Unreal Conditions in Homeric Narrative

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ATTENTION GIVEN to all kinds of conditional clauses in Homer has been limited, as far as I can discover, to concern about their origin, form, and constituent parts.[1] Concerning contrafactual conditions in particular I find only occasional passing references to Homer's use of them.[2] Some consideration is therefore given here to why and where Homer uses unreal[3] conditions both with regard to their effect on the narrative and in the matter of their different uses in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*.

First, a distinction must be noted among unreal conditions depending on whether the protases are affirmative or negative. Take for example two everyday, ordinary, unreal conditions,

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[1] As to origin, D. Tabachovitz, *Homerische ei–Sätze. Eine sprachpsychologische Studie* (=SkriftSvenskInstit 8° 3 [Lund 1951]), opposes the often-accepted position of L. Lange, *Der homerische Gebrauch der Partikel ei* (Leipzig 1872–73), that the conditional clause began as an independent statement of wishing, with parataxis preceding hypotaxis. As to form and constituent parts there is general agreement among the following: D. B. Monro, *A Grammar of the Homeric Dialect* (Oxford 1891) 294–96; E. Schwyzer, *Griechische Grammatik* II (Munich 1950) 347, 349, 686f; P. Chantraine, *Grammaire homérique* II (Paris 1953) 226f, 283; L. R. Palmer, "The Language of Homer," *A Companion to Homer* (London 1962) 165f.

[2] For example, S. E. Bassett, *The Poetry of Homer* (Berkeley 1938) 100f: contrafactual conditions as characterizing subjective narration which "concentrates the emotional tension and relieves it, all within the compass of two verses." M. W. Edwards, *Homer: Poet of the Iliad* (Baltimore 1987) 136: contrafactual condition as "the common emphasizing motif that something would have come about 'beyond fate' (*huper moron*) if a god had not intervened." G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: a Commentary* I (Cambridge 1985), designates the contrafactual condition at 3.373 as "formular."

[3] For the purposes of this paper conditions often called future less vivid (with optative in both clauses) are not included among the unreal, which are here limited to those conditions that deal only with past or present unreality. For the sake of brevity references to conditions will most often be to the line that includes the "if" or "if not."

one with an affirmative protasis and one of which the protasis is negative (following Homer's almost invariable custom of using the protasis-apodosis order where the protasis is affirmative and the apodosis-protasis order where the protasis is negative):[4]

> If the sun had shone, we would have had a picnic yesterday.
> We would have had a picnic yesterday, if it had not rained.

Both conditional statements give the hearer the feeling that the picnic was a very real possibility which did not come off. But while the sentence with the affirmative protasis seems to be merely explanatory of what would have happened if conditions had been favorable (but they were not), the impression left by the sentence with the negative protasis is that the picnic was a certainty which actual rain prevented. That is, an affirmative protasis contemplates a possibility which was not realized, while a negative protasis reports what happened to prevent an expected result. Or, in other words, an affirmative protasis envisages something which did not happen as making possible a particular result if it had happened; a negative protasis considers something which did happen and by happening made impossible a particular result. Apodoses, as a result, have different degrees of reality. In Homeric usage the distinction becomes clearer, since with very few exceptions the conditions with affirmative protases appear in speeches, as a kind of wishful thinking, while those with negative protases are used by the poet to explore the potentialities of a particular situation. It will be useful, therefore, to consider the two kinds of unreal conditions separately, treating first those with negative protases which make up four-fifths of the total number in the *Iliad* (35 of 44) but only half of those in the *Odyssey*, again reflecting the different usage in the two epics.

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[4] That is, in 42 of 44 cases in the *Iliad* and 16 of 22 in the *Odyssey*. The usual protasis-apodosis order of conditions with affirmative protases is reversed by only two of the nine *Iliad* examples (15.460, 16.613) and by six of the eleven such conditions in the *Odyssey* (1.237, 4.172, 11.317, 14.67, 20. 332, 23.220).

I. *Iliad*

1. Unreal Conditions with Negative Protases

The 35 average about one to every 450 lines, but their actual occurrence is far more limited: in five books there are none (1, 2, 9, 10, 19); ten books have one each (2, 3, 6, 12, 13, 15, 16, 20 22, 24); three have two each (7, 14, 21); the remaining six have three or five each (three: 5, 8, 11, 17, 18, averaging respectively one in 303, 188, 193, 254, and 206 lines; five in 23, or one in 179 lines). It is obvious that the frequency is greatest in Book 23, with Books 8 and 11 not far behind. Some explanation of such frequency, presence, and absence should be attempted. Since in narrative the apodosis of these conditions (such and such would have happened) introduces or suggests to the hearer a non-event, it not only provides a kind of contrast between what did and did not happen but also lays out the potentialities of a particular incident or situation, thus providing a kind of depth which a flat statement of what did happen simply does not have. The general effect, then, of such conditions in a narrative is both to open up for consideration a two-track range of actions or results and to increase the hearers' feeling of potentiality and even uncertainty. So it is perhaps not surprising that in three books (1, 9, 19) where there must be no uncertainty as to the attitudes, statements, and actions of the heroes, there are no unreal conditions. That is, in Book 1, although Achilles may be described as debating whether to kill Agamemnon in retaliation for his chief's heinous behavior, a statement by the poet that he would have killed Agamemnon if Athena had not stopped him would deny Achilles the freedom of choice that is so important for all his later actions. That freedom is preserved when she urges him to restrain his wrath and he can heed her command. And in Books 9 and 19 again there must be no uncertainty in either his refusal to be reconciled or his eagerness to do anything in order to avenge Patroclus' death.

If such is the case in Books 1, 9, and 19, what is the explanation for the absence of conditions in Books 4 and 10? In 4, where the guilt of the Trojans must be firmly established and Agamemnon's nervousness left in no doubt, any suggestion of alternatives might well be counter-productive. Book 10's adventure story, on the other hand, does not need the illusion of the shift-

ing fortunes and uncertainties that give life and interest to a war epic.

Turning to the other extreme, books in which there is plentiful presence of such conditions, we may examine the nature and feeling of latitude, scope, and potentiality that they introduce. Book 8, where they are relatively most frequent after the special case of Book 23 with its idiosyncratic subject matter, is notorious as serving in a swing-shift capacity between Books 1–7's recapitulation of events full of Greek successes (probably belonging to the previous nine years in some early chronicle version of the Trojan War story)[5] and Agamemnon's desperation in Book 9 leading to the embassy to Achilles. That is, not before Book 8 is Zeus' plan to honor Achilles by helping the Trojans put into effect.[6] Only then is the poet obliged to produce the illusion[7] that the Greeks are suffering defeat despite the

[5] Items in Books 2–7 that may be considered to belong to the first year of the war: catalogues of Greeks and Trojans (2); duel of claimants to Helen as the cause of the war, and the Teichoskopia (3); building of the wall (7). Items that may belong to any time but show no sign of Zeus' interference on behalf of Achilles: Trojan treachery and guilt justifying fall (4); Diomedes' *aristeia* (5); view of Troy and what Hector is fighting for (6); the duel between Ajax and Hector and abortive negotiations about the return of Helen (7). Greek successes in Books 3–7 are indicated by a comparison of the casualty figures: Book 3, Greeks 0/Trojans 0; 4, 2/5; 5, 11/26; 6, 0/15; 7, 3/0 (total 16/46).

[6] Except for Zeus' sending of the false dream in 2.5–15 to bring honor to Achilles by making the Greeks suffer, there is no indication in Books 2–7 of Zeus acting to this end. He does in 4.1–72 tease Hera and Athena about their partiality for the Greeks and he expresses his own fondness for Troy, and yet not in relation to Achilles but because of the Trojans' generous sacrifices to him. Instead, he shows his even-handedness in his question whether there should be war or peace (4.14–19) and in his willingness to arrange for Trojan treachery (70–73). His indifference appears again in 5.32f where Athena says, "Might we not leave the Trojans and Achaians to fight, to whichever of them Zeus may give glory?"

[7] There are other such illusions that seem to be used both to counteract the impression of Trojan defeat conveyed by the traditional material and to give the illusion of Greek desperation: Paris as challenger in Book 3; Agamemnon's nervousness and blustering in 4; Diomedes' need of divine help in 5; Agamemnon's refusal to take captives in 6; the Greek reluctance to take up Hector's challenge, and Greek wall-building in Book 7; the Greek fate in Zeus' scales weighing more heavily, Hera's and Athena's fear for the Greeks and their plot to help them, and the Trojans' boldness in camping on the plain in 8—and even so, no Greeks are killed in 8, while eleven Trojans are. In later books such illusions include: desperation and plea to Achilles in 9; sleep-

nature of his material which seems to have been disproportionately composed of Greek successes. Witness the total casualty figures: Greeks 52, Trojans 190.

The comparative abundance of contrafactual conditions in Book 11 may again result from the poet's need to suggest disastrous possibilities, but the even more numerous examples in Book 23 require a different explanation. And since they are all of one type, which seems to be especially appropriate to the subject matter of that book, we should turn now to a consideration of the conditions themselves and their different types:

TYPE A: something contrary to fact would have happened, had not someone acted to prevent it (11);
TYPE B: something destined to happen later but contrary to present fact would have happened now, had not someone acted to prevent it (12);
TYPE C: some action or passion would have continued, had not someone put a stop to it (12).

Type A:

2.155f, "Then would the Achaians have returned home contrary to fate, had not Hera addressed a word to Athena...."
3.373f, "Now he [Menelaus] would have dragged him and won undying glory, had not Aphrodite daughter of Zeus looked sharp...."
5.311f, "And now Aeneas king of men would have perished, had not Aphrodite daughter of Zeus looked sharp...."
5.388–90, "And now Ares insatiable of war would have perished, had not his stepmother, beautiful Periboea, called upon Hermes...."
7.104–06 (Homer speaks), "Then to you, Menelaus, would have appeared the end of life, at Hector's hands, for he was far stronger, had not the chiefs of the Achaians, leaping up, stopped you."
8.90f, "And now the old man [Nestor] would have lost his life, had not Diomedes good at the war cry looked sharp...."
11.750–52 (Nestor speaks), "And now I would have slain the Actorian

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less worry and the sneak attack on the Trojan camp in 10; the wounding of the chief Greek heroes, Achilles' concern in sending for news, and Nestor's agonized plea to Patroclus in 11; the penning of the Greeks behind their wall in 12; Poseidon's rush to help the Greeks in 14. All these are necessary to counteract the impression made by the 'fact' that in Books 10–15 only 30 Greeks are killed compared to 65 Trojans.

Molions, had not their father, the wide-ruling earthshaker, saved them from battle."

14.258f (Hypnos speaks), "And he would have hurled me into the sea, had not Night, subduer of gods and men, saved me."

17.614f, "Idomeneus would have given great power to the Trojans, had not Coeranus driven up his horses...."

18.165–67, "Now he would have dragged him [Patroclus] and won undying glory had not wind-footed swift Iris come as a messenger from Olympus to Peleus' son to arm himself."

20.290f, "Peleus' son would have taken away his [Aeneas'] life, had not Poseidon the earthshaker looked sharp...."

In each of these examples the apodosis presents an action that is both contrafactual and 'beyond fate': the Achaians did not return home contrary to fate; Paris was not dragged; Ares did not perish; neither Aeneas nor Nestor died at Troy; *etc.* The three cases of direct discourse (5.389, 11.751, 14.259) do not concern the situation at Troy, but the other eight all use the suggestion of an impossibility to show the desperate straits of one side or the other, of one hero or god, had there been no intervention. In five of the eight Trojan War cases the intervention was divine, showing the gods as guardians of fate and mythical fact; in two other cases (8.91, 17.614) it was the arrival of another hero that prevented the impossibility of Nestor's and Idomeneus' deaths; and in the last case (7.106) the impossible possibility of Menelaus' death is only a threat and is not imminent enough to require divine intervention but can be forestalled by other volunteers for the duel with Hector. In all cases the unreal condition makes possible a transition, having brought the action to the very brink of mythical impossibility and thus forcing a rightabout turn in the narrative. For example, the possibility of Paris' impossible death at the hands of Menelaus (3.374) put an end to the duel and landed the narrative along with Paris in Troy; the possibility of Aeneas' impossible slaughter by Achilles (20.291) brought about a conversation between two gods that resulted in the battle's changing direction.

Type B:

This kind of condition operates not with an impossibility but with the possibility of an action or event which is destined and

so in accord with fate and mythical fact but can be contrafactual
and contradictory because it is premature.

6.73–75, "Then again the Trojans would have gone up into Troy, giv-
ing way to cowardice before the war-loving Achaians, had not
Helenus standing by spoken to Aeneas and Hector."
8.130–33, "Then there would have been disaster and irreparable
deeds; and now the Trojans would have been penned in Troy like
sheep, had not the father of gods and men looked sharp and,
thundering, hurled a terrible bright bolt of lightning."
8.217–19, "And now he would have burned their balanced ships with
fire, had not the lady Hera urged Agamemnon in his heart, quickly
rushing in, to encourage the Achaians."
11.310–12, "Then there would have been disaster and deeds irrepar-
able; now the fleeing Achaians would have fallen among the ships,
had not Odysseus called to Diomedes, Tydeus' son."
11.504–06, "And not yet would the Achaians have given up their im-
petus, had not Alexander, husband of fair-haired Helen, put an end
to Machaon's exploits...."
12.290–93, "Not yet then would the Trojans and shining Hector have
broken the gates and strong bolt of the wall, had not Zeus coun-
selor raised up his son Sarpedon against the Argives...."
13.723–25, "Then mournfully from the ships and tents the Trojans
would have returned to windy Ilium, had not Polydamas, standing
by bold Hector, said...."
16.698–701, "Then would the Achaians have taken high-gated Troy by
the might of Patroclus, for he raged ahead with his spear, had not
Phoebus Apollo stood upon the well-built wall, intending evil for
him and helping the Trojans."
17.70f, "Then would Atreides have lightly carried off the famed
armor of Panthous' son, had not Phoebus Apollo begrudged it to
him."
18.454–56 (Thetis speaks), "And now they would have sacked the city
that day, had not Apollo in the forefront killed the strong son of
Menoetius, who had wrought much evil, and given glory to Hec-
tor."
21.544f, "Then would the Achaians have taken high-gated Troy, had
not Phoebus Apollo roused up Agenor...."
22.202–04, "How then would Hector have escaped the fates of death,
had not Apollo come near to him for the very last time and put
strength and lightness in his limbs?"

These Type B conditions also provide for narrative transitions
by raising the possibility of disasters which are not yet present

and so must be postponed by turnabout action. The transitions introduced by seven of these conditions are from general Greek triumph or initiative to Trojan effective response.[8] In 12.292 the transition is from a draw to Trojan victory. Only in two cases (8.218 and 11.312) is the transition from Trojan initiative to Greek. That is, the eventual disasters that could be anticipated in presently unreal conditions were chiefly those of the Trojans; for the Greeks only eventual forced retreat to the ships and Hector's bringing of fire could be both anticipated and forestalled. Then, too, Homer's material for Greek exploits was so much more extensive than for those of the Trojans that most often it is only by arranging special intervention that he can turn the initiative over to the Trojans. In the two cases involving individuals more than armies the transition is again from Greek advantage to Trojan: from Menelaus to Hector (17.71), from Achilles to Hector (22.203).

Type C:

Basically different from Types A and B, these conditions serve not to suggest contrafactual possibilities but to emphasize actions' or passions' potentiality for indefinite continuance if someone had not intervened. All five conditions in Book 23 are of this sort:

23.154f, "And now the light of the sun would have set on their grief, had not Achilles, suddenly standing by Agamemnon, spoken...."
23.382f, "And now he would have passed him by or made the issue doubtful, had not Phoebus Apollo begrudged victory to Tydeus' son."
23.490f, "And now the quarrel between the two would have proceeded, had not Achilles himself stood up and addressed them.
23.540–42, "Now he would have given him the horse, for so the Achaians urged, had not Antilochus, son of great-hearted Nestor, stood up and answered Peleus' son Achilles with a plea...."
23.733f, "Now leaping up again they would have wrestled for a third time, had not Achilles himself stood up and restrained them.

The apodoses of all five conditions are concerned with a continuing state of affairs, since even in 23.541 Achilles would have

[8] 6.75, 8.132, 11.505, 13.725, 16.700, 18.454, 21.545.

continued the award he had intended. The potentiality for con-
tinuation of these particular actions and passions fits the mood
of Book 23 by giving the illusion of comparative leisure and re-
laxation so unlike the busyness and tension of the war books.
The protases, by interrupting or preventing the potential contin-
uations, are also like those of Types A and B in that they pro-
vide transitions (there most often from one side to the other,
but here from one kind of action to another). But the whole
effect of both clauses here is not of uncertainty but of almost
humdrum daily activity in which not only is there time, but also
time must have a stop.

Three of the seven other Type C conditions are like those of
Book 23 in that an emotion or passion would have continued, if
it had not been cut short by human or divine action:

15.121f, "Then would added wrath, great and harsh, have come upon
the gods from Zeus, if Athena, fearing for all of them, had not
risen...."
18.397f (Hephaestus speaks), "I would have suffered (added) pains, if
Eurynome and Thetis had not taken me and held me...."
24.713–15, "And now they would have mourned Hector all day till
sunset, if the old man had not addressed them from his chariot...."

In the other four Type C conditions it is the potentiality for
continuation of killing or fighting that is emphasized:

5.679–81, "And now godlike Odysseus would have killed still more
Lycians, if great Hector of the gleaming helmet had not looked
sharp and come through the champions...."
21.211f, "And now swift Achilles would have killed still more Paeoni-
ans, if the deep-eddying river had not angrily addressed him...."
7.273f, "Now the two would have come to blows close at hand with
swords, if the heralds, messengers of Zeus and men, had not
come...."
17.530f, "Now the two would have attacked each other hand to hand
with swords, if the two Ajaxes, eager in battle, had not separated
them...."

In these cases too the unreal condition is convenient not only
to change the subject and effect a transition but also to empha-
size the virtual endlessness of actions or passions and so add a
fourth dimension.

Pseudo-conditions of Types A and B:

Closely related in function and effect to the 35 unreal condi-
tions with negative protases are four statements with unreal
apodoses and non-conditional 'protases'. In each of the follow-
ing, instead of "if not" there is "but" in what amounts to the
'condition': the apodoses are like those of the 35 in their use of
the modal particle and aorist indicative:

3.56f (Hector speaks), "But the Trojans were very cowardly, else you
would have put on a shirt of stone for the evils you have done."
13.676–79, "Soon there would have been victory for the Greeks; in
such a way did earthshaker Ennosigaios stir them up and aid them
with his own strength; but Hector held where first he had over-
leapt the gates...."
17.319–23, "Then again the Trojans would have gone up to Troy, giv-
ing way to cowardice before the war-loving Achaians, and the Ar-
gives would have won glory even beyond Zeus' will by their own
might and strength, but Apollo himself urged on Aeneas...."
20.92–94 (Aeneas speaks), "But Zeus saved me, when he gave me
strength and quickened my knees, or I would have been overcome
by Achilles' and Athena's hands."

The parallelism of at least 17.319–23 with the 35 conditions is un-
derlined by its use of the same apodosis as in 6.74f. Moreover,
the last three again serve as transitions from Greek to Trojan tri-
umph, with two contemplating premature events (Type B) and
the last suggesting an unmythical possibility (Aeneas' death at
Troy—Type A). 3.56f is Type A but unusual in being part of a
speech and in serving to challenge a reply rather than to make a
transition.

2. Unreal Conditions with Affirmative Protases

Unlike the 35 conditions with negative protases that play an
important part both in moving the narrative along and in sug-
gesting potentialities, the nine unreal conditions with affirmative
protases function more rhetorically, either to characterize the
speakers who use them (Type D) or as narrative uses that
mimic conditions of other types (Exceptions).

Type D:

2.80f (Nestor speaks), "If any other of the Achaians had told the dream, we would say it was false and turn our backs."
5.897f (Zeus speaks), "If you, thus baneful, were born of some other god, long since you would be below, beneath the Heavenly Ones."
8.366–69 (Athena speaks), "If I had known these things in my wise heart when Zeus sent him [Heracles] to Gate-keeper Hades to fetch Hades' hateful hound from Erebos, he never would have escaped the swift stream of Styx."
16.617f (Aeneas speaks), "Though you dance well, Meriones, soon my spear would have finished you off, if it had hit you."
16.847f (Patroclus speaks), "If twenty such warriors had come against me, all would have perished here, mastered by my spear."
24.220–22 (Priam speaks), "For if some other of mortals had urged me, either those who are divining prophets or priests, I would say it was false and turn my back."

The first and last examples, using the same apodosis, echo each other: the two elders, one on either side, show caution in their acceptance of the need for action. Zeus and Athena, in Books 5 and 8, use the unreal conditions to express the frustration they feel in dealing with their relatives. Similarly, Aeneas and Patroclus, thwarted by forces beyond their control, vent their anger by means of wishful thinking. Even in the following case, although it is properly narrative, the poet seems to speak personally, like a character, and thereby involves his audience in this expression of regret and wishful thinking:

16.686f, "But if he [Patroclus] had heeded Peleides' word, he would have escaped the evil fate of black death."

None of these unreal conditions with affirmative protases has any particular transitional function, and although all the apodoses state a non-fact, those non-facts serve not to explore narrative possibilities but only to express personal feelings.

Type D Exceptions:

15.458–60, "Teucer took another arrow for bronze-helmeted Hector and would have ended his fighting at the Achaian ships, if, hitting him as he triumphed, he had taken his life."
23.526f, "If still the contest had continued for both, then he would have passed him and not made it a tie.

The two are exceptional in different ways. It is likely that the second, which uses virtually the same apodosis as a previous unreal condition with a negative protasis in Book 23 (383) and is one of a string of such unreal conditions belonging to Class C, may have been given an affirmative protasis for the sake of variety and so is an exception among the conditions with affirmative protases. In the case of 15.458 it seems possible that the unreal condition belongs in Teucer's speech of disappointment (like Aeneas' Type D condition in 16.617), but that Homer, wishing to insert Zeus' action in breaking the bowstring and saving Hector, anticipated it in the narrative. It certainly makes more sense as an archer's boast than as a flat narrative statement that if someone was killed he would be stopped from fighting.

Pseudo-conditions of Type D:

Very close to the unreal conditions with affirmative protases are ten pseudo-conditions in which the protasis is either in the form of a wish impossible of realization or simply suppressed. Here the seven that occur in speeches parallel Type D conditions as they help to characterize the speaker and express personal feelings, often of frustration. The other three, although technically in the narrative, are expressions of emotion by the poet, like that concerning Patroclus (16.686), and so mark the response of both Homer and his hearers to a highly charged moment.

3.40f (Hector speaks), "Would that you were unborn and had died unwed; I would wish this, and it would have been far better."

11.380-83 (Paris speaks), "How I wish that hitting your lower belly I had taken your life. Thus the Trojans would have recovered from disaster."

19.59-61 (Achilles speaks), "Would that Artemis had slain her with an arrow by the ships on that day when I took her and destroyed Lyrnessus; then so many Achaians would not have bitten the dust."

21.279f (Achilles speaks), "Would that Hector had slain me, he who was best here; then a brave man would have slain, and a brave one been slain."

22.426f (Priam speaks), "Would that he [Hector] had died in my arms; then we would have had our fill of weeping and wailing."

In these statements the clause of wishing is substituted for the conditional protasis, but serves the same purpose of conveying frustration and wishful thinking.

In two the suppressed condition "if I had obeyed" is implicit:

5.201 (Pandarus speaks), "But I did not obey; and yet it would have been far better."

22.103 (Hector speaks), "But I did not obey; and yet it would have been far better."

Like these two, the following three have suppressed conditions:

4.420f, "Terribly sounded the bronze on the king's chest as he charged; even a stout-hearted man would have felt fear [if he had heard]."

5.20–22, "Idaeus leapt up and left the very fine chariot, but he did not dare stand over his dead brother, for neither would he himself have escaped black death [if he had bestrode him.]"

16.638–40, "Nor would even a clever man any more recognize Sarpedon, the godlike [if he had tried], since he was covered with darts and blood and dust."

This survey of the *Iliad*'s unreal conditions with negative and affirmative protases and the unreal statements that mimic them will serve as background against which to view the proportionately fewer and more diverse unreal conditions and unreal statements in the *Odyssey*.

II. *Odyssey*

1. Unreal Conditions with Negative Protases

The eleven average one in about 1,100 lines and are distributed as follows: in seventeen books there are none (1–3, 6–12, 14–15, 17–20, 22); four have one each (13, 16, 21, 23); the remaining three have two or three each (4 and 5: 2, averaging respectively 1 in 424 and 246 lines; 24: 3, averaging 1 in 183 lines). There is no significant concentration, but it is interesting that three of the eleven belong to Iliadic contexts (4.502; 24.42, 51); another three (16.221, 21.227, 23.242) follow a pattern familiar in the *Iliad* (23. 155, 24.715).

Where in the *Iliad* only 9 (or one-fifth) of 44 genuine conditions have affirmative protases,[9] in the *Odyssey* 11 (or one-half) of 22 conditions are of this sort.[10] Where in the *Iliad* there are roughly equal numbers of conditions with negative protases in Types A (11), B (12), and C (12), the 11 such conditions in the *Odyssey* are divided rather unevenly into only two classes, A (7) and C (4).

Type A:

4.363f, "Now all goods and the men's might would have perished, if some one of the gods had not been touched and pitied me."

4.502f, "Now Ajax would have escaped fate, though hateful to Athena, if he had not spoken a proud word and been very reckless."

5.426f, "He would have had his skin stripped off and his bones broken, had not the goddess grey-eyed Athena given him a hint."

5.436f, "Then Odysseus would have died wretched beyond fate had not grey-eyed Athena given him adroitness."

13.383–85, "Alas, I would be about to die the evil death of Atreus' son Agamemnon in my halls, if you had not told me each thing in order, goddess."

24.50f, "Now leaping up they would have fled to the hollow ships if a man knowing many ancient things had not stopped them."

24.528–30, "And now they would have killed all and given no return, had not Athena, daughter of aegis-bearing Zeus, shouted out and restrained the whole host."

In all these Type A cases the possibilities envisaged in the apodoses are unfated and unmythical, and their function seems to be both to suggest disaster and to use it to make a transition to the next stage of the narrative. But only in the last two cases does the contemplated possibility either involve the same kind of immediate threat or present the same kind of opportunity for narrative transition as do the *Iliad*'s similar unreal conditions. The others serve much more to heighten the effect of the narrative by dramatizing the potentialities of the situation. And the fact

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[9] Or 19 out of 58 (one-third), if we count both the four pseudo-conditions that mimic negative protases and the ten pseudo-conditions that mimic affirmative protases.

[10] Or 20 out of 31 (two-thirds), if we count the nine pseudo-conditions that mimic affirmative protases.

that no such unreal condition exploring an unfated, unmythical outcome occurs in the battle with the suitors shows how different that fighting is from the battles of the *Iliad.* The nature of the *Odyssey*'s subject matter, generally, may be the cause of the disparity in numbers of unreal conditions with negative protases between the two epics (11 versus 35). Certainly the complete absence of any Type B conditions (premature action prevented) in the *Odyssey* shows how different are the plots and the poet's intent in the two epics. In the *Iliad* it is apparently important to keep the possibilities in view by prematurely contemplating disasters to come, while in the *Odyssey* some maintenance of suspense seems desirable.

Type C:

16.220f, "And now the sun would have set on their grieving, if Telemachus had not quickly addressed his father."
21.226f, "And now the sun would have set on their grieving, if Odysseus himself had not held back and said...."
23.241f, "Rosy-fingered Dawn would have come upon them weeping, if the goddess grey-eyed Athena had not planned otherwise."
24.41f, "We fought the whole day; nor would we at all have stopped, if Zeus had not made an end with a storm."

The first two of these are not only very close to several Type C conditions in the *Iliad,* but actually use the same apodosis as *Iliad* 23.155. The third is very Odyssean, using in the protasis a formula that occurs five times in the second person (of Athena), and once each in the third person (of Athena, Penelope, and Helen).[11] The fourth, too, as narrative at a distance from the *Iliad,* is very summary and so quite different from the detailed interventions in the *Iliad;* moreover, its negative apodosis is paralleled by only two such (11.504–06, 12. 290–93) among the *Iliad*'s 35.

2. Unreal Conditions with Affirmative Protases

Although unreal conditions with negative protases in the *Iliad* are far more numerous than those with affirmative protases, in

[11] Second person: 2.383, 393, 4.795, 6.112, 18.187; third person: Athena 23.344, Penelope 16.409, Helen 4.219.

the *Odyssey* we find an equal number of each. And the *Odyssey*'s eleven conditions with affirmative protases are, in addition, more numerous than the *Iliad*'s nine, although the *Odyssey* is only four-fifths the *Iliad*'s length.

Type D:

1.236–40 (Telemachus speaks), "I would not be thus grieved for his death, if he had been slain with his comrades in the land of Troy.... All the Achaians would have built a tomb for him, and he would have won great fame even for his son hereafter."

3.256–58 (Nestor speaks), "If Atreus' son, fair Menelaus, coming from Troy, had found Aegisthus still living in his halls, they would have heaped no tomb for him after he died...."

4.172–79, "If far-seeing Olympian Zeus had granted to us a return in our swift ships over the sea, I would have settled a city in Argos for him [Odysseus].... And we would have been close friends, nor would anything have kept us from our love and joy in each other."

4.732–34 (Penelope speaks), "For if I had heard he was pondering this trip, then either he would have stayed, though eager for the road, or he would have left me dead in the palace."

9.497–99 (Odysseus' crew speak), "If he [Polyphemus] had heard anyone speaking or calling out, he would have broken our heads and the ship's timbers, hitting us with a jagged rock."

11.317 (Odysseus' apologue, about Otus and Ephialtes), "And they would have done it, if they had reached maturity."

14.67 (Eumaeus speaks), "The lord would have given me much, were he growing old here."

20.331f (Agelaus speaks), "Since that would have been better, if Odysseus had come home and returned to his house."

23.21–24 (Penelope speaks), "For if any other of the women who are here had come saying this and wakened me from sleep, quickly with hate I would have sent her to go back again to the hall."

23.218–21 (Penelope speaks), "Nor would Argive Helen, born to Zeus, have come together in love and bed with a foreigner, if she had known that the warrior sons of the Achaians would take her home again to her dear native land."

24.284–86 (Laertes speaks), "For if you had found him alive in Ithaca, he would have sent you on your way, rewarding you with gifts and good entertainment."

Except for the statement about the Aloads in Book 11, which is both narrative and spoken by Odysseus as bard, all these conditions are spoken by characters in their own persons. In at least

nine of them there is something of the same characterizing
frustration and wishful thinking (including regret) that was seen
in the *Iliad* examples: Telemachus regretting the absence of a pa-
ternal heroic death (1.237); Nestor regretting the lack of proper
vengeance on Aegisthus (3.256); Menelaus regretting his in-
ability to make the grand gesture (3.172); Penelope frustrated at
being left out (4.732); the crew in agony over Odysseus' fool-
hardiness (9.497); Eumaeus regretting the lack of reward for his
faithful service (14.67); Agelaus mourning Odysseus' non-re-
turn (20.332); Penelope frustrated by news she thinks is too
good to be true (23.21); and Laertes regretting Odysseus' ab-
sence (24.285). The other two seem to be more explanatory
than characterizing, but there may be something of regret or
wishful thinking even in the Aloads' failure to mount high
heaven (11.317) and something of self-justification for her own
caution in accepting strangers in Penelope's reference to Helen
(23.220).

The *Odyssey* unreal conditions with affirmative protases, like
those in the *Iliad*, are not used to effect transitions, except per-
haps from one mood to another, where there is regret for a
"might have been" or from one personal concern to another,
where the condition is used to explain the situation.

Pseudo-conditions of Type D:

First there are six with suppressed (or transformed) protases,
one of which (9.228) is the same as two *Iliad* examples noted
above (5.201, 22.103):

4.546f (Proteus speaks), "For either you will find him alive, or
    Orestes would have killed him, being beforehand [=if he had come
    before]."
9.211f (Odysseus speaks), "Sweet smell wafted from the krater, mar-
    velous, then it would not be pleasant to hold off [if you had
    smelled it]."
9.228 (Odysseus speaks), "But I did not obey, and yet it would have
    been far better [if I had obeyed]."
9.302f (Odysseus speaks), "Another thought held me back, for there
    we would have suffered sheer destruction [if I had killed him]."
10.84 (Odysseus speaks), "There would a sleepless man have won two
    wages [if he had wanted to]."
20.304–07 (Telemachus speaks), "This was far better for you and your

life, Ctesippus, that you missed the stranger, for he avoided your missile. For I would have struck your middle with sharpened spear, and your father would be preparing a tomb, not a wedding [if you had hit him]."

And as in the *Iliad* there are in the *Odyssey* some pseudo-conditions that substitute a wish for a protasis:

5.308–11 (Odysseus speaks), "Would that I had died and fulfilled my fate on the day when most Trojans hurled their bronze-tipped spears at me around the corpse of Peleus' son; then would the Achaians have given me rites and glory as well."

13.204–06 (Odysseus speaks), "Would that I had remained with the Phaeacians there; and I would have gone to another of the powerful kings who would have loved me and set me on my return."

24.30–32 (Achilles speaks, to the shade of Agamemnon), "Would that you had enjoyed the dignity of your position and encountered death and fate in the land of the Trojans, and so all the Achaians would have made a tomb for you."

All these examples, in the *Odyssey* as in the *Iliad*, whether with protases in the form of wishes or more or less suppressed, are closest to the unreal conditions with affirmative protases. And, as one might expect, they too serve to characterize the speaker and give vent to emotions, whether of frustration or simple yearning.

III. Conclusion

A table will summarize the somewhat confusing multiplicity of conditions and show the contrast between *Iliad* and *Odyssey*:

	Iliad				*Odyssey*			
	A	B	C		A	B	C	
Conditions/neg. prot.	11	12	12 = 35		7	0	4 =	11
Pseudo-conditions	2	2	0 = 4		0	0	0 =	0
			39					11

	D	Except.			D	Except.		
Conditions/affirm. prot.	7	2	= 9		11	0	=	11
Pseudo-conditions	7	3	= 10		9	0	=	9
			9					20

Totals:		58		31

It is clear that the use of conditions (and pseudo-conditions) with negative protases is far more prominent in the *Iliad* than in the *Odyssey*. It is equally clear that such conditions serve to change the direction of the narrative. Obviously, there is greater need in the *Iliad* for zigzag narrative transitions (from one side of the battle to the other, from one duel to another, from victory to defeat) than for the straight-line account of one hero's adventures in the *Odyssey*.[12] But also the Trojan War story involves much in the way of "mythical history" or what was known to have happened and who was known to have survived, so that it was possible for the poet by threatening the unhistorical, as it were, to change the course of the narrative. In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, it seems likely that the subject matter was far less canonized and so lent itself less to the sort of brinkmanship so comparatively frequent in the *Iliad*.

As far as conditions (and pseudo-conditions) with affirmative protases are concerned, it is obvious that here it is the *Odyssey* that despite its lesser length not only has the greater number but also uses them almost exclusively in discourse, while at least two of the *Iliad*'s smaller number appear in the narrative. Since the function of these conditions in discourse was seen most often to express feelings of regret and frustration, it seems clear that in this respect, as in so many others, the *Odyssey* is the more personal and subjective of the two epics. And if there had been any hope that use of unreal conditions might be the touchstone that could be used to determine dual authorship, it is now as abundantly clear as it has always been that the differences between the epics can be accounted for by the difference in subject matter.

APPENDIX I: Intervening Agents and Acts in Conditions

In *Iliad* conditions with negative protases, the intervention is most often divine (20 out of 35), with Apollo acting six times; Athena,

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[12] Conditions are obviously of no use for the *Odyssey*'s needed transitions between the adventures and the situation in Ithaca. And it should be noted that of the eleven conditions with negative protases in the *Odyssey* only three (5.426f, 436f, 13.383–85) refer to Odysseus' adventures; four others (4.363f, 502f, 24.41f, 50f) come in narratives about Menelaus, Ajax, and the Trojan War; three of Type C (16.220f, 21.226f, 23.241f) are the formulaic means of finishing off a grieving session; and one (24.528–30) serves to bring the epic to a peaceful close through divine action.

Aphrodite, Zeus, and Poseidon twice each; and Eëriboea, Hera, Nyx, Iris, Thetis, and Scamander once.[13] Intervention by human characters is less concentrated: only Achilles acts more than once (23.155, 491, 734); the others are Hector (5.690), Helenus (6.75), the other chiefs (7.106), the two heralds (7.274), Diomedes (8.91), Odysseus (11.312), Paris (11.505), Polydamas (13.725), the Ajaxes (17.531), Coeranus (17. 614), Antilochus (23.541), and Priam (24.715).[14] The choice between human and divine seems to be made on the same grounds as with other kinds of external motivation in Homer. The two extremes are: if the action is explicable in human terms, the agent is human; if not, divine. More difficult is the situation in which the action is human enough but the impetus thereto or the knowledge required therefore necessitates divine intervention; such agents are often divinities disguised as particular human beings, but they may also be human beings who are impelled by a divinity. Divine intervention in these unreal conditions comes most often through the divinities themselves stepping in to prevent what may not be. In only four cases do gods impel mortals to take the necessary action: Hera inspires Agamemnon to act (8.218); Zeus drives Sarpedon against the Greeks (12.292); Apollo in the guise of Mentes impels Hector to face Menelaus (17. 71); Apollo incites Agenor to action (21.545).

The variety of actors in the *Iliad* affirmative protases is in strong contrast to the intervening agents in the negative protases of the other group: two are "someone else" (2.80, 24.220); two are divine ("you" [Ares] 5.897, "I" [Athena] 8.366); three are human (Teucer 15.460; Aeneas 16.616; Patroclus 16.686); one is "twenty such men" (16.847); and one has no actor (23.526). In the ten corresponding pseudo-conditions, actors in the suppressed or wishing protases are equally various: Artemis (19.59), Hector (21.279, 22.103, 426), Paris (3.40), Pandarus (5.201), Idaeus (5.20), Trojans (3.56), a stout-hearted man (4. 420), a clever man (16.638).

Intervention in *Odyssey* unreal conditions with negative protases is most often, as in the *Iliad*, divine (7 of 11): Athena acting five times (5.427, 437, 13.385, 23.242, 24.529), Zeus and "some god" once each (24.42, 4.364). The four human characters who intervene are Ajax (4. 503), Telemachus (16.221), Odysseus (21.227), Nestor (24.50). Actors in *Odyssey* conditions with affirmative protases and the pseudo-con-

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[13] Apollo 16.700, 17.71, 18.454, 21.545, 22.203, 23.383; Athena 2.156, 15.123; Aphrodite 3.374, 5.312; Zeus 8.132, 12.292; Poseidon 11.751, 20.291; Eëriboea 5. 389; Hera 8.218; Nyx 14.259; Iris 18.166; Thetis 18.398; Scamander 21.212. The different kinds of interference are exemplified by Apollo: action in his own person (16.700, 18.454, 23. 383); acting on heroes (21.545, 22.203); speaking to heroes (17.71).

[14] Most often the intervention is by speech, but Paris acts, as do the Ajaxes and Coeranus.

ditions that mimic them include only one god (Zeus, 4.172) and the following mortals: Odysseus (1.236, 5.308, 9.211, 228, 302, 13.204, 20. 331, 24.284 in disguise); Menelaus (3.256), Penelope (4.732), Polyphemus (9.497), Aloads (11.317), Helen (23.220), Orestes (4.546), Ctesippus (20.304), Agamemnon (12.30), a sleepless man (10.84), any other woman (23.21).

APPENDIX II: Formal Aspects of Conditions

All the *Iliad*'s 35 negative protases are introduced by εἰ μή, but of the four pseudo-conditions three use ἀλλά and the fourth αὐτάρ (20. 92). In six of the 35 the protasis is introduced with the formulaic εἰ μὴ ἄρ' ὀξὺ νόησε (3.374, 5.312, 680, 8.91, 132, 20.291). Three use εἰ μὴ ... εἶπε παραστάς (6.75, 13.725, 23.155).[15] Of the 35 apodoses 29 use only two initial formulas: καί νύ κεν (κε/κ') in 18 cases;[16] ἔνθα κε/κ' in 11 cases[17] and in one of the pseudo-conditions (17.319). Four of the 35 use two formulas: καί κε/κ', a short form of καὶ νύ κε used when the clause begins with the second foot in 14.259 and 17.614; and οὐδ' ἄν πω in the only two negative apodoses (11.505, 12.292). Two others use one each: πῶς δέ κεν (a unique rhetorical question, 22.203); τότ' ἄν (where the clause begins at the penthemimeral caesura, 18.398).[18] One pseudo-condition (17.319f) shares part of its apodosis with the condition of 6.75; the apodoses of the three other pseudo-conditions all begin differently.

All verbs used in both clauses of the 35 unreal conditions with negative protases and the four pseudo-conditions are the expected aorist, pluperfect, or imperfect indicative except for aorist optative (5. 312, 389) and present optative (17.71) in the apodoses. The optative seems to be 'potential' as in the apodosis of a future less vivid condition.

Formal aspects of the nine *Iliad* conditions with affirmative protases and the ten pseudo-condtions that mimic them are as follows: or-

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[15] Other verbal parallels between conditions include the following: 3.373=18.165; 5.311=5.388 up to penthemimeral caesura; 5.679=21.211 up to the bucolic diaeresis except for transposition of two words; 6.73f=17.319f; 7.273=17.530 up to the bucolic diaeresis; 8.130=11.310; 16.698=21.544. Also 7.104=16.787 except for the vocative name and the fact that the latter is not unreal.

[16] 3.374, 5.312, 389, 680, 7.174, 8.91, 218, 11.751, 18.166, 454, 21.212, 23.155, 383, 491, 541, 734, 24.715. Also in second lines of 8.132 and 11.312.

[17] 2.156, 6.75, 7.105, 8.132, 11.312, 13.725, 15.123, 16.700, 17.71, 20.291, 21.545.

[18] Another way of characterizing formula use is to note that the only six of the 35 conditions with negative protases that do not use the first two formulas are: two that are spoken by characters (14.259, 18.398); two of which the apodoses are negative (11.505, 12.292); one where the condition is a parenthetic expression that interrupts the syntax (17.614); and one where the condition is a highly unusual rhetorical question (22.203).

dinary protases begin with εἰ; in five pseudo-conditions the protasis is suppressed; in the other five the wish is expressed by some form of ὄφελον. Apodosis introductory formulas for both regular and pseudo-conditions include: καί κεν/κε/κ', which also occurs in *Iliad* conditions with negative protases (3.40, 5.897, 15.460); τῷ κεν/κε/κ' (19.59, 21.279, 22.426, 23.526); ἦ τ' ἄν (5.201, 16.686, 22.103); all the others have unique apodosis introductions. In view of the much more specialized uses of these conditions in contrast to the 35 above, this individualized usage is not surprising. As far as moods and tenses in these conditions are concerned, all verbs are past tenses of the indicative except for present optative (2.80, 24.220) in the apodoses.

All protases of the *Odyssey* conditions with negative protases are introduced by εἰ μή; the formula εἰ μὴ ἐπὶ φρεσί of 4.427 appears also in *Iliad* 8.218. Of the eleven apodoses nine have one of the two initial formulas used in 29 of the 35 similar conditions in the *Iliad*: καί νύν κε(ν) in seven cases (4.354, 503, 16.221, 21.227, 23.242, 24.40, 529), ἔνθα κε in two (5.427, 437). One of the other two apodoses begins with οὐδε κε (24.42); and the other has no modal particle at all (13. 385); both are spoken by characters. All verbs used in both clauses are aorist or imperfect indicative.

Of the eleven *Odyssey* conditions with affirmative protases and the nine pseudo-conditions that mimic them, six have the same apodosis initial formula, τῷ κε(ν) (4.733, 5.308, 14.67, 23.21, 24.30, 284). Thirteen others have thirteen different beginnings;[19] the twentieth (20. 332) has no modal particle at all and yet has the same gist as the apodoses *with* modal particle of three pseudo-conditions in which the protasis is suppressed (*Il.* 5.201, 22.103; *Od.* 9.228). All verbs used in both clauses of the eleven *Odyssey* conditions with affirmative protases and the nine pseudo-conditions that mimic them are past indicative except 1.237 (present optative).

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May, 1989

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[19] καί νύ κεν (11.317); τῷ κε (3.258); οὐδε κεν (23.220); οὔ κε (1.237); καί κε (4.172); σύν κεν (9.498); ἦ τ' ἄν (9.228); ἦ κεν (4.546); τότ' ἄν (9.211); κε (9.302); ἔνθα κ' (10. 84); ἦ γάρ κεν (20.304); ἐγὼ δέ κεν (13.204).