

THE JUDGMENT OF ZEUS

In the *Iliad* Zeus twice consults his golden scales. During the battle between the Achaeans and Trojans at the beginning of Book 8 Zeus lifts up his scales and weighs the keres of the Greeks and Trojans. The keres of the Greeks are the heavier and they settle upon the ground,

καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα,
ἐν δ' ἐτίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο,
Τρώων θ' ἵπποδάμων καὶ Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων·
ἔλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβῶν· ῥέπε δ' αἴσιμον ἦμαρ Ἀχαιῶν.
αἰ μὲν Ἀχαιῶν κῆρες ἐπὶ χθονὶ πουλυβοτείρῃ
ἔξέσθην, Τρώων δὲ πρὸς οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἄερθεν (Il. 8. 69 ff.)

Then Zeus "loudly thundered from Ida, and sent the blazing flash among the people of the Achaeans, and they beholding it, were astounded, and pale terror seized upon all." The second instance of the kerostasia in the *Iliad* comes from Book 22, where Zeus weighs the two keres of Achilles and Hector, and the αἴσιμον ἦμαρ of Hector sinks to the ground and goes to Hades,

καὶ τότε δὴ χρύσεια πατὴρ ἐτίταινε τάλαντα,
ἐν δ' ἐτίθει δύο κῆρε τανηλεγέος θανάτοιο,
τὴν μὲν Ἀχιλλῆος, τὴν δ' Ἑκτορος ἵπποδάμοιο,
ἔλκε δὲ μέσσα λαβῶν· ῥέπε δ' Ἑκτορος αἴσιμον ἦμαρ,
ῥῆχετο δ' εἰς Ἀΐδαο, λίπεν δὲ ἐ Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων
(Il. 22. 209 ff.)

This well-known image poses a variety of questions which have not always been asked, let alone fully answered. The question uppermost in the reader's mind concerns the relationship between Zeus' scales and the workings of an impersonal fate in Homer to which in these instances even Zeus appears to submit¹). Next, what dramatic or artistic part do the scales

1) For the most important literature on this point, especially by Welcker and Gruppe, see U. Bianchi, ΔΙΟΣ ΑΙΣΑ (Rome 1953) 77-85 "La Kerostasia", and 79, and 83 n. 1. E. Leitzke, *Moirā und Gottheit im alten*

play in the *Iliad*? Are they, in the hands of Zeus, a significant instrument with the help of which the god only dispenses a special kind of destiny? Connected with these inquiries is the problem of the possible or probable origin of this image of weighing a fate. It is as well to make plain at this point that the present state of our evidence does not allow us to make a conclusive answer to the last question, so that the following discussion will serve as a prolegomenon to a wider issue concerned with the exact usage and significance of the scales in religious contexts. What evidence there is, however, when fully considered, will clear the way to a better understanding of the *kerostasia* in the Homeric context, as well as provide some illuminating information about Greek and non-Greek sources which contributed towards the birth of this concept.

The first question is easily disposed of. The context of the two passages in question, and that in Book 22 in particular, makes it obvious that the outcome of each contest was well known before the actual weighing occurred²). There can be no question that Zeus in these instances is imagined as resorting to an extraneous power of fate; in any case, as Nilsson³) already points out, Zeus does not weigh the fate of a person or group but their *ker*, that is, he determines their weight — the heavier sinks to Hades⁴). The fact that Zeus appears to consult the scales, does not indicate a submission to fate — Zeus must have already known the outcome of the duel between Hector and Achilles. Nilsson (*ibid.*) illustrates this point well. He says, to believe that Zeus is inquiring of the scales the fate of the two heroes, is as untrue as „daß der Kaufmann, der eine Ware oder ein Goldstück wägt, Untertan der Waage ist“.

Any doubts that may remain on this point are dispelled by a consideration of the two other passages in the *Iliad* where the scales of Zeus are mentioned. In Book 16.658 Hector turns to

griech. Epos (Diss. Göttingen 1930) 59, says, „Daß Zeus damit an ein ihm Fremdes gebunden ist, scheint sicher, so viel davon auch wegzudeuten versucht ist, denn die Schwere der Gewichte ist von ihm unabhängig.“ Cf. also G. de Sanctis, *Per la Scienza dell'Antichità* 24, and W. Schadewaldt, *Abb. Sächs. Akad.* 43.6 108 n. 1, both of which are cited by Bianchi, *op. cit.* 83 n. 1.

2) See e. g. *Il.* 8. 33 f.; cf. *Il.* 7. 478; *Il.* 22. 5; 39 f. — Achilles is superior cf. 20. 434; 22. 158 — 175 ff.

3) *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft* 22 (1923/24) 389 n. 3 = *Opuscula Selecta* (Lund 1951) 1. 390 n. 46.

4) Cf. also E. Ehnmark, *The Idea of God in Homer* (Uppsala 1935) 78.

flight, because he “knows the scales of Zeus” — γνῶ γὰρ Διὸς ἱρὰ τάλαντα; and in Book 19.223 f. Odysseus says that when Zeus, the steward of battle — ταμίης πολέμοιο —, inclines his scales, then there “is a harvest that is all cutting down, no storing up” (Monro’s translation). Here in the last example Zeus himself inclines his scales and brings destruction to men, while the Διὸς τάλαντα in 16 seem to be little more than the “will of Zeus”⁵), and in sense this expression does not differ from the Διὸς βουλή (e.g. *Il.* 1. 5) and even the Διὸς αἴσα (*Il.* 9. 608; *Od.* 9. 52).

Zeus, in fact, is not quizzing an absolute fate. The scales in Book 22 and 8 are not a part of a concept of fate guided by the gods or an impersonal power — they have nothing to do with fate; but since the result of the weighing and the duel in Book 22 could be anticipated before either actually occurred, the kerostasia serves no real useful purpose at all beyond momentarily shifting the scene of action from the human level to that of the gods⁶) and of dramatically introducing one of the vital parts of the story of the *Iliad*: the death of Hector. It is quite wrong, therefore, to discover in this image of weighing a deeper significance than the context will bear⁷).

The second and third questions raise more complex problems which involve an evaluation of the dramatic import of the kerostasia, as well as an appreciation of both the exact significance of the keres placed in each scale, and the character of Zeus’ office discharged in this way. To begin with, of the two kerostasia passages the one in Book 8 contains some obvious difficulties: the two lines 73 f. show an intolerable juxtaposition of plural, dual, plural — αἱ μὲν . . . κῆρες . . . ἔξέσθην,

5) Cf. schol. A. D. on *Il.* 8. 69. See also P. C. Bonaventura Pistorio, *Fato e Divinità nel Mondo Greco* (Palermo 1954) 63.

6) Cf. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 80.

7) O. Gruppe, *Griechische Mythologie und Religionsgeschichte* (München 1906) 1. 989, for instance, reads too much into this passage when he maintains that Zeus makes use of his scales as an oracle — on this view of the scales of Zeus = a means of divination, see below — in order to avoid that his personal inclinations could bring him into conflict with fate. Likewise, E. Eberhard, *Das Schicksal als poetische Idee bei Homer* (Paderborn 1923) 28-29, goes too far in claiming that the motif of the scales justifies Zeus’ forsaking a hero dear to him. W. C. Greene, *Moirā — Fate, Good and Evil in Greek Thought* (Harvard 1948) 16 — cf. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 83 n. 1 — is nearer the mark in calling the kerostasia a means of dramatic technique.

Τρώων δὲ . . . ἄεϋθεν — which cannot be paralleled in Homer⁸), and these two lines therefore were athetized by Aristarchus. Furthermore, the use of two keres for the Achaeans and Trojans is distinctly clumsy in this image, and it suggests, together with the inappropriately used terms here, a less skilful use of a traditional theme⁹), rather than a conscious development of 22, in such a way that the fate of a single hero is extended to cover a whole army¹⁰). The weighing of a single hero's fate may be assumed to represent the older notion in Homer on which the kerostasia in Book 8 is modelled; and therefore we may confine the following investigations to the former passage.

Now, when Hector and Achilles had circled Troy three times and come upon the Springs a fourth time (*Il.* 22. 208), a critical point is reached in the narrative at which a decision is imminent; then the progress of action is delayed while the scene moves to Olympus, in order perhaps to heighten the tension contained in the events leading up to Hector's death — that is all. There is no question here of the scales' symbolising the equilibrium of the *anceps proelium* or ἴση μάχη before one of the contestants proves superior¹¹). Nor is there an *impasse* or "equality of balance between two contending parties"¹²), because in Books 8 and 22 the defeat of the Greeks and the death of Hector are inevitable before the kerostasia takes place. If the poet of these two passages intended to describe an

8) *Od.* 13. 109 is no exception.

9) Cf. U. v. Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Die Ilias und Homer* (Berlin 1916) 43; W. Leaf, *The Iliad* (repr. of second ed. Amsterdam 1960) on *Il.* 8. 73 f.; G. de Sanctis, *Storia dei Greci, dalle Origini alla Fine del Secolo V* (Firenze 1940) 1. 187; Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 59; E. Wüst, "Psychostasie" RE 23. 2. 1442, who also quotes further literature concerning this point. For a different opinion, see G. Bjoerck, "Die Schicksalswaage", *Erano* 43 (1945) 59.

10) For this belief see Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 453—454, where he says that the keres in the Book 8 passage have achieved a developed sense of „Todesdämonen“, that is, they have been personified.

11) See Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 79, "(questa tensione) è l'equilibrarsi instabile delle sorti dell'*anceps proelium*, dell' ἴσα μάχη, che attende di essere rotto con il tracollare, *ictu oculi*, di una delle due parti." For F. G. Welcker's related view — though rejected by Bianchi — that the motif of the scales is symbolic of the tension in the mind of Zeus at the moment of decision, see *Griechische Götterlehre* (Göttingen 1857) 2. 190.

12) R. B. Onians, *The Origins of European Thought*² (Cambridge 1954) 397.

equilibrium or balance of affairs, then he made use of the scales of Zeus in a radically different manner in *Il.* 16.658 and 19.223.

Consider, too, that such tension and balance in Homer are normally expressed in other ways, which leave no doubt about their true significance. The verbs commonly used to describe such a balance are τανύω and τείνω. Thus in *Il.* 11.336 we read of a stretching or tightening of an equal battle, ἔνθα σφιν κατὰ ἴσα μάχην ἐτάνυσσε Κρονίων. With this compare *Il.* 14.389, δὴ ῥα τότε αἰνοτάτην ἔριδα πτολέμοιο τάνυσσαν, and *Il.* 16.662, εὖτ' ἔριδα κρατερὴν ἐτάνυσσε Κρονίων. The exact force of this τανύω and its association with the craftsman are well brought out in the simile in *Il.* 17.389 ff. Once τανύω is used together with πείραρ to express the tension of a combat (*Il.* 13.358 ff.),

τοὶ δ' ἔριδος κρατερῆς καὶ ὁμοίου πτολέμοιο
πείραρ ἐπαλλάξαντες ἐπ' ἀμφοτέροισι τάνυσσαν,
ἄρρηκτόν τε ἄλυτόν τε¹³).

In *Il.* 15.410 ff. the poet, taking another example from the world of the craftsman, compares a battle which is "extended equally" (ἐπὶ ἴσα μάχῃ τέτατο πτόλεμός τε) with the stretched line (στάθμη) used by a carpenter to align the timbers of a ship.

Of interest in this connexion is another passage which reads in full,

ἀλλ' ἔχον, ὥς τε τάλαντα γυνὴ χερνῆτις ἀληθῆς,
ἦτε σταθμὸν ἔχουσα καὶ εἴριον ἀμφὶς ἀνέλκει
ἰσάζουσ', ἵνα παισὶν ἀεικέα μισθὸν ἄρῃται·
ὥς μὲν τῶν ἐπὶ ἴσα μάχῃ τέτατο πτόλεμός τε

(*Il.* 12.433 ff.).

Here an equally balanced — suspended — battle is compared with another scene from the world of the craftsman; in this instance with a woman who works wool for hire. The conscientious (ἀληθῆς) handworker (χερνῆτις) takes up her scales and measures out an exact amount of wool which will balance with a set weight (σταθμόν), so that she may earn her miserable pay for her children. Bianchi cites this passage, together with *Il.* 15.410 ff., as proof that this type of expression, describing

13) On the meaning of πείραρ in this context in particular, see Leaf, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) on *Il.* 7.102; Leitzke, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 40—41; and especially Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 310—12.

a balance in the fortunes of war in Homer, formed the basis from which the motif of the kerostasia was developed¹⁴). The only common point, however, shared alike by *Il.* 12. 433 ff. and the kerostasia scenes in Books 8 and 22 is the use of scales. The woman in the last example is a wool-worker who is given an exact amount — *pensum* — of wool to spin in one day. This amount — the *talasiā*¹⁵) — she discovers by equalizing (ισάζουσα) the wool with an exact weight (σταθμόν); the balance then achieved is like that of the ἴση μάχη in Book 12 before Zeus gives victory to Hector (*Il.* 12. 437). The poet here presents us, therefore, with an image essentially different from that of the kerostasia in Book 22, where — apart from the foreknowledge of Zeus and of the Homeric audience — there is no thought of equalizing two weights to show the tension of two forces in balance, but of determining, or better, of judging two weights in relation to one another and not against an absolute standard. This is a major point that will come up again below, when we have to consider earlier concepts which may have served as models for Homer's kerostasia¹⁶).

14) Bianchi, op. cit. (see n. 1) 78—79.

15) For this significance of *ταλασία* (ta-ra-si-ja) on Mycenaean Linear B tablets, see E. L. Bennett, *The Mycenaean Tablets 2*, *Trans. Americ. Philol. Soc.* 48. 1 (Philadelphia 1958) 110; cf. M. Ventris-J. Chadwick, *Docs. in Mycen. Grk.* (Cambridge 1956) 352. For the classical use of *ταλασία* = *ταλασιουργία* see Xenoph. *Mem.* 3. 9. 11; *Oecon.* 7. 41, and *L&Sc. Jones s. v.*

16) Of interest here is an expression used by Nestor in Book 10. 173. Nestor tells Diomedes that a great necessity is pressing the Achaeans, and that "it stands upon the edge of a razor with all, whether the Achaeans will perish or be saved", γυν γὰρ δὴ πάντεσσιν ἐπὶ ξυροῦ ἴσταται ἀκμῆς etc. This idea of a razor's edge balancing the outcome of an event becomes a common proverbial expression in Greek literature in e.g. Theognis 557; Simonides 99; *Herod.* 6. 11; Aeschyl. *Choeph.* 883; Soph. *Antig.* 996; Eur. *Her.* 630, and it calls to mind the personified Kairos (not before the fifth cent. B. C.) with the attributes of scales and razor who presumably symbolises the equilibrium of chance or of a contest before the final decision. This Kairos sometimes was represented as balancing his scales on the edge of a razor, see A. B. Cook, *Zeus* (Cambridge 1925) 2 fig. 799 and 2. 2 Append. A. 859—61. Notwithstanding his late personification, the scales and razor of Kairos are truly expressive of an older concept which imaginatively describes a fine balance of affairs immediately preceding victory or defeat; and it is not surprising, therefore, that the same attributes are found with Nike — F. Studniczka, *Die Siegesgöttin* (Leipzig 1898) 20 Pl. 4; 23; 26—27 — and with Nemesis — H. Posnansky, *Nemesis und Adrasteia* (Breslau 1890) 113. The scales of Zeus have nothing in common with this concept.

The *keres* which Zeus places in the scales are synonymous with *αἰσιμον ἦμαρ* (*Il.* 22. 212), and they refer to the death of the heroes¹⁷). These *keres* have been interpreted differently, because the *kerostasia* has come to be compared and identified with the known image of the weighing of souls or *eidola* in art and literature¹⁸). Some interpretations translate these *keres* by 'lots' or 'lots of death' ('Todeslose')¹⁹). Others render them as 'dynamic agencies of fate' in nature similar to the Homeric *daimon*²⁰), or as 'Todesdämonen'²¹), or even as the equivalent of *ψυχαι*²²).

Before any special significance can be given to the *keres* placed in the scales by Zeus, it has to be established that in these instances the *keres* perform functions which are not found elsewhere. A brief examination of the usage of *κῆρ*, *κῆρες* in Homer, however, shows that this is not so. The only novelty consists in the manner in which the *keres*, as active agents or more commonly as passive lots, are pictured as performing their offices. In the *Iliad* *ker* is synonymous with death, commonly inflicted by human agents²³) and sometimes

17) Virgil in a passage modelled on Homer — *Aen.* 12. 725 ff. — renders *κῆρ* by *fatum* and *αἰσιμον ἦμαρ* by *letum*.

18) For the *psychostasia* see below.

19) See the editions of the *Iliad ad loc.* of van Leeuwen and Ameis-Hentze; Malten, "Ker" RE Suppl. 4. 895—96; Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 452—54; Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 79 — "sorti mortali".

20) Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 408.

21) Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 452—54, sees this difference between the *kerostasia* in 8 and in 22. In the latter passage the *ker* of each hero represents his "Todeslos", but in Book 8 the many *keres* of an army stand for the "Todesdämonen": those of the Greeks settle on the ground while the *keres* of the Trojans "fly away". As was noticed above, however, the *kerostasia* in Book 8 was inappropriately modelled on the weighing scene of Hector and Achilles in 22. Furthermore, lines 8. 73 (in which alone the *keres* appear in the plural) and 74 have been rejected, so that we must assume the poet here to have imagined one *ker* as representing a whole army. This *ker* could not be a "Todesdämon", especially since the Greek army here only suffers a temporary set back. In any case, there is no mention in the text of a flying away of a *ker* or the *keres*.

22) This is still maintained by W. Pötscher, "Moirā, Themis und τύχη im hom. Denken", *Wiener Studien* 78 (1960) 18, who says that the *keres* in the weighing scenes are, "die in den Bereich der Ker hineingezogenen Seelen".

23) E. g. *Il.* 2. 352: the Greeks bring death to Troy. Cf. *Il.* 5. 652 = 11. 443.

by gods²⁴), once by animals²⁵), and often by an undefined agent²⁶), who is usually said to threaten a death which a person avoids or escapes in the heat of battle; but here too the source may often be gathered from the context — a person escapes the onslaught of an enemy²⁷). In the majority of cases *keres* in the plural = 'forms of death' equally lack any personality²⁸). They simply represent the many ways — ever present in time of war — in which a man might die²⁹), and which at a given time may be warded off by a god from a favoured mortal³⁰). In the *Odyssey* *κῆρ* is used along the same lines, except that now it is more often placed together with *θάνατος* or *φόνος* or both³¹), and that the singular and plural numbers are often used without any noticeable distinction³²).

Thus *ker* in Homer is either synonymous with death or closely connected with the idea of death, and this word has nothing in common with any particular concept of fate. The *keres* weighed by Zeus also are immediately connected with

24) *Il.* 18. 115 = 22. 365.

25) *Il.* 3. 6.

26) E. g. *Il.* 16. 47.

27) See *Il.* 3. 32 = 11. 585 = 13. 566 = 596 = 648 = 14. 408 = 16. 817; 3. 360 = 7. 254; 5. 22 etc. For the figurative sense of *ker* in *Il.* 3. 454 and particularly in *Il.* 9. 378, see Ed. Schwyzer, *Glotta* 12 (1918) 17—18, cited by E. Risch, *Wortbildung der hom. Sprache* (Untersuch. z. Indogerm. Sprach- und Kult. Wiss.) (Berlin und Leipzig 1937) 2. n. 1. For a different view see F. Bechtel, *Lexilogus ad Homerum* (Halle 1914) 187; Leitzke, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 31.

28) Cf. C. F. v. Naegelsbach, *Homerische Theologie*² (Nürnberg 1884) 147—48, who aptly renders *keres* by "Todesarten". The poetic personification of *Ker*, *Eris* and *Kydoimos* in the description of Achilles' shield — *Il.* 18. 535 — is a unique exception.

29) See particularly *Il.* 12. 326.

30) E. g. *Il.* 4. 11; 12. 402; 21. 548; and a passage of especial interest to our discussion: 22. 202.

31) *φόνος* or *θάνατος* or both are used with *κῆρ* in the singular on 12 out of 19 occasions: *Od.* 2. 165; 283; 3. 242; 4. 273=8. 513; 12. 157; 15. 275; 16. 169; 17. 82; 22. 14; 24. 127; 414. The other instances of *κῆρ* are, *Od.* 4. 502; 15. 235; 17. 500; 18. 155; 22. 330; 363=382. All these passages — except *Od.* 17. 500 — concern the avoiding, escaping of death, and occur with the various forms of (*ἐκ*)*φεύγειν*, *ἀλυσκάνειν*.

32) The plural in the majority of cases — six out of eight — occurs in the formula *θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξας* (*ἀλύξει*, *ἀλύξη*, *ἀλυξεν*), *Od.* 2. 352; 5. 387; 17. 547; 19. 558; 22. 66; 23. 332. The other instances are, *Od.* 2. 3. 6: Telemachus will let loose death at the suitors; *Od.* 4. 512: *ἔκφυγε κῆρας*, Agamemnon avoided death. Cf. this form with those used with the singular of *κῆρ* in the previous note.

death, as was noticed by the synonymous use of *ἄλσιμον ἦμαρ*. It is possible, however, to find even closer parallels in Homer to the function of the *keres* in the scales. *Ker*, *keres* in Homer come to assume functions as agents which are better known from *moira*. Thus the *keres* in *Il.* 2. 834 = 11. 332 are said to lead the sons of Merops to their death³³). Achilles knows from his mother — *Il.* 9. 410 f. — that he has a choice of two *keres* which lead him to death: one of a short life of glory, and the other of an uneventful but long life at home, *μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι . . . | διχθαδίας κήρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλοσδε*. In *Il.* 23. 78 f. *ker* is equivalent to the realm of death that holds a person who has died: the *ker* which was his lot at birth now engulfs Patroclus, *ἀλλ' ἐμὲ μὲν κήρ | ἀμφέχανε συγεργή, ἦ περ λάχε γεινόμενόν περ*. Most illuminating for our purpose is an example from the *Odyssey* where the *keres* are pictured as bearing their victim off to Hades, *ἀλλ' ἦ τοι τὸν κήρες ἔβαν θανάτοιο φέρουσαι | εἰς Ἄϊδαο δόμους* (*Od.* 14. 207 f.).

These *keres* then are similar to the *ker* and *ἄλσιμον ἦμαρ* which weigh down Hector's scale³⁴) and go into Hades. It is not quite clear in the *kerostasia* scene, however, whether the *keres* in the balance are meant to be active agents or passive lots, since one may argue in favour of either belief. Hector's *ker* may be the equivalent of the *keres* which lead the sons of Merops to their death (see above), or of that *ker* which is pictured as conquering, overcoming her victim³⁵). On the other hand it is reasonable to argue that Hector's and Achilles' *keres* are the same as the passive, impersonal lot of death which is certain for a mortal at birth³⁶). Again, when Zeus is pictured as holding the scales, it is not immediately certain whether he in this way is leaving an entirely free hand to an active *ker* who is to take her victim to Hades, or whether Hector's *ker* is merely the passive lot of death which, ready for the hero, sinks

33) Cf. *Il.* 2. 302. Compare this function of the *keres* with *Il.* 5. 613f.: *μοῖρα ἦγε, Il.* 13. 602: *τὸν δ' ἔγε μοῖρα κακή* etc. Mr. Hainsworth kindly added to my argument the point that the parallelism between *θάνατος* και *μοῖρα κραταιή* and *θάνατον* και *κήρα μέλαιναν* — a declension — confirms the sense of *κήρ*.

34) For „heavy“ *keres* see *Il.* 21. 548. Some mss., however, read *χετρας* here for *κήρας*: see Leaf, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) *ad loc.*

35) See e. g. *Od.* 3. 410=6. 11; *Od.* 11. 171=398.

36) Apart from *Il.* 23. 78f., see *Il.* 12. 326f. and cf. the similar use of *μοῖρα* in *Od.* 24. 28f.

below. Although a certain mixture of both types of *keres* is felt to exist in this image, the idea of *ker* = 'Todeslos' is predominant here, because, as mentioned above, Zeus knows that Hector will succumb to his superior opponent. As *ταμίης πολέμοιο*³⁷⁾ the supreme god judges Hector's death to be at hand. Furthermore, it is quite evident from all four passages in which Zeus' balance is mentioned that the latter is the instrument solely working the bidding of Zeus no matter what may be placed in each individual scale. Thus the *keres* of Hector and Achilles and, in a developed but less applicable sense, those of the Greek and Trojan armies in Book 8 simply represent the death of a contestant which Zeus shows or judges to be ready.

This way of showing the presence of someone's death does not imply that in Homeric belief each person at birth is assigned a definite and predetermined span of life at the end of which his lot of death, or his *ker* or even *moira* has accumulated a certain weight to be discovered by the golden scales of Zeus³⁸⁾. Passages like *Il.* 23. 78 f.; 9. 411; and *Od.* 24. 28 f. do not prove the existence of such a belief. When Patroclus says that he is engulfed by the lot of death which was given him at birth, he tells us no more than that each mortal born must die — at some time³⁹⁾, and any attempt to break this law is intolerable⁴⁰⁾. The *ker* in the weighing scene, as elsewhere in the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, quite simply signifies the death of a person which Zeus, or for that matter the other gods, inflict personally or bring about through human agency, and this is a fact well known to the Homeric hero as we see Achilles' speech to his mother in *Il.* 18. 115 f.,

κῆρα δ' ἐγὼ τότε δέξομαι, ὁππότε κεν δῆ
 Ζεὺς ἐθέλη τελέσαι ἧδ' ἀθάνατοι θεοὶ ἄλλοι.

Zeus as supreme arbiter of events and especially as *ταμίης πολέμοιο* decides war and peace⁴¹⁾, and he plans evil or actually gives death or destruction to individuals, whole cities and armies⁴²⁾. When Zeus takes up his scales he is only con-

37) Cf. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 81 n. 2; 82.

38) This idea is implied as belonging to Homeric religion by Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 399; and by Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 82.

39) Cf. *Il.* 12. 326f.; *Il.* 18. 117.

40) See *Il.* 16. 441f. = 22. 179f.

41) See e. g. *Il.* 4. 82ff.

42) See e. g. *Il.* 3. 365 = *Od.* 20. 201: Ζεῦ πάτερ, οὐ τις σεῖο θεῶν ὀλοώτερος ἄλλος. *Il.* 22. 60; *Od.* 3. 88; *Od.* 11. 560; *Od.* 24. 96; *Il.* 7. 70: Zeus

cerned with giving destruction: in *Il.* 16. 658 Hector knows Zeus' scales that is, he is in fear of death because the god was still driving on Patroclus (11.653 ff.) and had instilled terror (l. 656) in Hector's heart. In Book 19 Zeus inclines his scales that is, he wreaks destruction in battle. Thus we must also understand the sinking of the scales in the *kerostasia* passages in Books 8 and 22, as standing for death and destruction. No real balance is implied here, as seen above: the essential point in this image — whenever Zeus makes use of his scales — is that a death or, in a developed form, a defeat is at hand. It is only in this way that we can comprehend the seemingly perverse fact — noticed by some scholars⁴³⁾ — that the heavier side of the scales is also the less desirable one⁴⁴⁾.

All considerations of balance and fate apart, Zeus in Book 22. 209 ff. simply gives Hector his *ker* or death, just as in *Od.* 11. 560 Zeus is said to have given Ajax his *moira* or death. This means to say that in the *kerostasia* scenes not only do we find expressions like *κῆρ* and *αἴσιμον ἦμαρ* used in the ordinary Homeric way, but also Zeus here — and indeed in the other two passages where his scales are mentioned — performs a common function as destroyer and giver of death. The reason why Zeus resorts to the scales in order to inflict death and defeat is not explained, of course: Bianchi⁴⁵⁾ sees in the *kerostasia* scenes a continuation of common Homeric motifs, such as a) the idea of an equilibrium of forces before a final decision, b) the notion of fate as a portion of life, or as individual lot reserved for each hero, and c) the concept of Zeus

determines ill for both Greeks and Trojans; *Il.* 10. 71: Zeus sent evil to Agamemnon and Menelaus at birth; *Il.* 12. 67: Zeus can put all the Greeks to rout; *Il.* 13. 226f.: the destruction of the Greeks is dear to Zeus; *Il.* 19. 273f.: Zeus wished death for many Greeks; *Il.* 21. 216: Z. can grant destruction of all Trojans; *Od.* 3. 152: Z. fashioned evil for the Greeks; *Od.* 9. 554: Z. planned destruction for Odysseus' ships; *Od.* 14. 300; *Od.* 17. 597: Z. should destroy ill disposed Greeks.

43) E. g. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) e. g. 84; Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 398 n. 2; Ehnmark, *op. cit.* (see n. 4) 7; Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 59.

44) The famous passage in Aesch. *Pers.* 345ff. is no help here, because we may reasonably suppose that the heavier *τύχη* is the preferable one. The divine weighing in this scene, although harkening back to Homer's *kerostasia*, is only most generally related to the latter. The three lines read,

ἀλλ' ὅδε δαίμων τις κατέφθειρε στρατὸν
τάλαντα βρισας οὐκ ἰσορρόπῳ τύχῃ.
θεοὶ πόλιν σφῆζουσι Παλλάδος θεᾶς.

45) *Op. cit.* (see n. 1) 81—82.

as the supreme master of human destiny including the fate of death. It was seen above that motifs a) and b) do not fit our passages; but Bianchi is entirely correct in maintaining that outside the use of the scales there is no new unfamiliar thought.

This raises the important question whether the scales of Zeus were merely a picturesque dramatic device to heighten the tension of the audience⁴⁶⁾ at a critical point of the narrative, or whether the Homeric poets in this way intended to evoke a concept of well known and perhaps religious significance. A partial answer to the first alternative is found in the fact that *Il.* 16. 658 and especially 19. 221 ff. are passages of no great dramatic import. On the contrary, and this has at times been pointed out before⁴⁷⁾, these last two passages could suggest that here we are dealing with a concept so well established and of such long standing that a mere allusion to Zeus' scales is enough to convey their exact significance to the Homeric audience. However, before reaching any conclusions on this point, it is as well to bear in mind that Zeus' scales are not the only instrument of destruction or even of giving to man a general fate. In *Il.* 12. 37 and 13. 812 Zeus overcomes the Greeks with his whip, like a charioteer his horses.

Altogether the Homeric poets are fond of drawing on the world of the artisan or craftsman for their vocabulary, in order to describe a general fate or a fate of death that is given by Zeus, or even by other men. Verbs like *τεκταίνομαι* and *τεύχω* are used for building ships (*Il.* 10. 19) or houses (*Il.* 6. 314; cf. 14. 166), as well as for describing an evil or death wrought against a person⁴⁸⁾. Similarly *ὄφαίνω* describes the work of the sail maker on the one hand (*Il.* 6. 456; *Od.* 2. 104), and the trick or ill design 'woven' for a victim on the other⁴⁹⁾. Again, Zeus and the gods in Homer at times are said to spin misery, doom

46) Cf. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 80.

47) See E. Hedén, *Homerische Götterstudien* (Diss. Uppsala 1912) 172—73; Cook, *op. cit.* (see n. 16) 2. 734 n. 3; Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 390 n. 46; Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 59.

48) See *Il.* 10. 19; *Od.* 20. 11. For other examples in Homer, especially with *ἀπτῶ* see B. C. Dietrich, "The Spinning of Fate in Homer", *The Phoenix* 16 (1962) 2. 99 n. 77.

49) *Il.* 6. 187; *Od.* 4. 678. For other examples of this type and for a similar double usage of *ῥάπτω*, see Dietrich, *op. cit.* (see n. 48) 99 n. 78. Also add to this list the use of *πείραρ*, cf. *Od.* 3. 433 and 12. 51 with *Il.* 7. 102 and 6. 143; *Od.* 5. 289.

or a general fate for men ⁵⁰), just like Moira and a personified Aisa ⁵¹). Indeed, it was noticed in another place ⁵²) that although the image of spinning in Homer is primarily a picturesque expression for the workings of fate, one may still discern in this concept the seeds of popular belief. Yet to what extent can one maintain that the same holds true for the scales of Zeus, and that here we do not merely have an example of the Homeric poets' predilection for an imagery derived from the world of the craftsman or from every day life? To say that *Il.* 16. 658 and 19. 221 ff. would be obscure ⁵³) to an audience unless it was well acquainted with an old perhaps religious concept of weighing is not enough. Do we, on the same grounds, have to look for a deeper religious significance in phrases like the whip of Zeus, the fate that lies on the knees of the gods ⁵⁴), or Zeus' jars of good and evil (*Il.* 24. 527 f.)?

In spite of these considerations there is some evidence to suggest that Zeus' scales may not be an Homeric invention, but trace back to a weighing of destinies perhaps, or to a weighing of souls. Greek popular belief is no help in this respect, because we can uncover no proof that the scales or the act of balancing conveyed any particular religious idea. Again, the knowledge (see above) that the ker weighed in the *Iliad* is modelled on and equivalent to ⁵⁵) the active Moira that did hold a definite place in popular imagination cannot help us in this particular inquiry, since Moira in inscriptions or elsewhere is never imagined as weighing anyone's destiny or as being weighed herself ⁵⁶). Also, the use of the scales or the image of weighing in later literature is not of much help, because we are offered

50) *Od.* 4. 208; 16. 64; 1. 17; 3. 208; 8. 579; 11. 139; 20. 196; *Il.* 24. 525.

51) *Il.* 24. 209ff.; 20. 127f.; *Od.* 7. 196ff.

52) Dietrich, *op. cit.* (see n. 48) e. g. 100—101.

53) "Rätselhaft", Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 454. Cf. Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1448.

54) *Il.* 17. 514; 20. 435; *Od.* 1. 267; 400; 16. 129. For Onians' explanation of this expression see *Class. Rev.* 38 (1924) 4—6 and *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 303—309.

55) κῆρας τὰς μοίρας λέγει, schol. Ven. B on *Il.* 22. 209.

56) See A. Mayer, *Moira in griech. Inschriften* (Diss. Gießen 1927) 29, „Die Vorstellung, daß Moira wie andere Schicksals- und Todesgottheiten das Menschenschicksal mit der Waage entscheidet, konnte ich inschriftlich nicht feststellen.“ Zoilus' story — in schol. Townl. on *Il.* 22. 210 — is an obvious scurrilous invention to discredit Homer.

nothing new here and most instances are based in sense on the Homeric passages⁵⁷). In one respect, however, such later scenes in literature as well as in art serve our purpose, because subsequent authors and artists conceive of the scales as an instrument of judgment and indeed of justice, until abstract concepts like *Dikaiosyne*, *Aequitas* and *Justitia* are depicted as mistress of the balance⁵⁸). That the use of a balance in literature implies a judgment is obvious from all but a few examples⁵⁹). Some instances which spring to mind come from the *Hom. Hymn. to Hermes* (l. 324), *δίκης τάλαντα*, Bacchyl. 4. 11 f., *ἰσὸρ ἰροπον ἔχοντα Δίκας τάλαντον*, 16 [17]. 25 f., *Δίκας ῥέπει τά ἰλαντον*. An interesting idea is introduced by Theognis who lets Zeus with his scales judge poverty and wealth for men⁶⁰). Aeschylus speaks (*Agam.* 250) of *δίκαι ἐπιρρέπει*⁶¹). Occasionally the idea of a balancing is conveyed by a single word or phrase⁶²), but generally the idea of a judgment or justice is evident in this image⁶³).

This idea of judgment in the Homeric *kerostasia* and in later scenes would seem to be the one real connecting link

57) Cf. E. Wüst, "Die Seelenwägung in Ägypten und Griechenland", *Archiv f. Religionswissenschaft* 36 (1939) 166.

58) For sources in art and literature, see Cook, *op. cit.* (see n. 16) 2. 734 n. 3; 99 n. 1; Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 60; Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1451. For a similar use of scales in Islamic, Jewish and Christian religion, see Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1453-57. In Christian theology the archangel Michael becomes the wielder of the scales, Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1457-58; cf. Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 60; R. Eisler, *Weltenmantel und Himmelszelt* (München 1910) 1. 267-68 n. 8.

59) Ch. Picard, *Les Religions Préhelléniques (Crète et Mycènes)* (Paris 1948) 290, likes to see in the *τάλαντα* of *Il.* 18. 507 scales of gold connected with the procedure of a court of justice. But this interpretation of *τάλαντα* is hard to prove here.

60) 157 f., *Zeús gárhoi to tálanthon epirrépei álloste állows, ἄλλοτε μὲν πλουτεῖν, ἄλλοτε μηδὲν ἔχειν*. Cf. Zeus distributing good and evil from his jars in *Il.* 24. 527 f. Bjoerck maintains — *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 60 — that Theognis here does not give a true picture ("entgleist") of the Homeric concept.

61) See also *Pers.* 345f. — cf. above n. 44 — and *Suppl.* 822f., *σὸν (Zeus) δ' ἐπίπαν ζυγὸν ἰκαλάντου*. The *Psychostasia* will be mentioned below.

62) E. g. Soph. *Antig.* 1158; Eur. *Hec.* 57f.

63) See still Diotimus in *Anth. Pal.* 6. 267. 3: *τάλαντα δίκης* and Macedonius — *Anth. Pal.* 9. 380. 3f.: *καλανταεὺς πάντα νόμον βίτου*. A number of examples are very close imitations of the Homeric passages and therefore of less interest here. Among these imitations must be counted Quint. Smyrn. 2. 540; Tryphiodorus, *excid. Il.* 506f.; Virg. *Aen.* 12. 725f.

between Homer and the well known weighing during the judgment of the dead in Egyptian religion. Leaf already suggested⁶⁴) that Homer's *kerostasia* ultimately derived from the weighing scene in the Egyptian 'Totengericht'. This theory was more fully worked out by E. Wüst⁶⁵), who attempts to show Homer's direct dependance on Egyptian practice. The Eg. weighing scene has been described by Wüst⁶⁶) and need not be repeated in detail here. Briefly, the dead is depicted as appearing in the room of the two Maat (Truth and Justice) before the judge of the dead. In the centre of the room stands a pair of scales watched by Anubis, while beside him Thoth records the verdict. The object most commonly weighed is the heart of the defendant whose weight is measured against the feather of Maat. If this symbol of truth tips the balance, then the monster Ammat devours the dead. If the two weights are equal — and they always are — the heart is returned to the man who begins a new life of bliss. A cursory comparison of this scene with the Homeric text shows up some fundamental differences. In Egypt the judgment is of a moral nature, in Homer it is not. Contrary to the *kerostasia*, the Egyptian weighing occurs after death, and the heart of the dead is measured against an absolute weight. Again, the Egyptian scenes of the judgment give the impression of an elaborate courtroom scene where we find, apart from the judge (Osiris?), a master of the scales (Anubis), the recorder of the verdict (Thoth)⁶⁷), the executioner (Ammat), and various figures like the personifications of Fortune and Misfortune and the 42 gods of the 42 districts of Egypt who may have acted as advisers or helpers of the defendant. In Homer Zeus performs all these functions himself. It is hardly surprising, therefore, that Wüst found no supporters for his thesis as it stands⁶⁸); and he subsequently

64) *Op. cit.* (see n. 9) on *Il.* 22. 209f. Cf. Cook, *op. cit.* (see n. 16) 2. 734 n. 3, who says that the weighing of souls was common to the Egyptians, Babylonians and Greeks.

65) *Op. cit.* (see n. 57) 162-71. He modifies but retains his views in *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1439-58.

66) In *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1439-41, where all the evidence has been collected.

67) Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 398 is wrong when he says that "the scribe Thoth does the weighing".

68) For the main criticism of Wüst, see Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 58-66; cf. Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 398; Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 84-85 n. 2.

admitted that the Greek *kerostasia* could not have directly descended from the Egyptian practice⁶⁹).

Nonetheless we must recognize a few points — some of which Wüst brings up himself — that show a more than superficial resemblance between the Egyptian and Homeric weighing. Before setting out these, we will have to consider some further evidence outside Homer to show that a practice of weighing what might have been souls obtained in Greek belief. The literary evidence mostly consists of Aeschylus' *Psychostasia* and one scene from the *Aethiopsis*. In art there are extant seven vases — the oldest of which antedate Aeschylus — an Etruscan mirror, and an Etruscan bronze chest⁷⁰) on which a weighing scene is depicted. Aeschylus and the vases have in common the fact that the two heroes whose fate is being decided are not Achilles and Hector, but Achilles and Memnon. They differ in that all art representations of this weighing scene have Hermes as the 'Waagemeister', while Zeus normally is absent, or at best an interested party not directly concerned with the scales. Aeschylus, like Homer, shows Zeus as wielder of the scales. In spite of the intrusion of Memnon and another figure as the master of the scales, the scenes themselves show that we are on common ground with Homer here: it is the lot of death that is being weighed of two heroes who are about to fight in a duel.

Our information about Aeschylus' *Psychostasia* is second hand, deriving from some notices of the scholiasts on *Il.* 22. 209⁷¹), and from a passage in Plutarch⁷²). Therefore we can no longer know the exact form of the weighing scene; but we may assume that the poet modelled himself both on Homer — Zeus as 'Waagemeister' — and on the literary source — probably the *Aethiopsis* (see below) — which suggested the scenes

69) *Op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1441-42; 1445.

70) Collected by F. Studniczka, *Arch. Jahrb.* 26 (1911) 131-33 figs. 54-56, and by E. Lung, *Memnon, Archäologische Studien zur Äthiopsis* (Diss. Bonn 1913) 14-16. For criticism of the famous Boston throne relief — Studniczka, *op. cit.* 146 — see Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 61.

71) Ven. B: κῆρας τὰς μοῖρας λέγει (Homer), οὐ τὰς ψυχὰς, ὡς ἐξεδέξατο φαύλως Αἰσχύλος. Ven. A: ὅτι ἐντεῦθεν ἡ ψυχοστασία Αἰσχύλου πέπλασται, ὡς τοῦ Διὸς τὰς ψυχὰς ἰσάντος, οὐ θανατηφόρους μοῖρας. Cf. schol. Townl.

72) *De aud. poetis* 17 A: τραγωδίαν δ' Αἰσχύλος ὄλην τῷ μύθῳ περιέθηκεν ἐπιγράψας Ψυχοστασίαν καὶ παραστήσας ταῖς πλάστιγξι τοῦ Διὸς ἔνθεν μὲν τὴν Θέτιν ἔνθεν δὲ τὴν Ἥῴ, δεομένας ὑπὲρ τῶν υἱέων μαχομένων.

depicted on the vases⁷³). For the *Aethiopsis* we have to rely mainly on Proclus' *Chrestomathia*, where the duel between Achilles and Memnon is described⁷⁴). That this duel was preceded by a weighing scene has already been shown by Welcker and Robert⁷⁵) and is now generally accepted⁷⁶). In the *Aethiopsis*, it seems, we have an exactly parallel weighing scene as it is seen on the vases: Hermes — at the command of Zeus — weighs the lots of Achilles and Memnon who are aided by their mothers Thetis and Eos. Aeschylus differs only in that he takes over from Homer Zeus as the actual wielder of the scales.

It appears, then, that the weighing of lots of two contending parties is not an isolated image, but forms part of a tradition in literature and in art. Further, it can be seen that such a tradition could not have been invented by the Homeric poets and then imitated by later epic and by tragedy. On the contrary, the evidence suggests that the Homeric image finds itself at the end of such a tradition rather than at its beginning. The *kerostasia* in *Il.* 22 suffers from some structural faults: the weighing of Hector and Achilles decides nothing which was not already known beforehand, indeed the scene could well be omitted without impairing sense or language. The Homeric scene still shows traces of the more elaborate arrangement of the vases and the *Aethiopsis*, where each contestant was supported by a 'Fürsprecher'⁷⁷). In Homer the place of the heroes' mothers is taken by Athene and Apollo⁷⁸).

A consideration of the evidence concerning the various weighing scenes renders two points obvious: 1) there is a con-

73) Cf. Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1446-47.

74) In E. Bethe, *Homer*² (Leipzig 1929) 2. 167-68.

75) F. G. Welcker, *Der Epische Cyklus*² (Bonn 1865-82) 2. 174-75; C. Robert, *Bild und Lied, archäol. Beitr. z. Gesch. d. griech. Heldensage* (Berlin 1881) 143-45. Cf. W. Schmid-O. Stählin, *Gesch. d. griech. Literatur* (München 1929) 1. 1. 211 n. 5.

76) See e. g. W. Schadewaldt, *Von Homers Welt und Werk*² (Stuttgart 1951) 164, who cites some further modern literature on this point.

77) See Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 57) 165; *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1444.

78) *Il.* 22. 213f. Ameis-Hentze in their ed. of the *Iliad* — Append. to Book 22 p. 13 — suspect line 213: λπεν δέ ε Φοιβος Ἀπόλλων. They argue that Apollo could not desert Hector now, when Apollo had not been previously said to help him — cf. Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1444. This objection does not, however, take into account 11. 202f.:

πῶς δέ κεν Ἐκτωρ κήρας ὄψεσφυγεν θανάτοιο,
εἰ μὴ οἱ πύματόν τε καὶ ὄστατον ἦντετ' Ἀπόλλων.

Cf. I. 220.

necting link between all of them, and 2) the scene in the *Aethiopsis* and on the vases is more complete and shows the earlier form, while Aeschylus' *Psychostasia* lies between the two⁷⁹). Point 2 was noticed already by O. Gruppe⁸⁰) and is on the whole accepted by later scholars⁸¹), some of whom have made use of it in order to prove that the Memnon epic preceded the *Iliad*⁸²). This question, of considerable historic and literary importance, is outside the scope of this essay, and indeed no decisive answer to this problem is required for our purposes. It is enough to say that, regardless of the date of either epic, the judgment by means of scales appears in its earlier and more complete form in the *Aethiopsis*⁸³), and this earlier form is mirrored by the representations in art. Can such a tradition of the weighing of lots be traced back to the weighing of hearts in the Hall of the two Truths?

The Egyptian practice — we have seen — is not exactly parallel to the Greek. But this need not altogether deter us, since we cannot expect to find an Egyptian religious belief wholly adopted in Greece without some significant changes or modifications. The un-Homeric and un-Greek concept of Elysium — ἄθι ξανθός Παδάμανθος (*Od.* 4. 563 f.) — is a good

79) See Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 57) 169; *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1446-47.

80) *Griech. Mythol. u. Religionsgeschichte* (München 1906) 681 n. 6. Cf. B. Niese, *Die Entwicklung d. homer. Poesie* (Berlin 1882) 103; G. Finsler, *Homer*² (Berlin 1918) 2. 227; Welcker, *op. cit.* (see n. 75) 2. 173-75; E. Löwy, *Neue Jahrb.* 33 (1914) 85-86.

81) Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 61 is an exception. He argues that because Hermes is the master of the scales on the vase representations, the Cyclic source is subsequent to Homer. Bjoerck also cites on this point Séchan, *Études sur la Tragédie Grecque dans ses rapports avec la Céramique* (Paris 1926) 15-16. On Hermes see further below. W. Schmid, *op. cit.* (see n. 75) 1. 1. 211 n. 5, without argument accepts the priority of the *Iliad* weighing scene.

82) The most notable name in this connection is that of W. Schade-waldt, *op. cit.* (see n. 76) 164 — where some more relevant modern literature is quoted. Schade-waldt is by no means the first scholar — as seen above — to voice this view. To some extent he was also preceded by H. Pestalozzi, *Die Achilleis als Quelle der Ilias* (Zürich 1945) 12; and by J. T. Kakridis, *Homeric Researches* (Lund 1949) 94. See further P. von d. Mühl, *Kritisches Hypommema zur Ilias* (Schweizer. Beitr. z. Altertumsw. 4) (Basel 1952) 336 and n. 29; W. Kullmann, *Die Quellen der Ilias* (Wiesbaden 1960) 316-18.

83) Cf. Nilsson, *op. cit.* (see n. 3) 390 = *Opusc. Sel.* 390 n. 46. Prof. D. Page in his review of Kullmann's book, *op. cit.* (see n. 82) in *Cl. Rev.* 9. 3 (1961) 205-209, introduces a timely note of caution into the discussion concerning the priority of the *Aethiopsis*.

case in point, because there we have a concept which, after some modification, was accepted from Egypt probably via Crete⁸⁴). Apart from the difference in the weighing procedure — and the importance of this has perhaps been overemphasized — there are two obstacles which appear to forbid a close analogy between the Greek and Egyptian use of the scales. The first concerns the objects weighed: in Egypt it is usually said to be a weighing of souls — a psychostasia — in actual fact it is the heart of the defendant which is placed in the scale, or some object — e.g. a vase — symbolic thereof, as opposed to the *keres* of Achilles and Hector in Homer. In the case of the *Aethiopsis* and in the scenes depicted on the vases, the exact nature of the objects is not made clear. This gulf between Homer and Egypt cannot be bridged⁸⁵), because the *keres* in Greek belief are not souls⁸⁶), with one somewhat dubious exception⁸⁷); and it will not do to maintain that the *ker* on the Homeric balance is analogous to the post-Homeric concept of

84) See L. Malten, "Elysion und Rhadamanthys", *Arch. Jahrb.* 28 (1913) 35—37; M. P. Nilsson, *The Minoan-Mycenaean Religion and its Survival in Greek Religion*² (Lund 1950) 622—27; *Gesch. d. gr. Rel.*² (München 1955) 1. 328—29.

85) Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 398 n. 3, ingeniously suggests that, "A Greek would, perhaps, be encouraged to assimilate or fuse the Homeric with the Egyptian conception by the fact that, while in the former it is the *κῆρ* which is placed in the balance, in the latter it is the heart (i. e. *κῆρ*)." Onians also cites instances of "apparent assimilation" in Quint. Smyrn. *Posthomer.* 2. 570; 11. 105 f.

86) This had been maintained by O. Crusius, "Keres" *Roscher Myth. Lex.*, and by E. Rohde, *Psyche*⁸ transl. by W. B. Hillis (London 1925) ch. 1 n. 10; 5 n. 100; 9 n. 92. Cf. Hedén, *op. cit.* (see n. 47) 101—03. J. Harrison, *Prolegomena to the Study of Greek Religion*³ (repr. New York 1955) 43—44, is inclined to agree with Crusius and Rohde, but she likens the *keres* to ghosts rather, or sprites — *op. cit.* 165. More recently Malten, *op. cit.* (see n. 19) 883—85 conclusively disproved that the *keres* stood for the souls of the departed. Cf. Nilsson, *Gesch. d. gr. Rel.* 1. 224.

87) That is the trimeter spoken at the end of the Chytroi, the third day of the Anthesteria: *θύραζε κῆρες, οὐκέτ' Ἄναεσθήρια*. See also L. Deubner, *Attische Feste* (repr. Berlin 1956) 112—14. Here without doubt the *keres* represent the souls of the dead. Malten, *op. cit.* (see n. 19) 892—94, rightly points out, however, that this use probably was confined to special festivals of the dead, and that it was not necessarily a reflection of popular belief. At the end of such a festival the desire of the participants would be to rid themselves of the now unwelcome presence of the spirits; the whole phrase suggests a mild form of abuse in which the name *keres* might not have been a laudatory epithet — cf. Nilsson, *Gesch.* 1. 225.

ψυχῆ = soul⁸⁸). The Homeric poems, however, know nothing of men's souls, so that their absence in the balance is not surprising⁸⁹).

Again, it is far from clear whether κῆρες or ψυχαί are weighed in the *Aethiopsis*⁹⁰), but we may learn some more from the scenes on the 'weighing' vases, where the artists modelled themselves on the *Aethiopsis*. Now, Otto (ibid.) says that, "die Vasenbilder ließen etwas wägen, was den ψυχαί ähnlich sieht"; that is, small εἰδῶλα with wings. Such εἰδῶλα are often drawn to represent the spirits or souls of the dead in popular belief, and a good example can be seen on a white lekythos now in Jena⁹¹), where Hermes is shown standing over a grave pithos "evoking, revoking the souls"⁹²) in the shape of little winged eidola. In our case it is unlikely that souls could be weighed of two heroes who yet have to fight. It has been suggested, therefore, that these eidola are the equivalent of the Homeric keres⁹³). Nilsson, indeed, believes⁹⁴) that the artist drew eidola because he did not know how to represent keres.

In addition to Homer, the vase paintings and the *Aethiopsis*, we cannot find any real evidence that Aeschylus' *Psychostasia* contained a true weighing of souls. Here, too, presumably Achilles and Memnon are still alive at the time of weighing. Moreover, Bjoerck⁹⁵) cites Jebb⁹⁶) who pointed out some time ago that "ψυχῆ in the tragedians never means 'a departed spirit', but always the *anima* of the living." Thus, in all these Greek scenes we essentially have a weighing of lives⁹⁷). This point leads to and combines with the second chief difference of the Greek from the Egyptian practice: the latter event is an event occurring *post mortem* and is designed to determine the

88) See still Pötscher, above n. 22.

89) Cf. W. F. Otto, *Die Manen, oder von den Urformen des Totenglaubens* (Berlin 1933) 50—51: "Homer ließ κῆρες (= Todesdämonen) wägen, weil er die ψυχῆ (bei Homer Leben) nicht als selbständiges Wesen kannte."

90) Cf. Otto, *op. cit.* (see n. 89) 50—51.

91) Shown in Harrison, *op. cit.* (see n. 86) fig. 7; Nilsson, *Gesch.* 1. Taf. 33. 3.

92) Harrison, *op. cit.* (see n. 86) 43.

93) Cf. Harrison, *op. cit.* (see n. 86) 183—84.

94) *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 456.

95) *Op. cit.* (see n. 9) 65.

96) On Soph. O. C. 999.

97) Cf. Harrison, *op. cit.* (see n. 86) 184; Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 65.

future blissful existence of the deceased in after life, in the former case the scales decide the life or death of two contestants about to join mortal combat. In fact, one point presupposes the other: that means, as soon as the scene of the weighing shifts to the world of the living one can no longer conceive of a true psychostasia.

The vital tie between Egypt and Greece can be seen from the fuller form of the kerostasia in the *Aethiopsis*. Wüst already (see above) pointed out that in the Cyclic Epic — and traces of this remain in Homer — each contestant was represented by a “Fürsprecher”, in most instances his mother, and that the arrangement of participants suggests a scene of judgment. Now, the Egypt. scene — as was seen above — also represented a court of justice, albeit in the underworld. And here lay the insuperable objection: a judgment of the dead along Egypt. lines cannot be paralleled in Greece before the sixth century at the earliest⁹⁸), and we do not meet with such a judgment in literature before Plato who may have been under Orphic and Pythagorean influence⁹⁹). The Homeric poets, however, were familiar with figures of judges and judged. When we find them it is in the underworld, not, and the case of Minos is a good example (*Od.* 11. 568-71), as judges of the dead, but as figures whose scene of action has been transferred to Hades, where they are imagined as continuing their former activity¹⁰⁰). Thus, we move on familiar ground when we discover that the Egyptian judgment of the dead began not as a psychostasia, but as a trial in the world of the living, and that it was modelled on the trial *par excellence* in Egypt, that of Horus and Seth. Later on the scene shifts to the underworld, too, and in time, from one particular judgment, became a general judgment of all the dead¹⁰¹). Like Zeus in Homer, the master of the scales in the Egypt. “Totengericht” probably was the highest sun god Re¹⁰²),

98) See Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 450; *Gesch.* 1. 367 n. 1; *Min.-Mycen. Rel.* 34.

99) See especially *Gorg.* 523 E f. and E. R. Dodds, in his ed. of the *Gorgias* (Oxford 1959) 373. For other Platonic passages on this point, see L. Ruhl, *De mortuorum iudicio* (Religionsgesch. V. u. V. 2. 2) (Berlin 1903), cited by Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 450 n. 7.

100) See Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 445—49.

101) See J. G. Griffiths, *The Conflict of Horus and Seth* (Liverpool U. P. 1960) e. g. 74—81; S. Morenz, *Ägyptische Religion* (Stuttgart 1960) 136; 220, where further sources are cited.

102) Griffiths, *op. cit.* (see n. 101) 80—81.

rather than Osiris ¹⁰³). The relevant passages in the Book of the Dead ¹⁰⁴) further show the interesting fact that the psychostasia clearly continues the normal procedure of a litigation, where the heart now is conceived of as the enemy and accuser, so that we cannot really speak of a weighing of a person's soul against an absolute standard (see above).

Finally, the argument that the Egypt. psychostasia ultimately derived from a trial of two gods and not mortal heroes must contend with the Egypt. belief that her gods, like men, were subject to the laws of death ¹⁰⁵). It would be unwise not to stress here that the Egypt. judgment of the dead, from the negative confession to the reward of a life of bliss after death, early on becomes associated with the highest moral and ethical ideals, and in this respect has nothing in common with Greek epic belief. To look for an exact model of the Homeric keros-tasia in Egypt. religion is folly; nevertheless we may note some basic similarities which make it probable that the Greek keros-tasia to some extent drew from Egypt. stock. The Homeric poets took their scales from earlier traditional motifs found in Cyclic Epic which describe the weighing of keros or eidola as a form of judgment, where the loser is 'punished' by death: in Egypt, if convicted, the victim is devoured by Ammat. Both parties are supported by counsellors who could be said to form part of a larger courtroom or judgment scene. The trial of Horus and Seth, indeed, is a contest between an essentially good and a bad power, while no such qualification attaches to Achilles and Memnon or Hector in Homer and Arctinus. But can we not discern a similar moral division in a passage which, though late, harkens back to Homer and the *Aethiopsis*? Quintus Smyrnaeus distinguishes between the black ker advancing on Memnon's heart, and the bright ker of Achilles,

δοιαὶ ἄρ' ἀμφοτέροισι θεῶν ἐκάτερθε παρέσταν
κῆρες· ἐρεμναίη μὲν ἔβη ποτὶ Μέμνονος ἦτορ
φαίδρῃ δ' ἀμφ' Ἀχιλλῆα δαΐφρονα ¹⁰⁶).

103) Griffiths, *ibid.*; cf. the discussion in Morenz, *op. cit.* (see n. 101) 136—37.

104) Cited by Griffiths, *op. cit.* (see n. 101) 80.

105) See Morenz, *op. cit.* (see n. 101) 25.

106) *Posthom.* 2. 509ff. Whether these keros anticipate the black and white Erinyes — Harrison, *op. cit.* (see n. 86) 183 — is another matter which cannot be discussed here. There seems little to warrant such a belief.

We are on less firm ground, when we attempt to compare the divine figures connected with the act of weighing in Egypt and in Greece. In Egypt the scales are normally administered by Re¹⁰⁷), and Thoth records the verdict. In Greek belief Zeus is the wielder of the scales, or he commands Hermes to do the weighing as in the *Aethiopsis*¹⁰⁸), or from some art representations it appears that Hermes alone is the master of the scales. Now, Thoth has often been compared with Hermes as a god with similar offices¹⁰⁹), and Osiris, who sometimes replaces Re as supreme judge, has been compared with Zeus¹¹⁰). We dare not, however, overlook the dangers inherent in such analogies, especially since it is impossible to be certain whether in Greek belief Hermes or Zeus must be considered as the original figure with the scales, because plausible arguments can be advanced in favour of both theories¹¹¹). But exact knowledge of this point solves nothing outside the purely literary question of priority, and is of as little import to the present question as the fact that the contestants judged in Greece are either Achilles and Memnon, or Achilles and Hector. While the participating figures in a contest like that of a judgment by scales may differ according to the needs of the poet or his religious outlook, the underlying basis or belief connecting two different forms of the same concept remain unaltered¹¹²).

107) This is not generally realized, see e. g. Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 57) 167. See also above n. 102; 103; and 67.

108) Kakridis, *op. cit.* (see n. 82) 94, believes that Zeus is master of the scales here too.

109) E. g. Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1446; *op. cit.* (see n. 57) 167.

110) Wüst, *ibid.*

111) Hermes, on the one hand, as Psychopompus is peculiarly suited to supervise a decision involving the death of one contestant; on the other, Zeus as supreme god — like the cosmic Re or Osiris, god of kings and vegetation — and as arbiter of human life and death especially in time of war, the *ταμίης πολέμοιο*, is naturally thought of as master of the scales — cf. Bianchi, *op. cit.* (see n. 1) 81. In any case, Hermes in Homer generally is the divine guide, and he occurs only once as Psychopompus and that is in the second *Necyia* (*Od.* 24. 1).

112) Thus neither will the presence of Hermes — as Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 57) e. g. 167, believes — furnish proof of the Egyptian origin of the image of the *kerostasia*, nor does it establish by itself that the Homeric weighing scene represents an earlier form than that found in the *Aethiopsis* — Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 61, who cites Séchan, *op. cit.* (see n. 81) 15—16. Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 452—53, simply assumes that Zeus was the original master of the scales in Greek thought.

If the Egyptian psychostasia has gone some way towards illuminating the significance of the weighing scene in Greek epic, and if we may safely detect some basic conceptual link here between Egypt and Greece, we cannot with justification assert that Egypt was the sole home of the kerostasia; indeed, present evidence does not account for influence that may or may not have come from quarters other than Egypt. Such a possibility is obvious and cannot be ruled out, because the use of scales for every day and perhaps even religious purposes was wide spread and of long standing¹¹³). Neither can we any longer clearly discern the date or the route by which the Egyptian concept travelled to Greece. Wüst damages his case when he states, for instance, that the knowledge of the psychostasia reached Greece by way of the Minoan merchants after 1500 B.C. who governed trade in the whole of the Mediterranean¹¹⁴); or when he attempts to trace Memnon's Egypt. descent¹¹⁵).

Wüst proposes another more probable path between Egypt and Greece¹¹⁶); but his evidence is thin and cannot always carry conviction. Wüst notes the difference between the epic kerostasia and the Egyptian moral judgment, and he rightly states that Greek literature did not know of such a moral judgment before Plato¹¹⁷). The moral element, he says, was introduced through the Mysteries at Eleusis which in turn in their ritual included a psychostasia taken over from Egypt. There are in fact a few more or less likely parallels between the later Greek moral judgment and the Egyptian practice¹¹⁸), but Plato and no one else mentions a psychostasia. Whether there did exist a psychostasia along Egyptian lines at Eleusis is difficult to decide. Wüst derives his strongest evidence from the famous judgment scenes in the *Frogs* where Aristophanes makes use of

113) Cf. for instance a good parallel example from early Hindoo belief, cited by Onians, *op. cit.* (see n. 12) 398 n. 4. To pinpoint an "Ur-heimat der Waagesymbolik" is impossible, and to search for one is unrealistic — Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 62.

114) *Op. cit.* (see n. 57) 167.

115) *Op. cit.* (see n. 57) 168.

116) *Op. cit.* (see n. 57) 169; *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1448—50.

117) See above p. 117.

118) E. g. Wüst compares the Hall of the two Truths with Plato, *Axioch.* 371, where it is said that the judgment occurs on the *πεδλον ἀληθειας*. On the other hand, Aesch. *Eum.* 274 does not show that the poet was thinking of Thoth, nor does Diod., 1. 96. 5, tell us much of value regarding the Eleusinian Mysteries.

a pair of scales in order to weigh the merit = weight of the poetry of Aeschylus and Euripides (*Frogs* 1365). Dionysus is the master of the scales. Wüst sees in this scene a parody of both Aeschylus' *Psychostasia* and of the Egypt. practice as taken over by Eleusis¹¹⁹), and he maintains that the weighing scene is only one instance of several in the *Frogs* where the poet takes the Mystic rites to task¹²⁰). The second chief piece of evidence Wüst finds in Clement of Alexandria¹²¹) who, describing the Mysteries, speaks of a *πόμα χολῆς καὶ καρδιουκλῆαι καὶ ἀρρητουργίαι. καρδιουκλῆα*, according to Hesychius¹²²), means *τὰς καρδίας ἔλκειν*, and *ἔλκω* is at times used of weighing¹²³), but otherwise the phrase tells us very little. The concept of a moral judgment after death connected with reward and punishment is common to Orphic and Pythagorean doctrine, and Prof. Dodds¹²⁴) postulates the presence at Eleusis of such a concept before the seventh century B.C. Who is to say, then, that such a wide spread belief was solely indebted to Egypt? Also, no such considerations were of import to Homeric or Cyclic Epic.

It remains to discuss some archaeological evidence which may have a bearing on our subject. Mention has already been made of the fact¹²⁵) that the scales were a common implement of trade and every day life in Mycenaean times, and this knowledge will temper any findings from monumental sources which may point to the use of scales in religious life and belief. There are really two types of evidence which concern us here. The first consists of some finds, from Mycenaean shaft graves, of small golden scales some of which have a butterfly engraved on each scale¹²⁶). The size of these scales and the material from which

119) *Op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1447—48 with further sources.

120) *Op. cit.* (see n. 57) 170, and cf. *Bayr. Blätter f. d. Gymn.* (1929) 201—203. It is unconvincing to compare this "weighing of words" in the *Frogs* with the testing of words in Spell 125 from the Book of the Dead in a Hymn to Osiris — see Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 1450; and it is altogether going too far to compare the changing of two Athenians into birds in Aristophanes' *Birds* to Spell 83—86 in the same Book of the Dead — see Virey, *Actes du XIV congrès intern. des Orientalistes* (Paris 1907) 2. 59—61, cited by Wüst, *ibid.*

121) *Protrept.* 2. 15. 1.

122) S. v. Cf. Photius, 131. 5.

123) See *Lidd. & Sc. Jones* s. v. 1. 7 (Homer); 2. 9 (post. Hom.).

124) *Op. cit.* (see n. 99) 373.

125) See above e. g. p. 118.

126) See e. g. D. Fimmen, *Die Kretisch-Mykenische Kultur* (Leipzig & Berlin 1924) 123—24 and fig. 116.

they are fashioned preclude the possibility of these scales' having a more than symbolic significance. Again, the engraved butterflies have led some scholars to the conclusion¹²⁷⁾ that these scales represent a psychostasia along Egyptian lines. By themselves, however, these gold models prove nothing beyond the known fact that scales were a common implement of domestic life and trade¹²⁸⁾, and small replicas may well have been buried with the dead, together with other tools of daily use, because they were required for life in the hereafter¹²⁹⁾. Accordingly, the interpretations of Schliemann and Evans have more recently been criticised¹³⁰⁾.

The second piece of evidence — in no way more conclusive — is a Mycenaean amphora found in a chamber tomb at Enkomi in Cyprus. This vase — dated by Nilsson at about 1300 B.C.¹³¹⁾, and about 200 years later by Poulsen¹³²⁾ — has received perhaps rather more attention than it deserves, because once again it cannot teach us anything definite. It is fully discussed, together with relevant sources, by Nilsson¹³³⁾. The picture briefly shows two men dressed in long tunics and standing in a chariot drawn by one horse. Before the horse, and facing the chariot, stands another, similarly attired man, who is holding a pair of scales. The scene is completed, apart from

127) H. Schliemann, *Mykenae* (Berlin 1878) 229; A. J. Evans, *Palace of Minos* (London 1921—35) 2. 787—88; 3. 148—50; cf. *The Earlier Rel. of Greece in the Light of Cretan Discoveries* (Frazer Lect. for 1931 in the Un. of Cambr.) (London 1931) 28; see also W. Krause, "Zeus und Moira bei Homer", *Wiener Studien* 64 (1950) 33—35 n. 62; and Ch. Picard, *op. cit.* (see n. 59) 156; 290 and bibliography.

128) Cf. Fimmen, *op. cit.* (see n. 126) 123—24.

129) For this common belief see e. g. J. Wiesner, *Grab und Jenseits* (R. V. V. 26) (Berlin 1938) e. g. 201.

130) See Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 451, who strongly disagrees with Evan's interpretation of butterflies = souls. See also Wüst, *op. cit.* (see n. 57) 167, who points out that the third Mycenaean shaft grave, which yielded up the richest fund of golden scales, contained the remains of two infants and two women for whom scales were the most appropriate article of daily use. Cf. Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 62. Of course, without further evidence the significance of the butterflies must remain unexplained. Until, then, however, Evan's interpretation is still the most attractive, and, if confirmed, will vouch for the early presence of a psychostasia in Crete.

131) *Min.-Mycen. Rel.* 34.

132) *Archäol. Jahrb.* (1911) 247.

133) "Zeus mit der Schicksalswaage auf einer cyprisch-mykenischen Vase", *Human. Vetensk. Samf. i Lund, Årsber.* 2 (1933) 29—43 = *Opuscula Selecta* 1. 443—456; *Homer and Mycenae* (London 1933) 267; *Min.-Mycen. Rel.* 34—36; *Gesch.* 1. 366—67.

other adornments, by a horse shown above the figure with the scales, and by a small figure below the horse drawing the chariot¹³⁴). This last figure appears to be carrying with both hands an X shaped object which Nilsson¹³⁵) calls "rätselhaft", and which Wiesner¹³⁶) interprets as a Minoan type collapsible stool ("Klappmöbel") carried by a servant. Nilsson rightly rejects the interpretation that this scene represents a "Totengericht"¹³⁷), but he firmly maintains an unshakeable conviction that here we are shown an example of Zeus with his scales as highest "Schicksalslenker" deciding the fate of two heroes about to go into battle. This explanation is verified, according to Nilsson, by the similarity of this scene to the Homeric *kerostasia* which in turn was the original model for the *psychostasia*: a self evident point which requires no discussion¹³⁸). Therefore Zeus must have been the original master of the scales, and more significant still: this vase gives evidence¹³⁹) that in Mycenaean belief already Zeus was the supreme master of human fate. Unfortunately, the vase painting does not substantiate Nilsson's theory¹⁴⁰), we cannot even know whether the man holding the scales is Zeus; indeed, this seems quite unlikely¹⁴¹). At present we must judge as equally conjectural the theory of Wiesner and Picard who discover in this scene some kind of trade transaction, where the figure with the scales plays the part of an attendant¹⁴²).

Certainly it is also unprofitable to follow Eitrem and Bjoerck in their attempt to find here an early example of the

134) Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 444, calls all but the central figures "Füllsel", an interpretation which does not satisfy Wiesner, *op. cit.* (see n. 130) 202 n. 1.

135) *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 444.

136) *Op. cit.* (see n. 129) 202 and n. 1.

137) This belief was held by Dr. E. Sjoquist, the discoverer of the amphora — see Nilsson, *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 443.

138) *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 452—53, „Die Psychostasie geht auf Homer zurück. Wir können es daher unterlassen, die Umbildung, welche die bildliche Tradition zeigt — statt Zeus hält Hermes die Waage — zu diskutieren, sondern uns dem ältesten Zeugen zuzuwenden.“

139) *Opusc. Sel.* 1. 455—56.

140) Nilsson seems to be effectively overruled by the criticism of Evans, *Pal. of Minos* 4.659; Wiesner, *op. cit.* (see n. 129) 201—2 and n. 2; Picard, *op. cit.* (see n. 59) 290 with further sources.

141) Picard, *op. cit.* (see n. 59) 290.

142) Cf. Wiesner, *op. cit.* (see n. 129) 202; Picard, *op. cit.* (see n. 59) 290; Evans, *Pal. of Minos* 4. 659, who recognizes in this scene a representation of a deceased Mycenaean standing before his house in military array.

working of fate by means of divination¹⁴³). Thus, we derive very little of definite value to our study from a knowledge of the golden scales in the Mycenaean shaft graves, and from the weighing scene on the Mycenaean amphora. At best we have an indication that the scales were an integral portion of every day life in Mycenaean society, and that they may well have played a part in the religious belief of the times.

The available evidence from the Mycenaean tombs is too scanty, therefore, and we must dismiss it as inconclusive. A consideration of internal Homeric evidence, however, and of other sources from art and from epic literature which have a bearing on the Homeric *kerostasia* allows both the general conclusion that Zeus' scales were subject to an older tradition, and a more particular insight into the poetical significance of the *kerostasia* in the *Iliad*. In connection with the first point, it is clear that the *kerostasia* or *psychostasia* does not begin with Homer — as Nilsson claims — but, on the contrary, in Homer constitutes, if not the final stage, at least a developed aspect of an older concept. The older picture, which served as a guide to the Homeric poets, appears on the *kerostasia* vases and in the *Aethiopsis*; a point which no more proves that the Cyclic Epic antedates the *Iliad* than that these vases were painted prior to the composition of Book 22. All that we can gather from this

143) This was proposed by S. Eitrem, *Symbolae Osloenses* 13 (1934) 57 n. 1, who comments on the Cypro-Mycenaean vase, "Man denkt zunächst an irgendwelche Ausfahrt, wobei das 'Wiegen' das Omen abgibt." Bjoerck, *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 63, says that the technique of divination gave the vocabulary to the working of fate; therefore the Homeric *kerostasia* was fashioned after a special type of divination where scales and a weight are used. The difficulty with which Bjoerck's theory has to contend consists in the absence of any real example of such divination by means of weighing. Again, it is far from easy to envisage the possible procedure that this type of divining might have followed. Bjoerck — *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 64 — suggests that there might have been two weights, alike in appearance but of different weight. The person in charge of the scales — the "Offiziant" — might then determine each time what either weight (= destiny) represents. Bjoerck's proposal that such weights might have been fashioned in the form of little people, and that these might have been called *κῆρε* — hence the later *εἰδωλα* and *κῆρες* on the scales in Homer and the *Aethiopsis* — requires no discussion. Also, one must feel compassion for the unfortunate person whose destiny was "fixed" by a heavy or light weight before the scales could ever be consulted. Bjoerck himself — *op. cit.* (see n. 9) 65—66 — appreciates this difficulty and he cannot really overcome it by uncertain examples from the Nordic saga of the Jomswikinger. Examples of this kind are no more useful here than Wüst's analogies between Zeus' *kerostasia* in Homer and Wodan's "Siegeskür" in the Edda.

finding is that both Arctinus and the Homeric poets basically worked with the same motif of which the Cyclic version is closer to an original form. Homer's *kerostasia* is adapted to suit his ideas, e.g. of the office of Zeus as the *ταμίης πολέμοιο*, and of the functions of the poet's *keres*, to such an extent that the description of the weighing of the lots of Hector and Achilles falls out of context.

There are some grounds for believing that in some measure the Greek *kerostasia* drew from the Egyptian practice of weighing the souls of the dead. Important differences notwithstanding, the basic link joining Egypt with the image of the Homeric Zeus wielding his scales consists in the idea of a trial and judgment: in Egypt this trial and judgment are shifted from the world of the living to the underworld, where the scales are the instrument of a moral decision. In the *Iliad* the judgment of Zeus' scales — in consonance with Homeric belief — is stripped of any moral implication: here they are concerned with determining the death of a hero. Admittedly, not much remains in Homer of an older model for his scales, and were it not for analogies in art and literature, the existence of a previous history of this image might well have escaped the student's attention; yet the adaptation of older material for a new purpose in Homer can be paralleled by the concept of the spinning of fate¹⁴⁴). Zeus' scales are still an instrument of judgment, but they have been put to a more fearsome use than in Egyptian belief, where without exception they secure an eternal life of happiness. In Homer Zeus only takes his scales to hand when he is inclined to wreak death and destruction; and a mere mention of the scales in *Il.* 16. 658 and 19. 223 is enough to convey a picture of their true significance. The transition from the judicial function of the scales to the image where they become, as it were, an instrument of ruin, is unique and due to Homer alone. The Homeric poets were fond of expressions from the craftman's world and, ignoring any original significance, they may well have made use of a new picturesque image of Zeus 'weighing' out death, just as he could use his whip or spin the fate of a mortal¹⁴⁵).

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144) See Dietrich, *op. cit.* (see n. 48) 86—101.

145) I am much indebted to Professor R. P. Winnington-Ingram and Mr. J. B. Hainsworth for valuable criticism of my arguments.