

THE HOMERIC EPICS

Critical Summaries of Iliad Books 9 – 12

Book 9

- **1 – 88** What is the role of Agamemnon here? Why does he need to behave as he does? What picture do we get of Diomedes and Nestor? Is their presentation in any way different from that elsewhere in the poem?
- **89 – 181** What is the role of Nestor here? What qualities and skills does he display? How is Agamemnon portrayed in this section? How is his character as shown in Book 1 developed?
- **182 – 225** What happens in this scene? What is its function within the Book as a whole?
- **225 – 306 Speech of Odysseus.** How does Odysseus echo words spoken earlier by Agamemnon? What different methods and arguments does Odysseus employ to persuade Achilles? Assess the strengths of Odysseus' attempt.
- **307 – 429 Reply of Achilles.** What are Achilles' main arguments? What different styles are evident in this speech? Which aspects of Achilles' character does this speech reveal? Is Achilles being reasonable? Which, if any, of his arguments have any practical validity?
- **430 – 605 Speech of Phoenix.** What picture emerges of Phoenix? What are the main arguments he uses? Why does Phoenix employ the Meleagros story (524 – 605) at the end of his speech? [Consider the ways in which the comparison between Achilles and Meleagros is appropriate.]
- **606 – 619 Reply of Achilles.** What reasons does Achilles give for resisting Phoenix's entreaties? What is the tone of this speech? Why does Achilles propose to keep Phoenix with him?
- **620 – 642 Speech of Aias.** What kind of language does Aias employ here? What does this speech reveal of Aias' character?
- **643 – 655 Reply of Achilles.** What evidence is there here that Achilles is to some extent sympathetic with Aias' words? What is the prevailing tone of this reply? What reason(s) does Achilles give for not being able to act on Aias' advice?
- **656 – 713** How is the Embassy Scene concluded? How does the final scene mirror the opening section of the Book? What is Odysseus' role here? How does Diomedes attempt to restore the Greeks' morale? What do Diomedes' words here add to his characterization?

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Iliad Book 10: Context Questions.

1. Lines 218 – 247 (p. 224)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Discuss and describe the tone of Diomedes' speeches in this passage. [10]
- (c) What do we learn from this passage about Diomedes' character? How does this fit into the presentation of his character in the poem as whole? [10]

2. Lines 254 – 271 (p. 225)

- (a) What is the situation here and how has it arisen? [5]
- (b) For what purpose does Odysseus take this equipment from Meriones? [2]
- (c) Lines 261 – 271 ('and he too ... head of Odysseus.'): Why do you think Homer discusses this helmet at such length? [8]
- (d) How does the whole episode of which this passage forms part differ in style and content from Homer's battle narrative elsewhere in the poem? [10]

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Iliad Book 11: Context Questions.

1. Lines 396 – 420 (p. 245)

- (a) Describe the circumstances leading up to this passage. [5]
- (b) What does this passage show about the character of Odysseus? Is Odysseus' presentation here consistent with that elsewhere in the poem? [10]
- (c) What features of the heroic code are illustrated in this passage? [10]

2. Lines 543 – 573 (p. 249)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) What picture of Aias emerges from this passage and how is it conveyed? [10]
- (c) Which principal Greek heroes feature in Book 11? By what means does Homer differentiate them? [10]

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Iliad Book 12: Context Questions.

1. Lines 230 – 257 (pp. 264 – 265)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage begins? [5]
- (b) How important are omens and signs from the gods to the story of the Iliad? [10]
- (c) How accurately does this passage reflect the character of Hector as revealed in the Iliad as a whole? [10]

2. Lines 309 – 328 (pp. 266 – 267)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) What do we learn from this passage about the character of Sarpedon? [10]
- (c) (i) How does this passage contribute to the overall picture in the Iliad of the heroic code?
(ii) What do we hear elsewhere in the poem of the heroes' views about fate? [5,5]

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Iliad Book 16: Context Questions.

1. Lines 431 – 449 (p. 342)

- (a) Describe the events preceding this passage. [5]
- (b) (i) Assess Homer's skill in characterizing the relationship between Zeus and Hera in this passage.
(ii) What do we learn from this passage about the relationship of Zeus to fate? [5,5]
- (c) What is the function of the gods in the Iliad? [10]

2. Lines 777 – 805 (p. 351)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage begins? [5]
- (b) To what extent are Apollo's actions in this passage consistent with his character as revealed in the Iliad as a whole? [10]
- (c) How does this passage display Homer's skills as a story-teller? [10]

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Iliad Book 17: Context Question.

Lines 106 – 124 (p. 357)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage opens? [5]
- (b) What does this passage add to our understanding and perception of Menelaus as a character in the Iliad as a whole? [10]
- (c) Why do you think that Homer devotes the whole of Book 17 to the fight for Patroclus' body? [10]

Iliad Book 18: Context Question.

Lines 148 (meanwhile the Achaians...) – 164 (p. 379)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) How does this passage display Homer's skills as a storyteller? [10]
- (c) How does this passage contribute to the overall picture in the Iliad of Hector? [10]

Iliad Book 19: Context Question.

Lines 215 – 237 (p. 398)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Comment in detail on this speech, showing how it reveals the greatness of Odysseus as a speaker and as a man. [10]
- (c) (i) Is Achilles' gesture in refusing to eat so long as Hector is alive typical of his behaviour elsewhere in the Iliad? [5]
(ii) Looking at this scene, and elsewhere in the Iliad and Odyssey, explain the importance Homer attaches to the taking of food. [5]

Iliad Book 20: Context Question.

Lines 16 – 32 (pp. 404 – 405)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) What is revealed about the character of Zeus in this passage? How far is what Zeus says here consistent with the impression we get of him elsewhere in the Iliad? [10]
- (c) Assess the importance the poet attaches to this and other retardation methods within the Iliad. [10]

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Comment Passages (in 2000 taken from Iliad Books 9 – 12 and 16 – 20)

Each main comment question usually consists of three sub-questions on a passage of c. 25 – 30 lines, adding up to 25 marks. Typically these three questions might require:

(a) explanation of the **context**, e.g.

[5 marks]

- What has just happened?
- What is the situation here/as this passage opens/begins?
- Who is speaking? In what circumstances does s/he make this speech?
- What has caused x to make this speech?
- Who is x, and why has s/he done y?

(b) **critical and analytical comment** on the passage printed in the question, e.g. [10 marks]

- How does this passage display/illustrate Homer's skills as a story-teller?
- Discuss in detail the mood and power/interest and effectiveness of this passage.
- What does this passage add to our understanding of x (a character or broader aspect) in the Iliad as a whole?
- What do we learn from this passage about x's character?
- Discuss/How would you describe the contents and tone of x's speech here?
- Discuss the simile in lines x to y. How appropriate do you find it?

(c) **discussion** of a feature or character in the printed passage and **consideration** of how far the presentation of this is consistent with that in the remainder of the poem, or even in the Odyssey, e.g. [10 marks]

- How important are x (a particular feature which appears in the passage, e.g. omens, sacrifices, arming scenes) in the Iliad?
- How does this passage contribute to the overall picture in the Iliad of x (a character or feature)?
- How are x's words and/or actions in this passage consistent with his/her character in the Iliad as a whole?
- What do we learn from this passage about x's character, and how does it fit into the development of his/her character as a whole?
- How does this passage help us to understand the character and feelings of x? Is this consistent with what we know of his/her character from the whole poem?
- Compare the role of x (a god or mortal character) here with that in the Odyssey.

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Essay Topic 2: Zeus and Fate in the Iliad

Past Questions:

- 1 (1986) What is the relationship between Zeus and fate in the Iliad?
- 2 (1989) How firm and how fair is Zeus' control over the events of the Iliad?
- 3 (1995) What do we learn from the Iliad about Zeus and how he governs the world?
- 4 (1999) How strong is Zeus' control over events in the Iliad? Is the 'will of Zeus' the same as 'fate'?

Reading:

(a) Some important passages in the Iliad:

- 1.5 (p. 59)
- 1.493-530 (pp. 72-73)
- 2.1-40 (pp. 76-77)
- 4.1-72 (pp. 113-115)
- 8.5-27 (pp. 182-183)
- 8.66-77 (p.184) (cf. 22.208-213 below)
- 11.163-194 (pp. 238-239)
- 15.59-77 (pp. 310-311)
- 16.431-461 (p. 342)
- 18.356-367 (pp. 384-385)
- 22.166-187 (pp. 439-440)
- 22.208-213 (pp. 440-441) (cf. 8.66-77 above)
- 24.525-533 (p. 489)

(b) Secondary Reading:

The Iliad of Homer, R.Lattimore, pp. 53-54

The World of Odysseus, M.I.Finley, pp.132-141 (esp. 138-139)

Homer, M.Thorpe, pp. 45-55 (esp. 45-48, 54-55)

Homer, J.Griffin, ch. 2 The Iliad, (esp. pp 20-26)

HOMER The Iliad, M.Silk, pp. 79-82

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Essay Topic 3: The Gods in the Iliad

Past Questions:

- 1 (1978) In what respects are the gods of the Iliad more admirable and in what respects less admirable than the men? How do you account for this?
- 2 (1984) Discuss the opposition between Zeus and the other gods in the Iliad.
- 3 (1996) To what extent does Homer use the gods in the Iliad to reflect the interests and concerns of his human characters?
- 4 (1997) Are the gods in the Iliad too ridiculous to be convincing?

Reading:

(a) Some important passages in the Iliad*:

- 1.493-611 (pp. 72-75)
- 4.1-103 (pp. 113-116)
- 5.311-518 (pp. 136-142)
- 5.711-909 (pp. 147-152)
- 8.1-52 (pp. 182-183)
- 14.153-351 (pp. 298-303)
- 15.1-280 (pp. 309-316)
- 16.431-461 (p.342)
- 20.1-74 (pp. 404-406)
- 21.385-513 (pp. 428-432)
- 22.166-277 (pp.439-442)
- 24.22-119 (pp.475-478)

* These are some of the more significant passages in which the gods appear. You will need to be selective and establish carefully which passages are relevant to the question you are answering. The above list is by no means exhaustive and, as the gods' presence pervades the whole poem, you may well discover additional episodes better suited to your purpose than some of those suggested here.

(b) Secondary Reading:

The Iliad of Homer, R.Lattimore, pp.53-54
Homer, M.Thorpe, Ch.4: Homer and the Gods (pp. 45-55)
Homer, J.Griffin, Ch.2: The Iliad (esp. pp. 20-26)
HOMER The Iliad, M.Silk, pp.79-82

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Essay Topic 4: The Presentation of War in the Iliad

Past Questions:

- 1 (1979) How successful is Homer in lending variety to his battle narratives in the Iliad?
- 2 (1980) What are the major stages in Homeric battles? Describe the fighting techniques used by the heroes.
- 3 (1982) Discuss the effectiveness of the Iliad as a description of human beings involved in warfare.
- 4 (1985) Discuss the characteristics of Homeric fighting. How realistic are the battle sequences depicted in the Iliad?

Reading:

(a) Some important passages in the Iliad*:

- Book 5 (especially Diomedes' aristeia, 84 ff.)
- Book 7 (especially the encounter between Aias and Hector, 206-312)
- Book 8 (a complete day's fighting, including much divine involvement)
- Book 11.1-594 (especially Agamemnon's aristeia, 67-283)
- Book 13.673-837
- Book 14.352-522
- Book 15.592-746
- Book 16.101-867 (especially Patroclus' aristeia, 284-683)
- Book 20.353-503 (including, from 381 ff. a general aristeia of Achilles)
- Book 21.34-210 (Achilles engaged in single combats)
- Book 22 (especially 131-404, the final encounter between Achilles and Hector)

*Descriptions of fighting or preparations for fighting occupy some 5500 lines of the Iliad, i.e. approximately a third of the poem. You will clearly need to be selective and are advised to focus on a small number of significant passages which you should try to discuss in a way which is relevant to the question you are answering.

(b) Secondary Reading:

Homer's War Music, Robert Parker, (Article in 'Omnibus', Vol. 10)*
HOMER The Iliad, M.Silk, pp. 73-78*
Homer, J.Griffin, Ch.2: The Iliad (passim)

*We shall look at these discussions after you have written your essays.

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Essay Topic 5: The Homeric Hero

Past Questions:

1 (1987) Which of the heroes of the Iliad best embodies the 'heroic code'? Give reasons for your choice.

2 (1988) 'An Iliadic hero lives only for glory and achieves his greatest glory by death in battle.' Discuss.

3 (1992) Show how the characters of the Iliad reveal different sides of what it is to be an Homeric hero.

4 (1996) 'Zeus, and you other immortals, grant that this boy, who is my son,
may be as I am, pre-eminent among the Trojans,
great in strength, as I am, and rule strongly over Ilion;
and some day let them say of him: "He is better by far than his father",
as he comes in from the fighting; and let him kill his enemy
and bring home the blooded spoils, and delight the heart of his mother.'
(Iliad 6.476-481)

How effectively does this passage – Hector's prayer for his son Astyanax – sum up the role of a hero in the society of the Iliad?

Reading:

You are advised to base your argument on specific passages from the Iliad. It will be necessary, particularly for those answering questions 1 and 3, to consider a range of heroes in order to explore the different traits which they exhibit.

Should you wish to do some secondary reading, the following may prove helpful:

The Mortal Hero, S.Schein, Ch. 3, pp. 67-84, (esp.69-70)

Homer on Life and Death, J.Griffin, pp. 72-76; Ch. III (esp. pp. 90-100)

Homer, M.Thorpe, pp. 29-37

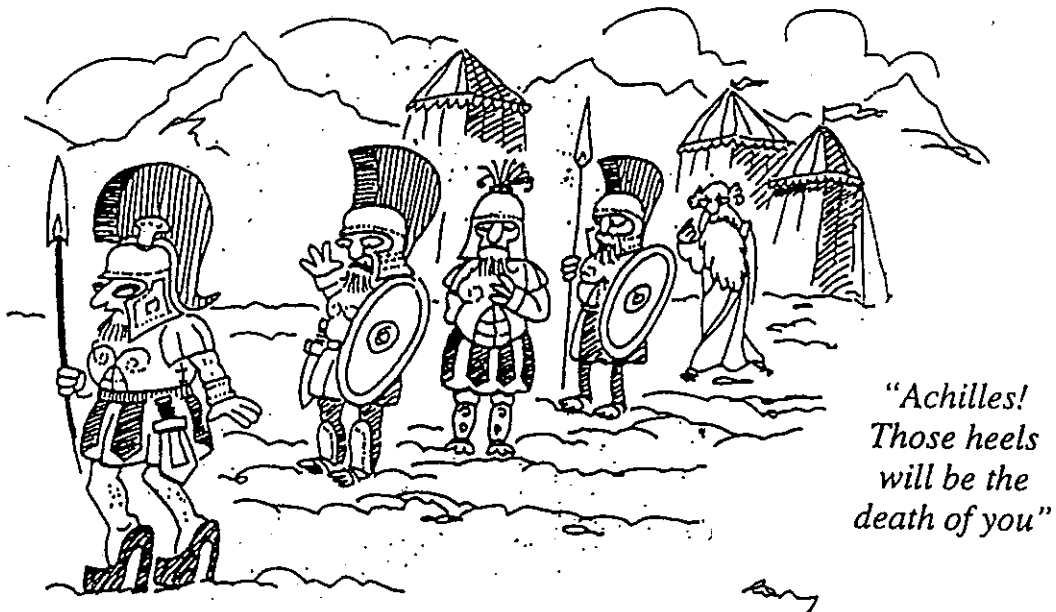
Homer Poet of the Iliad, M.Edwards, Ch. 19 (pp. 149-157, esp. pp. 150-154)

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Essay Topic 6: The Character of Achilles

Past Questions:

- 1 (1980) Discuss the concept of honour in the Iliad, and explain its effect on Achilles' behaviour throughout the poem.
- 2 (1989) Discuss to what extent Achilles is an asset and a model to the Greeks at Troy.
- 3 (1991) Show, from particular scenes in the Iliad, how Achilles is depicted both as an unusually emotional man and as a thinker. Do you think there is a conflict between these two elements in his character?
- 4 (1998) In what ways do Achilles' skills as a speech-maker help to make him an interesting character?



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Essay Topic 7: Important Characters in the Iliad

Past Questions:

- 1 (1982) Discuss the personality and actions in the Iliad of Agamemnon and Menelaos. How does Homer differentiate the personalities of the two brothers?
- 2 (1990) Describe Homer's portrait of Nestor and his involvement in the plot of the Iliad. What is his interest and importance for Homer?
- 3 (1997) Analyze Homer's portrait of Diomedes and his involvement in the plot of the Iliad. What is his interest and importance for Homer?
- 4 (1999) Analyze Homer's portrait of Paris and his involvement in the plot of the Iliad.

Assignment

For your chosen character you should

- establish the main appearances he/they make(s) in the poem and note down the Book/line references.
- read each of the sections you find quickly, paying particular attention to any speeches made by the character.
- note down the different aspects of each hero's personality which emerge from their words and actions.
- write a brief assessment of the character's significance within the plot of the poem as a whole.

You should not exceed two sides of A4. Make sure that the main points you wish to make are clearly set out in such a way that your summary may be easily comprehensible when reproduced.

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Iliad Book 12: Context Question.

445 Meanwhile Hektor snatched up a stone that stood before the gates
and carried it along; it was blunt-massed at the base, but the upper
end was sharp; two men, the best in all a community,
could not easily hoist it up from the ground to a wagon,
of men such as men are now, but he alone lifted and shook it
450 as the son of devious-devising Kronos made it light for him.
As when a shepherd easily carries the fleece of a wether,
picking it up with one hand, and little is the burden weighting him,
so Hektor lifting the stone carried it straight for the door leaves
which filled the gateway ponderously close-fitted together.
455 These were high and twofold, and double door-bars on the inside
overlapping each other closed it, and a single pin-bolt secured them.
He came and stood very close and taking a strong wide stance threw
at the middle, leaning into the throw, that the cast might not lack
force, and smashed the hinges at either side, and the stone crashed
460 ponderously in, and the gates groaned deep, and the door-bars
could not hold, but the leaves were smashed to a wreckage of splinters
under the stone's impact. Then glorious Hektor burst in
with dark face like sudden night, but he shone with the ghastly
glitter of bronze that girded his skin, and carried two spears
465 in his hands. No one could have stood up against him, and stopped him,
except the gods, when he burst in the gates; and his eyes flashed fire.
Whirling, he called out across the battle to the Trojans
to climb over the wall, and they obeyed his urgency.

HOMER, *Iliad* 12. 445 – 468 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage begins? [5]
- (b) How might this passage be used to demonstrate Homer's skills as a story-teller? [10]
- (c) To what extent is the depiction of Hektor here consistent with that in the *Iliad* as a whole? [10]

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Iliad Book 16: Context Question.

He fell, as when an oak goes down or a white poplar,
or like a towering pine tree which in the mountains the carpenters
have hewn down with their whetted axes to make a ship-timber.
So he lay there felled in front of his horses and chariots 485
roaring, and clawed with his hands at the bloody dust; or as
a blazing and haughty bull in a huddle of shambling cattle
when a lion has come among the herd and destroys him
dies bellowing under the hooked claws of the lion, so now
before Patroklos the lord of the shield-armoured Lykians 490
died raging, and called aloud to his beloved companion:
'Dear Glaukos, you are a fighter among men. Now the need comes
hardest upon you to be a spearman and a bold warrior.
Now, if you are brave, let bitter warfare be dear to you.
First you must go among all men who are lords of the Lykians 495
everywhere, and stir them up to fight for Sarpedon,
and then you yourself also must fight for me with the bronze spear.
For I shall be a thing of shame and a reproach said of you
afterwards, all your days forever, if the Achaians
strip my armour here where I fell by the ships assembled. 500
But hold strongly on and stir up all the rest of our people.'

HOMER, Iliad 16. 482 – 501 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Show how Homer lends dignity to Sarpedon's dying moments in the above passage. [10]
- (c) What does the Iliad gain from the inclusion of similes? Support your answer by using examples from elsewhere in the poem, not merely those in the passage above. [10]

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Iliad Book 17: Context Question.

- 1 As when in the sky Zeus strings for mortals the shimmering
rainbow, to be a portent and sign of war, or of wintry
storm, when heat perishes, such storm as stops mortals'
work upon the face of the earth, and afflicts their cattle, 550
so Athene shrouded in the shimmering cloud about her
6 merged among the swarming Achaians, and wakened each man.
And first she spoke, stirring him on, to the son of Atreus,
strong Menelaos, since he was the one who was standing close to her.
She likened herself in form and weariless voice to Phoinix: 555
'Menelaos, this will be a thing of shame, a reproach said
of you, if under the wall of the Trojans the dogs in their fury
can mutilate the staunch companion of haughty Achilleus.
But hold strongly on, and stir up all the rest of your people.'
Then in turn Menelaos of the great war cry answered her: 560
'Phoinix, my father, aged and honoured, if only Athene
would give me such strength, and hold the volleying missiles off from me!
So for my part I would be willing to stand by Patroklos
and defend him, since in his death he hurt my heart greatly.
Yet Hektor holds still the awful strength of a fire, nor falters 565
in raging with the bronze spear, since Zeus is giving him glory.'
So he spoke, and the goddess grey-eyed Athene was happy
that first among all the divinities his prayer had bespoken her.
23 She put strength into the man's shoulders and knees, inspiring
in his breast the persistent daring of that mosquito 570
who though it is driven hard away from a man's skin, even
26 so, for the taste of human blood, persists in biting him.
With such daring she darkened to fullness the heart inside him.

HOMER, *Iliad* 17. 547 – 573 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Explain briefly the points of comparison in the two similes in this passage (lines 1 – 6 and 23 – 26.) How effective do you find them? [6]
- (c) What evidence is there in Book 17 and the rest of the *Iliad* to suggest that Homer is fond of Menelaos? [6]
- (d) To what extent are the actions described in this passage typical of the way in which the gods interact with mortals in the *Iliad*? [8]

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Iliad Book 18: Context Question.

- 1 But Zeus spoke to Hera, who was his wife and his sister:
'So you have acted, then, lady Hera of the ox eyes.
You have roused up Achilleus of the swift feet. It must be then
that the flowing-haired Achaians are born of your own generation.'
Then the goddess the ox-eyed lady Hera answered him: 360
'Majesty, son of Kronos, what sort of thing have you spoken?
Even one who is mortal will try to accomplish his purpose
for another, though he be a man and knows not such wisdom as we do.
As for me then, who claim I am highest of all the goddesses,
both ways, since I am eldest born and am called your consort, 365
yours, and you in turn are lord over all the immortals,
12 how could I not weave sorrows for the men of Troy, when I hate them?'
13 Now as these two were saying things like this to each other,
Thetis of the silver feet came to the house of Hephaistos,
imperishable, starry, and shining among the immortals, 370
built in bronze for himself by the god of the dragging footsteps.
She found him sweating as he turned here and there to his bellows
busily, since he was working on twenty tripods
which were to stand against the wall of his strong-founded dwelling.
And he had set golden wheels underneath the base of each one 375
so that of their own motion they could wheel into the immortal
gathering, and return to his house: a wonder to look at.
These were so far finished, but the elaborate ear handles
were not yet on. He was forging these, and beating the chains out.
As he was at work on this in his craftsmanship and his cunning 380
24 meanwhile the goddess Thetis the silver-footed drew near him.

HOMER, *Iliad* 18. 356 – 381 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago press)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage begins? [5]
- (b) Lines 1 – 12 ('But Zeus spoke ... I hate them?'): Discuss the poet's possible motives for including this short scene at this point in the narrative. (You should consider the picture of Zeus and Hera, the tone of their remarks and the broader significance of these lines to the poem as a whole.) [10]
- (c) (i) How is the atmosphere in lines 13 – 26 ('Now as these ... drew near him.') and the scene which follows different from that in Book 18 so far?
(ii) How far is Thetis' involvement in Book 18 typical of her behaviour in the rest of the poem? [5,5]

THE HOMERIC EPICS

Iliad Book 19: Context Question.

And now, in the likeness of golden Aphrodite, Briseis
when she saw Patroklos lying torn with sharp bronze, folding
him in her arms cried shrilly above him and with her hands tore
at her breasts and her soft throat and her beautiful forehead. 285
The woman like the immortals mourning for him spoke to him:
'Patroklos, far most pleasing to my heart in its sorrows,
I left you here alive when I went away from the shelter,
but now I come back, lord of the people, to find you have fallen.
So evil in my life takes over from evil forever. 290
The husband on whom my father and honoured mother bestowed me
I saw before my city lying torn with the sharp bronze,
and my three brothers, whom a single mother bore with me
and who were close to me, all went on one day to destruction.
And yet you would not let me, when swift Achilles had cut down 295
my husband, and sacked the city of godlike Mynes, you would not
let me sorrow, but said you would make me godlike Achilles'
wedded lawful wife, that you would take me back in the ships
to Phthia, and formalize my marriage among the Myrmidons.
Therefore I weep your death without ceasing. You were kind always.' 300

HOMER, *Iliad* 19. 282 – 300 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Do you agree with Briseis' assessment of Patroclus' character? [10]
- (c) How far is this picture of Briseis typical of the way in which the *Iliad* portrays mortal women? [10]

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Iliad Book 20: Context Question.

Then in turn Aineias spoke to him and made his answer:
'Son of Peleus, never hope by words to frighten me
as if I were a baby. I myself understand well enough
how to speak in vituperation and how to make insults.
You and I know each other's birth, we both know our parents
since we have heard the lines of their fame from mortal men; only
I have never with my eyes seen your parents, nor have you seen mine.
For you, they say you are the issue of blameless Peleus
and that your mother was Thetis of the lovely hair, the sea's lady;
I in turn claim I am the son of great-hearted Anchises
but that my mother was Aphrodite; and that of these parents
one group or the other will have a dear son to mourn for
this day. Since I believe we will not in mere words, like children,
meet, and separate and go home again out of the fighting.
Even so, if you wish to learn all this and be certain
of my genealogy: there are plenty of men who know it.

HOMER, *Iliad* 20. 199 – 214 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation as this passage begins? [5]
- (b) Why do you think the poet chose to give Aineias such a long speech (59 lines) at this point in the narrative? [10]
- (c) What arguments would you use to defend Book 20's place in the *Iliad*? [10]

Read one of the following translations and answer the questions at the end:

1.

And now Nestor the horseman stood forth among them and spoke to them:
'Son of Tydeus, beyond others you are strong in battle,
and in counsel also are noblest among all men of your own age.
Not one man of all the Achaians will belittle your words nor
speak against them. Yet you have not made complete your argument,
since you are a young man still and could even be my own son
and my youngest born of all; yet still you argue in wisdom
with the Argive kings, since all you have spoken was spoken fairly.
But let me speak, since I can call myself older than you are,
and go through the whole matter, since there is none who can dishonour
the thing I say, not even powerful Agamemnon.
Out of all brotherhood, outlawed, homeless shall be that man
who longs for all the horror of fighting among his own people.
But now let us give way to the darkness of night, and let us
make ready our evening meal; and let the guards severally
take their station by the ditch we have dug outside the ramparts.
This I would enjoin upon our young men; but thereafter
do you, son of Atreus, take command, since you are our kingliest.
Divide a feast among the princes; it befits you, it is not
unbecoming. Our shelters are filled with wine that the Achaian
ships carry day by day from Thrace across the wide water.
All hospitality is for you; you are lord over many.
When many assemble together follow him who advises
the best counsel, for in truth there is need for all the Achaians
of good close counsel, since now close to our ships the enemy
burn their numerous fires. What man could be cheered to see this?
Here is the night that will break our army, or else will preserve it.'

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HOMER, *Iliad* 9.52-78 (R. Lattimore, University of Chicago Press)

- (a) What is the situation here? [5]
- (b) Is the Nestor we see here typical of his character as portrayed by Homer in the *Iliad* as a whole? [10]
- (c) How does this passage contribute to the overall picture in the *Iliad* of heroic society? [10]

2.

"Go back and proclaim to him all that I tell you,
openly, so other Achaians may turn against him in anger
if he hopes yet one more time to swindle some other Danaan,
wrapped as he is forever in shamelessness; yet he would not,
bold as a dog though he be, dare look in my face any longer.
I will join with him in no counsel, and in no action.
He cheated me and he did me hurt. Let him not beguile me
with words again. This is enough for him. Let him of his own will
be damned, since Zeus of the counsels has taken his wits away from him.
I hate his gifts. I hold him light as the strip of a splinter.
Not if he gave me ten times as much, and twenty times over
as he possesses now, not if more should come to him from elsewhere,
or gave all that is brought in to Orchomenos, all that is brought in
to Thebes of Egypt, where the greatest possessions lie up in the houses,
Thebes of the hundred gates, where through each of the gates two
hundred
fighting men come forth to war with horses and chariots."

Homer *Iliad* 9. 369-384

- (a) Describe the circumstances in which this passage occurs. [5]
- (b) What is revealed about the character of Achilles in the passage? [5]
- (c) How important to the development of the *Iliad* is this speech? [15]

Read the passage below and answer the questions which follow.

3.

For not
worth the value of my life are all the possessions they fable
were won for Ilion, that strong-founded citadel, in the old days
when there was peace, before the coming of the sons of the
Achaians;
5 not all that the stone doorsill of the Archer holds fast within it,
of Phoibos Apollo in Pytho of the rocks. Of possessions
cattle and fat sheep are things to be had for the lifting,
and tripods can be won, and the tawny high heads of horses,
but a man's life cannot come back again, it cannot be lifted
10 nor captured again by force, once it has crossed the teeth's barrier.
For my mother Thetis the goddess of the silver feet tells me
I carry two sorts of destiny toward the day of my death. Either,
if I stay here and fight beside the city of the Trojans,
my return home is gone, but my glory shall be everlasting;
15 but if I return home to the beloved land of my fathers,
the excellence of my glory is gone, but there will be a long life
left for me, and my end in death will not come to me quickly.
HOMER, *Iliad* IX, 400-16 (Lattimore)

(a) Why is Achilles concerned, at this stage of the *Iliad*, about the value of his life (line 2)? [9]

(b) What is the more familiar name of the place called here 'Pytho of the rocks' (line 6)? [2]

(c) Does the prophecy of Thetis (lines 11-17) really give Achilles a choice? [7]

(d) How, why and when does he make the choice? [7]

4.

So long
as Meleagros lover of battle stayed in the fighting
it went the worse for the Kouretes, and they could not even
hold their ground outside the wall, though they were so many.
But when the anger came upon Meleagros, such anger
as wells in the hearts of others also, though their minds are careful,
he, in the wrath of his heart against his own mother, Althaia,
lay apart with his wedded bride, Kleopatra the lovely,
daughter of sweet-stepping Marpessa, child of Euenos,
and Idas, who was the strongest of all men upon earth
in his time; for he even took up the bow to face the King's onset,
Phoibos Apollo, for the sake of the sweet-stepping maiden;
a girl her father and honoured mother had named in their palace
Alkyone, sea-bird, as a by-name, since for her sake
her mother with the sorrow-laden cry of a sea-bird
wept because far-reaching Phoibos Apollo had taken her.

Homer *Iliad* Book 9 lines 550-564

[trans. R. Lattimore; University of Chicago Press]

(a) Explain briefly what happened in the rest of this incident. [4]

(b) In what way may the incident be regarded as evidence of the oral composition of *The Iliad*? [3]

(c) In what ways is the comparison between Achilles and Meleagros appropriate? [8]

(d) What features of the heroic code do you think are illustrated by the deputation to Achilles? [10]