Publications of the Milman Parry Collection
of Oral Literature No. 7

SINGERS AND TALES
IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

SINGERS AND TALES IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

edited by

David F. Elmer and Peter McMurray

Published by
THE MILMAN PARRY COLLECTION OF ORAL LITERATURE
Harvard University

Distributed by
HARVARD UNIVERSITY PRESS
Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England
2024

Singers and Tales in the Twenty-First Century

Published by The Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature, Harvard University
Distributed by Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts & London, England

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ISBN: 978-0-674-278547

The editors and contributors dedicate this book to the memory of John Miles Foley.

ἔνθεν δὲ προτέρω πλέομεν ἀκαχήμενοι ἦτορ

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Visuality in Bosniac and Homeric Epic

Anna Bonifazi and David F. Elmer

1. Introduction

Homeric poetry is an intensely visual art, as numerous studies have shown.[1] This intense visuality is a feature that Homeric poetry shares with many other oral narrative traditions.[2] The affinity of oral narrative for optically rich modes of presentation can be explained by the usefulness of visual techniques in composition and performance. Various writers have stressed the importance of visual and spatial information as facilitators of memory and recall: from the point of view of the oral performer, the cultivation of a detailed mental vision, which can then be scanned and presented in speech—what Albert Lord called "the living eye of the singer's imagination"—is an essential support for the cognitively demanding process of realizing a traditional narrative in performance.[3] At the same time, visual cues

[1] See, for example, Andersson 1976:15–52 on the visual emphasis on characters rather than on scenery; Richardson 1990:110–123 on changes of scene and bird's eye views; Bakker 1993 on the "presence" of the narrator through visualization; Minchin 2001:132–160 and Bakker 2001 on the visual impact of similes; Scodel 2002 on special signs to be recognized and the cognitive notion of flashbulb memory; de Jong and Nünlist 2004 on scenic standpoints; Turkeltaub 2005 on the relevance of the description of glowing eyes; Slatkin 2007 on tragic visualizations in the *Iliad*; Nagy 2009:97–105 on the association between Homeric poetry and non-verbal visual arts; Purves 2010:24–64 on the different ways in which the *Iliad* is "eusynoptic"; Strauss Clay 2011 on the "theater" of Troy; Tsagalis 2012 on the *Iliad*'s visual spaces.

[2] See, among others, Fleischman 1990:265–266. A Gaelic storyteller interviewed in the 1970s, when asked about "viewing" the events, asserts: "You've got to see it as a picture in front of you or you can't remember it properly ... You're as if the picture were in front of you here and all you do is follow the thing as it is" (MacDonald 1978:15). Zeman 2016 offers a more recent discussion of visualization as a feature of oral epic poems.

[3] Lord 2019:98. Rubin 1995 provides an excellent overview of relevant work in cognitive psychology and applies it to the particular problems faced by oral performers. For the application of such work to the Homeric poems in particular, see Minchin 2001 and 2008. Among earlier writers on

are equally indispensable to the audience in the face of their own, equally demanding cognitive task. By fostering involvement in the shared vision communicated by performance, such cues assist the audience in tracking the movement of the unfolding narrative. The cognitive importance of visual elements to the successful realization and comprehension of the performance helps to explain the prominence and structural significance of visually intense moments in many narrative traditions. Visual imagery often seems to function as a kind of "motor" of narrative movement, with important moments being heavily coded for visualization.[4]

It is this "architectonic" function of visual techniques that we would like to explore in this paper, with reference to both Homeric and Bosniac epic. The fruitful comparison between these two traditions established by Parry and Lord has tended to focus on the utility of traditional formulas as expressions of traditional themes, but the comparison can be extended in any number of directions, including the one suggested here. We will suggest some convergences and divergences between these traditions by examining a Bosniac epic song performed for Milman Parry by the Albanian singer Alija Fjuljanin in 1934, with an eye to its heuristic value as a guide to the understanding of the visual strategies employed by Homeric poetry.[5] The value of Fjuljanin's song as a comparandum for Homer consists in the fact that, as a much shorter composition—with a "mere" 1,000 lines—it permits us to observe the use of compositional devices on a much smaller and more easily comprehensible scale.

We will begin by reviewing examples of some techniques deployed by Fjuljanin and their Homeric analogues. These techniques relate to visuality at two theoretically distinct but practically interrelated levels. The first

Homer, one of the most influential proponents of the importance of visuality in the "psychological effort of recall" was Eric Havelock, who remarked, "[epic] units of meaning are highly visualized in order that vision may lead on to vision" (1963:188).

4 Bakker's analysis of narrative progression in Homeric poetry provides numerous illustrations of this motor function (Bakker 1997:54–122). Bakker describes a "syntax of movement" articulated in terms of visual framings, close-ups, and elaborations of detail, where narration and description cannot be disjoined.

5 We use the term "Bosniac" to refer to the traditional culture of those Muslim inhabitants of the republics of the former Yugoslavia who speak a South Slavic language. Following the usage of the majority of Parry's Muslim informants, we refer to their language as "Bosnian." In contemporary usage, "Bosniac" generally indicates a cultural identity, while "Bosnian" refers to a political one, i.e. to the identity of residents of Bosnia-Herzegovina. Fjuljanin, ethnically Albanian, was from the village of Leskova, some thirty kilometers southwest of Novi Pazar in today's Serbia. According to his own testimony in an interview recorded by Parry, although the residents of Leskova were mainly Albanian, they all spoke Bosnian (which Fjuljanin refers to as *jugoslavenski*, "Yugoslavian")—and sang epics only in Bosnian (Lord 1954:292).

concerns the visual dimension of the narrative content—the visual aspects of the events themselves and the act of seeing as experienced by characters and narrated by the performer. Visuality at this level can be termed "propositional visuality." The second level, which can be designated as the level of "pragmatic visuality," relates to the way the narrator presents this content, that is, the way his language encodes and cues the visual processing of the narrative. These two levels are distinct both conceptually and in terms of the particular devices they involve. Their practical independence, moreover, can be detected in the fact that the "mind's-eye" experiences of narrators and listeners—the domain in which the effects of pragmatic visuality are felt—often exceed in richness of detail the descriptive content of a narrative.[6] Nevertheless, propositional and pragmatic visuality often work together. That is, the visual relevance of what is told may be connected to the visual relevance of *how* it is told.

2. Relevant Features in a Bosniac Epic and Comparable Features in the Homeric Poems

Alija Fjuljanin's song "Halil Hrnjičić and Miloš the Highwayman" tells the story of the kidnapping of a certain Hajkuna, sister of the Muslim heroes Mujo and Halil, by a Christian villain and Halil's subsequent rescue of her.[7] What we have termed "propositional visuality" can be observed, at its most basic level, in any of the text's many descriptive passages. Bosniac epic is a visually rich medium; it shares with Homeric poetry a preference for the accumulation of ornamental details.[8] Fjuljanin, however, has a noticeable tendency to draw attention to the visual content of his narrative, for instance by using semantic redundancy to make the action of seeing as explicit as possible (l. 348):

[6] See, for example, the comments of Lindahl 2009:212–13 on the way the Muncy family tales, in spite of an extremely sparing use of visual detail, produced vivid images in the minds of narrator and listener. For more on Jane Muncy and her family's tales, see Lindahl, this volume.

[7] Fjuljanin's song is PN 662 in the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature. The song was recorded by Milman Parry on 19 aluminum phonograph discs (numbers 1087–1105) on November 21, 1934, in Novi Pazar. The text has been published in Lord 1953 and a complete translation in Lord 1954. The translations presented here are by D. F. Elmer. The original recordings and a transcription by Nikola Vujnović can be accessed through the website of the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature (http://mpc.chs.harvard.edu).

[8] For a comparison of the "poetics of ornamentation" in Bosniac and Homeric epic, see Elmer 2010. On the "optic poetics" of the Homeric tradition, see Bakker 2005:63.

uh kad vide crnjo sa oćima

Oh! When that black one saw with his eyes ...[9]

The "black one" is Halil, who has been chasing after his sister's abductors and just now realizes—after careful inspection of the grass for signs of passing horses—that they have made good their escape.

The Homeric poems likewise employ redundant expressions to emphasize the impact of visual experience on the characters. These mostly formulaic expressions typically combine the instrumental ὀφθαλμοῖσι(ν) "by means of eyes" with a form of the verb ὁρᾶν "to see," as in the formula:

ἐπεὶ ἴδον ὀφθαλμοῖσι

(*Odyssey* 10.414 = 2.155; cf. 11.615, 23.92)

when they saw with their eyes[10]

When considering the significance of these devices, it is essential to keep in mind the correlation between the visual perception of the characters and the mental vision of the audience. Every time characters are said to have seen, noticed, or spotted something or someone, listeners are invited to make the same object appear to their minds (and to their mind's eyes). The narrative unfolds for the listener as a sequence of mental images that are largely coextensive with the characters' visual experiences. Moreover, the links between these images—which is to say, the sequential steps that advance the plot—are often constructed precisely in terms of the act of seeing: in battle scenes, for instance, the narrative moves from killing to killing by describing how one hero observes another's death and so is motivated to seek vengeance.[11] In this way, the characters' vision becomes the very force that drives the plot forward. We glimpse here already an initial indication of the interrelationship between propositional and pragmatic visuality. Insofar as it animates the listeners' mental experience of the story—advances the frames, so to speak, of their mental film-strips—the propositional visuality of the characters' experiences takes on a pragmatic dimension.

[9] Compare the similar formulations at ll. 878 (*uh kad vide gospa sa oćima*), 935 (*a kad vide Miloš sa oćima*), 981 (*aj da vidiš ćuda sa očima*), and 986 (*uh kad Mujo vide sa očima*), all of which exhibit the same semantically redundant formulation "X saw with his/her eyes." Note that Vujnović alternates between the spellings *oćima*/*očima*.

[10] Other comparable examples: *Iliad* 3.28, 13.99 (= 15.286, 20.344, 21.54), 17.466, 23.202; *Odyssey* 3.373, 4.47.

[11] Slatkin 2007:19–20. Slatkin observes that the *Iliad*'s most decisive plot development—Achilles' decision to send Patroklos into battle in his place—is precipitated by precisely such an act of seeing.

A special case of the interplay between the visual experience of the characters and the mental experience of the listeners is presented by the motif of *disguise and recognition*, which is as prominent and important a device in the Bosniac tradition as it is in the Homeric. Regardless of whether the disguised character is recognized or not, the special narrative pleasure of this device derives from the contrast between strictly visual phenomena and the extradiegetic knowledge with which the listeners are able to enrich their mental vision. In "Halil and Miloš," Halil disguises himself as an unmarried girl and enters the palace of his enemies in the company of his helper, Ruža. The Christian *ban* (the potentate whom Miloš serves) is completely taken in by the deception:

> 'aman Ružo grom te pogodijo
> đe s ovaku curu nabavila
> nabavila sa sela devojku'
>
> PN 662, ll. 748–750

> '*Aman*, Ruža—may lightning strike you!—
> where did you find such a girl?
> Where did you find this maiden from the country?'

Scenes such as these produce delight because they invite listeners to share in a vision that they know to be false, and simultaneously establish the superiority of the audience's state of knowledge over that of the participants in the action. The *Odyssey*, of course, exploits this technique to the full, repeatedly presenting Odysseus to the gaze of unrecognizing spectators. Strategic usages of deictic or anaphoric markers heighten the effect by emphasizing the sameness of the referent "Odysseus" even as he is visualized or recalled as a different individual by internal and external spectators.[12]

Considered in isolation from the propositional level, pragmatic visuality encompasses all the techniques employed by the performer in order to help himself and the listeners visually construe and/or process the ongoing narration. As the narrative unfolds and the visual focus switches from object to object and place to place, the performer must mark these shifts in focus in order to facilitate cognitive tracking of the story in progress. The linguistic means for performing this function is provided in both Bosnian and Greek by lexemes known as "particles," which, though not in themselves necessarily visual, may

[12] See, for example, the deictic use of ὅδε at *Odyssey* 16.57, where Telemachus—still unaware of his father's presence—asks Eumaeus about the beggar: πόθεν τοι ξεῖνος ὅδ' ἵκετο; "from where did this stranger come to you?" Deictic devices such as this facilitate the convergence of the audience's mental vision with the perceptual sphere of the characters.

nevertheless indicate varying degrees of discontinuity in the mental vision shared by performer and audience.[13] In Bosnian, for example, the particle *a* marks the moderately discontinuous shift between two characters who are visualized sequentially, as in the following example, where the particle triggers a shift from the leader of the raiding party (Mujo) to the hero directly behind him (Osman):

> e okrenu poljom zeljenijem
> a za njime Arnaut Osmane
>
> PN 662, ll. 14–15

> So, he set off over the green plain,
> and behind him was Osman the Albanian.[14]

Since both characters act within the same temporal and spatial setting, the shift from one to the other is relatively smooth—more like a pan of the camera than a cut. Homeric poetry employs similar means to accomplish the same task, as when the narrator of the *Odyssey* employs the particle αὐτάρ to accomplish the visual switch from Demodokos to Odysseus:

> ... μετὰ δέ σφιν ἐμέλπετο θεῖος ἀοιδός,
> Δημόδοκος, λαοῖσι τετιμένος. αὐτὰρ Ὀδυσσεὺς
> πολλὰ πρὸς ἠέλιον κεφαλὴν τρέπε παμφανόωντα,
> δῦναι ἐπειγόμενος· δὴ γὰρ μενέαινε νέεσθαι.
>
> *Odyssey* 13.27–30

> ... and among them sang the godlike singer
> Demodokos, honored by the people. But Odysseus
> often turned his head toward the radiant sun,
> anxious for it to set, for he was very eager to set out for home.

Here the camera shifts from Demodokos to Odysseus and then continues to follow his gaze toward the setting sun.

A similar technique for marking visual discontinuity is deployed whenever a general description is followed by single details or a sequence of

[13] See Bonifazi 2016 for a general discussion of the pragmatic functions of particles in PN 662 and in the Homeric poems.

[14] The particle *a*, here translated "and," is in fact a mild adversative particle. Canakis 2011, pointing out parallels between this particle and modern Greek *kai* "and," observes that *a* can sometimes have a "deictic function" when it "marks a change of person." This "deictic function" matches well the function we ascribe to *a* here and elsewhere, where it marks or implies a visual shift.

details.[15] In the next example, the image of a wounded hero is followed by a kind of zooming-in on the details of his frightful appearance; once again, each visual shift, each cut of the mental "montage," is marked by a particle or interjection:

> ej kakav se momak nagrdijo
> a na njega ruha ni beljaja
> sve mu brza zrnad raznijela
> ej krvava va sablja do balćaka
> a krvava ruka do ramena
>
> PN 662, ll. 158–162

> Hey, how the young man had been disfigured!
> And on him there was not a scrap of clothing,
> swift bullets had torn it all away.
> Hey, his sword was bloody to the hilt,
> and his arm was bloody to the shoulder.

Homeric poetry offers many comparable examples as, for instance, in the famous scene of Agamemnon's arming in Book 11 of the *Iliad*. In this case as well, a broad descriptive statement ("he himself donned the gleaming bronze," 11.16) gives way to a sequence of details about the individual pieces of Agamemnon's equipment:

> Ἀτρεΐδης δ' ἐβόησεν ἰδὲ ζώννυσθαι ἄνωγεν
> Ἀργείους· ἐν δ' αὐτὸς ἐδύσετο νώροπα χαλκόν.
> κνημῖδας μὲν πρῶτα περὶ κνήμῃσιν ἔθηκε
> καλὰς ἀργυρέοισιν ἐπισφυρίοις ἀραρυίας
> δεύτερον αὖ θώρηκα περὶ στήθεσσιν ἔδυνε
> . . . . . .
> ἀμφὶ δ' ἄρ' ὤμοισιν βάλετο ξίφος· ...
> . . . . . .
> κρατὶ δ' ἐπ' ἀμφίφαλον κυνέην θέτο τετραφάληρον
> ἵππουριν· δεινὸν δὲ λόφος καθύπερθεν ἔνευεν.
> εἵλετο δ' ἄλκιμα δοῦρε δύω κεκορυθμένα χαλκῷ
> ὀξέα·
>
> *Iliad* 11.15–19, 29, 41–43

[15] Tannen (1989:134–166) analyzes the role of imagery and the functions of detailing in conversational narratives. Details, in particular, "fire the individual imagination" (136); their accumulation may mark the climax of a story "contributing to its main point" (141). Detailing may be seen as a way of evaluating (141); it is a powerful means of triggering memories and emotions (150). Examples from PN 662 reviewed below illustrate some of these points.

> The son of Atreus cried out and bid the Argives
> to arm themselves, and he himself donned the gleaming bronze.
> First he put on his legs beautiful greaves,
> fitted with silver ankle-pieces.
> Then he put a corselet around his chest
> . . . . . .
> And over his shoulders he hung his sword ...
> . . . . . .
> And on his head he set a helmet with bosses on both sides, four
> buckles,
> and a horse-hair crest; and the crest swayed terrifyingly above it.
> And he gripped two stout spears tipped with bronze
> and sharp.

Each successive shift to a new detail in this description is linguistically marked by means of a particle (μέν, αὖ, ἄρα, δέ, δέ).

As mentioned earlier, propositional visuality and pragmatic visuality not infrequently converge. So, in the following example, the visual wonder of the character Mujo yields immediately to the visual surprise engineered by the performer, who uses a direct address to the audience to communicate a sense of amazement at the sudden arrival of a new character (Osman) on the scene:

> taman Mujo u tom razgovoru
> dok ugljeda ćudo sa oćima
> kad evo ti Arnautovića
>
> PN 662, ll. 148–150

> Mujo had just spoken these words
> when he caught sight of a wonder—
> here you are, the Albanian's son.

The performer may also bridge the gap between the visual experience of characters and that of the audience by means of another strategy, which involves embedded visualizations—descriptions of the content of a character's vision. These embedded visualizations fuse the characters' attempts to perceive a remarkable event with those of the audience. In fact, this device invites the listeners not only to share but also to relive the perceptual and emotional experiences of the characters. The following excerpt, in which Mujo uses his spyglass to survey the landscape and look for signs of the danger that he fears threatens his city of Kladuša, provides an excellent example of this technique:

e sve gljeda kulje i avljije
a gljedaše ka ešći Kladuše
pa gljedaše sobom govoraše
Bože mijo na svemu ti fala
svuđe vedro jeste havajima
nigđe maglje nema ravninama
sem Kladušu tama ufatila
dalj je magla al' je pala tama
dal to puši kula serdareva

PN 662, ll. 139–147

Well, he [Mujo] looked over all the towers and courtyards,
and he looked toward ancient Kladuša,
and while he looked he said to himself,
"Dear God, thanks be to you in all things,
everywhere the skies are clear,
nowhere is there fog upon the plains—
a dark cloud has enveloped Kladuša alone.
Is it fog or a dark cloud that has come down,
or is it the *serdar's* tower smoking?"

The redundant repetition of the verb *gl(j)edati* "to look" in lines 139–141 lays considerable stress on Mujo's anxious attempts to obtain clear visual information about what is happening. His efforts to see become a kind of figure or *mise-en-abyme* for the audience's own drive to visualize events in anticipation of a major turning point in the action. What Mujo struggles to make out turns out to be exactly what he most fears: Kladuša is on fire; it has been sacked by the Christian warrior Miloš. A certain dilation of narrative time intensifies the audience's visual experience: the literal zooming in on the mysterious cloud (through Mujo's eyes) is emphasized by the retardation of the narrative pace.

In his lengthy study of Bosniac epic, the slavist Alois Schmaus draws attention to the way in which the Bosniac tradition develops such scenes of embedded visualization into a major compositional device that not only contributes to a more concrete and realistic "chronotope" but also provides an important means by which singers structure their narratives.[16] Of the spyglass motif in particular, Schmaus notes that it functions as an alternative way of introducing into the

[16] Schmaus 1979:79, 140–146. Mikhail Bakhtin's influence on Schmaus's thinking in these pages is evident. For more on Schmaus's contribution to the study of Bosniac epic, see Kunić, this volume.

narrative information about events happening at a distance.[17] In other words, it is a substitute for the various kinds of messenger-figures that appear throughout the Christian and Muslim epic traditions. This functional equivalence is in a sense made explicit in Fjuljanin's song, when Mujo's use of the spyglass leads directly to the appearance of Osman, who brings news of the attack on Mujo's home.

Schmaus makes a further observation with significance for our discussion: he compares the embedded visualizations of the Bosniac tradition to the *Teikhoskopia*, or "Viewing from the Walls," of *Iliad* Book 3.[18] In this famous scene, the Trojan king Priam, in the company of Helen, gazes down at the battlefield below and asks his daughter-in-law to identify the warriors he singles out. Priam's vision structures this scene: as he directs his gaze at several visually prominent figures in succession, he directs the listener's mental gaze as well. We will return shortly to the structural significance of Priam's vision. For now it is sufficient to stress that, once again, a visualization from afar focuses attention on the enemy threat at a crucial moment in the development of the action by zooming in on a succession of details.

3. Visual and Narrative Landmarks in "Halil and Miloš"

The spyglass episode allows us to take our argument a step further by evaluating the function of such devices within the overall narrative economy of the song. The visualization of the cloud over Kladuša occupies an important narrative position: it serves as the trigger for the complicating action. This corresponds to a broader storytelling strategy employed by Fjuljanin, who often uses propositional or pragmatic visuality to establish visual "landmarks" at narrative turning points.

An outstanding example of the use of visual techniques in connection with narrative landmarks and emotional peaks is provided by the character Osman's account of the abduction of Hajkuna. Fjuljanin employs an embedded flashback, a highly marked device, to record this crucial event, which must be fixed vividly in the listener's mind in order to establish the character of the story's antagonist. At the pivotal moment in the standoff between attackers and defenders, Fjuljanin's Osman pauses to provide a detailed description of the villain's mount.

[17] Schmaus 1979:79, 91.

[18] Schmaus calls song no. 26 in the Matica Hrvatska collection of Muslim epic (vols. 3–4 of *Hrvatske narodne pjesme*, first published in 1898 and 1899, respectively) "a humble variant of the Homeric *Teikhoskopia*" (143). Although Schmaus does not develop this point further, it should be noted that the connection between embedded visualization and messenger-figures is apparent in the *Iliad* as well: the *Teikhoskopia* concludes with the arrival of the Trojan herald Idaios, who brings news of developments on the battlefield.

This description almost literally launches the action forward, by transitioning directly into the preternatural leap with which the animal carries its rider into the courtyard:

e to reče zasede alata
kakav beše zakljali ga vuci
ćetiri mu noge putaljaste
a cijela glava baljatasta
e zinuo ka da pobesnijo
iz nožđara maven plamen bije
pripaljuje travu detelinu
nagna konja preskoći avljiju
uh kad dušman pade u avljiju
doćeka' ga puškom od obraza
što je fajda helj ga pogodijo
ne hoće ga gvožđe ni olovo
sve od njega zrnad odlećuju
udaraju kulji u duvaru
gotovo mi oči isteraše
ja potego sablju ađemkinju
na troje se sablja prelomila
tako Ajka pa ga doćekala
što je fajda helj ga doćekala
ne hoće ga gvožđe ni olovo
pruži ruku dofati Hajkunu
pa je baci za se na alata

PN 662, ll. 252–273

Well, saying this he mounted his chestnut horse.
What was [the horse] like, may wolves devour him?
His four legs had white markings
but his head was entirely black,
and he bared his teeth as though he were mad.
From his nostrils a blue flame darts;
it sets the clover grass aflame.
He spurred the horse, lept over the courtyard wall.
Oh! When the enemy descended into the courtyard,
I met him with my rifle at my shoulder.
What use, even if I struck him?
Neither iron nor lead has any purchase on him.

Every bullet flies off him,
strikes the wall of the tower.
They nearly struck out my own eyes.
I drew my Persian sword;
my sword broke into three pieces.
Ajka faced him in the same way.
What use, even if she faced him?
Neither iron nor lead has any purchase on him.
He stretched out his arm, he seized Hajkuna
and he set her behind him on the chestnut horse.

In a manner similar to the cinematographic "design for terror" discerned by Alain Renoir (1962) in *Beowulf*, the scene cuts from a vision of the villain on his terrifying horse to a sequence of shots of Osman and Hajkuna as they attempt to defend themselves. The singer's effort to invest this visually intense sequence with an emotional, as well as narrative, significance is likewise evident in the use of a rhetorical question coupled with an expressive curse ("What was the horse like, may wolves devour him?").

The initiation of the complicating action is by no means the only narrative high point that is singled out by means of visual devices. The *denouement* is similarly marked. The song's concluding scene hinges on an embedded visualization that is also a visual deception—which is to say, a kind of variation on the recognition motif. Halil "disguises" the disembodied head of Miloš as the whole, living person, and fools his brother into thinking that Miloš has returned to attack again. Note that redundant references to Mujo's vision bracket the scene:

e moj brate Kladuški serdare
aj da vidiš ćuda sa očima
e đe stiže Miloš ćesedžija
. . . . . .
uh kad Mujo vide sa očima
a kad vide na kapiju glavu
aman što ga nemir ufatijo
pa bežaše redom odajama
a smije se Mujović Haljile
baka baka pa dobra junaka
kako bi joj živoj udarijo
kad se boji posećene glave
a smije se Haljil po odajidots

e kad vide Mujo sa oći(ma)

PN 662, ll. 980–982, 986–995

"Hey, my brother, *serdar* of Kladuša,
ah, see a wonder with your eyes,
hey, how Miloš the Highwayman approaches.
. . . . . .
Oh! When Mujo saw with his eyes,
and when he saw the head at the gate,
aman! What distress took hold of him.
And he ran in flight through room after room.
But Mujo's Halil laughed:
"Just look, what a noble hero!
How would he have met him if he were still alive,
when he's afraid of his severed head!"
But Halil laughed in the chamber,
hey, when Mujo saw with his eyes.

A number of narrative turning points in Fjuljanin's song are, in fact, accomplished by means of recognition scenes, a fact that attests to the satisfaction and pleasure produced by these moments of recalibration, when the visual experience of a character or characters is synchronized with the point of view of the audience.[19]

4. Back to Homer

What new perspectives on Homer are opened up by this examination of Fjuljanin's performance? The techniques on display in "Halil and Miloš" help to focus attention on comparable features of Homeric discourse at both the propositional and pragmatic levels, and on an instructive difference as well.

At the propositional level, Fjuljanin's use of visually intense scenes to articulate his narrative suggests that we look for a similar "architectural" strategy in Homer. In fact, we can detect an indication of just such a strategy, played out in terms of propositional visuality, in a scene that has already been mentioned—the *Teikhoskopia*. This scene—which is itself a significant narrative landmark—establishes a motif that plays an essential role in the subsequent development

[19] Cf. the recognitions of Halil by Anđelija (ll. 447–458), Miloš (ll. 616–638), Ruža (ll. 657–670), and Ajkuna (ll. 815–828). Schmaus 1979:135, discussing Bosniac epic's pronounced affinity for disguise and recognition, notes the "special charm" of the disjunction between the experiences of the characters, on the one hand, and of the performer and audience on the other.

of the song. The motif centers on Priam's visual observation of the enemy. One might expect the narrative complications leading up to Hektor's fatal duel with Achilles to be focused on Hektor's experience of his antagonist; in actuality, however, the progress toward Hektor's death is articulated in terms of *Priam*'s experience of Achilles, as we see in the following two passages:

> ἑστήκει δ' ὃ γέρων Πρίαμος θείου ἐπὶ πύργου,
> ἐς δ' ἐνόησ' Ἀχιλῆα πελώριον· αὐτὰρ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ
> Τρῶες ἄφαρ κλονέοντο πεφυζότες ...
>
> *Iliad* 21.526–528

> And aged Priam stood upon the divinely-built tower,
> and noticed huge Achilles: before him
> the Trojans, put to flight, rushed wildly.

> τὸν δ' ὃ γέρων Πρίαμος πρῶτος ἴδεν ὀφθαλμοῖσι
> παμφαίνονθ' ὥς τ' ἀστέρ' ἐπεσσύμενον πεδίοιο,
> ὅς ῥά τ' ὀπώρης εἶσιν, ἀρίζηλοι δέ οἱ αὐγαὶ
> φαίνονται πολλοῖσι μετ' ἀστράσι νυκτὸς ἀμολγῷ
> . . . . . .
> ὣς τοῦ χαλκὸς ἔλαμπε περὶ στήθεσσι θέοντος.
>
> *Iliad* 22.25–28, 32

> Aged Priam first saw him [Achilles] with his eyes,
> shining as he sped over the plain like the star
> that rises in late summer, and its bright rays
> are conspicuous among the many stars in the dark of night
> . . . . . .
> Just so did the bronze about his chest flash as he ran.

In the first of these passages, the king singles out Achilles from the wall: Achilles occupies the visual center of attention, the Trojans, the periphery. More strikingly, in the second passage, from the beginning of Book 22, Priam's vision of Achilles is likened to the vision of the evening rising of Sirius, the Dog-Star.[20]

[20] On the narratological impact of the simile, see de Jong 2004:126; on its architectonic function in terms of signaling "long-range narrative design," see Moulton 1974:26. The suggestion of this long-range design can be discerned already in the words with which Priam concludes his involvement in the events of Book 3 (an involvement that began with the *Teikhoskopia*): "Never will I endure to see with my eyes my dear son engaged in combat with Menelaos, beloved of Ares" (3.306–307; note the redundancy of ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖσι ὁρᾶσθαι).

The reason for this emphasis on Priam's visual experience becomes clear when we situate these passages in the context of the overall trajectory of the Iliadic narrative. This resonant simile and, more generally, the emphasis on the fixture of Priam's gaze on Achilles look forward to the climactic visual experience of the poem, the reciprocal gaze of Priam and Achilles that caps the scene of Hektor's ransom in Book 24:

> ὡς δ' ὅτ' ἂν ἄνδρ' ἄτη πυκινὴ λάβῃ, ὅς τ' ἐνὶ πάτρῃ
> φῶτα κατακτείνας ἄλλων ἐξίκετο δῆμον
> ἀνδρὸς ἐς ἀφνειοῦ, θάμβος δ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντας,
> ὣς Ἀχιλεὺς θάμβησεν ἰδὼν Πρίαμον θεοειδέα.
> θάμβησαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι, ἐς ἀλλήλους δὲ ἴδοντο.
>
> *Iliad* 24.480–484
>
> As when overwhelming derangement takes hold of a man who,
> having killed another in his own land, comes to a foreign country,
> to the house of a rich man, and wonder grips those who behold him:
> so Achilles wondered as he gazed at godlike Priam;
> the others wondered, too, and they looked at each other.

This moment of intense propositional visualization concludes one of the poem's highest emotional peaks as well as the principal narrative arc.

A masterpiece of late-sixth-century Athenian art, the famous hydria (water jar) in Boston's Museum of Fine Arts depicting the dragging of Hektor's corpse (MFA 63.473), may attest to the impact this architectural device had on early audiences. By an artful combination of pictorial motifs, the painter has integrated into a single image several distinct moments in the plot of the *Iliad*: Achilles' initial disfiguring of the corpse (22.395ff.), the dragging of the body around the tomb of Patroklos (24.12–18), and the goddess Iris' mission to bring about the ransoming of Hektor's remains (24.159ff.).[21] These three narrative moments are synchronized, so to speak, by the visual engagement of the figures. Priam and Achilles, both painted with very prominent eyes, stare intently at each other while Iris, approaching from the right and balanced by the figure of Hekabe on the left, gazes along the same line of sight toward the ensemble. Hektor seems almost completely unnoticed; the scene's dramatic intensity derives from the ricocheting glances that originate with Priam at the far left of the image but that never touch his son. In the words of Emily Vermeule, "the painter forces the parents … to stare into the eyes of the enemy who had just killed their son

[21] For a sensitive description of the scene and the various motifs the painter has employed to capture these various moments in the plot, see Vermeule 1965:40–47.

and they do not even see the head of dead Hektor as it passes along the ground at their feet."[22] The pointed use of the figures' interlocking gazes to coordinate this synopsis of the *Iliad*'s last books recalls the way that Priam's sighting of Achilles articulates the Iliadic narrative.[23]

At the level of pragmatic visuality, Fjuljanin's techniques reinforce the idea that the performance of epic poetry ought to be understood as a process of mediating between past and present. In his investigations of the "immediacy" effect of the Homeric reenactment of the past, Egbert Bakker has demonstrated the many ways in which the Homeric performer may use the resources of language to bring it about that "the mountain comes to Mohammed"—that is, to bring the past into the present of performance.[24] Among the linguistic resources useful in this regard, Bakker includes the particle *ara* and the aorist tense, both of which are employed in the following example to render particularly vivid Penelope's retrieval of a weapon that plays a crucial role in the plot[25]:

> ἡ δ' ἄρ' ἐφ' ὑψηλῆς σανίδος βῆ· ἔνθα δὲ χηλοὶ
> ἕστασαν, ἐν δ' ἄρα τῇσι θυώδεα εἵματ' ἔκειτο.
> ἔνθεν ὀρεξαμένη ἀπὸ πασσάλου αἴνυτο τόξον
> αὐτῷ γωρυτῷ, ὅς οἱ περίκειτο φαεινός.
>
> *Odyssey* 21.51–54

> She went up to the raised platform: there stood
> the chests in which fragrant clothing was kept.
> Then, stretching out her hand, she lifted from its peg the bow
> along with the gleaming case that enclosed it.

Fjuljanin "presents" a similar moment—the retrieval and disabling of Miloš's rifle by Anđelija, another of Halil's helpers—with an even more explicit token of immediacy:

[22] Vermeule 1965:44.

[23] Vermeule notes (1965:44) that the painter, in adapting the conventions of departure scenes, has put Priam and Hekabe in the position normally occupied by the departing warrior's parents. This surprising arrangement may be an attempt to capture graphically the analogical relationship between Priam and Peleus, which plays an important role in the ransoming of Hektor's corpse. Immediately after they have exchanged their reciprocal looks of wonder, Priam begins his plea to Achilles: "Remember your father" (μνῆσαι πατρὸς σοῖο, 24.486). A similar emphasis on the reciprocal gaze of Priam and Achilles can be found in the depiction of the ransom of Hektor on an amphora attributed to the Rycroft Painter (Toledo 1972.54).

[24] Bakker 2005:156.

[25] On "Mohammed and the Mountain," see Bakker 2005:154–176. For Bakker's inclusion of ἄρα among the linguistic devices that foster immediacy, see Bakker 1993:16–25; 2005:97–100. For more on ἄρα, see Bonifazi, Drummen, and de Kreij 2016:II.4§§38–41, §§50–53; II.5§§51–62; III.2§96; IV.4§§171–172; II.3§§65–67; II.5§§51–62; IV.4§§169–170.

pa dofati brešku granajliju
evo brešku vinom natoćila

PN 662, ll. 857–858

Then she took his engraved rifle;
here [you are], she filled the rifle with wine

The deictic marker *evo* "here" is a compressed version of a "presentation formula," a device that enables Bosniac epic singers to summon events linguistically before their audience.[26] Elsewhere in the song, a similar effect is achieved by means of the deictic marker *sad(e)* "now."[27]

Even though Homeric narrative does not make use of spatial or temporal markers that are explicitly tied to the "here and now" of performance, we may observe the use of linguistic strategies that appear consciously designed to bridge the gap between past event and present telling. Some of these involve the use of lexical items other than those noted by Bakker to heighten the vividness and immediacy of the narrative. In the following passage, for example, the collocation καὶ δή singles out a visual and temporal zooming in on a new detail:[28]

ἦ τοι ὁ καλὸν ἄλεισον ἀναιρήσεσθαι ἔμελλε,
χρύσεον ἄμφωτον, καὶ δὴ μετὰ χερσὶν ἐνώμα
. . . . . .
τὸν δ' Ὀδυσεὺς κατὰ λαιμὸν ἐπισχόμενος βάλεν ἰῷ

Odyssey 22.9–10, 15

He [Antinoos] was just about to raise a beautiful cup,
golden, with two handles, and now he was holding it in his hands
. . . . . .
But Odysseus, aiming for the throat, shot him with an arrow

[26] For presentation formulas, see Elmer 2009. An uncompressed version of the formula in PN 662 is quoted below.

[27] In lines 774 and 780, for example, *sad(e)* brings Ruža's actions into proximity with the present time of the performance, even though the verb tense is past.

[28] In tragedy, καὶ δή frequently marks the entry of an actor—obviously a visually remarkable event. See van Erp Taalman Kip 2009, which argues that καὶ δή marks an expected new entry, while the cognate collocation καὶ μήν is used for an unexpected new entry. Καὶ μήν is used already in Homer to mark unexpected new entries (cf. *Odyssey* 11.582 and 593, where Tantalus and Sisyphus appear to Odysseus' sight in the Underworld). Καὶ δή—mostly uttered by embedded narrators—has visual relevance at *Odyssey* 10.30 and 13.169, for example. Others have commented on the visual relevance of δή alone: see Denniston 1954:203 and 250 (the latter on καὶ δή); Ophuijsen (1993:141) on the visual value of δή in Plato's *Phaedo*; Bakker 1997:78–79 on δή in Homer. For more on καὶ δή, see Bonifazi, Drummen, and de Kreij 2016:III.4§§51–5; IV.2§101; IV.2§100; IV.3§80; IV.5§83.

This detail is not irrelevant: it provides a note of intense pathos in anticipation of the upcoming act of violence and so contributes directly to the emotional immediacy of the event. Even more striking is the expressive potential of the grammatically-acknowledged ambiguity in the frame of reference of the deictic markers αὐτοῦ, αὖθι, αὐτόθι, etc. Words of this class can have both proximal ("here," "now") and distal ("there," "then") reference. We posit a deliberate exploitation of this ambiguity in cases in which the "there and then" potentially merges with the "here and now" of the performance, as in the following passage:

> μνηστῆρες δ' ἀκάχοντο κατήφησάν τ' ἐνὶ θυμῷ,
> ἐκ δ' ἦλθον μεγάροιο παρὲκ μέγα τειχίον αὐλῆς,
> αὐτοῦ δὲ προπάροιθε θυράων ἑδριόωντο.
>
> *Odyssey* 16.342–344

> But the suitors felt distressed and confounded in their hearts,
> and they went out from the hall beyond the great wall of the
> courtyard,
> and there/here, before the gate, they sat in council.

In his translation of this passage, Richmond Lattimore renders the αὐτοῦ of the last line as "there."[29] His rendering reflects a very common (perhaps "default") tendency to distance narrated events from the *hic et nunc* of their telling. We suggest that the Greek is actually more elusive, and therefore more open to an immediacy-oriented reading.[30]

5. Divergences

This kind of studied ambiguity, however, is still a very far cry from the level of explicit involvement in the performance setting on display in Fjuljanin's text. Fjuljanin establishes a direct relationship between himself, the events of his narrative, and his audience, as we can see from his use of the full version of the "presentation formula":

> kad evo ti Arnautovića
>
> PN 662, l. 150

> When, here you are, the Albanian's son.

[29] Lattimore 1967: "And there in front of the palace gates they held an assembly" (249).

[30] On the visual and narrative functions of *au-* particles and adverbs in ancient Greek, see Bonifazi 2008 and 2012:185–292.

The address to the listener that is implicit in the deictic marker *evo* "here" becomes explicit when the formula is expanded to include the second-person pronoun *ti* (word for word, *kad evo ti* translates as "when here for you"). Fjuljanin also makes use of the functionally parallel formula *a da vidiš* (roughly, "you should have seen"), in which the second-person verb again makes explicit reference to the listener. These devices represent a widespread technique in Fjuljanin's tradition for foregrounding new visual steps in the narrative. Audience address is, in fact, a prominent feature of very many performance traditions, so that its complete absence from the Homeric poems is justly cause for surprise. Although Homeric narrative has a variety of techniques for singling out characters and details and otherwise directing the audience's mental vision, the poems do not make use of this most obvious and perhaps easiest way to achieve that goal.

A similar point may be made with regard to the metanarrative comments such as:

> e kako se zekan nagrdijo
>
> PN 662, l. 155
>
> Hey, how the horse had been disfigured!

The metanarrative comment in this case engages not only the audience's attention but also, more particularly, their mind's eye by introducing a visual description (of the horse's haggard appearance). The Homeric epics, by contrast, do not include comments like these. The question is: why? We might speculate that some explicit reference to the performer-audience relationship—some form of "back-channeling"—*was,* in fact, verbalized at a certain stage in the development of Homeric poetry, but that such references were screened out of the text in the process of textualization, as the written text gradually became more and more independent of a particular performance.[31] At the same time, it must be stressed that previously undetected aspects of the Homeric strategies for conveying vividness continue to be discovered, and that scholars' understanding of Homeric visuality will necessarily continue to evolve—perhaps so as to encompass precisely those features that appear on the surface to be absent. This paper is offered as a contribution to this evolving understanding.

[31] Luka Marjanović, editor of an important collection of Bosniac epics, noted a suggestive phenomenon among his informants, who sometimes introduced into their sung verses a hypermetrical second-person pronoun (the dative *ti* "for you": see Marjanović 1898:liv). This form of listener address, essentially a highly compressed presentation formula, was not used when the performers were merely reciting their texts (presumably so that Marjanović could transcribe them).

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