Ancient Greek ekphrasis: Between description and narration

Koopman, N.

Citation for published version (APA):
4. The Shield of Heracles (Hes. Sc. 139-320)

4.1 Introduction
The next extant ekphrasis in ancient Greek Literature is found in the pseudo-Hesiodic Shield. The Shield is a small-scale epic poem of 480 hexameters, named after its central section which deals with Heracles’ shield. It is usually dated to the first third of the sixth century BC. The poem narrates an episode from the life of Heracles: the killing of Cycnus, a son of Ares; Ares himself is wounded, too. Heracles is portrayed throughout the poem in a positive light: Zeus has fathered Heracles as a protector against ruin for gods and for men (…ὡς ῥα θεοῖσιν / ἀνδράσι τ’ ἀλφηστῇσιν ἀρῆς ἀλκτῆρα φυτεύσαι, 28-9). By killing Cycnus, who robs travellers on their way to Delphi, Heracles lives up to this purpose.

The poem is generally regarded as a product of an oral tradition. In the words of Martin, “[s]tudy of heroic oral traditional literature in other cultures (…) will easily

---

1 I use the Loeb text (Most 2007); the translation has been extensively modified.
3 This is the currently scholarly consensus, for which see Bing 2012: 179 (who cites earlier literature on the poem’s dating).
4 The first 56 lines of the poem, which tell how Alcmene eventually gives birth to Iphicles and Heracles, are also found in Book 4 of the Catalogue of Women (see e.g. Ercolani and Rossi 2011: 99). For a brief overview of issues concerning the integration of this first part with the rest of the poem, see Stamatopoulou 2013: 273-4, note 5.
7 Lamberton 1988: 140 (“[t]he overall organization is a sufficient approximation of a huge compositional ring to suggest that it is an authentic product of the oral traditions of the Hesiodic bards”); Ercolani and Rossi 2011: 99 (“traditionelle mündliche Dichtung”).
show that the single episode, lasting a few hours in performance, and chosen by the
singer to fit the mood and politics of his immediate audience, is the basis for live
composition in performance. Or in other words, the 480-line, single-episode Aspis looks
much more like an oral poem than does the Iliad.8 The fact that the Shield is oral
poetry has consequences for its understanding. Thus, the idea that the Shield is a mere
imitation of Achilles’ shield in ll. 18.478-608 – a verdict that goes back to Aristophanes
of Byzantium – must be rejected.9 It is doubtful whether in the sixth century BC fixed
texts of the Iliad existed, to which another text, that of the Aspis, could refer.10 This is
very much a Hellenistic point of view. Rather, it is more plausible that both texts came
into being in a still-fluid oral tradition, which contains certain stock formulae and
themes.11 One common element in the tradition might well have been a shield
ekphrasis, which could serve as a showpiece of the poet.12

8 Martin 2005: 156; Bing 2012: 181 approves.
9 See Andersen 1969 [1974]: 10-1. Aristophanes’ verdict is found in hypothesis A (quoted in note 11
below).
10 Of course, the author of the Shield may have heard performances of (parts of) the Iliad.
11 Thus Bing 2012: 187: “(...) the relationship between these works in their original Archaic setting
might have been less a matter of one fixed text’s allusion to another than of each poem’s
dependence upon a common reservoir of formulae and themes. By Hellenistic times, however, the pervasive intertextuality between the Aspis,
Hesiod, and Homer came to be understood in terms of deliberate emulation of one written work
by another, a later piece modeling itself on a specific antecedent; that much is clear from the
report in the ancient hypothesis that Aristophanes of Byzantium doubted the Hesiodic
authorship of the Aspis because it was the work of someone attempting to imitate the Homeric
shield (διὸ καὶ ὑπώπτευκεν Ἀριστοφάνης ὡς οὐκ οὖσαν αὐτὴν Ἡσιόδου, ἀλλὰ ἐτέρῳ τινὸς τὴν
Ὀμηρικὴν ἀσπίδα μιμήσασθαι προαιρουμένου). Hellenistic readers, in other words, reinterpreted
the relationship between these poems in terms of their own readerly preoccupations, amongst
which imitation and allusion were prominent” (emphasis in the original).
12 So Andersen 1969 [1974]: 11-2: “the tradition underlying the two poems may have contained in
its store of set pieces, among others, the topics ‘description of an elaborate warrior-shield, made
by Hephaestus’”; and Martin 2005: 173: “[t]he Aspis...is most likely to be akin to the Iliadic shield
not as an inferior copy to a superior model, but as two instantiations of a tour de force that
rhapsodes could choose to do in performance: the ‘extended armament-ekphrasis’”. Martin
refers to Revermann 1998: 37, who states that the Homeric shield ekphrasis “(...) would be ideal
for separate recitation, as an encore for example”. For a similar idea of the shield of Achilles as a
showpiece, cf. Minchin 2001: 130: “(...) a composition, such as the description of the shield of
Achilleus or the palace of Alkinous, can be a showpiece: the poet has prepared in advance a
The poet of the *Shield* has indeed composed his shield ekphrasis as a showpiece: Heracles’ shield is noisier, more sensational, more gruesome, but above all bigger than Achilles’ shield. It takes up no less than 181 lines, which amounts to almost 38% of the poem. Accidentally, it is also 38% longer than Achilles’ shield (131 lines). Some scholars even argue that the shield ekphrasis is the *raison d’être* of the whole poem. This goes perhaps too far, but the length of the shield ekphrasis is certainly striking. This length is acquired by inclusion and expansion. In this respect, the ekphrasis is not different from the rest of the poem, the aesthetics of which could be summed up by the credo “more is more”. For example, the fight between Cycnus and Ares is preceded by no less than four similes, increasing in length (374-9, 386-92, 393-401, and 402-12). The poem also contains a number of lines which are almost identical. Many of these occur in the special composition, which he may use if the occasion is right and the audience responsive. (...) a sustained descriptive piece offers listeners diversion from the narrative mode; and it provides an occasion for the poet’s self-promotion.

Cf. Scott 1994: 5-6: “[i]f the shield is designed to strike horror into the hearts of Herakles’ opponents, it is also meant to dazzle and amaze its literary audience. In this sense, the ‘Shield of Herakles’ is a much more self-conscious literary construct than Homer’s ekphrasis and much more aware of its rhetorical role as entertainment. The author continually stresses the shield’s function as spectacle (...)”.

E.g. Mazon [1928] 1964: 125: “[c]e poète a pris pour thème la légende de Kycnos parce qu’il voulait décrire un bouclier et que, dans le cycle des légendes d’Héraclès, le combat avec Kycnos était le seul où Héraclès combattît avec l’armement complet d’un guerrier épique” ; Mazon is followed by Debray-Genette 1988: 215: “le récit semble avoir été écrit pour la description”.

Martin 2005: 164. Cf. also van der Valk 1966: “[s]i cet auteur est un poète faible, qui n’est pas doué de beaucoup de talent, on comprendra qu’il cherche à *éblouir son auditoire par la quantité*, parce qu’il ne sait pas *l’impressionner par la qualité*” (emphasis mine). Van der Valk here cautiously expresses what many scholars have stated, that the poet of the *Shield* was not a very good one. For an overview of such opinions, see Martin 2005: 154-5 (“Who says the Aspis (...) is trash? Just about every Hellenist who bothers to mention it”, ibid.: 154).

Cf. West [1949] 2003, who states that “[d]isproportion is characteristic of the work; the Homeric apparatus of arming, divine machination, brave speeches, and long similes is lavished on an encounter in which two blows are struck in all”.

See e.g. Janko 1986: 39: “[t]here can be absolutely no doubt that in places there are epic doublets incorporated into the text: the case is strongest at (i) 201b-203a = 203b-205a; (ii) 209b-211a = 211b-213a; (iii) 281-2 = 283; (iv) 293-5 = 296-7 + 299-300; (v) 402-4 = 405-11. The alternative versions of these passages have every appearance of oral variants, and are no doubt owed to rhapsodic performances of a text that attained a real popularity in later sixth-century Athens”.

---

Special composition, which he may use if the occasion is right and the audience responsive. (...) a sustained descriptive piece offers listeners diversion from the narrative mode; and it provides an occasion for the poet’s self-promotion.”

Cf. Scott 1994: 5-6: “[i]f the shield is designed to strike horror into the hearts of Herakles’ opponents, it is also meant to dazzle and amaze its literary audience. In this sense, the ‘Shield of Herakles’ is a much more self-conscious literary construct than Homer’s ekphrasis and much more aware of its rhetorical role as entertainment. The author continually stresses the shield’s function as spectacle (...).”

E.g. Mazon [1928] 1964: 125: “[c]e poète a pris pour thème la légende de Kycnos parce qu’il voulait décrire un bouclier et que, dans le cycle des légendes d’Héraclès, le combat avec Kycnos était le seul où Héraclès combattît avec l’armement complet d’un guerrier épique” ; Mazon is followed by Debray-Genette 1988: 215: “le récit semble avoir été écrit pour la description”.

Martin 2005: 164. Cf. also van der Valk 1966: “[s]i cet auteur est un poète faible, qui n’est pas doué de beaucoup de talent, on comprendra qu’il cherche à *éblouir son auditoire par la quantité*, parce qu’il ne sait pas *l’impressionner par la qualité*” (emphasis mine). Van der Valk here cautiously expresses what many scholars have stated, that the poet of the *Shield* was not a very good one. For an overview of such opinions, see Martin 2005: 154-5 (“Who says the Aspis (...) is trash? Just about every Hellenist who bothers to mention it”, ibid.: 154).

Cf. West [1949] 2003, who states that “[d]isproportion is characteristic of the work; the Homeric apparatus of arming, divine machination, brave speeches, and long similes is lavished on an encounter in which two blows are struck in all”.

See e.g. Janko 1986: 39: “[t]here can be absolutely no doubt that in places there are epic doublets incorporated into the text: the case is strongest at (i) 201b-203a = 203b-205a; (ii) 209b-211a = 211b-213a; (iii) 281-2 = 283; (iv) 293-5 = 296-7 + 299-300; (v) 402-4 = 405-11. The alternative versions of these passages have every appearance of oral variants, and are no doubt owed to rhapsodic performances of a text that attained a real popularity in later sixth-century Athens”.

---
shield ekphrasis. Most scholars regard these lines as interpolations. Yet the notion of interpolation is highly problematic in an oral tradition. Although these nearly-identical lines may strike a modern reader as superfluous, it is best to regard them as an integral part of the text. This chapter focuses on the ekphrasis of Heracles’ shield (139-320), and aims to establish which prototypically descriptive and/or narrative elements are present (section 4.3). There is considerably less scholarship on this ekphrasis than on Achilles’ shield, but the question of the narrativity or descriptivity of Heracles’ shield has been addressed (see section 4.2). After the conclusion (section 4.4), the shield’s visualization is briefly discussed (section 4.5).

4.2 Shield of Heracles: Description, Narration or Both? A Brief State of the Art
As is clear from section 3.2, most scholars are agreed that the shield of Achilles has many narrative elements. When it comes to the shield of Heracles, the picture is different, as scholars seem to regard this ekphrasis mostly as descriptive. Thus Schmale writes:

Im Gegensatz zum homerischen Schild lassen sich kaum narrative Elemente (nur vereinzelt gibt es z.B. Hinweise auf Akustisches) feststellen, stattdessen werden stillstehende Tableauszenen geboten. Psychische Vorgänge sind an äußeren Gesten erkennbar gemacht, und was als sukzessives Geschehen im Text präsentiert wird, ist – wie bei der Kriegsszenerie (238ff.) – als Nebeneinander auf der Abbildung vorstellbar. Auch bei besonders spannenden Szenen wie der Jagd (301ff.) wird nicht die Gelegenheit genutzt, die Szene narrativ auszugestalten.21

This is no surprise, since it is especially descriptions that can be easily extended. See e.g. Cobley 1986: 399 (who states that descriptions are “indefinitely extendable”) and Wolf 2007: 51-2. For this point in connection with the Shield, see also Dubel 1997b. See the discussion in Martin 2005: 168-70. He argues that only one of the several pairs does not make sense as it stands, 282-3 (ibid.: 168). However, we may compare Dornseiff 1933: 51, who states “[i]ch habe sämtliche angeblichen Zusätze oder Doppelfassungen geprüft und glaube nicht einen einzigen Fall. Alles stammt wie die Verse 51-56 vom Verfasser. Sie sind seine persönliche Note” (emphasis mine). Indeed, lines 282-3 can stand; only line 298, which is not part of a doublet, must be rejected (see further below). Schmale 2004: 113, emphasis mine.
Schmale’s remarks seem to go back to Friedländer, who regarded the Shield as a step forward in the technique of description. According to Friedländer, the poet of the Shield is very much concerned with the reality of the image, on account of which he avoids, or only scarcely refers to, non-representable elements such as movement and thought. The poet thus simplifies the image, but also enriches it with details fitting for an image, as well as with a clearer spatial arrangement of the various parts.

Friedländer also notes that the poet frequently draws attention to the contrast between art and reality by stating that the images on the shield merely resemble reality.

Other scholars have drawn attention to the narrative aspects of the shield of Heracles. Palm does not agree with Friedländer that everything that is non-representable is eliminated. He argues that “[i]n den mehr homerisch anklingenden Partien ist aber das beschreibende Element nicht so stark fühlbar; die Ekphrase nähert sich hier ein wenig der Erzählung. Oder richtiger: Die Beschreibung beginnt als Ekphrase von plastischer, recht statuarischer Kunst und endet als Ekphrase von gemalten Bildern; eine solche steht immer der Erzählung näher (…)”. Thus, it is especially in those lines which resemble the shield of Achilles (i.e. 237b-317) that narrative elements are found. Lamberton, too, emphasizes the similarities between the

22 Friedländer 1912: 11. Although the poet sometimes refers to sounds (“ein(en) Rückfall in die homerische Weise”), Friedländer concludes that “bei Hesiod ein bewußter Fortschritt der beschreibenden Technik vorliegt”, and that the poet of the Shield “gehört die Zukunft, und wenn ein Dichter unserer Tage ein Kunstwerk beschreibt, so tut er das in hesiodischer, nicht in homerischer Weise”.

23 For the idea that the poet of the Shield is concerned with describing an image on a work of art (and not reality, as is often argued in the case of Achilles’ shield), see also Van Groningen 1958: 117 (“il n’oublie jamais qu’il décrit des représentations”) and Elliger 1975: 41 (“[w]enn die jüngere Beschreibung trotz ihrer grelleren Farben so viel statischer wirkt als die ältere, dann nicht zuletzt deswegen, weil ihr Dichter nicht eine Schilderung des Lebens, sondern einer bildlichen Darstellung eines Kunstwerkes geben wollte (...”).

24 Friedländer 1912: 10 (quoted in section 4.5 below).


26 Palm 1965-6: 125. Palm concludes that the poet “(...) ist ein sehr guter Beschreiber; zumindest hat er sich ganz darauf eingestellt, eine gute Beschreibung zu machen; die Vorkommnisse interessieren ihn weniger. Er scheint damit mitten in der Entwicklung zu einer mehr beschreibenden als erzählenden Literatur zu stehen” (ibid.: 126).
two shields: “(...) both have a preference for narrative, readily elaborating static images into running stories that imply colorful movement”.27

As is clear from the remarks by Palm and Lamberton, the narrator of the Shield focuses on the res ipsae;28 in this respect, the shield of Heracles resembles the shield of Achilles: the images are, at least partially, of a narrative nature. If we are to believe Schmale and Friedländer, the poet of the Shield focuses but rarely on elements which are non-representable, whereas Homer does this more often.29 This they regard as an avoidance of narrative. I thus conclude that there is no consensus on the shield’s narrativity or descriptivity. In the next section, this issue will be investigated anew.

4.3.1 Shield of Heracles: Its Descriptivity and Narrativity. Overview of Tenses
In this section, I will establish which discourse modes are found in the text. The shield of Heracles (139-320a) is part of Heracles’ arming scene (122-320a). For my analysis of tenses, lines 122-38 are also taken into consideration, as well as the lines immediately after the shield ekphrasis (320b-26). In lines 122-38 and 320b-26 we find an alternation of imperfects and aorists. These lines contain a sequence of events, which consists of Heracles’ successive acts of arming (122-38), and his jumping on the chariot, Iolaus’ guiding it, and Athena’s approach (320b-26). In the ekphrasis proper (139-320a) imperfects and pluperfects predominate, but aorists and two present tenses occur, too.30

27 Lamberton 1988: 141.
28 For the focus on the res ipsae, see Becker 1992: 16–7 (= Becker 1995: 33–4). Thoughts and motives of the figures are included, as well as movement and sound. Becker is unjustly criticized by Schmale 2004: 111–2, note 46: “Becker deutet jedoch den Herakles-Schild zu sehr im Sinne seiner Interpretation des homerischen Achill-Schildes und übersieht dabei, dass die narrative Umsetzung der visuellen Präsentation in der Aspis so nicht stattfindet”.
29 See section 3.2 for the views of Friedländer and Schmale on the Homeric ekphrasis.
30 The following tenses have not been counted because they do not occur in main clauses: ἔδωκε (125), ἔμελλε (126), εἴρυτο (138), εἴλετο (149), φέροντε (150), φοβέσκον (162), φέροντε (163), μάχοιτο (164), ἄθον, μέμαρπεν (245), μεμάποιεν (252), ἀφέσαντο (255). Κατενήθοδεν (269), in form a perfect, has been counted as pluperfect because the verb form functions as such.
If we look more closely at 139-320a, and count only tenses that refer to the images on the shield, the following table results:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>122-38</th>
<th>139-320a</th>
<th>320b-26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aorists</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperfects</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pluperfects</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>presents</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1: use of tenses in main clauses in 122-326

In lines 139-320a, only seven aorists occur that refer to the images. Three aorists occur in a cluster (262-3); the others are scattered throughout the text. On account of the aorists in 262-3, these lines can be said to be in the diegetic discourse mode. Lines 252-7 also contain the diegetic mode. The rest of the text is in the descriptive discourse mode. As far as discourse modes are concerned, then, the shield of Heracles is similar to the shield of Achilles (for which see section 3.3.1). In other words, their textual organization is largely similar, viz. descriptive. Yet there is one important difference: in Homer, it is suggested by the repeated actions of Hephaestus that both fabula and story time progress. Heracles’ shield, however, is finished, which means that lines 140-320 constitute a pause; only story time advances.

31 The following aorists have not been counted: εἷλε (139, referring to an act of Heracles), ἔρρηξε, ἔθλασε (140, anterior aorists referring to the history of the shield), τεῦξεν (219, anterior aorist referring to the making of the shield by Hephaestus), ποίησε (319, anterior aorist referring to the making of the shield); the present tenses (δύνουσι, 151; πύθεται, 153) do neither refer to the images.

32 πλῆτο (146), μελάνθησαν (167), ἔθεντο (261), δράκον (262), ἰσώσαντο (263), μελάνθησαν (300), ἐπηνύσθη (311).

33 See further my analysis in section 4.3.2, 11.
In the next section, the images will be discussed separately. As a rule, the text will first be discussed, after which I turn to the images.

4.3.2 Shield of Heracles: Its Descriptivity and Narrativity. The Images (144-317) and the Lines surrounding the Images (139-43; 318-21)

In Homeric arming scenes, the shield always comes fourth (as the penultimate item, after the sword and before the helmet), but the narrator of the *Shield* saves Heracles’ shield for last.\(^{34}\) It has the following images depicted on it:\(^{35}\)

1. Fearful snake [in the middle] (144-53)
2. Catalogue of demonic figures: Pursuit, Rally; Tumult, Murder, Slaughter; Strife, Battle-Din, Fate (154-60)
3. Twelve serpent heads (161-7)
4. Battle of wild boars and lions (168-77)
5. Battle of Lapiths and Centaurs (178-90)
6. Ares with Fear and Rout (191-6)
7. Athena (197-200)
8. Group of immortals; Apollo (201-6)
9. Harbour with dolphins and fisherman (207-15)
10. Perseus and the Gorgons (216-37a)
11. Mortals at war (237b-70a)
   a. (237b-48) Men at fight [above Perseus and the Gorgons]
   b. (248-57; 261-3) Keres [behind them]
   c. (258-60) Clotho, Lachesis, Atropos [next to them]
   d. (264-70a) Death-Mist [beside them]
12. Mortals in peace time (270b-313)
   a. (270b-80) Festivities [beside Death-Mist]
   b. (281-85) Revel [on the other side from there]
   c. (285-6) Men on horseback [in front of the city]

---

\(^{34}\) For the differences in the order of elements, see Russo [1950] 1965: 102-3. Russo suggests that the shield is mentioned last in order to pass directly to the following description ("in modo da passarne alla descrizione", ibid.).

\(^{35}\) The overview is based on Byre 1976: 74-6 (who distinguishes twelve scenes, because he takes Ares and Athena together) and Van Groningen 1958: 116-7 (who distinguishes fourteen scenes; he divides 270b-313 into two scenes, "scènes de ville" (270-85) and "scènes de campagne" (286-313)).
d. (286-301) Ploughing, harvesting, wine-making  
e. (301-2) Boxing and wrestling  
f. (302-4) Hare-hunting  
g. (305-13) Chariot racing [beside them]  

13. Ocean [around the rim] (314-7)

As the overview makes clear, more images are depicted on the shield of Heracles than on the shield of Achilles, which has nine. In addition, these images are more crowded. The narrator of the *Shield* also uses more spatial indicators. The first image is located in the middle of the shield (ἐν μέσσῳ δέ, 144). The next images (2-10) are all introduced with ἐν δέ followed by a verb that designates a state.36 After line 237a, the narrator uses other spatial indicators to introduce a new image.37 In 237 and 270, the change to a new image occurs mid-verse.38 On the basis of the fact that the narrator starts in the middle of the shield and ends with its rim, it has been inferred that the description progresses from the centre outwards.39

Scholars have also tried to divide the images into coherent groups. A distinction often made is that between non-Homeric (114-237a) and Homeric scenes (237b-317).40 Toohey states that the shield ekphrasis is organized around Perseus, and divides the images into three groups: 139-215, 216-37a, and 237b-320.41 Van der Valk also distinguishes three groups, 144-67, 168-200, and 201-313.42 Yet the text offers no clue for any such grouping. Rather, the different images are enumerated (with δέ), just as in the

36 ἐν δὲ…τέτυκτο (154), ἐν δὲ…ἐσαύν (161), ἐν δὲ…ἐσαύν (168), ἐν δὲ ἦν (178), ἐν δὲ…ἔστασαν (194), ἐν δέ (ellipsis of ἦν, 197), ἐν δὲ ἦν (201), ἐν δὲ…ἐτέτυκτο (207-8), ἐν δὲ ἦν (216).  
37 οἵ δ᾿ ὑπὲρ αὐτέων (“and they, above them”) in 237; παρὰ δ᾿ εὔπυργος πόλις ἀνδρῶν (“and beside [it was] a well-towered city of men”) in 270; ἀμφὶ δ᾿ ἴτυν (“and around the rim…”) in 314.  
38 Toohey 1988: 23 states that “[w]here in v. 139-215 the narrative is paragraphed, imprecise, almost staccato, the narrative of v. 237b-320 dovetails or enjambs”.  
39 Byre 1976: 77: “a progression from center outwards is clearly implied”. This outward movement is also assumed in the case of the shield of Achilles (see e.g. Edwards 1991: 206: “[i]n the usual view, the heavenly bodies (...) occupy the central position, surrounding the boss (if there is one), and the following scenes occupy successive bands moving outwards to the rim”).  
40 See e.g. Friedländer 1907: 109-11 (who does note that some scenes have no counterpart, such as e.g. 12e-g).  
42 van der Valk 1966: 454-65. The first part consists of apotropaic images, the second of images of combat, and the third images of life in its diverse aspects.
shield of Achilles, the difference being that the narrator of the *Shield* uses spatial adverbs, too. In what follows, I will discuss certain images together, but this does not mean that I therefore consider them to be a distinct group.

0. Heracles grasps his shield (139-43)  

χερσί γε μὴν σάκος ἐβα μυκαιόλον, σοδὲ τὶς αὐτὸ  

140 οὔτ’ ἐρρήξε βαλὼν οὔτ’ ἔθλασε, θαῦμα ἰδέσται:  

πάν μὲν γὰρ κύκλῳ τίτανῳ λευκῷ ήλεκτρῷ  

ηλέκτρῳ θ’ ὑπολαμπὲς ἔην  

λαμπόντως, κυάνου δὲ διὰ πτύχες ἕληλαντο

With his hands he grasped his shield, shot with many colours, and no one had ever broken through it by striking it nor had smashed it, a wonder to see; for the whole thing glittered in a circle with gypsum and white ivory and electrum, and shone with gleaming gold, and dark blue stripes had been driven through it.

This first passage, which does not refer to any image on the shield, has both a narrative textual organization (139-40) and a descriptive one (141-3). I start with lines 141-3, which are wholly devoted to the *opus ipsum*. The verbs designate states (ἔην, ἠλήλαντο).

Textual progression is spatial (δία, 143). The narrator starts by mentioning the shield as a whole (πᾶν, 141) and its shape (κύκλῳ), after which he enumerates the various materials of which the shield is made. The brilliant appearance of the shield is

---


44 I have altered the punctuation in 140 (Most punctuates οὔτ’ ἐρρηξε βαλὼν οὔτ’ ἔθλασε, διά πτύχες ἕληλαντο). The LSJ translate τίτανος with gypsum, but the LfgrE (s.v. τίτανος B) note that this cannot be meant here, because gypsum is brittle and easily washed out. "Ηλέκτρον is probably an alloy of gold and silver, rather than amber (so LfgrE s.v. ἕλεκτρον B). See for the materials further Fittschen 1973: 20 and Chiariini 2012: 50-60. The πτύχες do not refer to the inner layers of the shield (as in Achilles’ shield in 18.481), but to "stripes" or “bands” on the shield (see LfgrE s.v. πτύξ B 1, and Myres 1941: 21-2). They are thus similar to the δέκα οἴμοι...μέλανος κυάνων on Agamemnon’s corselet in 11.24 (so Schwarz 1932: 43). For the difficulties involved with διελαύνω (143), see the LfgrE s.v. ἐλαύνω B II 1: “entweder ‘Streifen...waren hindurchgezogen’ oder...”
emphasized (ὑπολαμπές, φαεινῷ, λαμπόμενον). Neer even argues that the shield casts
light.\(^4\) The occurrence of the visual details – the radiance and the colours of the shield
– make lines 141-3 prototypically descriptive.

On account of the three aorists, lines 139-40 realize the diegetic discourse mode.
The first aorist, ἐιλε (139), refers to an event that is part of the fabula. By having Heracles
grasp it, the narrator introduces the main theme of the description, the shield (σάκος).\(^4\)
The shield is called παναίολον (139) on account of its many colours and materials
(mentioned in 141-3).\(^6\) Heracles’ shield is already finished. This means that it can have a
history, which indeed it has: “no one had ever broken through it by striking it nor had
smashed it” (139-40). Whereas in other ekphraseis the narrator deals with the maker
and/or provenance of the object in question, in the Shield the history of the object’s use
is narrated: it has never been broken or smashed.\(^5\) This indicates that Heracles’ shield is
invulnerable, and perhaps even magical.\(^5\) The maker of the shield, Hephaestus, will not
be named until line 219.\(^5\)

Mißverständnis von Σ 481; this latter suggestion is made by Russo [1950] 1965: 107-8. According
to Chiarini 2012: 59-60, the πτύχες do refer to the inner layers of the shield; she states that κύανος
refers to black copper, and draws attention to μέν (141) and δέ (143): the μέν-clause refers to the
surface of the shield, and the δέ-clause to its interior. This interpretation solves the difficulties
with διελαύνω.

\(^4\) See Faber 2000: 52. Faber notes that this brilliance is expanded in A.R. 1. 725-726, and that
ἑλεκτρον “is associated in early Greek literature with the sun’s brilliance” (for which he refers to
the LfgrE s.v. ἕλεκτρον).

\(^5\) Neer 2010: 59-60: “(…) it is radiant. (…) Herakles’ shield does not simply reflect light: it actively
casts it”.

\(^6\) According to Bershadsky 2010: 23, the fact that the shield is called σάκος (and not ἀσπίς)
indicates that Heracles will be victorious in battle.


\(^5\) For the history of the other objects in this study, see Theoc. Id. 1.39-42, A.R. 1.722-4, and Mosch.
Eur. 39-42. In Q.S. 5.3-5 Achilles’ shield does have a history (…ἀμφὶ δὲ πάντῃ / δαίδαλα
μαρμαίρεσκεν ὅσα σθένος Ἡφαίστοιο / ἀμφὶ σάκος ποίησε δρασύφρονος Αἰακίδαο, “and all round the
cunning works were gleaming, which the mighty Hephaestus had made on the shield of the
bold-minded Achilles”), as does Dionysus’ shield in Nonnus (D. 25.386b-93; see on this shield


\(^5\) Earlier critics were bothered by this fact, for which see Byre 1976: 72-3.
By using the phrase θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι (140), the narrator anticipates unbelief on the part of the narratee, who might be baffled by the statement that the shield is invulnerable.53 The phrase creates a ring with 318, where the shield is “a wonder to see even for deep-thundering Zeus” (θαῦμα ἰδεῖν καὶ Ζηνὶ βαρυκτύπῳ).54 The phrase θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι (140) also elicits the lines beginning with γάρ (141-3), thereby starting the description of the images.55 These are not introduced as a single main theme: a phrase such as δαίδαλα πολλά (Il. 18.482; A.R. 1.729; Mosch. Eur. 43) is lacking.

1-3. Snake, Demonic Figures, and Serpent Heads (144-67)56

ἐν μέσσῳ δὲ δράκοντος ἔην φόβος οὐ τι φατείος,  
αυτῶν, ἀστέα δὲ σφι περὶ ῥινοῖο σαπείσης
ἐν δὲ Προΐωξίς τε Παλίωξίς τε 
τῶν καὶ ψυχαὶ μὲν χθόνα δύνουσ', 
δεινὸν δερκομένη καναχῇσί τε βεβρυχυῖα.

53 The phrase has a similar force as τὸ δὴ περὶ θαῦμα τέτυκτο in Il. 18.549 (for which see section 3-3-3: 3).
54 On ring composition in the Shield, see Byrne 1976: 71-3 and Thalmann 1984: 9-10.
55 van Groningen 1958: 114: “[c]’est l’expression θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι qui constitue le point d’attache de la description qui suit et qui commence par une phrase avec γάρ”.
56 Verbs between square brackets have not been counted in the analysis of tense. I read δὲ δράκοντος ἔην φόβος in 144 with the manuscripts, not δ’ ἀδάμαντος ἔην Φόβος, a reading deduced from the scholia (for which see Russo [1950] 1965: 109).
In the middle was a fearful snake, terrible, glaring backwards with eyes shining like fire. Its mouth was filled also with white teeth, terrible, dreadful, and over its frightful forehead was flying to and fro terrible strife, who intensifies the battle of men, cruel one, who takes away the mind and sense of any men (150) who wage open war against Zeus’ son. Their souls too go down beneath the earth to Hades, [the souls] of themselves, and their bones, after the flesh has decayed around them, rot away on the black earth under parching Sirius. Upon it were wrought Pursuit and Rally, (155) upon it were raging Tumult and Murder and Slaughter, upon it [was rushing] Strife, upon it was rushing Battle-din, upon it deadly Fate, holding one who was alive but freshly wounded, another who was unwounded, was dragging another who was dead by the feet through the battle. Around her shoulders she was wearing a cloak, dark red with the blood of men, (160) while glaring terribly and bellowing with a clanging sound. And upon it were the heads of terrible snakes, horrible, twelve of them, who frightened the tribes of any men on the earth who waged open war against Zeus’ son. Of their teeth too there was a grinding, whenever (165) Amphitryon’s son fought. They were shining, these marvellous works; and it was as though there were spots to be seen on the terrible snakes, [which were] (dark) blue along their backs, and their jaws had become dark.

The first three images on the shield are designed to strike terror into Heracles’ opponents, as is clear from lines 146-50 and 162-3. Two images of snakes (144-7 and 161-7) frame an image with symbolic monsters (154-60). The images are apotropaic, such as one expects to find on a shield. In this respect Heracles’ shield differs from Achilles’ shield, which lacks such an apotropaic section.

The text which represents these three images contains a mixture of various tenses. The imperfects, pluperfects and omnitemporal present tenses are all associated with the descriptive discourse mode, but the aorists in 146 (πλῆτο) and 167 (μελάνθησαν) are not. As I shall argue below, these aorists can be accounted for within the descriptive...
discourse mode. I also draw attention to the subordinate temporal clause 164-5. I conclude that the text has a largely descriptive structure.

The first image (144-53) depicts a fearful snake (δράκοντος...φόβος, 144).\(^6\) It is terrible (οὔ τι φατειός, 144),\(^6\) and glares backwards with eyes shining like fire (ἔμπαλιν...δεδορκώς, 145).\(^6\) The narrator uses an aorist (πλῆτο, 146) to indicate that its mouth was full of white teeth; another aorist occurs in line 167 (μελάνθησαν; this form recurs in line 300).\(^6\) It has been argued that these aorists are used in the sense of a pluperfect, because the pluperfects of both verbs are not found in Archaic epic.\(^6\) It is

---

\(^6\) According to Russo [1950] 1965: 109, δράκοντος...φόβος equals φοβερὸς δράκων (for this use he compares E. Ph. 1120, but see Mastronarde 1994: 465). For what a δράκων is, see Ogden 2013: 2-4; and 3, note 6 for a list of serpents decorating arms. Heracles has battled with many serpents, for which see ibid.: 193-5. On the shield, the serpents fight on Heracles’ side.

\(^6\) The \textit{LfgrE} translate οὔ τι φατειός with ‘(‘wovon man nicht reden darf =) schrecklich, grässlich’ (s.v. φατειός B); similar phrases in 161 (οὔ τι φατειῶν) and 230 (οὐ φαταῖ). Becker 1992: 19 emphasises the original sense of the words (‘not in any way expressible’), and argues that ‘[i]n such acknowledgements that some phenomena are indescribable, the focus of the description becomes the poet’s attempt to turn visible images into word. These expressions of inexpressibility suggest not only the mediator (descrimer), as do expressions of wonder, but also the medium (language)’. Differently again Neer 2010: 60, for whom ‘the sight of ‘unspeakable’ fear [Neer reads δ’ ἀδάμαντος ἔην Φόβος] renders the beholder mute, like an image – ‘silent poetry,’ as Simonides puts it”.

\(^6\) For a discussion of ἔμπαλιν, see Chiarini 2012: 65-6, who notes that ἔμπαλιν can also mean “contrariwise, the opposite way” (\textit{LSJ} s.v. ἔμπαλιν II), in which case the snake would be looking at Heracles’ opponents. The \textit{LfgrE} refer to Myres 1941: 23, note 29 for arguments against this interpretation.

\(^6\) They differ from the aorists in the shield of Achilles, which provide background information that is not depicted on the shield. See further 3.3.3.3, 2b for a discussion of the aorists in the Homeric shield ekphrasis.

\(^6\) Russo [1950] 1965: 110 notes that the aorist ‘(...) fa certa difficoltà in un contesto descrittivo. Saranno mancate al poeta le forme del piuuccoperfetto, ché altrove viene sempre usato l’imperfetto e il piuuccoperfetto (...)’. The idea that the aorists are used as pluperfects is derived from Schwarz 1932: 63, who comments on the aorists in 146 and 167 that “[a]c ne de eventu quidem agitur sed de condicione, cui nihil aliud nisi plusquamperfectum adaptatum sit. Tamen specie tantum hanc legem poeta migravit, nam omnino non suppobetab perfecta a verbis πιμπλημί 'sich fuellen' et μελαίνομαι 'sich schwaerzen' derivata. Itaque aoristis plusquamperfectorum loco uti coactus est".
preferable, however, to analyse them as anterior aorists: πλῆτο is intransitive ("had been/was filled"); μελάνθησαν is passive ("had become dark").

In lines 147b-8, the narrator focuses on Eris, who is flying over the snake’s forehead. According to Russo, the pluperfect πεπότητο in 148 indicates that the image is static. The perfect of ποτάομαι may have present sense, which means that πεπότητο can equal an imperfect. The verb has, furthermore, iterative-frequentative force. The verb, then, refers to the res ipse. It could be the case that the image is static, and that it merely suggests iterative movement. It could also be argued that Eris really flying above the shield, in which case the movement is not imagined by the narrator, but real. Though this may seem improbable, the snakes in lines 163-4 really produce sound, and Perseus in lines 216-8 is really moving.

In the remainder of this passage (148b-53), the narrator moves away from what is depicted on the shield. With the participle clause κορύσσουσα κλόνον ἀνδρῶν ("who intensifies the battle of men", 148) the narrator indicates that Eris makes the battle more savage. The narrator uses an exclamation, σχετλίη (148), to emphasize her cruel nature. The following relative clause, containing a gnomic aorist (εἵλετο, 149) and a distributive-iterative optative (φέροιεν, 150), indicates that Eris takes away the mind and

---

66 LSJ s.v. ποτάομαι A and LfgrE s.v. ποτάομαι, ποτέομαι B.
67 So LfgrE s.v. ποτάομαι, ποτέομαι B; they translate “fly (about), flit, flutter” and add “at least mostly of erratic, shifting movement”.
69 For the meaning of κορύσσουσα κλόνον ἀνδρῶν, I follow Brügger, Stoevesandt, and Visser 2003: 86 (ad Il 2.273, πόλεμον... κορύσσων), who take the phrase to mean ‘to intensify battle’, and who note that is used similarly in Sc 148 and 198 (“wohl wie ‘Hes.’ Sc. 148 u. 198 zu verstehen: ‘den Kampf anspitzend’, erregend, intensivierend’). This meaning is proposed by Leumann 1950: 210; cf. also Kirk 1985: 144 (ad Il 2.273, “bringing war to a head”). Although Brügger et al. note that the LfgrE propose a different meaning, the LfgrE also translates with “d[en] Kampf erregen” (s.v κορύσσω B).
sense of any of Heracles' opponents (οἵτινες, 150). This probably means that Heracles' enemies lose their senses, so that Heracles can easily kill them. Lines 151-3, which describe what happens to those who are killed by Heracles, thus arise naturally out of what precedes. The narrator uses two omnitemporal present tenses (δύνουσι, 151; πύθεται, 153). He thereby indicates that this terrible fate always befalls those who wage war against Heracles.

The second passage (154-60) contains an enumeration of eight subthemes, personified figures of battle. Only the appearance of the last figure is described. Προϊωξις and Παλίωξις are Pursuit and Pursuit-in-turn; they symbolize the constant turning of the tide of battle. "Ομαδὸς is the Din of battle, Φόνος is Murder, and Άνδροκτασίη is Slaughter. "Ερις is Strife, Κυδοιμός is the Din of battle, and Κήρ is Fate. The repetition of (near) identical figures, such as "Ομαδὸς and Κυδοιμός, has bothered scholars. Yet repetition is typical of the narrator of the Shield, who often adds details in the form of triplets.

The first pair of figures is introduced with the pluperfect τέτυκτο (154), and the triplet in 155 with the pluperfect δεδήει. The pluperfect τέτυκτο refers to the opus ipsum.
but δεδήει to the res ipsae.\footnote{The LfgrE translate δεδήει with “wütete” (s.v. δαίω B 1).} The focus on the res ipsae continues in the following lines (156-9): two imperfects (ἐθύνεον, 156; ἕλκε, 158) refer to ongoing actions. One could wonder, however, whether Ker could actually be dragging three victims on the shield, rather than merely being depicted as doing so (cf. Perseus in 216-8). If this is so, then Ker is also really producing sound and glaring terribly (δεινὸν δειρκωμένη καναχήσει τε βεβρυχύσα, 160). Though this may seem improbable, in line 164 the shield certainly makes noise.

The third passage (161-7) is wholly devoted to the opus ipsum. Three imperfects (ἔσαν, 161; πέλεν, 164; ἐδαίετο, 165) designate states. The twelve snake heads are terrible (δεινῶν, οὔ τι φατειῶν) and thus frighten Heracles’ opponents, which is related in 162-3. These lines are a relative clause with an iterative imperfect (φοβέεσκον), followed by another relative clause with a distributive-iterative optative (163 = 150). The snakes produce sound by gnashing their teeth (ὀδόντων...καναχή). The narrator uses a temporal clause (εὖτε μάχοιτο...Ἀμφιτρυωνιάδης) with a distributive-iterative optative to indicate that this happened every time Heracles fights.\footnote{According to Byre 1976: 76, “[t]he authorial comment ἰσματὰ ἔργα seems here to refer, not to aesthetic reactions of a hypothetical observer, but to the more practical reactions of Heracles’ enemies”. In my view, it is the narrator’s own reaction that is referred to.} The snakes react to what happens in the world.

The snakes are said to be shining or burning (τὰ δ’ ἐδαίετο), which could mean that they emit light.\footnote{Such temporal clauses occur frequently in descriptions; cf. Od. 13.101 (in section 2.3.2).} The phrase θαυματὰ ἔργα fits this interpretation, since the words anticipate unbelief.\footnote{My translation is based on that by Evelyn-White (Loeb, 1914). Russo [1950] 1965: 116 refers to the scholia, who gloss ἐδαίετο as ἔλαμπε.} Line 166 is difficult; I have translated “and it was as though there were spots to be seen on the terrible snakes”.\footnote{Byre 1976: 82 states that “there seems to be a contrast between the gleam of the serpents’ bodies and the dark spots upon them”, where see for other references in the Shield to such colour contrasts.} The narrator ends this section with two references to colours, the snakes are (dark) blue along their backs, and their jaws are black.\footnote{Byre 1976: 76, “et ce prodige d’art lançait aussi des feux”. The LfgrE translate ἐδαίετο with “sprühten Feuer” (s.v. δαίω B 1); Russo [1950] 1965: 116 refers to the scholia, who gloss ἐδαίετο as ἔλαμπε.}
I sum up. The descriptivity of the text is high. Textual organization is descriptive: the text progresses by enumeration; some spatial markers occur, too. Most verbs – imperfects and pluperfects – designate states. Many visual details are included: there are references to colour and the shield’s radiance, but most attention is paid to the terrible appearance of the images, the adjective δεινός being a favourite of the narrator. In fact, the image itself seems to be looking back at the viewer (145, 160). Sounds are described, too. On account of the present tenses, lines 151-3 do not refer to what is depicted on the shield. They, too, can be regarded as descriptive: they do not narrate what happens to particular people in particular circumstances, but describe what befalls anyone who happens to be killed by Heracles.

The narrativity of the images is low: none of the basic elements of narrative is present. In those lines that focus on the res ipsae (155-60), the personified figures of battle are depicted in their prototypical capacity.

4-5. Battles between wild boars and lions, and between Lapiths and Centaurs (168-90)

Ἐν δὲ συών ἀγέλαι χλούνων ἔσαν ἡδὲ λεόντων ἐς σφέας δερκομένων, κατεύαν δ’ ἱεμένων τε.

τῶν καὶ ἁμηλήδον στίχες ἦσαν, οὐδὲ νῦ τῷ γε οὐδέτεροι τρεάτην, φιάσκόν γε μὲν αὐχένας ἅμροι.

ἡ δ’ ἄφαν σφιν ἐκεῖτο μέγας λίς, ἁμρὶ δὲ κάθοι δοιοὶ, ἀποτρόπαιοι ψυχῆς κατά δὲ σφι καλαίνων αὐλ’ ἀπελευθ’ ἐρας, οἱ δ’ αὐχένας ἐξερευνάντες

καίκωτο τεννήτιατο υπὸ βλασφυροὶ λέσσων-

τοι δ’ ἐτί μᾶλλον ἐγειρεθήν ἑκοτεύει μάχεσθαι, ἀμφότεροι, χλούναι τέ σωσ χεροποι τε λέσσων.

Ἐν δ’ ἤν υψίν Λαπιθών αἰχμητῶν

Καινά τ’ ἁμρὶ ἐνακτα Δρωστάτα τε Πειρίδον τε

References to colours: πυρὶ λαμπομένοισι (145), λευκαθεόντων (146), δαφοινεόν (159), κυάνεοι, μελάνθησαν (167); reference to the terrible look of the shield: οὔ τι φατειός (144), δεινῶν, ἀπλήτων, βλασφυραί (147), δεινή (148), ὠλήι (156), δεινόν (160), δεινῶν, οὔ τι φατειῶν (161), δεινοῖσι (166).

Upon it were herds of wild boars and lions glaring at them, angry and eager. (170) Of them too in groups the rows were advancing, and neither side was fleeing, but both sides were bristling up [the hairs of] their necks. For already for them a great lion was lying dead, and on either side [were lying] two boars, deprived of life; and their black blood was dripping down onto the ground; and they, having fallen with regard to their necks, (175) were lying, killed by the frightful lions. And they were yet more roused to fight, angry, both sides, the wild boars and the fierce-eyed lions. Upon it was the combat of the spear-bearing Lapiths around Caineus their king and Dryas and Peirithous and (180) Hopleus and Exadius and Phalerus and Prolocus, and Mopsus of Titarus, Ampycus’ son, scion of Ares, and Theseus, Aegeus’ son, equal to the immortals; [they were] silver, having golden arms around their bodies. The Centaurs, on the other side, opposite them, were gathering together (185) around great Petraeus and Asbolus the augur and Arctus and Orius and black-haired Mimas and Peuces’ two sons, Perimedes and Dryalus; [they were] silver, having golden fir trees in their hands. And rushing against another as if they were alive, (190) they were keeping their spears and fir trees drawn, close together.

The next two images are scenes of combat. The text which represents the images has a prototypically descriptive structure. As for other prototypical elements of description, I note the following visual details in 168-77: the look of the lions (169), the bristling of the hairs by either party (171), the dead lion is a big one (μέγας, 172), the blood is black (κελαινόν, 173); βλοσυροῖσι (175) and χαροποί (177) refer respectively to the appearance and look of the lions. The number of the dead animals is specified (δοιοί, 173). The opus ipsum is not referred to. All attention goes out to the figures; the narrator does not specify the location or setting of the action, which is always the case in the shield of...
Achilles. In lines 178-90, the catalogue of fighters is a prototypically descriptive element. Lines 183 and 188 refer to the opus ipsum, and are full of visual details; I note especially the contrast between the silver figures and their golden arms or weapons.

The first image (168-76) depicts a battle between wild boars and lions that is about to enter its final stage. The narrator has personified the animals. This means that the image can acquire narrative qualities, since human or human-like agents are a basic requisite for narrative. The narrator focuses on the res ipsae only. The scene is characterised by ring composition: an outer ring (168-9 ≈ 176-7) encloses an inner frame, which forms the centre of the image. This ring mirrors the composition of the image: two parties, located at either side; in their midst the dead lion and boars. The image can be divided into three distinct parts: 1) 168-71, 2) 172-5, and 3) 176-7.

1) The narrator first introduces the two parties in 168. In 169, the narratees look, together with the lions, at the boars (ἐς σφέας δερκομένων), and learn their state of mind: they are angry, and eager to fight (κοτεόντων θ’ ἱεμένων τε). This cannot be depicted, but is easily accepted as an inference from what is depicted, which will be related in 171b below. The animals advance in rows, grouped closely together (ὁμιληδόν), as if they were rows of soldiers. The narrator again refers to something that is not depicted: οὐδέ νυ τώ γε / οὐδέτεροι τρεέτην, “and neither side was fleeing” (170-1). The use of the negative (οὐδέ... / οὐδέτεροι) is striking. Yet the narrator has inferred this determination to fight from the way the animals are depicted on the shield: “but (γε μέν) both sides were bristling up [the hairs of their] necks” (171b).

86 Cf. e.g. the first scene on the shield of Achilles: ἐν δὲ δύω ποίησε πέλασις μερότων άνθρώπων / καλάς. ἐν τῇ μέν… (18.490-1).
87 Thalmann 1984: 10: “[t]he verbal description, by its form, embodies the composition of the picture that we are to imagine. Both are unified, contained within boundaries”.
88 In Homer, στίχος are always made up out of human soldiers (Russo [1950] 1965: 11).
89 The dual emphasizes the fact that the lions and boars form two opposing armies; it recurs in 171 (ἄμφω) and 176 (ἐγειρέσθην κοτέοντε). The IľgrE translate this instance (as well as 213 below) with “to flee” (s.v. τρέω B).
90 Only two negatives occur in the Homeric shield ekphrasis, for which see 3.3.3.3, 2b. In the pseudo-Hesiodic ekphrasis, negatives are rare, too. Apart from the negatives belonging to an adjective (οὐ τι φατειός, 144; similarly 161 and 230: οὐ τι...μεγάλη, 259) only one other negative occurs, in 310-11 (οὐδέ ποτέ σφιν / νίκη ἐπηνύσθη, 310-11), for which see below.
91 According to Russo [1950] 1965: 117, γε μέν is adversative, as in 300 below; Denniston [1934] 1954: 387 lists γε μέν in 300 as adversative, but in 139 as progressive, or weakly adversative. Lines
(2) Lines 172-5 form the central section of the image, in which the narrator focuses on three individuals that are all dead. This section starts with ἤδη γάρ; both words do not occur in the Homeric shield ekphrasis. Γάρ makes clear that this line expresses the reason why the animals do not flee.92 The temporal adverb ἤδη implies a previous stage of the battle, which is however not depicted. The image on the shield depicts a dead lion (172), flanked (ἀμφί) by two dead boars (172-3).93 The blood of all three victims is dripping down onto the ground.94 Three participles refer to earlier non-depicted moments:95 the boars are dead (aorist participle: ἀπουράμενοι ψυχάς, “having been deprived of their life”), their necks are lying on the ground (aorist participle: αὐχένας ἐξεριπόντες, “having fallen with regard to their necks”), and they have been killed by the lions (perfect participle: τεθνηῶτες ὑπὸ βλοσυροῖσι λέουσιν).96

(3) The narrator ends the description of this image by ring composition. He returns to the same animals he had referred to in lines 168-9. He adds information which can be understood only after lines 172-5: on account of their dead comrades, both sides are yet...

170-1 are particularly rich in particles. I further note νυ…γε in 170; the narrator is drawing attention to this striking feature of the image. For the value of νυ see Ruijgh 1971: 843 (“la valeur de νυ est donc proche de celle de ἄρα (ῥα) et de δή, particules qui servent à souligner l’intérêt du fait exprimé”).


96 For αὐχένας ἐξεριπόντες, see LfgrE s.v. ἐρείπω B 2 1, who state that αὐχένας is an accusative of respect and that αὐχένας ἐξεριπόντες “(...) prob[ably] expresses both the idea of the boars’ having fallen in general and of their necks’ having fallen away, been twisted away from the normal position i[n] relat[ion] to the body in life”. Russo [1950] 1965: 118, as do most commentators, gives ὑπό local sense: “[...] due cinghiali, morti, giacevano sotto i leoni avanzati a vendicare il compagno ucciso”. According to Paley 1883: 137, ὑπό cannot mean “under” here, and must express agency; this is also how Mazon translates ὑπό (“victimes des lions effrayants”). This is a more natural interpretation, which is in keeping with the composition of the image: lions on one side, wild boars on the other; a dead lion in the middle, with on either side a dead boar.
more (ἔτι μᾶλλον) roused to fight.97 The words ἔτι μᾶλλον imply a lapse of time, in which the animal’s eagerness to fight has increased. Thus, the narrator has been able to suggest temporal progression by the way he moves through the image. In part (1), the animals are about to start fighting. In part (2), the narrator reveals another fact about the image: three dead animals are also depicted. They are casualties of an earlier stage in the battle (ἤδη), as well as the reason why the battle is about to begin. In part (3), finally, the narrator states that the animals’ fierceness has increased. They are, however, the very same animals that were described in part (1).

The image thus suggests a sequence of events. It also refers to earlier events that are not depicted. World disruption and ‘what-it’s-like’ are present. As for world disruption: in the preceding battle three animals have already been killed, and the coming battle promises to be a fierce one (lines 171 and 176). The narrator draws attention to the black blood dripping on the ground (173-4). As for ‘what-it’s-like’, it is said that the animals are angry (κοτεόντων, 169; ἐγειρέσθην κοτέοντε, 176) and eager to fight (ἵεμένων, 169; 176).

The narrative depicted in this image thus has a high degree of narrativity. The image depicts a pregnant moment, the moment just before the final stage of the battle. It allows the narrator-focaliser to infer what has gone before, as well as what will happen next.

The second image of combat (178-90) is of a mythical nature.98 Mythical scenes are not found on the shield of Achilles.99 The description is characterised by parallelism: two catalogues of fighters (179-84; 185-8) follow after their introductory lines (178; 184).100

97 Cf. Russo [1950] 1965: 118: “[l]a scena è vigorosamente condensata, perché i brevi cenni del poeta lasciano immaginare quel che è passato fra le due schiere, che ora si accingono all’ultimo combattimento, infuriate dalle precedenti perdite”.

98 For a possible reason for the inclusion of this myth, see Toohey 1988: 26-7. According to Stamatopoulou 2013: 279, note 32, the Lapiths and Centaurs are Heracles’ contemporaries, whereas Perseus (another mythological figure, in 216-29) represents the heroic past.


100 Thalmann 1984: 24-5. The fact that the names of the fighters are listed might be an indication that the narrator envisages these names as actually being written on the shield (see e.g. Cook 1937: 208 and Chiarini 2012: 83-4).
In the opening line, the narrator only mentions the Lapiths as forming part of the combat (ὑσμίνη Λαπιθάων αἰχμητάων). The fact that the Lapiths fought with the Centaurs was well-known, on account of which the Centaurs need not be mentioned. The image depicts a multitude of Lapiths, grouped around (ἀμφί, 179) their leaders, who are enumerated in 179-82. The narrator ends with a reference to the opus ipsum: the Lapiths are made of silver, their armours of gold. The Centaurs are located opposite the Lapiths (ἑτέρωθεν ἐναντίον, 184) and also grouped around their leaders (ἀμφί, 185). The narrator ends again with a reference to the opus ipsum: they are silver, too, and their weapons made of gold. Their weapons, fir trees, characterize them as wild beasts vis-à-vis the civilized Lapiths.

In line 178, the narrator surveys the image as a whole, which depicts a battle (ἐν δ’ ὑσμίνη). He does not refer to any specific actions in which the Lapiths are engaged. In line 184, the narrator does refer to a specific action: the Centaurs are gathering together (ἠγερέθοντο, 184). In lines 189-90, it becomes clear that the battle consists of a hand-to-hand fight: "and rushing against another as if they were alive, they were keeping their spears and fir trees drawn, close together". It would seem that "gathering" and "fighting" are mutually exclusive actions. The contradiction can be solved by assuming that the image depicts both the gathering and the fighting. The narratee would then have to assume that some figures are still gathering, while others are already fighting.

The image thus depicts two stages of the battle, which are happening simultaneously. It does not contain a sequence of events, for the same figures are not involved in consecutive actions. World disruption is present: a fight is always a disruptive event. The battle is a general mêlée; the narrator does not focus on individuals. The element of 'what-it’s-like' is absent, since no attention is paid to the feelings of the figures. Even so, I conclude that the image has a high degree of narrativity.

101 Thalmann 1984: 24: "[h]ere the civilized humans and the wild semibeasts are contrasted by their implements of warfare, and the parallel manner of their presentation also balances them each against the other"; see also Russo [1950] 1965: 121.

102 I follow the LfgrE in translating ὠριγνῶντο with "hielten gezückt" (s.v. ὀρέγω, ὀρέγνυμι, ὀριγνάομαι B 1 b). LSJ translate with "they fought with outstretched spears" (s.v. ὀριγνάομαι A). For the value of καί τε in 189, cf. Ruijgh 1971: 774 ("[l]a particule καί (...) fonctionne (...), comme coordonnant non corresponsif introduisant un member à verbe fini sans changement de sujet (...). L'idée du climax y est sensible (...)").

103 In this respect, it is similar to the battle which ends the city at war in Homer (18.539-40).
The mythical subject matter does not augment the narrativity of the image. In fact, it is not clear how this image relates to the larger myth of which it is a part. It is unlikely that the battle takes place at the wedding of Peirithous and Hippodameia. This version of the myth is not attested before the second quarter of the fifth century. Furthermore, the battle seems to take place out of doors, as the Lapiths are wearing their armours. As for the cause of the battle, this may have been an incident at the wedding, but the narrator gives no information from which the narratee can deduce this. There is no hint either at the outcome of the fight, although traditionally the Centaurs lose. Thus, even though the fight is a mythical one, it is not possible for the narratee to reconstruct, from clues in the text, the larger story.

I want to address one last point. In line 189, the narrator emphasizes the lifelike qualities of the figures with ὡς εἰ ζωοί περ ἐόντες, "as if they were alive". The narrator compares "art" with reality; the phrase serves as a reminder to the narratees that actions on a work of art are described, not actions in reality. Yet what about the nature of this work of art, the shield of Heracles? In the case of Achilles’ shield, it is clear that the figures are static. Heracles’ shield, on the other hand, is magical. It is clear, furthermore, that some figures really move (see Perseus below in 216-37a). Thus, the expression ὡς εἰ ζωοί περ ἐόντες could refer to actual movement: the figures are moving as if they were alive – but they are not alive, because they are made of metal and part of a shield.

---

105 So Gantz 1993: 278: "(...) the fact that the Lapithai do wear armor, would seem to suggest a nondomestic context, while there is no mention at all of women or other noncombatants".
106 Gantz 1993: 278 summarizes what may have been the larger story: "(...) there would seem to have been an initial isolated incident (whether or not at the wedding) leading to general hostilities and finally to an all-out war, which the Kentauroi lose"; this story is based on the references in the Iliad (1.262-70; 2.742-4) and Odyssey (21.295-303), although Gantz rightly notes that the epics need not refer to the same version.
107 A similar expression in 194 (but see discussion below): two such expressions are found in the Homeric shield ekphrasis (18.518 and 539). Cf. also the somewhat different phrases with forms of εἰκώς and the like in 198, 206, 209, 215, 228, 244, and 314.
108 E.g. Becker 1992: 17: "[w]hen calling attention to the interpretation of the describer, this ekphrasis breaks the illusion that we are viewers (...). (...) here an explicit expression of similarity reminds us of the describer: a simile openly interprets, and so brings the visual representation into the describer’s own understanding of the world. It reminds us that we are ‘seeing’ a human response to depicted phenomena, not the phenomena themselves".
Upon it stood the swift-footed horses of frightful Ares, made of gold, and upon it too was spoil-bearing, dire Ares himself, holding a spear in his hands, giving orders to foot soldiers, dark red with blood as though he were slaying living men, (195) mounted on his chariot. Beside him stood Fear and Rout, eager to plunge into the battle of men. Upon it stood Zeus’ daughter, leader of the war-host, Tritogeneia, and she looked as though she wanted to intensify battle, holding a spear in her hand, and [having on her head] a golden helmet, (200) and the aegis around her shoulders. And she was going off towards dread battle. Upon it was the holy dance of the immortals; and in the middle the son of Zeus and Leto was playing music, rousing desire, upon a golden lira. The seat of the gods was hallowed Olympus; upon it was the place of assembly, and around it measureless wealth was placed (205) in the assembly of the immortals. Goddesses were leading the song, the Pierian Muses, and they looked as though they were singing with high voices.

The text that represents these images has a prototypically descriptive structure. As for other prototypically descriptive elements, the opus ipsum does not receive much attention. The material is referred to thrice, once in every image: χρύσεοι (192), χρυσέην (199), and χρυσείῃ (203);$
^{109}$ there is one other reference to colour (φοινικόεις, 194). Other

---

$^{109}$ Χρυσέην in 199 does not scan, but a number of manuscripts read χρυσείη, which does scan if the υ is taken as short. Russo [1950] 1965: 125 denies the possibility of a short υ, but not so Paley.
visual details are ἐναρσφόρος (192) and ἀπείριτος (204). Some other details are also found: οὔλιος (192), αἰνήν (200), ἱερός (201), ἱμερόεν (202, referring to sound), ἁγνός (203), and λιγύ (206, sound).

The images all depict gods: Ares on his chariot, flanked by Fear and Rout (191-6), Athena (197-200), and a group of immortals, with Apollo and the Muses (201-6). It has been suggested that Ares and Athena are taking part in the fight between the Lapiths and Centaurs of the previous image, but also that this is unlikely, since the introductory formula ἐν δὲ points to separate images. Reinhardt argues that these two images are

1883: 139, who reads ἐν χερσὶ (also in some manuscripts) χρυσείην and notes that “[t]his verse contains a clear proof of an unskilful composer. The tragic writers frequently shorten the υ in χρύσεος, but never the Epic poets of the good age. There is little reason to suppose the verse corrupt, though it may possibly be an interpolation”.

110 According to Thalmann 1984: 62, “[a]t the center of the poetic account lie three scenes of gods (ll. 191-206), which stand out from the five scenes that precede and the five that follow them. In these flanking parts there is a general progression from monstrous personifications of war and violence through strife in the animal world to warfare among mankind”. The inclusion of Ares and Athena – who are fighting against and with Heracles in the narrative of the Shield – has attracted the attention of scholars. For Russo [1950] 1965, they are symbols of hostile opponents, which is the reason why they are not engaged in battle with each other (“(…) simboli di nemici avversi, e però non li mette veramente in mezzo ad una battaglia armati l’uno contro l’altro (191-200).”). According to Effe 1988: 163, their occurrence here mirrors the antagonism between the two gods in the rest of the poem, which will be decisive for the battle to come (“Hier spiegelt sich der göttliche Antagonismus, der für den Kampf des Herakles bestimmend sein wird”). Janko 1986: 40 notes that the three gods (Ares, Athena and Apollo) are portrayed in the order in which they appear in the narrative.

111 van Groningen 1958: 117, note 2: “[i]t is tout juste possible que les deux dieux prennent part à la lutte des Lapithes et des Centaures; dans ce cas il y a une longe scène de combat comptant 23 vers. Mais la formule ἐν δὲ en 191 et 197 plaide plutôt pour des scènes nouvelles”. Toohey 1988: 27 thinks van Groningen’s suggestion is not unlikely (“[i]t deserves to be noticed, furthermore, that the appearance of Ares (…) and Athena (…) may link with this conflict”). It has also been argued that Ares and Athena must be imagined as preparing to fight with each other, but that there are no references to this fact in the text (see Chiarini 2012: 97: “(…) mancano in effetti nei vv. 191-200 riferimenti a episodi precisi del mito che videro Ares e Athena su fronti opposti e tantomeno viene esplicitato che essi muovano l’uno contro l’altro, ma potrebbe anche essere immaginati come due gruppi figurativi affiancati e distinti”; I think the text points towards the latter interpretation, for which see my discussion below).
independent portraits of Ares and Athena. On this point, Heracles’ shield differs from the Homeric shield ekphrasis, where Ares and Athena take part in the ongoing action.\footnote{Reinhardt 1961: 408; the reference is to 18.516-9. According to Cook 1937: 208-9, “the choice of Ares and Athena is probably due to their presence on the shield of Achilles”.}

The first passage (191-6) has two finite verbs only (ἕστασαν, 191 and 196; these pluperfects equal imperfects, “were standing”).\footnote{The meaning of ἕστασαν is close to “were” (for this meaning, see LSJ s.v. ἵστημι B, “freq[uently] merely a stronger form of εἶναι, to be in a certain place or state”).} The picture lacks movement: the horses are said to be standing, and so is Ares himself, with a spear in his hand (193), on his chariot (195).\footnote{Differently Martin 2005: 159, who notes that “(…) there is movement and colour. Fear and Dread stand straining to enter the fight. Ares is urging on the fighters, stepping onto the chariot”. He also notes that Ares is, at this very moment, facing Heracles: “[i]f we imagine the polished shield as both depicting and reflecting, it is interesting that the same god is facing Heracles at this very moment, as if his picture has been caught on the lens of the shield surface” (ibid.).}

The narrator also states that Ares is “giving orders to foot soldiers” (πρυλέεσσι κελεύων, 193).\footnote{Stamatopoulou 276, note 18 states that “(…) to read commemorative value in the depiction of Ares on the shield, since Heracles has already beaten the god once in the past (359-67). His appropriation in the ekphrasis, therefore, can be interpreted also as yet another trophy put forth with an apotropaic function”.} Ares is dark red with blood as though he were slaying living men (αἵματι φοινικόεις ὡς εἰ ζωοὺς ἐναρίζων, 194). This phrase does not mean that Ares is depicted as if he were killing men, but that his colour is blood-red as if resulting from the killing of actual men.\footnote{According to Russo [1950] 1965: 123-4, the foot soldiers are not depicted on the shield (“Ares, ancora lontano dalla mischia (cf. 195 sg.), incita con la voce degli uomini che combattono. Questa scene lontana, e non descritta, è fatta balenare con πρυλέεσσι κελεύων (cf. la stessa cosa al 201 e in Σ 519”).} The narrator thus comments on the realism of the colour. Ares is flanked by Fear and Rout, who are eager to enter the fight (ιέμενοι πόλεμον

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
  \item Reinhardt 1961: 408; the reference is to 18.516-9. According to Cook 1937: 208-9, “the choice of Ares and Athena is probably due to their presence on the shield of Achilles”.
  \item The meaning of ἕστασαν is close to “were” (for this meaning, see LSJ s.v. ἵστημι B, “freq[uently] merely a stronger form of εἶναι, to be in a certain place or state”).
  \item Differently Martin 2005: 159, who notes that “(…) there is movement and colour. Fear and Dread stand straining to enter the fight. Ares is urging on the fighters, stepping onto the chariot”. He also notes that Ares is, at this very moment, facing Heracles: “[i]f we imagine the polished shield as both depicting and reflecting, it is interesting that the same god is facing Heracles at this very moment, as if his picture has been caught on the lens of the shield surface” (ibid.).
  \item Stamatopoulou 276, note 18 states that “(…) to read commemorative value in the depiction of Ares on the shield, since Heracles has already beaten the god once in the past (359-67). His appropriation in the ekphrasis, therefore, can be interpreted also as yet another trophy put forth with an apotropaic function”.\footnote{Russo [1950] 1965: 124, who notes on this line that “sc. αἰμοτώδης ἢν, ἐσπερ φυνικέοις. L’esperessione non indica, come può sembrare a prima vista, che Ares stia uccidendo, e quindi sia in battaglia: il dio era insanguinato come un omicida”. There is thus a difference with 189 (ὡς εἰ ζωοὶ περ ἐόντες), where the phrase is attached to a predicate; here, the phrase modifies an adjective only, φοινικάεις.}
\end{itemize}
\end{footnotesize}
καταδύμεναι ἀνδρῶν, 196). This cannot be depicted, but it is a likely inference by the narrator in this context.

The second passage (197-200) is short, and introduces Athena by a paraphrase (Διὸς θυγάτηρ ἀγελείη Τριτογένεια). She “looks as though she wanted to intensify battle” (τῇ ἀκέλη ὡς εἴ τε μάχην ἐθέλουσα κορύσσειν). With such phrases (see also 209, 211, and 215 below), the narrator does not describe the res ipsae directly (“Athena wanted to intensify battle”), but indirectly, thereby drawing attention that he is describing an image. Athena is wearing her common attributes: spear (in her hand), helmet (on her head), and the aegis (around her shoulders) (199-200). The narrator ends with a reference to the res ipsae: Athena is going off towards battle (ἐπὶ δ’ ᾤχετο φύλοπιν αἰνήν, 200). This probably means that Athena is depicted as moving – that she is going off to battle can only be an inference by the narrator from the way she is dressed. This means that Athena, just as Ares, is not depicted as part of a battle, but by herself.

The third passage (201-6) presents the first peaceful image on the shield. The ἀθανάτων ἱερὸς χορός could refer to a dance, or to a dancing place. In the middle, Apollo – who is also introduced by a paraphrase – is playing on a golden lyre (202-3). The narrator locates the scene on the Olympus (203b), in its gathering place (204). The narrator thus zooms out: the ἱερὸς χορός is a more likely subtheme of the Ὄλυμπος than vice versa. The narrator also refers to the immense wealth that is placed in the assembly of the gods. There is music, too: the Pierian Muses are leading the song, looking as if they were singing with high voices (λιγὺ μελπομένῃς ἐικυῖαι, 206).

117 Fear and Rout are also found on Agamemnon’s shield (Il. 11. 37); on Phobos, see further Shapiro 1993: 208-10.
118 For the meaning of κορύσσω, see note 69 above.
119 I take ἐν χειρί with ἔγχος only, and interpret χρυσέην τε τρυφάλειαν [sc. ἔχουσα] as referring to the helmet on her head (translated by Mazon with “casque d’or en tête”). It seems unlikely that Athena has her helmet in her hands, if she is depicted as going off to battle (200).
120 LfgrE s.v χορός B 2 b.
121 According to van der Valk 1966: 474, the poet mentions Apollo and the choir of immortals first to create a contrast with the war gods of the previous scenes.
122 Λαγορή refers to a place for assembly (LfgrE s.v. ἄγορη Β 12); ἄγορα to the assembly itself (LfgrE s.v. ἄγον Β 1: “Ensemble, Versammlung (Zusammensein einer Mehrzahl)”). According to Chiarini 2012: 103, “[c]on ἄγορη il poeta potrebbe veicolare la disposizione circolare degli dei attorno ad Apollon, che di fatto però si realizza graficamente in un ἄγον, ossia una fila di divinità raffigurate una accanto all’altra in mancanza di profondità (...)” (emphasis mine).
The narrativity of these three images is low. All of the three basic elements of narrative are lacking. The images depict the gods in their prototypical activities: Ares shouting to foot soldiers, Athena moving towards battle, and the gods enjoying themselves on the Olympus with dance and music. No reference is made to a specific event.

9. Harbour with dolphins and fisherman (207-15)\textsuperscript{123}

\begin{verbatim}
Ἐν δὲ λιμήν εὐφορὸς ἀμαμακέτοιο βαλάσας
κυκλοτερῆς ἐπάκτυκτο ποινῆφον κασσιτέριον
κλυζομένον ἱκελος· πολλοὶ γε μὲν ἀδι κλάσαν αὐτόν
δελφῖνες τῇ καὶ τῇ ἐθύνουν ἰχθυάστες
νικημένοις ἱκελοι· δοιὼ δ' ἀναφυεύσωντες
ἀργύρεοι δελφῖνες ἑφοίτων ἐλλοπας ἰχθυᾶς
τῶν δ' ὄπω ἄλλοι τράζουν ἰχθυᾶς· αὐτάρ ἄπε' ἀκταίς
Hibernate ἀλλοι ἀλειας δεδοκενμενος, εἴχε δὲ χερσίν
ἰχθυᾶς τῶν ἅμαμ τοι ἀμφίβληστρον ἀπορρίπτοντι εἰκός.
\end{verbatim}

Upon it was wrought a harbour, with good mooring places, of the invincible sea, semi-circular, of completely refined tin, looking as though it were undulating; in the middle of it many (210) dolphins were rushing this way and that, while hunting, looking as though they were swimming; and two silver dolphins, spouting, \textsuperscript{†}were going to and fro\textsuperscript{†} the mute fish. Below them, the bronze fish were fleeing; on the shore a fisherman was sitting, watching, and in his hands he was holding (215) a casting-net for fish, looking as though he was just about to cast it.

In between two mythical sections (178-206; 216-37a), the narrator inserts an image of daily life.\textsuperscript{124} The text which represents the image has a prototypically descriptive

\textsuperscript{123} In 212, Solmsen prints ἐφοίβεον (following von der Mühll, after manuscript F). According to Capone 1971-2: 6, “(...) ἐφοίβεον si inserisce bene nel contest col significato di ‘mettere in fuga’, pur se, a prima vista, susciti qualche riserva, poiché potrebbe sembrare un esempio di banalizzazione”. Parts of these lines (from 207-13) are also found in a papyrus (PBerol. 9774); in the papyrus, these parts follow after \textit{II. 18.608} and provide the ocean on Achilles’ shield with a harbour and fishes too. On this papyrus, see further West 1967: 132-6 and Martin 2005: 169-70. The papyrus reads ἐφοίνεον ἐλλοπας ἰχθυᾶς (the meaning of which is unclear; the \textit{LfrE} s.v. φοίνεω note that the verb is a hapax and tentatively propose “röten, hetzen”). In 213, I read ἐπ’ ἀκταίς with the manuscripts.

\textsuperscript{124} Some scholars, among whom Cook 1937: 209-10, have associated this scene with the following one. Chiarini 2012: 106 comments that “[d] al punto di vista testuale non vi sono elementi che
structure: its organization is enumerative, and its three main parts are connected spatially (ἂμ μέσον αὐτοῦ, 209; αὐτάρ ἐπ’ ἀκταῖς, 213a). Further spatial indicators are found in 210 (τῇ καὶ τῇ), 211 (ἀναφυσιόωντες), and 213 (τῶν δ’ ὕπο). Reference is made to the opus ipsum in 208 (πανέφθου κασσιτέροι, and perhaps κυκλοτερής), 212 (ἀργύρεοι), and 213 (χάλκειοι). These are all visual details; two references to number (πολλοί, 209; δοιώ, 211) are also found. Other details are ἀμαιμακέτοι (207) and ἔλλοπας (212).

The extensive focus on the scenery (207-9a) is found only in this image on the shield. The harbour is introduced as part of the opus ipsum with the pluperfect ἐτέτυκτο, followed by the material of which it is made (πανέφθου κασσιτέροι, 208). The narrator also focuses on the res ipsae: the harbour has good mooring places (εὔορμος); κυκλοτερής, “semi-circular”, could refer to both the res ipsae and the opus ipsum.125

After this static picture of the scenery, the narrator focuses on the res ipsae (209b-213a): many dolphins are swimming in the middle of the harbour (ἃμ μέσον αὐτοῦ), this way and that, while hunting (ἰχθυάοντες, 210).126 The narrator next zooms in on two dolphins: they are spouting, and scaring the other fish. Notwithstanding the fact that ἐφοίτων in 213 is corrupt, this much is clear from 213: beneath the dolphins (τῶν δ’ ὕπο), the fish, distinguished by their bronze colour, are fleeing (τρέον). This, too, indicates that the dolphins are hunting.127

inducano ad accorpare le due sequenze, che sono presentate secondo il ripetuto (e vago) ἐν δὲ, ma d’altronde ciò non esclude tale ipotesi, tanto più se si tiene conto degli elementi marini che talora arricchiscono gli sfondi delle immagini delle Gorgoni”.

126 The LfgrE translate ἰχθυάοντες with “hunt fish” (s.v. ἰχθυάω B); LSJ, on the other hand, translate ἰχθυάοντες here with “sport (like fish)” (s.v. ἰχθυάω A 2). In Homer, the verb is used twice (Od. 4.368, 12.95) in the meaning of “fishing”; in both cases, it has a human subject (Menelaus’ comrades and Scylla). The LfgrE s.v. κλονέω B I (for which see note 210 below), however, suggest that the meaning of ἰχθυάοντες is “tumbling”.
127 According to Heckenlively 2013: 658, “[t]he dolphins of the Scutum hunt ἄμ μέσον (Sc. 209), a naturalistic, yet also fierce and martial image”. Russo [1950] 1965: 129-30, on the other hand, denies that the dolphins are hunting: “[n]ella nostra scena i delfini balzano al di sopra della superficie del mare sfiatando acqua, ed i pesci ne rimangono turbati e fuggono via: non si tratta quindi di una caccia al pesce, ma di una scenetta simile a quella dei versi 315-317, dove i cigni stridono e nuotano sul pelo dell’acqua, e accanto guizzano via i pesci. (...) delfini ἀναφυσιόωντες non possono uccidere o mangiare pesci, ammesso che questo operazioni si facciano alla
Lastly, the narrator focuses on a human figure, a fisherman (213b-15), sitting on the cliffs (ἐπ’ ἀκταῖς / ἤστο, 213-4). He is watching the fish (δεδοκημένος, 214). The picture seems one of stasis: the fisherman is holding a casting net in his hands (εἶχε δὲ χερσὶν / ἱχθύσιν ἀμφίβληστρον, 214-5). Yet from the last words of line 215, it appears that the fisherman looks as though he is just about to cast his net (ἀπορρίψονι ἐοικώς). This might indicate that the fisherman, at least as far as his hands and net are concerned, is depicted in motion. The picture would then consist of a pregnant moment: the fisherman is depicted in such a way as to suggest that he is just about to cast his net. Thus, the future participle looks to an event that is not depicted, but which is suggested by the image.

The image is low in narrativity. All three basic elements of narrative are absent, although the narrator does look forward to an event subsequent to the ongoing event depicted in the image. As is the case with most scenes on the shield of Achilles, this image has generic narrativity. Although the narrator focuses on an individual in 213b-15, this individual is depicted in his capacity as fisher, in the exercise of his profession. 

superficie dell’acqua”. It should be noted that the verb ἐθύνεον (210) is always used in a martial context, the exception being Sc. 286 (LfgrE s.v. δύν(έ)ω B).

128 For ἐπ’ ἀκταῖς, see Russo [1950] 1965: 130 (“i] pescatore sta seduto su degli scogli”). For σύταφ, see my discussion of Od. 13.102 (σύταφ ἐπὶ κρατὸς λιμένος…) in 2.3.2.

129 According to Martin 2005: 168, the fisherman plays the role of internal audience for this scene, as would Achlus do in 264 below (but see my discussion). Such internal audiences are also found on the shield of Achilles, see e.g. 18.496.

130 Chiarini 2012: 110 notes that an ἀμφίβληστρον is a small net, used to catch small fish and which may be used in combination with a fish-hook.

131 According to Elliger 1975: 41-2, the fisherman is a more independent part of the image than the human figures on the shield of Achilles: “(…) so ist der Angler auf den Klippen vom Vorhergehenden deutlich abgesetzt als eigener Teil im Bildganzen. Man mag ihm ruhig mehr als die Funktion einer Staffagefigur zubilligen, aber den Stellenwert des Menschen in der homerischen Schildbeschreibung erreicht er auf keinen Fall. (…) In den homerischen Szenen sind alle Szenelemente in das Ganze integriert, die Hafenbeschreibung des jüngeren Dichters wirkt eher wie ein Kompositgebilde, bei dem jeder Teil mit einer gewissen Selbständigkeit neben dem anderen besteht” (emphasis mine). Elliger concludes “daß bei dem jüngeren Dichter [pseudo-Hesiod] das Typische hinter dem Individuellen zurücktritt” (ibid.: 43). Whereas I agree that the fisher occupies a distinct part of the image, more so than the figures in the Homeric shield ekphrasis do, the Homeric narrator focuses on individuals, too (see e.g. the king in 556-7).
Upon it was the fine-haired son of Danae, the horseman Perseus, neither touching the shield with his feet nor far from it, a great wonder to perceive, since nowhere was he attached to it. For that was how with his hands the renowned crook-legged had wrought him, (220) of gold. Around his feet he was wearing winged sandals; on his shoulders, about him, was a dark-bound sword from a bronze baldric; and he flew like a thought. The head of the terrible monster was covering his whole back, [the head] of the Gorgon, and around it a pouch was running, a wonder to see, (225) of silver; and shining tassels were hanging, dangling down [from it], of gold; and the terrible helmet of Hades was set around the king's temples, having the dread darkness of night. Perseus himself, Danae's son, was exerting himself, looking as though he were hastening and shuddering; and they, (230) the Gorgons, dreadful and terrible, were rushing after him, eager to catch him; as they ran on the pallid adamant, the shield resounded with a large noise, sharply and piercingly; and on their girdles, two serpents were hanging, dangling down, bending their heads forward; (235) both were playing with their tongues, and they were grinding their teeth with strength, glaring savagely; and upon the terrible heads of the Gorgons great Fear was shaking.

10. Perseus and the Gorgons (216-37a)
The next image on the shield depicts Perseus, pursued by the Gorgons. I first discuss the image on account of its complex nature. The image can be divided into two parts: 1) 216-29a, in which the narrator focuses on Perseus, and 2) 229-37, in which the narrator focuses on the Gorgons. The structure of these lines is chiastic: A. (216-227) appearance of Perseus; B. (228-9a) action in which Perseus is involved; B. (229b-31a) action in which the Gorgons are involved; A. (231b-37) appearance of the Gorgons.

In the first five lines, the narrator introduces Perseus as part of the opus ipsum. This part of the shield is of a miraculous nature: Perseus is hovering just above the surface of the shield (217), “since he was nowhere attached to it” (ἐπεὶ οὐδαμῇ ἐστήρικτο, 218). Anticipating disbelief on the part of his narratee, the narrator adds that Perseus is “a great wonder to perceive” (θαῦμα μέγα φράσσασθαι, 218); and that Hephaestus had really made him that way (219). Both phrases serve to heighten the credibility of the narrator.

After having described Perseus’ position on the shield – i.e. after having introduced the subtheme of this section as a whole – the narrator describes Perseus’ well-known attributes (220-7). The narrator moves spatially through the picture, moving from

---

132 Many scholars regard Perseus and Heracles as doublets (see Toohey 1988: 20-5). For other reflections on the reason for Perseus’ occurrence here, see further Stamatopoulou 2013: 276-7. According to Gärtner 1976: 57, the Perseus scene is the “Glanzstück” of the poet, as well as a “Bindeglied” between the scenes starting with ἐν δέ, and those which start with other prepositions (e.g. οἳ δ’ ὑπὲρ αὐτέων, 237).

133 Both parts are characterised by ring composition; part one by Δανάης τέκος, ἱππότα Περσεύς (216) and Περσεὺς Δαναΐδης (229); part two by Γοργόνες (230) and καρήνοις / Γοργείοις (236-7).

134 According to Russo [1950] 1965: 132, φράσσασθαι equals ἐννοῆσαι, “to look at” and therefore “to understand”, which he regards as a stronger expression than θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι (“a osservarsi (oculis considerare), e perciò a capirsì (mente concipere). È più forte della solita espressione θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι”). Others have argued that the phrase means “a great wonder to remark/tell”, which would highlight the fact that the description consists of language (so Becker 1992: 19; similarly Squire 2013: 161: “where the Homeric shield poses as a miracle of sight, the Pseudo-Hesiodic imitation revealingly transforms the Heraclean shield into a miracle of speech – ‘a great wonder in the telling’ (...)”). However, the LfgrE does not allow for the meaning of “tell/remark” (see s.v. φράζω B).

135 Τεῦξεν (219) is an anterior aorist, and not part of a narrative sequence, as is the case in the Homeric shield ekphrasis with ἔτευξε (483), ποίησε (490), etc.

136 Fittschen 1973: 22 notes that “Perseus ist im Besitz seiner kanonischen Attribute”.
bottom to top. The following items are listed: winged sandals (220), a black-bound sword (221) hanging from a bronze baldric (222a), a pouch for the Gorgon's head (223-4) including tassels (225-6), and the helmet of Hades, which makes its wearer invisible (226-7). Apart from ἐποτᾶτο in 222, all verbs in 220-7 designate states, and all but one are accompanied by spatial indicators. Only ὃ δ' ὥς τε νόημ' ἐποτᾶτο, "he flew like a thought" (222), does not refer to an attribute. The comparison most likely illustrates the speed with which Perseus is flying around just above the surface of the shield.

Apart from being Perseus' traditional attributes, the items that are listed in 220-7 may remind the narratee of the traditional story of Perseus cutting off the head of the Gorgon, i.e. Medusa. This part of the story is not depicted. The image depicts one moment only, Perseus fleeing from the two remaining Gorgons, who pursue him as a result of his killing their sister Medusa. Thus, the winged sandals make Perseus' swift flight possible. In addition, their presence makes it likely that Perseus is "really" flying just above the surface of the shield. The narratee will probably regard the sword as the weapon with which the Gorgon's head has been cut off. Similarly, the helmet "with the dread darkness of night" (νυκτὸς ζόφον αἰνὸν ἔχουσα, 227), which makes its bearer
invisible, can be regarded by the narratees as the reason why Perseus was able to approach the Gorgon unseen.

The description of the κίβισις, the proper name for the pouch containing the head of the Gorgon, the so-called Gorgoneion, is striking. The narrator first notes that the head of the Gorgon was covering Perseus' whole back (223-24a), which might give the impression that the Gorgoneion is visible. Next he states that the pouch was running around it, a wonder to see (θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι, 224). Scholars have argued that this line means that the pouch is covering the Gorgon's head, thereby indicating that only the pouch, and not the head, is depicted on the shield. However, the phrase θαῦμα ἰδέσθαι indicates that the narrator again describes something that is hardly credible, which could well be a visible Gorgoneion, with the pouch literally running around it, rather than covering it. The Gorgoneion was known for her horrible gaze, and is frequently used as an apotropaic device.

After having described his attributes, the narrator returns to Perseus himself with αὐτὸς δέ in 228. Focus is now on the action in which Perseus is engaged: Perseus, looking as though he were hastening and shuddering, is "exerting himself" (ἐτιταίνετο, 229). At first sight, it might seem that the narrator focuses on the res ipsae, and that Perseus is depicted as a static figure. However, the narrator had already stated that Perseus was not attached to the shield (217-8), flying like a thought (222). Furthermore, while the Gorgons are running around (231-2), the shield repeatedly resounds with a large noise, sharp and piercingly (ἰάχεσκε σάκος μεγάλῳ ὀρυμαγδῷ / ὀξέα καὶ λιγέως, 232-3). Thus, the action of these lines is not merely imagined, as part of the res ipsae, but

---

144 Russo [1950] 1965: 25-6 notes that "[n]ella parallele rappresentazioni figurate la testa non si vede, ma è effigiate il rigonfio sacco [the swollen pouch] che la contiene. Il poeta qui ragguagliava l'ascoltatore con un verso alllettante: la teste terribile non veniva poi descritta, perché era avolta nel sacco!", and ibid.: 134: "[p]rima il poeta aveva voluto dare l'impressione di presentare scoperta la testa (...); similarly Chiarini 2012: 114, who notes that "raramente infatti, nelle più antiche rappresentazioni, il Gorgoneion è visibile. (...) in genere il sacco copre tutta la testa del mostro".

145 For example, the Gorgon is depicted on Agamemnon's shield (II. 11.36-7, τῇ δ' ἐπὶ μὲν Γοργὼ βλαστρώσσεις ἐστεφάνωτο / δεινὸν δερκομένη…). For a depiction of Perseus with both bag and the head of Medusa visible (ca. 630 BC), see Stansbury-O'Donnell 1999: 72, figure 28.

146 Mazon translates "(...) fuyait à grandes enjambées – on croyait voir sa hâte et sa terreur".
really happening, and thus part of the opus ipsum. In this light, ἐοικώς in 228 does not compare art with reality, as the participle does elsewhere (see e.g. 206). Rather, the phrase is an interpretation of reality: Perseus’ flying around on the shield is interpreted as being executed with haste and fear. Yet the narrator does not know this for sure: for Perseus is only resembling someone who is hastening and shuddering – hence ἐοικώς.

That Perseus is hastening and afraid is a likely inference, in that he is pursued by the horrible and terrible Gorgons (229-31), probably two in number. They are eager to catch him (ἵεμεν μαπέειν, 231). This inference might indicate that the Gorgons are depicted while stretching out their hands to catch Perseus. After this brief reference to the action in which the Gorgons are engaged, the narrator gives a visual and auditory description of the shield. The iterative form ἰάχεσκε (232) suggests that the Gorgons keep running in circles around the shield; they thereby produce a very unpleasant noise: loud, sharp and piercing (232-3). The snakes on their girdles also produce a loud noise (μένει δ’ ἐχάρασσον ὀδόντας, 235), while looking fiercely (ἄγρια δερκομένω, 236). Lastly, the narrator returns to the Gorgons’ heads, on which great Fear is shaking (ἐδονεῖτο μέγας Φόβος).

The narrativity of this image is high. The figures on the shield are involved in one action: Perseus is fleeing the Gorgons, who are pursuing him. This one action is literally ongoing and will never stop. Event sequencing is absent. The action is part of a well-known story, which means that the narratees can infer what has gone before, and what will come after. In addition, Perseus’ attributes refer to earlier events. Such references

---


149 The snakes are similar to those of lines 161-7, for which see above.

150 The ambiguity of Φόβος is described by Paley 1883: 143, who writes that the narrator “(...) may mean simply that the heads were terrible; that terror seemed to move or range on their heads. But Φόβος may perhaps be personified, like ‘Eris on the dragon’s head (...)’). Most scholars opt for the first interpretation (so e.g. Russo [1950] 1965: 137 and Chiarini 2012: 120, who consequently print φόβος). The Lfgre translate ἐδονεῖτο with “wogte” (“was undulating”), and note that it is a reference to hair consisting of snakes (s.v. δονέω B 2).
are implicit. As for the end of the story, the narrator gives no clue as to how it might
finish. In fact, although in the myth Perseus ultimately escapes the Gorgons, on the
shield he is forever caught in the same moment, and the pursuit will never end. In
sum: event sequencing is absent, but the image does refer to earlier events.

The other two basic elements of narrative, world disruption and ‘what-it’s-like’, are
present. Being pursued by two horrible and terrible monsters is a disruptive event: the
narrator emphasizes that Perseus has to make (ἐτιταίνετο, 229) to stay ahead
of the Gorgons. In 228 (σπεύδοντι καὶ ἔρρίγοντι ἡμικώς) the narrator draws attention to
‘what-it’s-like’: Perseus is fleeing in haste and fear.

I now turn to the text, which has a prototypically descriptive organization. I further
note that the opus ipsum receives much attention. Lines 216-20 are devoted to the opus
ipsum; only 219 refers to an act of Hephaestus, and is thus a small analepsis. In the
listing of Perseus’ attributes (220-7), states abound and textual progression is spatial
(220-7). The information related in these lines could all be part of the opus ipsum: apart
from the explicit mention of the materials (χαλκέου, 222; ἄργυρεή, 225; χρύσεως, 226), the
other details also refer to the surface of the shield (visual: πτερόεντα, 220; μελάνδετον,
221; φαεινοί, 225; perhaps visual: δεινοί, 223; δεινή, 226).

In the second part (229-37), progression is spatial, too (ἐπί is used thrice, in 231, 233,
and 236; note also ἐπι-μορφέντα and ἐπι-κυρτώσατε in 234). Again, all details may refer to
the opus ipsum. There are fewer visual details in this section: the material with its
colour is named once (χλωροῦ ἀδάμαντος, 231); emphasis lies on the horrible look of the
Gorgons and the snakes (ἄπλητοί τε καὶ οὐ φαταί, 230; ἄγρια δερκομένω; δεινοῖσι, 236). The
narrator focuses on the sound that the figures make (μεγάλῳ ὀρυμαγδῷ / ὀξέα καὶ λιγέως,
232-3; μένει δ’ ἐχάρασσον ὀδόντας , 235).

11. Mortals at war (237b-70a)

...οἱ δ’ ὑπὲρ αὐτῶν impf.
And they, above them, the men, were fighting, wearing warlike armour, some warding off
destruction for the sake of their city and their parents, others eager to sack it. Many were lying
[dead], and more being still engaged in conflict were fighting; and they, the women on well-built
towers of bronze, were crying out sharply, and they were rending their cheeks, looking as though
they were alive, works of the renowned Hephaestus. (245) The men who were elderly and whom

old age had seized were crowded together outside the gates, and they were holding up their hands to the blessed gods, fearing for their sons; and they, in turn, were engaged in battle. And behind them they, the dark Fates, while gnashing their white teeth, (250) terrible-faced and grim and blood-red and dreadful, were fighting for those who were falling; all were eager to drink black blood; and whomever they caught first, lying [there] or falling while freshly wounded, around him she was clenching her great claws, and his soul was going down to Hades, (255) to chilling Tartarus. And they, when they had satisfied their spirits with [his] human blood, him they would hurl backwards, and they were rushing again into the battle-din and mêlée, while going back (again). Clotho and Lachesis stood next to them; and she, Atropos, somewhat smaller, was [there], in no way a big goddess, but she (260) was superior to these others and the oldest one. All were causing bitter battle around one man; they were glaring terribly with their eyes at each other, angry, and on him they were equally laying their claws and fierce hands. And beside [them] Achlus was standing, gloomy and dread, (265) pallid, parched, covered in hunger, thick-kneed, and long claws were under her hands; and from her nostrils [streams of] mucus were streaming, and from her cheeks blood was dripping on the ground; and she, grinning dreadfully, was standing there, and much dust was lying on her shoulders, (270) wet with tears.

This image depicts men at war (ἄνδρες ἐμαρνάσθην, 238). Whereas all previous images were introduced with a stative verb plus ἐν δέ, here a new image is opened with an other spatial marker (οἳ δ' ὑπὲρ αὐτέων, 237), followed directly by a verb that designates an ongoing action. The narrator thus focuses directly on the res ipsae. The image can be said to consist of two parts: 1. the fighting of mortals (237-48a); 2. the actions of various demonic figures (248b-70). This second part can be further subdivided into three parts, which form a triple crescendo: 1. the Keres (248b-57 and 261-3), 2. the Μοῖραι or Parcae (258-60), and 3. Ἀχλύς or Death Mist (264-70).

I first discuss the text. It largely has a descriptive textual organization, but 252b-7 and 261-3 stand out. Lines 261-3 contain three aorists and thus contain the diegetic
discourse mode; lines 252b-7 contain a number of elements associated with the diegetic discourse mode, and express iterative events. Both will be further discussed below. The various subthemes are connected spatially to each other: μετά in 248 separates subtheme one (men at war) from two (demonic figures); the subthemes of part two are separated by ἐκφέστασαν (258) and πάρ (...) εἰστήκει (264).

The following other prototypically descriptive elements are present. First, lines 258-60 and 264-70 contain genuine descriptions of the appearance of the personified spirits of war; verbs designating states abound. As for the passage as a whole, I note the following visual details: πολλοὶ, πλέονες (241), χαλκέων (243), κυάνεαι, λευκοὺς (249), line 250 as a whole, μέλαν (252), μεγάλους (254), ύφησσων / (... oū ti (... μεγάλη (258-9), ἑνί (261), δεινά (262). Apart from χαλκέων, there are no unambiguous references to the opus ipsum.155 Lines 264-70 as a whole are a visual spectacle. The passage contains many other details.156

Let us now turn to the image. In the first part (237-48a), an ongoing fight for a city is depicted. Whereas the city at war in the Homeric shield ekphrasis (18.509-40) consists of six different moments in time, here only one moment is depicted.157 The ongoing battle is fought between two different armies.158 They have contrary goals: one is defending the city (239-40a), the other wants to sack it (240b). Although this cannot be depicted, the inference by the narrator of the armies’ intentions is a likely one. Many men (of both armies, I presume) are already dead (πολλοὶ μὲν κέατο, 241), but “more, being still engaged in conflict (ἔτι δῆριν ἔχοντες), were fighting”. The adverb ἔτι indicates

---

155 I therefore wonder whether the conjecture χαλκέων (for χάλκεον), adopted by all editors, is correct. According to Russo [1950] 1965, 138, the paradox is difficult to explain. This makes χάλκεον the lectio difficilior.

156 I note: πολεμήια τεύχε’ ἔχοντες (238), ἐυδμήτων (242), ὀξύ (243, sound), the relative clause in 245 (οἳ πρεσβῆες ἔσαν γῆρας τε μέμαρπεν), ἀθρόοι (246), μακάρεσι (247), νεούτατον (253), κρυόεντα (255), ἀνδρομέου (256), προφερής, πρεσβυτάτη (260), δριμεῖαν (261), δραστεία (263).

157 This moment is similar to the sixth and last phase of the Homeric city at war (18.533-40). Though I compare both ekphraseis in this section, this does not mean that I therefore assume that the Pseudo-Hesiodic narrator is directly dependent on Homer for his ekphrasis. The similarities are slight (cf. Chiarini 2012: 121), and could be due to the use of traditional motifs. For example, women and old men watching the battle are found elsewhere in the Iliad, too (see Edwards 1991: 219, who refers e.g. to the Τειχοσκοπία).

158 The dual ἐμαρνάσθην (238) indicates that two armies are meant (Russo [1950] 1965: 138); they are further specified with τοὶ μὲν (...)/ (...) τοὶ δὲ (239-40).
that, notwithstanding the great losses (πολλοί), the fight is still going on.\textsuperscript{159} The narrator thus makes clear that the battle has already been going on for a while, but that it is not yet finished.\textsuperscript{160}

After having focused on the fight – note the ring composition in ἐμαρνάσθην (238) and μάρναντο (242) – the narrator turns his attention to the bystanders, the women (242-4) and the elder people (245-8a). In the Homeric shield ekphrasis, the women (with their children) and old people are only guarding the wall (18.514-15), but the Pseudo-Hesiodic narrator focuses on the feelings of the bystanders. The women are shrieking sharply, and rending their cheeks (242-3), both of which are signs of grief. By comparing them to living women (ζωῇσιν ἴκελαι), the narrator indicates that he is describing a work of art (although it could be the case that the figures are really moving; cf. Perseus above); the reference to Hephaestus once again enhances the credibility of the narrator’s words (ἔργα κλυτοῦ Ἡφαίστοιο, 244).

The old men are gathered “outside the gates” (ἐκτοσθεν πυλέων, 246), which presumably indicates that the men are on the outside of the city walls.\textsuperscript{161} They are holding up their hands to the gods (246b-47a), a sign of prayer. The narrator infers the reason for this prayer: they are fearing for their sons (247b-48a). The narrator then turns to these sons: τοῖς αὖτε μάχην ἔχον, 248. This reference to the fighting closes off the first part of the image by ring composition.

\textsuperscript{159} ἔτι must be understood in reference to what has gone before (so Ravenna 1974: 26, “il rapporto è stabilito nei confronti del passato”; for this use, he compares Q.S. 5.109). For ἔτι looking forward to a future state of affairs, see A.R. 1.732 and Mosch. Eur. 45. In line 176 below, ἔτι modifies another adverb (μᾶλλον).

\textsuperscript{160} I therefore do not agree with Reinhardt 1961: 408, who argues that the fate of the city is sealed (“[w]enn im homerischen Bilde der Stadt im Kriege das Naheliegende gemieden, keine Eroberung, keine ‘halosis’ geschildert wird, so läßt sich der hesiodeische Dichter die Frauen, die laut heulend auf den Mauern sich die Wangen zerreißen, nicht entgehen; so wenig wie die Greise, die vor den Toren die Hände zu den Göttern erheben, zitternd um die Kinder. Das Schicksal der Stadt ist besiegt”, emphasis mine). It should be noted that in the two ekphraseis the women and elderly people are witnessing something different: in the Homeric city at war, they are guarding the walls; in Pseudo-Hesiod, they are watching the actual battle.

\textsuperscript{161} Russo [1950] 1965: 139 explains ἐκτοσθεν πυλέων as “ἐν τοῖς ἐξωπύλοις μέρεσι”. According to Schwarz 1932: 58, note 89, the old men are positioned before the gates (“senes pro portis constittisse videntur ea mente, ut animos filiorum, qui oppidum defendunt, confirmarent atque a fuga eos prohiberent”).
The Κῆρες, the “Fates”, are also fighting (δῆριν ἔχον, 251). They look particularly gruesome, as is the action in which they are engaged. The narrator describes their appearance in 249-50. As for λευκοὺς ἀραβεῦσαι ὀδόντας (249), this could refer to the res ipsae or to the opus ipsum. In the latter case, the Keres on the shield would really make sounds, as do the snakes in 164. The Keres are fighting περὶ πιπτόντων (251). I think that the narrator refers to a fight among the Keres themselves (cf. 261-3 below). Περὶ may have local sense (“around those who were falling”), but more likely means “for/about those who were falling”. The narrator next refers to the intentions of the Keres: all are eager to drink black blood (251-2).

The following lines (252-7) are characterized by a number of elements associated with the diegetic discourse mode. The relative clause in 252-3 contains a distributive-iterative optative, combined with a temporal adverb (ὅσοι δὲ πρῶτον μεμάποιεν, “whomever they caught first”, 252). In lines 255-6 we find a temporal clause with an anterior aorist (αἳ δὲ φρένας εὖτ’ ἀρέσαντο / αἵματος ἀνδρομέου, “when they had satisfied their spirits with human blood”). Line 256 contains an iterative imperfect, ῥίπτασκον. Lastly, line 257 contains two adverbs which also indicate that the action is repeated (ἂς, “back again”; οὖτις, “back (again)”).

Lines 252b-7, then, express iterative events. A number of different, consecutive actions is repeated: 1. the Keres catch a victim (252-3); 2. one of them (βαλλ’ in 254 is singular) kills him (254-5); 3. they throw the killed victim backwards (255-6); and 4.
they rush back into battle (257). These iterative actions can be interpreted in a number of ways. First, one could argue that the image depicts four phases, the iterativity of which is inferred by the narrator. This would mean that the whole scene repeats itself. As such, these iterative actions relate to a single static image. In that case, however, I would expect omnitemporal present tenses (cf. 151-3 above). Third, the narrator could also refer to real movements. Although this may seem improbable, we may compare the actions of Perseus and the Gorgons above in 228-37, as well as lines 261-3 below. Heracles’ shield has magical properties.

The next figures present in the image (258-60) are the Μοῖραι: Κλωθώ, Λάχεσις, and Ἀτρόπος. Clotho and Lachesis are said to be standing next to the Keres (τρις ἐφέστασαν, 258). The narrator then turns to Atropos: she is somewhat smaller (ὑφήσσων), and in no way a big goddess (258-9). Yet she is superior to the others and the oldest (258-9). It is unclear why Atropos is described as such. However, these lines

βάλλ’ as equalling βάλλον. Mazon, for example, translates “elles l’enveloppaient, abatant sur lui leurs immenses ongles”; some earlier editors let the reading stand (van Lennep 1854: 33. “[s]ed (...) acquiescer si satius in vulgata”; Paley 1883: 144 does not discuss βάλλ’). According to Russo, however, βάλλ’ cannot stand for βάλλον (ibid.).

Iterative actions that relate to a static image are found on the shield of Achilles, too (18.544-6 and 399-602).

So Byre (quoted in note 164 above).

It has also been argued that these could be regarded as Κήρες (cf. Onians in note 162 above, and the LfgrE s.v. Κλωθώ). According to Chiarini 2012: 128, note 242, the Μοῖραι are different (“[l]e quali (...) risultano come entità distinte rispetto alle Keres”).

The LfgrE (s.v. ψῆφουν) translate this hapax with “etwas geringer im Rang”, and take προφερής as “höher”. However, on account of οὐ τί πέλεν μεγάλη θεός (259), it seems preferable to translate ψῆφουν as “smaller” (see for a list of scholars who do so Chiarini 2012: 130, note 247) and προφερής as “carried before, placed before, excelling” (LJF s.v. προφερής A).

do suggest that Atropos is the most important of the three, from which the narratee could deduce she plays the most important role in killing warriors.\footnote{See Chiarini 2012: 130-1.}

Lines 261-3 present a number of difficulties. First of all, the text contains three aorists in close succession: ἔθεντο (261), δράκον (262), and ἰσώσαντο (263). These lines clearly contain the diegetic discourse mode.\footnote{The aorists are one of the reasons why these lines have been regarded as interpolated. See e.g. Schwarz 1932: 62 (“atque accedit, quod in aoristis tribus ἔθεντο, δράκον, ἰσώσαντο gravissime offendimus, ut qui pessime descriptioni congruent”).} Second, it is not clear to whom πᾶσαι in 261 refers. There are three options. (1) At first sight, it seems likely that the three Moirae are meant. However, these are introduced in 258-60 as static figures (σφιν ἐφέστασαν, 258). It could, of course, be the case that they are now performing actions, but this solution is unnecessary. (2) It is more likely that πᾶσαι refers to the Keres, with lines 258-60 as a parenthesis.\footnote{So van der Valk 1953: 276-7. He notes that “[i]t should be borne in mind that the Keres are the principal goddesses who are described in this passage. They are depicted in 249-257. The mentioning of the Parcae is a kind of parenthesis. In 261 the poet resumes the description of 249-257” (ibid.: 277, note 1). That πᾶσαι refers to the Keres was also stated by Paley 1883: 145 (“[h]e reverts to the Κῆρες, contending like so many vultures for the possession of a corpse”).} (3) Lastly, πᾶσαι could refer to the Keres and the Moirae together, but this is again unlikely on account of the reason mentioned under (1).

What are the Keres doing in 261-3? They are involved in three consecutive actions: 1) they start a battle for a single man (ἐνὶ φωτὶ μάχην δριμεῖαν ἔθεντο, 261);\footnote{For μάχην...ἔθεντο, see LfgrE s.v. τίθημι B 16 (“establish, effect, bring about, cause, make to happen”).} 2) they throw each other terrible looks (262), and (3) they devour the man (263).\footnote{The LfgrE s.v. ἰσόομαι translate line 263 as “and on him they made their claws and hands equal”, which they take to mean as “they rivalled in devouring him”.} Here, we clearly find three figures involved in different consecutive actions. It is thus difficult to imagine what the image on the shield looks like. The narrator has genuinely turned to narration, as we find aorists instead of imperfects. It seems as if the narrator no longer looks at what is happening through a static image (imperfects), but looks at what is happening as if it were part of reality itself (aorists).\footnote{In the Homeric shield ekphrasis, the aorists refer to non-depicted events (see 3.3.3.3, 2b). Such an interpretation is impossible here.} Alternatively, the aorists could refer to genuine movements of the figures on the shield.
The narratee may wonder how the actions of the Keres narrated in lines 261-3 relate to the those narrated in lines 252b-7. Lines 261-3 could be regarded as an elaboration of what is expressed in 253b-4, ἀμφὶ μὲν αὐτῷ / βάλλ’ ὄνυχας μεγάλους. The narrator then zooms in on the most gruesome part of the behaviour of the Keres. This would mean that he revisits the same image, and focuses on one action that he finds particularly gruesome. Alternatively, lines 261-3 could also refer to a different image.

The climax of this image is the description of Αχλύς, Death-Mist, the most horrendous creature on the shield. Palm has called this passage a “sehr vollständige Personen-Ekphrase”. Indeed, these lines are wholly devoted to the physical appearance of one figure only. This figure is a bystander (πὰρ δ’ Ἀχλὺς εἱστήκει), not engaged in any action. Most details are of a visual nature. The narrator seems to focus on the res ipsae. The details that occur can be explained by assigning to Achlus a proleptic function: her appearance refers to the mourning by the kinsmen that takes place after they have lost a beloved one on the battlefield.

The narrativity of the image is high. One moment of fighting is depicted, although the many dead bodies indicate that the battle has already been going on for a while. The presence of Αχλύς (264-70) may remind the narratee of what happens when the war has ended, and the kinsmen start mourning. In most lines, then, event sequencing is absent. Lines 252-7 and 261-3 do feature a sequence of events. It is unclear how they relate to the shield, and it is therefore difficult to decide whether this sequence of events is depicted in the image, or whether it is part of the text only.

In the Homeric city at war narrativity is mainly due to the six different moments in time, as well as the disruptive nature of the events: the siege does not go according to plan. On the shield of Heracles, the action itself does not deviate from a script: the fighting is a general mêlée. Nevertheless, the siege of a city is a disruptive event for

---

177 Achlus has been called the personification of the horrors of war (so Thalmann 1984: 63; Russo [1950] 1965: 12-3 speaks of an allegorical figure).


179 According to Martin 2005: 166, Achlus is the internal audience witnessing the actions of the Keres, but there are no indications in the text that she is actually watching or looking at what is going on. Pseudo-Longinus also discusses this passage, for which see ibid.: 155.

180 Fränkel [1969] 1975: 111: “[w]ith the next demonic figure, ‘Darkness of Night,’ it is no longer the battlefield which is in view but the home of the fallen. When the terrible news comes, the eyes of his kin are darkened with night, there is no desire for food, there is loud lamentation, tearing of cheeks until the blood runs, and rolling in the dust”; similarly the lfigrE s.v. Αχλύς B.
those who are involved. This is expressed by the presence of the many dead bodies, but above all by the reactions of the bystanders, the women and the elderly, to the fighting. The narrator, furthermore, adds what is at stake for those involved. The defenders are warding off destruction (λοιγόν, 240), and they do this for their own city and their own parents ( htonl stmt το δεκήν, το δεκήν, το δεκήν).

Now, lines 239-40 could be an inference by the narrator, but the image itself also emphatically indicates that war is highly disruptive. It does so by focusing on 'what-it’s-like'. This is, first of all, expressed by the actions of the women watching the fight (242-4), and the old men praying for their sons (245-8). The Keres and Moirai in the following lines (249-63) convey the horrors of war. Their actions make clear what it is like to be on the battlefield; Achlus (264-70) represents the feelings of the bereaved kinsmen. The image devotes more attention to 'what-it’s-like' than to the actual fighting. In this respect, too, this passage differs sharply from the city at war in the Homeric shield ekphrasis (18,509-40), where the element of 'what-it’s-like' is touched upon only in passing.

12. Mortals in peace time (270b-313)

... παρὰ δ' εὔπυργος πόλις ἀνδρῶν, χρύσειαι δέ μιν εἶχον ὑπερθυρίοις ἀραρυῖαι ἔπτα πόλιαν· τοῖ δ' ἄνδρες ἔν ἄγλαίας τε χοροίς τε τέρψιν ἔχον· τοῖς γὰρ υπὲρν ἐσωσάτωρ ἐπ' ἀπήνης ἠγονοῦ τοῖς ἀνδρὶς γυναίκας, πολλὰς ἡμέρας ἀφάρησαν τῆς ἡμέρας· τίλη δ' ἀπ' αἰθομένων δαίμων σέλας εἰλύφαζε. χερὶν ἐνὶ δμῳῶν· τοῖς ἀγλαίας τεθαλύσαν. τοῖς μὲν φορήσαν ἀνδρὶς, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει· τῆλε δ' ἀπ' αἰθομένων δαΐδων σέλας εἰλύφαζε. χερὶν ἐνὶ δμῳῶν· τοῖς ἀγλαίας τεθαλύσαν. τοῖς μὲν φορήσαν ἀνδρὶς, πολὺς δ' ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει· τῆλε δ' ἀπ' αἰθομένων δαΐδων σέλας εἰλύφαζε.
Beside [her] [was] a well-towered city of men, and seven golden gates, fitted to the lintels, held it. And they, the men, were enjoying themselves with festive splendour and dances. For some were leading a bride to her husband on a well-wheeled wagon, and a loud wedding-song had arisen; (275) from afar the blaze from burning torches was spreading, in the hands of slaves; and they, resplendent in festive splendour, were walking in front, and choruses, while dancing, were following them. And they were sending forth their voices from their soft mouths, accompanied by shrill panpipes, and around them the echo was breaking. (280) And they were leading the lovely dance to the accompaniment of lyres. On the other side from there, young men were revelling, accompanied by a pipe, some of them dancing with dance and song; others, while laughing, each to the music of a flutist, were walking in front; festivities, dances, and festive splendour (285) filled the whole city. Others again, in front of the city, were rushing mounted on horse-back. And others, ploughers, were breaking up the divine earth, and they were clothed in girt-up tunics. And there was a deep corn-field: some were reaping with sickles the bending stalks, (290) which were weighed down with ears of corn, just as Demeter's grain; others were
tying [the corn] with hands and spreading [the sheaves] on the ground; others were harvesting
the vines, holding sickles in their hands; others again were carrying white and black grape
clusters from the gatherers to baskets, from big vine-rows (295) weighed down with leaves and
silver tendrils. Others again were carrying [them] to baskets. Beside them was a vine-row made
of gold, famous works of the exceedingly wise Hephaestus, [others again, dancing each one to
the accompaniment of a pipe-player], trembling with leaves and silver vine-props, (300)
weighed down with the grape-bunches; these had become black. Some were treading [grapes],
others were drawing off [the most]. Other men were competing at boxing and wrestling. Others,
huntsmen, were hunting swift-footed hares, and there was a brace of jagged-toothed dogs in
front, eager to catch them, but they [the hares] eager to escape. (305) Next to them, horsemen
were at hard toil, and around a prize they were engaged in conflict and effort. Standing on the
well-plaited chariots, the charioteers were urging on the swift horses, slacking the reins; and
they, the well-fastened chariots, were flying clattering, and on them the naves of the wheels
were screeching loudly. (310) They were at ceaseless toil, and never for them was victory
achieved, but they had a contest undecided. Before them was also set, within the course, a large
tripod, of gold, famous works of the exceedingly wise Hephaestus.

The next image on the shield of Heracles depicts various activities in and outside a city. The
text has a descriptive textual organization. Two aorists occur, which might seem
out of place: μελάνθησαν (300) and ἐπηνύσθη (311). As I have argued above, μελάνθησαν is
an anterior aorist and as such can be accounted for within the descriptive discourse
mode. The aorist ἐπηνύσθη is combined with a negative (οὐδὲ ποτὲ σφιν / νίκη ἐπηνύσθη),
and is used because a punctual event is negated.181

The following other prototypically descriptive features of the text are present.
References to the opus ipsum are few: χρύσειαι (271), ἀργυρέῃς (295), χρύσεος (297),
ἀργυρέῃσι (299), χρύσειος (313). The text contains many details, both visual and of a
different kind.182

181 So Schwarz 1932: 63: “negatio οὗ aoristum affert, i.e. tempus effectus vel ‘punctuationis’ quam
dicunt”; cf. also Russo [1950] 1965: 155: “il passaggio di tempo, normale per la presenza della
negazione (οὐδὲ), è appropriatissimo: la fatica era eterna e la vittoria non arride mai, e incerta
rimaneva la gara” (emphasis in the original).
182 Visual: ἑπτά (272), αἰθομένων (275), ἀγλαΐῃ τεθαλυῖαι (276), γελόωντες (283), ἐπιστολάδην (287),
βαθύ (288), ἔξεισι, κορωνιόωντα (289), βριθόμενοι σταφυλῇσι (300), λευκοὺς καὶ μέλανας, μεγάλων
(294), lines 295 and 299, βριθόμενος σταφυλῇσι (300), κρυμμάτων (303), and μέγας (312). Other:
εὔπυργος (270), ὑπερθυρίοις ἀραρυῖαι (271), ἐυσσώτρου (273), πολύς (274, sound), λιγυρῶν (278,
sound), ἁπαλῶν (279), ἱμερόεντα (280), δῖα (287), κλυτά, περίφρονος (297), ὠκύποδας
The text proceeds mainly by enumeration, often signalled by the use of the anaphoric pronoun (sometimes combined with a noun). Spatial markers occur, too. The moving between the two main spaces – from the inside of the city (270-85) to the outside of it (285-313) – is marked by προπάροιθε (285); within these two spaces, the shift between scenes is also spatially marked. Lines 270-2 refer to the appearance of the city and are as such prototypically descriptive; ἐξέχον (271) designates a state. The same holds for lines 284-5, which close off the first part (270-85) by ring composition (πᾶσαν δὲ πόλιν διαλιαί τε χοροῖ τε / ἀγλαίαι τ' ἐξέχον). Further, lines 296-300 are a description of a row of vines (ἐρχοχος, 296). In these lines, only states occur (ἡν, 297; μελάνηγασάν, 300). They are also full of visual details and as such prototypically descriptive.

Let us now turn to the image. As stated above, it consists of two main parts: 1) activities within the city (272-85), and 2) activities outside of it (285-313). The narrator thus moves from the city to the countryside. Lines 272-3 (τοὶ δὲ ἄνδρες ἐν ἀγλαίαι τε χοροῖς τε / τέρψιν ἔχον) introduce the whole of the first part: the men are enjoying themselves with festivities and dances. This first part is divided into two scenes: a marriage procession (273-80), and on the other side of the city, a κώμος (281-5).
The marriage procession (273-80) is part of the festivities; γάρ (273) indicates that these lines are an elaboration of what has been stated in 272-3. In contrast to the Homeric marriage scene (18.491-6), here only one marriage is being celebrated: a woman is led on a cart to her husband (273-4). She is the only individual to be singled out; the other figures are all in the plural. As in the Homeric marriage scene, the narrator indicates that a loud marriage song has arisen (πολὺς δ’ ὑμέναιος ὀρώρει, 274). This is a likely inference in this context.

In the next lines (275-80), the narrator deals with the festivities accompanying the wedding procession. He refers twice to a non-human subject: “the blaze from the burning torches was spreading” (ἀπ’ αἰθομένων δαΐδων σέλας εἰλύφαζε, 275), and “the echo was breaking” (ἄγνυτο ἠχώ, 279). Whereas the spreading blaze could perhaps be depicted, a breaking echo cannot be depicted. It could be an inference by the narrator from the preceding lines, in which is stated that the choruses “were sending forth their voices from their soft mouths, accompanied by shrill panpipes” (278-9). Alternatively, the sound could be part of the opus ipsum (see e.g. 231-3 above). At any rate, by making the sound the subject of an action, the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator moves much further away from what can be depicted than the Homeric narrator does in 18.491-6. After the marriage procession follows a κῶμος (281-4); only plural subjects are found.

The second part of the image (285-311) consists of a number of activities taking place outside of the city. It is their location which connects them, as the activities are of a diverse nature (competitions and agricultural scenes): 1. men on horseback (285-6); 2. ploughers (286-8); 3. a deep corn-field; men are harvesting (288-91); 4. wine-making (292-301); reference to a row of vines in 296-300; 5. boxing and wrestling (301-2); 6. hare-hunting (302-4); 7. chariot race (305-11). In the Homeric shield ekphrasis, most activities

---

188 On account of the iconographical tradition, Chiarini 2012: 135 supposes that the man is also present on the cart; she takes ἄνδρι (274) as standing metonymically for the man’s house. However, the text offers no evidence for this interpretation.

189 For the pluperfect ὀρώρει, see 3.3.3.2. 2a.

190 According to Byre 1976: 84, “[t]he mention of the song of the young men in 278 seems partially justified as an authorial comment on a representation by the detail ξ ἄπαλων στομάτων (279a), but περὶ δὲ σφιστὶν ἄγνυτο ἠχώ (279b) is not. Nor are the acoustic images in 274, 308-9, and 316”.

191 According to Paley 1883: 147, the κῶμος is part of the nuptial scene, too; according to Russo [1950] 1965: 148-9, however, ἐνὶ ἐν δ’ αὐτῶν ἦτερω (281) signals a clear demarcation. Yet the fact that something is spatially removed from something else does not necessarily mean that it is therefore not connected qua subject matter.
(such as ploughing, or harvesting; see 18.541-9 and 550-60) are introduced separately with ἐν δὲ, and assigned a specific location. Here, the narrator focuses immediately on the activities of the figures. Only in 288 does he refer to the scenery, and then even summarily (αὐτὰρ ἔην βαθὺ λήιον). He also refers to a row of vines in 296-300, but only after the relevant activities have been introduced (292-6; two more activities are added in 301). Another difference is the length of the scenes: in the Homeric shield ekphrasis, most scenes are longer (e.g. ploughing: 9 lines; harvest: 11 lines; vineyard: 12 lines). The pseudo-Hesiodic shield, on the other hand, has more scenes. Both facts contribute to the impression that this part of the pseudo-Hesiodic shield is crowded and busy.192

The men on horseback receive no elaboration (285-6), and it is unclear what they are doing here.193 Torelli draws attention to the aristocratic nature of this activity; he notes that other aristocratic activities occur in 301-11 below.194 Seeing that horses are mentioned, these lines could form some sort of ring with verses 305-11 below (Ἰππος, 307).195 The ploughing (286-8) is briefly touched upon, too; the narrator also focuses on the clothing of the figures (ἐπιστολάδην δὲ χιτῶνας / ἐστάλατο, 287-88). The harvest consists of three activities: reaping (288-90), the tying of the corn into sheaves, and the spreading of the sheaves on the ground (291).196


194 Torelli 2006: 37.

195 According to Chiariini 2012: 140 (following Russo [1950] 1965: 149), “[l’]espediente di inserire a questo punto un gruppo di cavalieri ha l’utile funzione di condurre la descrizione dall’interno all’esterno della cinta muraria della città pacifica (…)”. In my view, this is due to the prepositional phrase προπάροιθε πόληος (285) rather than to the nature of the subject matter.

196 The LfgrE note that αἰχμή stands only here for δρέπανον (s.v. αἰχμή B). The interpretation of ἔπιτνον ἀλωῇ (291) is difficult. I follow Russo [1950] 1965: 151 (“i mietitori legavano le spighe in fasci e le mettevano in aia, le ‘inaiavano’”; emphasis in the original). For the meaning of ἐπιτνον, see the LfgrE s.v. πίτνημι, πίτνω, πετάσαι, πέπταμαι B (“ausbreiten, pandere”). It should be noted that ἀλωῇ is a conjecture; the manuscripts read ἀλωήν. This reading is retained by Mazon, who translates "dont ils jonchait l'aire", “[the sheaves] with which they covered the ground/threshing floor”.

---


194 Torelli 2006: 37.

195 According to Chiariini 2012: 140 (following Russo [1950] 1965: 149), “[l’]espediente di inserire a questo punto un gruppo di cavalieri ha l’utile funzione di condurre la descrizione dall’interno all’esterno della cinta muraria della città pacifica (…)”. In my view, this is due to the prepositional phrase προπάροιθε πόληος (285) rather than to the nature of the subject matter.

196 The LfgrE note that αἰχμή stands only here for δρέπανον (s.v. αἰχμή B). The interpretation of ἔπιτνον ἀλωῇ (291) is difficult. I follow Russo [1950] 1965: 151 (“i mietitori legavano le spighe in fasci e le mettevano in aia, le ‘inaiavano’”; emphasis in the original). For the meaning of ἐπιτνον, see the LfgrE s.v. πίτνημι, πίτνω, πετάσαι, πέπταμαι B (“ausbreiten, pandere”). It should be noted that ἀλωῇ is a conjecture; the manuscripts read ἀλωήν. This reading is retained by Mazon, who translates "dont ils jonchait l’aire", “[the sheaves] with which they covered the ground/threshing floor”.
The wine making (292-301) is the longest scene (10 lines), although one line (298) cannot be explained as the text stands.\textsuperscript{197} The vines are harvested (292), after which the grape clusters are carried from the gatherers to baskets (293-5). Lines 294-5 are full of visual detail: the grape clusters are both white and black, the vine-rows are big (294) and weighed down with leaves and silver tendrils (295). In 296, the narrator repeats δ' αὖτ' ἐς ταλάρους ἐφόρευν from 293. This repetition could be explained by assuming that the narrator, after having described the many rows of vines as a whole in 294-5, wants to zoom in on a single row (296-300), which must be imagined as positioned next to those carrying the grapes to the baskets (παρὰ δὲ σφισιν ὄρχος, 296).\textsuperscript{198} The description of this single golden vine-row includes a reference to the maker of the shield, Hephaestus (297), which Russo attributes to the exceptional craftsmanship of the following verses (flickering leaves in 299; and black grape bunches in 300).\textsuperscript{199} Indeed, such references heighten the credibility of the description.\textsuperscript{200} The wine making ends in 301, with two brief references to the treading of the grapes and the drawing off of the most. In this line (οἵ γε μὲν ἐτράπεον, τοὶ δ' ἤρυον), the narrator only mentions the activities: no other details are added.

The last three scenes (301-13) consist of sportive and competitive activities, activities of the aristocracy.\textsuperscript{201} The first two activities, boxing and wrestling, are merely mentioned (οἳ δὲ μάχοντο / πύξ τε καὶ ἑλκηδόν, 302-3). Next follows the image of the hare-hunt (302-4). The animals receive some elaboration: the hares are swift-footed (ὠκύποδας λαγός, 302) and the dogs, two in number, have sharp teeth (καρχαρόδοντε, 303). The hunting itself is only described indirectly: the narrator indicates the motives of both dogs and hares (ἱέμενοι μαπέειν, οἳ δ' ἱέμενοι ὑπαλύξαι, 304).

The last scene contains the most noble and prestigious sportive activity, a chariot race.\textsuperscript{202} The contest is framed by the prize that can be won: ἀμφὶ δ' ἀέθλῳ (305) and μέγας τρίπος (312). The race is described in 306-9. First, the narrator describes the chariots, the charioteers (ἡνίοχοι, i.e. the ἱππῆες of 305) and their horses (306-8). The narrator returns to the chariots in 308-9: they are moving with great speed, while

\textsuperscript{197} The subject matter of this line, dancing, is not alien to what is going on: in the Homeric shield ekphrasis, the carrying of grapes is accompanied by a dance (18.569-72).
\textsuperscript{198} For a different explanation of this repetition, see Dubel 1997: 118-9.
\textsuperscript{199} Russo [1950] 1965: 152. Cf. the similar phrase in 313 below.
\textsuperscript{200} Cf. my remarks on 18.548-9 in 3.3.3.3.3.
\textsuperscript{201} Torelli 2006: 37; cf. also Chiarini 2012: 149.
\textsuperscript{202} Chiarini 2012: 151-2.
clattering (ἐπικροτέοντα πέτοντο); the naves of the wheels make a loud noise, too (ἐπὶ δὲ πλήμναι μέγ᾽ ἀύτευν). The narrator thus emphasizes the loudness of the scene.

Lines 310-11 have attracted much attention: the narrator states no less than three times that the race never ends: 1. the charioteers were at ceaseless toil (οἳ μὲν ἄρ᾽ αἴδιον ἔχον πόνον, 310), 2. never for them was victory achieved (οὐδὲ ποτὲ σφιν / νίκη ἐπηνύσθη, 310-11), 3. but they had a contest undecided (ἀλλ᾽ ἄκριτον εἶχον ἄεθλον, 311). Scholars usually interpret these lines as a narratorial comment on the stasis of pictorial art, as a deliberate breaking of its illusionary nature. One could also argue, in view of lines 216-37 above, and taking into account the magical nature of Heracles’ shield, that the chariots are really moving and making sound. One might imagine them as driving in circles on the round shield. Indeed, victory can never be achieved: they are, literally, forever engaged in this circular movement, just as Perseus and the Gorgons are forever fleeing and pursuing.

After having mentioned the prize (a big tripod, of gold, 312-3), the narrator ends with another reference to Hephaestus (κλυτὰ ἔργα περίφρονος Ἡφαίστοιο, 313). This remark could well apply to the previous scene as a whole (305-11), rather than to the golden tripod only. If we interpret this phrase as a means to heightening the credibility of the narrator’s words, κλυτὰ ἔργα περίφρονος Ἡφαίστοιο could be adduced as evidence for the idea that the chariots are really moving.

The narrativity of the image is low. Event sequencing and world disruption are both absent. All activities follow a script: everything goes as it should go. For example, a boxing match, a hunt, or a chariot race are all subjects which easily lend themselves for the inclusion of world disruption, or for the creation of tension. Yet the image depicts the activities as they are normally and usually performed. The whole image is thus characterized by generic narrativity. There are only a few references to ‘what-it’s-like’: in lines 272-3 it is stated that the men were having pleasure in their feasting; the dance is lovely (ἱμερόεντα, 280), and the κωμασταί are laughing (γελόωντες, 283). Perhaps δῆριν ἔχον καὶ μόχθον in 306 indicates that the charioteers are having a hard time.

13. Ocean (314-6); concluding remarks and resumption of the narrative (317-20)

Ἀμφὶ δ’ ἴτυν Ὠκεανὸς πλήθον ἐοικώς, impf.

See e.g. Bing 2012: 195 and Chiarini 2012: 154. Cf. my discussion of αὕτως (Il. 18.584) in 3.3.3.3. 6.

According to Russo [1950] 1965: 156, this phrase also reminds the narratee of the divine nature of Heracles’ shield as a whole.

See for this term 3.3.3.3. 2a.
Around the rim Ocean was flowing, looking as though it was in full flood; (315) it held together the whole richly-worked shield. Upon it high-flying swans were calling loudly, who, in large numbers, were swimming on the surface of the water; beside them fish were tumbling – a wonder to see even for deep-thundering Zeus, by whose will Hephaestus had made the shield, big and sturdy, (320) having fitted it together with his skilled hands. Zeus’ strong son wielded it forcefully, and he leapt onto his horse-chariot (...)

As in the case of Achilles’ shield (18.607-8), the Randstück of Heracles’ shield is formed by the Ocean, too. On Heracles’ shield, the Ocean receives further elaboration, which is absent from the shield of Achilles. I start with the text of 314-17 that refers to the image. It has a descriptive textual organization; progression is spatial (κατά 315; ἐπί, παρά, 317). I note the following visual details: πλήθοντι ἐοικώς (314) and πᾶν δὲ συνεῖχε σάκος πολυδαίδαλον (315), both of which refer to the opus ipsum; πολλοί (316). Other details are ἀερσιπόται and μεγάλα (316, the latter detail refers to sound).

As for lines 318-21, θαῦμα ἰδεῖν καὶ Ζηνὶ βαρυκτύπῳ in 318 refers to the whole shield;206 with this phrase, the narrator ends the description of Heracles’ shield by ring composition (= θαῦμα ἵκεσθαι, 140). The relative clause in 318-20 (οὗ διὰ βουλὰς…ἀρσάμενος παλάμῃσι) contains an anterior aorist (ποίησε, 319) and constitutes a small analepsis.207 The narratees already knew that the shield was made by Hephaestus (since line 219); the fact that this was done at the prompting of Zeus is new information.208 With τὸ μὲν Διὸς ἄλκιμος υἱὸς / πάλλεν ἐπικρατέως (320) the narrative resumes; τὸ refers to the shield that has just been described.


207 I translate βουλὰς with “will” (see for this meaning LSF s.v. βουλή A); the LfgRE translate with “Ratschluß” (s.v. βουλή B 1 d).

The image of lines 314-7 is low in narrativity, as all three basic elements of narrative are absent. The res ipsae are described in 315-7. The narrator focuses on sound in 316: the swans are calling loudly (μεγάλ’ ἤπυον).\footnote{The reference to swans is not gratuitous; see Fränkel [1969] 1975: 111 (the swans are Apollo’s birds, the god in whose service Heracles is undertaking the battle) and Bing 2012: 196-7. Schadewaldt [1944] 1965: 362 discusses the presence of the swans and the fish under the poet’s preference for the Freude am Kleine, and notes that “[m]an sieht, der Hellenismus ist in der Dichtung nicht eine zeitlich klar abgesetzte Erscheinung”.} Beside the swans, the fish are “tumbling” (ἐκλονέοντα).\footnote{The LSJ s.v. κλονέω II 2; LfgrE s.v. κλονέω B 1 (“tummelten sich”; they compare line 210, but see note 126 above); Evelyn-White translates “and near them were shoals of fish”; Mazon with “s’agitaient”.} Alternatively, one could translate ἐκλονέοντα with “were driven in panic”, in which case the picture becomes more violent.\footnote{See Thalmann 1984: 204, note 82: “[e]ditors and translators tend to play down the force of ἐκλονέοντα in line 317, but this verb’s normal meaning in epic is ‘drive (or, in the passive, ‘be driven’) in panic’; Most translates with ‘were being driven in rout’.”} As such, these lines are similar to lines 212-3 above, where a similar ambiguity is present.

4.4 Shield of Heracles: Its Descriptivity and Narrativity. Conclusion
The ekphrasis in the Shield (139-320) concerns a finished object. Thus, the ekphrasis lacks the narrative backbone of the Homeric shield ekphrasis (18.478-608), which means that the ekphrasis in the Shield constitutes a pause. Notwithstanding this difference, the textual organization of both ekphraseis is largely descriptive. In both ekphraseis, some passages with a narrative textual organization are found, too. In the Homeric ekphrasis, passages with a narrative textual organization can be harmonized with static images. In the pseudo-Hesiodic ekphrasis, it is unclear whether these passages (252b-7 and 261-3) can refer to static images. It could be the case that reference is made to actions which are really happening on the shield. One could say that the narrator exploits the fact that he is constructing a shield out of words, which allows him to create a magical shield.

The text has a number of other prototypically descriptive features. On the whole, the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator refers more often to the opus ipsum than the Homeric narrator does in the shield of Achilles, and incorporates more visual details. The pseudo-Hesiodic narrator seems to devote more explicit attention to the appearance of the figures (e.g. 144-8; 161-7; the portraits of Ares and Athena in 191-200; Perseus in 220-7;
the Gorgons in 233-7; Achlus in 264-70; in such passages verbs designating states abound). On the other hand, in the image of the mortals in peace time (270b-313) the narrator devotes very little attention to the scenery or appearance of the figures in comparison with similar images on the shield of Achilles. Throughout the ekphrasis, the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator more often draws attention to the fact that he is looking at a shield; we find phrases such as ὡς εἰ, "as if" and εἰκώς or ἴκελος, "looking as".

The images on the shield of Heracles have various degrees of narrativity. Most images have a low degree of narrativity. The apotropaic images (144-67) hardly have any narrative elements at all. The images of the mortals in peace time (270b-313), as well as the harbour with the fisherman (207-15), possess generic narrativity; in this respect they are similar to most images on the shield of Achilles. There is also a number of images with mythical subjects that are low in narrativity: the portraits of Ares and Athena (191-200) and the chorus of immortals and Apollo (201-6).

Four images have a high degree of narrativity. Whereas on the shield of Achilles images with a high degree of narrativity feature event sequencing (city at war; attack on the herd of cattle), on the shield of Heracles most images do not sequence events. They are, nevertheless, similar in that they all feature world disruption: (1) The battle between the wild boars and lions (168-77) depicts a pregnant moment, from which the narrator infers what has gone before, and what will happen next. This inference is marked explicitly by the use of adverbs (ἦδη γάρ, 172; ἐτι μᾶλλον, 176). (2) The battle of the Lapiths and Centaurs (178-90) depicts two events that are happening simultaneously. (3) The image of Perseus fleeing the Gorgons (216-37a) is of a mythical nature, and thus illustrative. The figures are really moving, since the shield makes a large noise (231-3). Hence, the image is not static. On account of its mythical nature, the narratee can infer what has gone before and what will happen next; adverbs are therefore not necessary. (4) The image of the mortals at war (237b-70a) not only features world disruption, but also pays attention to 'what-it's-like'. The main subject of the image is not the actual fighting, but rather its horrible and gruesome effects and consequences. This effect is also created by describing figures which are merely bystanders, such as the Moirae (258-60) and Achlus (264-70).

---

212 We see, then, that a mythological subject does not automatically lead to a narrative image (as seems to be implied by Chiarini 2012: 165).

213 For this term, see section 1.4.3.
4.5 Coda: Visualizing the Shield of Heracles

Most scholars are agreed that the shield of Achilles is difficult to visualize.\(^{214}\) It perhaps comes as a surprise that a different opinion exists regarding the visualization of the shield of Heracles. I quote Friedländer:


The basic idea is that the narrator of the *Shield* is very much aware that he is describing an object, whereas the Homeric narrator would often forget this. As I already showed in section 4.2, this idea is shared by a number of scholars.\(^{216}\) It is based on the following observations: the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator avoids or refers but rarely to non-

---

\(^{214}\) See section 3.5.

\(^{215}\) Friedländer 1912: 10, emphasis in the original. The idea that the narrator of the *Shield* follows, in some parts at least, a real shield is old-fashioned (see Fittschen 1973: 18-9); but according to Torelli 2006: 32 (following Russo [1950] 1965: 23-4), “l’autore dello ‘Scudo’ ha senz’altro presente uno scudo reale, dalla cui decorazione, per intuibile ragioni di verosimiglianza, ha sentito il bisogno di partire”.

\(^{216}\) See e.g. the scholars quoted in note 23 above; further Byre 1976: 77 (“[m]ost of the details in the ekphrasis, and the order of their arrangement, seem to be determined by the nature of a concrete object. Much more than Homer, the poet of the *Scutum* gives the impression of following a spatial order in his addition of details and creates an image of the physical appearance of the object. The shield, we are told in 141, was round. Since the first scene is placed on the middle of the shield’s surface (144), the last at the shield’s rim (344), a progression from center outwards is clearly implied. (…) The scenes, moreover, are described as representations rather than narrated as real events, the addition of detail following a spatial rather than temporal order”), Schmale 2004: 113, and Chiarini 2012: 94.
representable elements such as movement and thought; the simplification of the image, but also its enrichment with details fitting for an image; a clearer spatial arrangement of the various parts; and the emphasis on the artificial nature of the object with phrases such as "looking as" and the like.

As I have argued in section 3.5, the "problems" with the visualization of the Homeric shield are to a certain extent exaggerated: the Homeric narrator, too, makes it clear that he is referring to images on an object. At the same time, any problems that do exist regarding the visualization of the pseudo-Hesiodic shield are downplayed. I have the feeling that elements which are regarded as problematic in the shield of Achilles are regarded as unproblematic in the shield of Heracles. For example, the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator also often refers to movements, thoughts and sounds. Yet in the case of the shield of Heracles, these references are no problem. For example, Friedländer writes that "Handlungen und Gefühle werden selten weiter ausgezeichnet, als in der Natur des Dargestellten liegt".

It is true that the Homeric narrator refers much less to the *opus ipsum*. Yet it does not automatically follow that because the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator refers more often to the *opus ipsum*, this means that his description is therefore "more realistic", or that Heracles' shield is therefore easier to visualize; it only means that he more often refers to the fact that he is describing an object. As for the clearer spatial arrangement, it is indeed the case that the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator uses more spatial markers. For example, the ekphrasis starts in the middle (ἐν μέσσῳ δέ, 144) and ends at the rim (ἅπαξ ὕμην, 314); some images are located vis-à-vis each other, too (e.g. the two main scenes: ὁ δ’ υπὲρ αὐτῶν in 237; παρὰ δ’ εὐπυργος πάλις ἀνδρῶν in 270).

217 Cf. Schmale quoted in 4.2 above.
218 That is, the pseudo-Hesiodic narrator also focuses on the res ipsae. Schmale’s criticism of Becker 1992 (for which see note 28 above) is therefore unjustified. Cf. also Stansbury-O’Donnell 1999: 62, who states regarding the image of Perseus and the Gorgons that “[d]espite this change to a mythological subject, the poem follows the same basic viewing process in the earlier shield of Achilles”.
219 Similarly Schmale 2004: 113, who writes that "Psychische Vorgänge sind an äußeren Gesten erkennbar gemacht"; she refers e.g. to the women on the wall in 242-4.
220 Within these two main images, spatial markers are also used, although not consequently (see the overview in 4.3.2). Herein however, the pseudo-Hesiodic shield does not differ from the Homeric shield.
Enumeration, however, is still the main ordering principle (ἐν: 154, 161, 168, 178, 191, 197, 201, 207-8, 216), and the spatial indicators are somewhat vague: what does it mean for one image to be situated above another (ὑπέρ, 237) on a shield that is round, and that therefore has no inherent bottom or top, no left or right? What does it mean for one image to be positioned next to another (παρά, 270), if the narratees know nothing about the way the images are arranged on the shield – perhaps in friezes, which in turn are divided into concentric circles? Even the idea that the narrator progresses from the centre outwards is an assumption based on the fact that he starts in the middle and ends at the rim. Thus, many basic facts about the arrangement of the images on the shield are unknown.

I want to draw attention to a number of elements that make the shield of Heracles unrealistic, and therefore more difficult to visualize. First of all, the shield is magical: it emits light and produces sound (the snakes in 164-6), and some of its figures are really moving (e.g. Perseus and the Gorgons in 229-33). This could imply that the figures in some of the other images (e.g. the Lapiths and Centaurs in 168-90, the Keres in 252-7 and 261-3, the chariots in 305-11) are also moving. In my view, an image with moving figures is more difficult to visualize than an image with static figures. How much space on the shield, for example, is allotted to the pursuit of Perseus and the Gorgons? In the case of the Keres in lines 252-7, one may wonder about the duration of their iterative actions, i.e. how long it takes before they move on to a new victim. Another problem regarding the visualization of Heracles’ shield is posed by the very short scenes in the image of the mortals in peace time (270b-310). In some lines (301-3), the narrator offers no visual details at all, but only enumerates the ongoing actions. In most other images of the mortals in peace time, the scenery receives little attention, and the spatial arrangement of the figures within the images is kept vague.

Notwithstanding these difficulties, the shield of Heracles can be visualized by the narratee, who would have used his knowledge of (contemporary) visual art to do so.221 In this respect, it does not differ from the shield of Achilles. Heracles’ shield is magical,

and therefore has a number of unrealistic features that are absent from Achilles’ shield. Some of its images are static, but others are moving; all static images on the shield of Heracles are monophase; some have a mythical subject matter. In comparison with Achilles’ shield, its surface is more crowded. In sum, Heracles’ shield is huge, fantastic, overcrowded, horrendous, noisy, ugly, flashy – a shield fitting for a hero like Heracles.222

222 Cf. the reconstructions in Studniczka 1896: 75, 83; Myres 1941: 22, and plate II; Fittschen 1973: 18-9; and Chiarini 2012: 161.