compressed format as summaries, thereby rendering this measurement ineffectual. The length of these compressed events can still be compared with the length of other regular events in the narrative.

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