EPILOGUE

TIME IN ANCIENT GREEK LITERATURE

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Chronology

Surveying the various analyses of time in Greek literature, a first observation immediately offers itself: most narrative texts display an order that is chronological. This phenomenon is hardly surprising, since the very definition of a narrative is to some extent built on the notion that time progresses. Most narrators will proceed in an order that is essentially chronological, with the result that their texts are recognizable as a narrative. Even the narratives of Pindar, which have generally been treated as anachronical because they seemed to be structured according to the principle of ring-composition, upon closer examination appear to be mostly chronological too. What seemed to be temporal ring-composition often turns out either to be thematic ring-composition, or the narrator makes use of the device of ‘initial summary with subsequent elaboration’: he first gives the gist of the story in summary form and then narrates it in more detail in essentially chronological order.

A text that is not strictly chronological is Hesiod’s *Theogony*: while the general sequence of the genealogies is chronological, within the single genealogy the narrator regularly pushes ahead and narrates the birth and experiences of characters who belong to later generations of the same family branch. The demands of genealogy here prevail over strict chronology. For genuinely anachronical narratives we must turn to those of secondary narrators (in epic or drama). Thus, while some of the narratives embedded in drama are chronological (especially prologue narratives and messenger-speeches, but also, for example, Atossa’s report of her dream in Aeschylus’ *Persians*), choral narratives and narratives recounted in dialogue form often display very different orders. A notorious example of temporal complexity is the *parodos* of Aeschylus’ *Agamemnon*. A recurrent type of anachronical order is first to move backwards in time and then forward again (so-called ‘epic

regression'). Even in oratory, where narratives tend to be chronological for the sake of clarity, Demosthenes may opt not only to fragment his narrative (this phenomenon is found in other orators too) but to present events in an anachronical order that best suits his strategy of persuasion.

Occasionally, we find only a semblance of chronology, as is the case in many Aristophanic narratives. They begin chronologically, but soon, under the influence of emotions, end in temporal chaos and the piling up of events in a random order.

Another variation on the chronological order is found in the genres of biography and historiography. Here a narrator may wish, for reasons of thematic unity, to group together events that in fact belong to different times. We find this feature in Herodian, Plutarch and Philostratus. Philostratus even alternates chronological narration with achronical, paradigmatic narration: the linear account of Apollonius' life is interspersed with anecdotes which are hard to pinpoint temporally but illustrate behaviour that is characteristic of him.

Time awareness

An important aspect of the handling of time and one that lies at the basis of many others, such as rhythm and frequency, is the question of explicit time awareness: do we regularly find time-markers that help us identify at which point of the story we are and how much time each event takes up? Interesting and manifold variations are discernible here, which show that there is no generic uniformity in this respect. Thus in epic and elegiac poetry there is a marked difference between on the one hand Homer and Apollonius of Rhodes, who regularly provide precise time-markers, indicating the days and nights and often the individual parts of a day (and the seasons in the case of Apollonius), and, on the other, Hesiod, the Homeric hymns, Callimachus and Theocritus, who are vague where the marking of time is concerned. Interestingly enough, there is one Homeric hymn, the one to Hermes, which does abound in time-markers. Their frequency and specificity turn this hymn, which recounts Hermes' theft of Apollo's cattle, into a kind of 'police report'. In Callimachus the occasional time-marker is inserted not so much for the sake of establishing a precise chronology but in order to convey a programmatic or meta-poetic message. By beginning his *Aetia* with the story of the Charites at Paros, which takes place when

Minos extended his rule over the Cyclades, Callimachus signals that the *Aetia* begins where Hesiod's *Theogony* ends and is therefore supposed to be read as a form of sequel.

Turning to the genre of historiography, we may observe that Herodotus and Xenophon by and large employ unspecific and relative time-markers (type 'after that'), whereas Thucydides provides a model of precise marking (by year and by seasons) that is followed occasionally by Xenophon and more systematically by Polybius. A highly detailed day-to-day chronology is adopted by Arrian, who in this way invites the narratees, as it were, to 'join' the hero Alexander on his expedition. Arrian also indicates the years (dating them by means of Greek archonships), sometimes, in Thucydidean fashion, the seasons and, in the case of important battles, even the months. Herodian proceeds by reigns of emperors rather than years. The historical works of Josephus, at last, stand out for their unique specificity: events are dated by reference to the reigns of Roman emperors, Hasmonaean rulers, or Roman procurators of Judaea. In his account of the Jewish war he also includes references to the months of the Macedonian calendar. When dealing with climactic moments in his narrative, Josephus even inserts more than one time-marker. In spite of the differences among the individual historiographers, the genre as a whole is characterized by a comparatively high density and specificity of time-markers. This, no doubt, is related to its subject matter. The same point also applies to the temporal framework at large. Homer or Apollonius of Rhodes may precisely indicate the temporal structure of their narratives, but the story as such is located in an unspecific, probably remote past, whereas historiographers such as Herodotus not only 'date' their main stories but even the 'mythical' past that precedes it.

As is readily understood, the narratives of drama, which usually cover relatively short periods of time, have little need for explicit time-markers. From a modern perspective it comes as a surprise, however, that the same situation prevails in the narratives that are embedded in the orators. In spite of the courtroom setting, they proceed in a surprisingly vague way ('then', 'after some time') and only occasionally resort to equally vague but highly suggestive phrases such as 'when X had made a large fortune' or the like. This remarkable nonchalance regarding the marking of time may perhaps be related to the general tendency in the orators to give the impression of speaking spontaneously and without premeditation. More generally, the observation can be made that many of the texts treated in this volume appear to prefer markers

of relative chronology. This observation even applies to historiography, which, as seen, displays a comparatively high density of specific markers.

Turning to philosophy, a similar lack of specific dating can be seen, excepting the dialogues related to the death of Socrates. This seems to be related to the iterative nature of this type of text: though strictly speaking recording one particular dialogue, the suggestion clearly is that this dialogue represents many similar ones (see below on frequency).

The biographers Xenophon and Plutarch reproduce the model found in Herodotus or Xenophon's historical works rather than in Thucydides, and thus are vague in their temporal marking. The striking exception is Philostratus, who, in the regular narrative parts (as opposed to the digressions and paradigmatic parts), employs three time systems: one Roman, one Greek and one mystic-oriental, depending on the current location of his hero, the sage Apollonius.

The novels, finally, again show different patterns. Chariton and Xenophon of Ephesus are closer to Herodotus or Xenophon in their vagueness. Conversely, Longus makes a highly intricate use of the seasons in order to mark the progression of the young heroes on their path towards maturity. In the case of Heliodorus the number of time-markers varies in the course of the novel. From daybreak at the beginning of the novel to the end of book 5, we have five carefully marked day-night units, but in the second half of the novel temporal markers become less frequent. Only on the final day, recounted in book 10, does precise chronology return.

Analepsis

The use of anachronies, analepsis and prolepsis, depends to a considerable degree on the length of the narrative in question: a short narrative tends to contain fewer instances, a long narrative more. Another factor is the relationship of story and fabula: if story and fabula coincide, there are, by definition, no external analepses (and prolepses). This is a relatively rare phenomenon in general, the Greek examples being Hesiod's *Theogony* and Josephus' *Antiquities*, which aim at giving a history of the world from the beginning until the present. Most Greek narrative texts, however, do make use of analepses in considerable numbers and to a great variety of purposes.

A first use of the external, usually heterodiegetic, analepsis, found in virtually all the texts, aims to provide background information on characters, places or objects. Sometimes a particular twist is given to this general use, for example when the analepses have an aetiological function (Apollonius of Rhodes and Callimachus) or when they contain intertextual reverberations (Apollonius of Rhodes, Callimachus, Thucydides and Xenophon's *Hellenica*). Polybius even uses this type of analepsis in order to engage in polemical discussions with predecessors. Such analepses are mostly narratorial, but the novels also have characters introduce other characters by means of actorial analepsis.

A second recurrent use of narratorial analepsis is the 'obituary': the narrator throws a summary look back at the entire career of a character who has just died, often with patent evaluation on his part. In Homer such obituaries take the form of external analepses: the moment a hero dies, the narrator fills in his background, often to pathetic effect. Conversely, these analepses are internal in historiographical texts (mainly Arrian, Herodian, Josephus) and thus form a conclusion to part of the narrative (cf. below on clausal prolepsis). A variant is the analeptic *sunkrisis* found at the end of almost all the *Lives* of Plutarch, in which he weighs the pros and cons of the characters of the two protagonists.

A third general and widespread use of analepsis is the internal actorial type, that is, when characters inform other characters about something that has happened. These analepses are often repeating, in that they repeat what the primary narrator has recounted before. Thus they allow the narratees to gauge how the characters assess the event in question, a focalization that regularly differs from that of the primary narrator. Such analepses thus may have a characterizing function. The reverse situation applies when the narrator explains the outcome of predictions or prophecies by characters (see below on prolepsis). A very special variant of actorial analepsis is the one found in Philostratus, where the sage Apollonius repeatedly solves riddles by bringing to bear his preternatural insight into the past, that is, his recollection of events to which he was not consciously a party.

The actual beginnings of narratives regularly pose problems to both the narrator and modern scholars alike. Historiographers, in particular, often grapple with the question as to where their histories should begin. A good example is Herodotus, who first rejects several beginnings before he then chooses his own. Many historiographers begin their works with one or more books of 'prehistory' (Thucydides, Polybius, Herodian). Similarly, a biographer such as Plutarch usually begins

with an analeptic account of events that lead up to the birth of the protagonist. Scholars are confronted with the question as to whether to have the main story begin with these prehistories or rather take them as external analepses. If the narrative speed is different (summary), it seems preferable to see them as different from the main story, that is, as instances of external analepsis. In connection with this, it is interesting to note that Apollonius of Rhodes, who resembles a historiographer in more than one respect, likewise raises the implicit question as to where his narrative begins. While it is clear that the main story opens with the departure of the Argonauts, it is more difficult to determine the beginning of the fabula: is it the oracle to Pelias or Hera's anger at Pelias, which triggered the oracle, or the adventures of Helle and Phrixus, which caused the Golden Fleece to reach Colchis? Different characters and the narrator himself give different answers. Indeed, most aetiological external analepses in the *Argonautica* go back to the beginnings of time and often culminate in the present of the narrator's own time. The narrator seems to suggest that his real 'fabula' is a history of the Greek world at large.

External analepses, both narratorial and actorial, are often used to insert famous exploits from the past that serve as a standard against which the present behaviour of the characters can be measured. These comparisons may be negative or positive, moralizing or exhortative. This paradigmatic use of the embedded narrative is widespread and occurs in many of the texts treated in this volume.

Analepses also play a role in connection with the device of narrative delay or paralipsis: when the narration of an event is suppressed at its proper place in the temporal sequence of events in order to be recounted later, at a more effective place. This device is found in rudimentary form in Homer and Hesiod and is used to great effect by Thucydides and Plutarch. If in these cases the retrieval of deliberately suppressed information is conscious and effective, an analepsis may also be used simply to fill in the narratees about something they need to know in order to understand what follows.

A fairly widespread use of the analepsis, attested from Homer onwards, is the serialization of analepses through the whole work, which, when pieced together, form a complete story. Examples are the returns of Odysseus, Agamemnon and Menelaus in the *Odyssey*, the story of the Golden Fleece in Apollonius of Rhodes, the history of Athens and Sparta in Herodotus or the history of the Temple of Jerusalem in Josephus' *Jewish War*. In the case of Heliodorus, with his spectacular

in medias res opening, a whole series of analepses and, often, analepses within analepses is necessary to provide the narratees with large chunks of essential information. This allows them to assemble the pieces one by one and reconstruct the entire action that precedes the massacre at the beginning of the novel.

In drama, a function similar to that of analepsis is fulfilled by retrospective narratives. The whole genre abounds in such retrospective narratives, which, when external, set out the prehistory of the play either in one piece (the prologue narratives of Euripides and Aristophanes) or in a series of narrative sections (Aeschylus, e.g. the fall of Troy in *Agamemnon*; Sophocles, e.g. Oedipus' story in *Oedipus Tyrannus*). Although Euripides and, to a lesser degree, Aristophanes like to start with stretches of uninterrupted narrative, it should be noted that these too are sometimes later completed by means of retrospective narratives. Thus a series of retrospective narratives recount the fall of Troy in Euripides' *Andromache*, or Athenian history subsequent to the murder of Hipparchus in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata*. A special device, found primarily in Sophocles, is the repeating retrospective narrative, that is, when different (secondary) narrators recount the same story but with different focalizations, as is the case in *Ajax* with the several versions of how Ajax in a rage of madness killed the herds. Internal retrospective narration mainly occurs in the form of messenger-speeches, which inform characters and spectators about events that just before took place off-stage.

A special variety of retrospective narrative is the one found in Aristophanes, where a narrative about a past event is interspersed with simultaneous narration of the current situation. An example is, in the opening scene of *Clouds*, Strepsiades' narration of the past troubles with his son, which is intercut by the cries of that son dreaming of his horse-racing.

On occasion, the main purpose of a (repeating) analepsis is to provide the narratees with a recapitulation in order to refresh their memories (cf. the structuring function of prolepsis as 'header' below). This use of the analepsis is found in Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, the historiographers, forensic oratory and some of the novels. Such recapitulations are especially appropriate in lengthy and complex narratives, where the narratee will be particularly grateful for such an aide-mémoire (Polybius and, though not nearly as frequently as one might expect, Heliodorus). In less extensive texts this seems even more a question of the individual narrator's preference and, perhaps, his trust in

the narratees' competence: Chariton, for example, has recapitulations, whereas Longus does not. Thucydides and Xenophon (historical works) use them at transitional points: these narrators end a section with a brief repeating analepsis, summarizing the position in which the one protagonist is about to be left, and then begin the next section with another brief repeating analepsis, which summarizes the position in which the other protagonist had been left before. A variant of the recapitulating analepsis is found in the dialogues of Plato and, to a lesser degree, Xenophon, where speakers recapitulate for their own benefit (and that of the primary narratees) the upshot of the argument so far.

A last, particular use of analepsis is the combination with prolepsis, which can take two forms: the analepsis is followed by (or incorporates) a prolepsis or has itself proleptic force. Instances of the first type are ubiquitous, for example when Herodotus talks about the past and future of the Alcmeonids. A particularly forceful example is found in Cassandra's narrative in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon*, which moves from past to present to future, and often does not even distinguish between them. For the second type we may think of characters recounting omens or dreams (Penelope's dream which adumbrates Odysseus' revenge in the *Odyssey*, Tiresias' report on the omen of the birds which bodes ill for Creon in Sophocles' *Antigone*) or the analepsis on Jason's robe, which, recalling his affair with Hypsipyle and that of Theseus with Ariadne, heralds no good for his present affair with Medea.

Prolepsis and foreshadowing

External narratorial prolepsis indicates what happened after the end of the main story. Narrators vary in their wishes to look beyond their own stories. In Homer, Hesiod, the Homeric hymns and Theocritus the narrators hardly look into the future. The Homeric narrator only once, but very effectively, looks at the destruction of the wall around the Greek camp after the fall of Troy and in his stress on nature taking over again conveys an air of tragic futility and at the same time poetic self-consciousness. Theocritus even suppresses prolepses where they might be expected, for example when recounting the marriage of Helen and Menelaus but omitting any hint at what is in store for them. Both Apollonius of Rhodes and Callimachus, however, insert many external prolepses, which often culminate in references to the narrator's own time and thus suggest a continuity of the past with the present.

Of the historiographers, Herodotus regularly anticipates the future conflict between the victors of the Persian wars, Athens and Sparta, while his successors hardly go beyond the end of their stories, Thucydides' references to his own exile being a moot point. A special case in this context are Arrian's many references to Alexander's plans that came to naught owing to his premature death. The historiographers do, however, anticipate the fate of individuals, in the form of so-called proleptic closure.

Among the dramatists, Aeschylus and Sophocles have little to no external narratives (only occasional references), whereas Euripides abounds in them: the uninterrupted anticipations that *dei ex machina* often make at the end correspond to equally uninterrupted external retrospective narratives at the beginning. Aristophanes' approach is similar to Euripides': his plays regularly look ahead to a brave new world, though his anticipations are less detailed than Euripides' and not formally set off but rather interwoven with the action.

The orators and philosophers hardly provide examples of external narratorial prolepsis. Of the biographers, it is Plutarch who at the end of the biographies often traces the fate of the subject's descendants. In the case of the novel, finally, it is Chariton who more than once refers to the return of his heroine's son to Syracuse and the greatness that he will receive there, examples of external prolepses that serve to anchor the fictional plot in 'historical' reality.

Internal narratorial prolepsis and the more implicit device of foreshadowing are found almost anywhere (exceptions are Plato, Xenophon in his philosophical works and the *Cyropaedia*) and may be put to different uses: to create suspense, pathos or irony. In particular, the repeated prolepsis of one and the same event, for example the death of Patroclus in the *Iliad* or the destruction of the Temple in the *Jewish War*, will not fail to make a strong impression on the narratees. In the case of Polybius' account of the Second Punic War, which is replete with Roman defeats, the repeated prolepses to later Roman successes give his work a decidedly teleological outlook.

Narratorial prolepsis can also have a structuring function when it informs the narratees of what the narrative has in store for them: we are dealing either with the ubiquitous short 'header' device (type 'Alexander now decided to make an expedition to Egypt') or with the more intricate 'initial summary with subsequent elaboration' device that is prominent, for example, in Pindar. Related to this device is the proem, prologue or preface. Strictly speaking, these are not prolepses,

since the story has not begun yet, but they serve to inform the narratees about the story that is about to unfold before their eyes. The present volume discusses the proems of several authors (Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, Herodotus, Arrian, Herodian, Euripides, Xenophon's *Cyropaedia*, Plutarch). One such opening deserves particular attention: the painting in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, a pictorial 'proem' that whets the narratees' appetite, since the narrator, suppressing his *ex eventu* knowledge, describes exactly what he saw (and did not quite understand) at the time—later it will turn out to be a pictorial representation of the story we are about to read. Comparable is the tendency of biographers such as Plutarch and Philostratus to insert paradigmatic anecdotes about the main characters at an early stage of their biographies, while still recounting their childhood. Another form of narratorial prolepsis that owes its existence primarily to structuring purposes is the clustering of thematically similar events that are in fact temporally distinct (Philostratus).

A very particular technique of foreshadowing, which is primarily found in Hellenistic poetry, is the so-called prequel technique, whereby stories are narrated that precede their better-known sequels, for example the affair between Medea and Jason in the *Argonautica*, which forms the prequel to Euripides' *Medea*. While the narrator never explicitly refers to these later events, he nevertheless counts on his narratees' knowledge of the sequel, which allows him to create various effects, ominous, humoristic, etc. An example is Theocritus' Polyphemus, who hopes that a future visitor (Odysseus) will teach him how to swim. Closely related are the more incidental types of prolepsis, triggered by intertextuality, for example in Chariton (where quotations from Homer mark Callirhoe as a Helen and Penelope) and Longus (Daphnis climbing a tree to fetch an apple for Chloe is reminiscent of a wedding song by Sappho, and the primary narratee is cued to take the episode as foreshadowing their wedding). These intertextual prolepses are comparable to their analeptic counterparts (discussed above).

Actorial internal prolepsis regularly takes the form of either apprehensive or optimistic emotions. A special type are the prophecies, dreams and omens, which can be found in several texts (Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, Herodotus, Arrian, Josephus, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Philostratus, several novels). Here, different effects may be created depending on whether the prophecy is misunderstood or not heeded by a character (this is a widespread motif), or the prophecy is not reliable (a variant found, for example, in Arrian and Longus). In all these

cases it is of crucial importance to compare the outcome, as related by the primary narrator, with the original omen. An intermediate position between mere emotions and actual prophecies is taken by characters who announce or hatch plans or speculate about their fulfilment. Here, the narratees' interest lies in examining whether and how these plans are executed, noting that certain characters are unaware of the plans and are deceived. However, on occasion it is the narratees themselves who are misdirected, when (repeated) prolepses do not actually lead to the expected outcome (e.g. Euripides' *Medea* contains several references to her intention to kill Jason, but in the end she kills the children).

A less dramatic but more argumentative use of the actorial prolepsis is found in Platonic dialogue: philosophers should not only be able to recapitulate earlier parts of a dialogue (internal analepsis, see above) but also foresee the future course of the argument or their interlocutors' prospective arguments (internal prolepsis). Sometimes this anticipation is given the form of whole stretches of hypothetical dialogue: 'if you were to say X, I would say Y ...'. A similar form of hypothetical prospective narration is found in drama (e.g. Teucer imagining how his father will receive him after Ajax' death in Sophocles' *Ajax*, or characters who 'rehearse' a scene, usually to be played out offstage, for example the pedagogue's report about Orestes' alleged death in Sophocles' *Electra*).

Actorial external prolepsis can be a powerful tool to extend the fabula beyond the limits of the story. The Homeric narrator, for example, hardly anticipates the fall of Troy himself. Instead he has his characters do so on a regular basis. Similarly, characters in Polybius, Pindar, Euripides, Plato (*Apology*), Chariton and Longus make external prolepses at the end of the story.

Parallel storylines and simultaneity

Longer narrative texts tend to deal with more than one storyline and feature characters who are at different locations. Several devices are available to the narrator to connect these storylines. Most frequent is the well-known and hence unobtrusive combination of the Greek particles *men* and *de* ('on the one hand ... on the other'). This construction merely indicates that there are two storylines, but does not address the question of their temporal relationship (it is, in fact, used for many purposes other than signaling multiple storylines). Another elegant and, as

it were, camouflaged link between two storylines is the narrator following in the footsteps of a character who moves from A to B or accompanying news that spreads from A to B (Herodotus, Thucydides, Herodian). More conspicuous is the use of temporal correlatives such as *ophra* ... *tophra*... ('while ... , in the meantime ...'). Finally, there are other forms of explicit synchronisation: 'at the same time' or even expressions of the type 'on the same day that X did A Y did B'. This type is found in Herodotus, Thucydides, Xenophon and Josephus (though, the latter two include instances that are in fact historically inaccurate). Interestingly enough, the first part of Polybius' work makes only sparing use of explicit synchronisation, because, as he himself explains, there was no real connection between the different parts. The turning point comes with the 140th Olympiad, after which he regularly switches between the different locations and hence storylines. The fact that Polybius explicitly addresses the question is characteristic of this self-conscious narrator in general.

In the case of the *men* ... *de*-construction, which leaves the actual temporal relationship between the two storylines open, two general types can be discerned. One has been described as 'relay-race' or the 'continuity of time principle': the narrator switches from storyline A to storyline B; while he is dealing with B, the action of A remains stationary; when he returns to A, time there has moved on. This method is found in Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes, Herodian, Chariton and Xenophon of Ephesus. A second method has it that the narrator, when switching back from B to A, retraces his steps and goes back in time. Apollonius of Rhodes and Josephus use this method. The historians Thucydides and Xenophon often insert brief recapitulations at points of transition. A mild form of such going back in time is found in Homer, when, for example, characters focalize events which have already been recounted by the narrator. Another method of handling simultaneous material is by recapturing it in the form of completing analepses that are inserted at the point where the information actually becomes relevant. This is the method used by Thucydides and Heliodorus, and, in the form of retrospective narratives by messengers, by the dramatists.

Rhythm

The rhythm (or speed, duration) of a narrative text as a whole is to some degree determined by the time span that is covered by this text. Thus narratives that focus on a comparatively short time span (e.g. Homer, Homeric hymns, Callimachus' *Hymns*, Heliodorus) are bound to display a narrative speed that is relatively slow, while narratives that cover years, decades or even centuries (e.g. Hesiod, historiographers, biographers) are generally narrated at a faster pace. It will be obvious, however, that no text maintains a steady narrative speed throughout. Rather, all the narrative texts covered in this volume display a more or less intricate combination of segments that are narrated now more slowly ('scenes'), now faster ('summaries'), now more slowly again, etc., the differences in speed being relative and not absolute. Such an alternation of slowing down and accelerating is extremely common, though the individual implementations of the principle, needless to say, vary considerably, even within a single text. To paint a complete picture exceeds the boundaries of this epilogue, but some trends are discernible. At one end of the spectrum we find, for example, the Homeric epics, which, by comparison, present a comparatively balanced picture, whereas Pindar or Callimachus' *Aetia* regularly show changes between 'fast' and 'slow' that are both more abrupt and extreme. This, of course, is not to say that the narrator of a more balanced text such as the Homeric epics cannot put the device of varying the narrative speed to use in a very efficient way.

It is hardly surprising that narrators tend to devote more textual space (i.e. slow down) to events that they consider particularly important, while less important events can be rushed through at a higher pace ('summary') or omitted altogether ('ellipsis'), with the boundaries between extreme summary and explicit ellipsis being fluid. Slowly narrated 'scenes' are often a clear indication of the narrator's emphasis and have at the same time a tendency to make their way into our memories. In addition to this and (especially in the case of fictional texts) somewhat paradoxically, such passages with their high amount of detail also tend to appear more authentic (which Roland Barthes calls 'l'effet de réel'). A recurrent large-scale pattern is that the thematic centrepiece in slower narrative speed is either preceded (Herodotus, Thucydides) or framed (Homer) by sections that are noticeably faster.

However, slowing down need not always mean that this particular event is of primary importance. The same device can also be applied to

a more tangential event in order to postpone the narrating of another, more important event ('retardation'). The narrator as it were abuses the fact that slowing down is often taken as a sign of importance. The overall effect is the creation of suspense and expectation in the narratees.

If slowing down does not always indicate importance, summary passages do not automatically imply a lack thereof either. Thucydides, for example, occasionally uses summaries to bring out the swiftness that he considers characteristic of the Athenians.

Generally speaking, ellipsis can be found in all the texts treated in this volume. However, the device is particularly prominent in two types of texts: (1) those which, instead of narrating stories at length and in some detail, show a high degree of selectivity in that they rather allude to or largely presuppose prior knowledge about them (Pindar, Aeschylus, Sophocles, Callimachus, Theocritus); (2) texts which cover a large time span (e.g. Hesiod, historiographers, biographers) and are therefore bound to skip certain periods. In line with its generally allusive, that is, suggestive rather than explicit narrative style, the former group normally makes use of implicit ellipsis, while the latter group uses both the explicit and implicit form of ellipsis.

Summaries can also have a structuring function, in that they open a new narrative section by giving its gist in advance, which is then elaborated in more detail (header technique, see above). Similarly, a summary can also be a closural device, when the end of an episode repeats its essence in a summary fashion.

Given that direct speech leads to an approximate equation of the narrative speed with 'reality', the insertion of speeches results in scenes and hence in a slower narrative pace. Consequently, a high proportion of direct speech (e.g. Homer, Homeric hymns, Apollonius of Rhodes (especially book 3), Callimachus' *Hymns*, Chariton, Heliodorus) leads to an overall narrative speed that is slow. A similar effect can, of course, be achieved by the accumulation of much narrative detail. Direct speeches and a high amount of detail both give the impression of authenticity and immediacy. The occasional insertion of a speech equally results in a temporary slowing down of the narrative speed, even within a narrative that in itself is short (e.g. Pindar, messenger-speeches in tragedy, Callimachus' *Aetia*). Conversely, post-Homeric literature shows a noticeable increase in the use of indirect speech, which, among other things, accelerates the narrative speed. A similar acceleration is achieved by the post-Homeric tendency to suppress 'doublings' such as the one, for

example, of command and execution of command, which are normally narrated with equal detail in Homer.

The description of characters, objects, locations, etc. is a common feature of narrative literature. However, instances of a genuine ‘pause’ (i.e. the narrative ‘clock’ comes to a temporary halt and the characters are, as it were, ‘frozen’ in motion) are not as ubiquitous as might, perhaps, be expected. The Homeric epics, for example, contain only a few instances of real pauses, Chariton and Xenophon of Ephesus none. Other authors use the device more frequently, especially when they insert digressive material (Apollonius of Rhodes, historiographers, Philostratus, Heliodorus). Such digressions can take a generalizing or even omnitemporal form.

Frequency

The bulk of the narratives analysed in this volume are singulative: each event is narrated once. Given that singulative narration is, so to speak, the default mode (in Xenophon’s *Anabasis* with particularly striking effect), one might be tempted to leave it there and focus on the other types of frequency that depart from it. However, at least one of its features is worth singling out. There are passages that are written in what is formally recognizable as singulative narration, but where contextual or generic considerations suggest that what appears to be a single event is in fact not. This feature mainly occurs in two variants. In the first variant, the relevant text is either a biography (Xenophon’s *Cyropaedia*, Plutarch, Philostratus) or contains biographical material (especially historiography) and presents an event (or several) that is clearly meant to be not merely incidental but paradigmatic for the character in question. In other words, the narrated event is in fact understood to have happened not once but several times. A similar combination of singulative form and iterative implication can be found in philosophical dialogue (Xenophon, Plato): the same or a very similar conversation could have and, in fact, will have taken place more than once. Some of Thucydides’ speeches have a similar implication, as do certain passages in drama and in Theocritus.

Iterative narration normally goes hand in hand with summary, in that several equal and recurrent events are narrated once, which can save time or space, as Polybius knew well. Iterative narration can thus be used in an efficient way to draw up a general, characteristic back-

ground against which the ‘scene(s)’ and their particulars can be played (in singulative narration). Although virtually all the texts analysed here do make use of iterative narration, it remains the exception, singulative narration being the rule. (Extensive stretches of iterative narration will have to wait for texts such as Proust’s *A la recherche du temps perdu*.)

While the passages in iterative narration are for the most part subsequent, some texts contain a noticeably high proportion of simultaneous iterative narration because they deal either with the, by definition eternal, privileges and spheres of activities of divinities (especially Homeric hymns, Callimachus’ *Hymns*) or with recurrent (‘omnitemporal’) features of humankind or nature as described in similes (Homer, Apollonius of Rhodes) and certain generalizing digressions.

The conceptual counterpart to iterative narration is repeating narration: the same event is narrated more than once. On a small scale, repeating narration can occur when an initial header or a closural summary (on both see above) repeats the gist of the episode in question. On a larger scale, repeating narration can be used in order to remind the narratees of the story so far (cf. above on analepsis). Such recapitulations are normally placed with particular care at important way stations of the narrative. Overall, however, most narrators treated in this volume show a general reluctance to go over the same ground more than once.

Repeating narration generally invites the narratees to compare the two (or more) versions with each other. Particularly interesting are the cases where the two (or more) versions are not focalized by the same narrative agent, which often leads to illuminating insights into their respective outlooks and, more generally, contributes to their characterization. The tensions and differences between the various versions can also be exploited for other purposes such as dramatic irony (when it is clear whose version is ‘accurate’) or suspense (when it is not). While full-fledged experimentation with repeating narration (e.g. Faulkner’s *Absalom, Absalom!*, mentioned in the Introduction, or the famous film *Rashomon* by the Japanese director Kurosawa) remains a prerogative of modern (literary) art, ancient Greek authors are far from ignoring the high potential that lies in this device.

Subsequent, prior and simultaneous narration

As is the case with narrative literature in general, in ancient Greek literature too the default form of narration is subsequent (witness Thomas Mann's famous description of the novelist as 'raunender Beschwörer des Imperfekts'). The fact that the act of narrating postdates the events is on occasion made explicit or even stressed (e.g. by Homer, who sets off the 'mortals today' from the semi-divine heroes of the past, or in Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius*). Some narrators feel the desire to tell the narratees a great deal about their own time (the 'reference to the narrator's own time' motif). The same feature can take the specific form that, at the time when the events took place, things were *not yet* there. Conversely, things may *not* be there *any more* at the time of the narrating, or, more often, things are said to be *still* there *even now* (Herodotus, Callimachus, Apollonius of Rhodes, Plutarch).

Extended prior narration by primary narrators is a rare phenomenon in general and apparently not extant in Greek literature at all (excepting a puzzling passage in Hesiod's *Works and Days*). The only Greek examples of the device are found in secondary narratives, where it is the characters who make prophecies.

Simultaneous narration, finally, is most frequently found in the form of simultaneous-iterative narration (see above on frequency). It has already been stated above that Aristophanes is fond of interspersing analepsis with snippets of simultaneous narration. Extended simultaneous narration is rare but, when used, can be highly effective: thus in *Idyll* 16 Theocritus uses it to suggest that Hiero's warfare, strictly speaking an event of the future, is already in full swing. The chorus' narration of the imagined fall of Thebes in Aeschylus' *Seven against Thebes* and Clytemnestra's account of the fall of Troy in Aeschylus' *Agamemnon* can also be taken as instances of simultaneous narration. A prominent characteristic of simultaneous narration is its immediacy and vividness. The narratee seems to be an immediate witness to the events that are unfolding right before his or her eyes (for example, when in Bacchylides 13 a secondary narrator gives a gripping account of Heracles' fight with the Nemean lion). Perhaps one could even argue that the insertion of verb forms in the so-called 'historic present' (e.g. in messenger-speeches or forensic oratory) is a form of pseudo-simultaneous narration: by inserting historic presents into a generally subsequent narrative, the narrator creates the impression that the narrative is simultaneous, which increases its vividness.

Envoi

This second volume of *Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative* examines time as a narratological category and attempts to implement the kind of diachronic narratology that was envisioned by Fludernik (see Preface). It traces the forms and uses of various temporal devices within texts and within genres. As has been the case in *SAGN* 1, the overall conclusion is that most narratological categories are not bound by genre: the same devices occur in different genres, and genres are not homogeneous where the use of narrative devices is concerned.

Needless to say, there are other ways of looking at time in narrative texts. One is the philosophical-historical approach that is pursued, for example, in the multi-authored volume *Constructions du temps dans le monde Grec ancien*.¹ This volume aims to analyse the ‘temporalisations’, that is, the manifold ways in which the Greeks mark rhythms, cut up time into individual units, create chains of events, etc. It discusses time as a psychological, philosophical and social product.

Another way of approaching time is through linguistics. The moods and tenses of the Greek verbal system have attracted the attention of readers and scholars from antiquity onwards. In recent years, fostered and influenced by the pragmatic ‘school’ of linguistics, there has been a noticeable increase in scholarly discussions.²

The narratological analyses of the present volume is a first attempt to offer a comprehensive discussion of this phenomenon in ancient Greek literature. In many cases, the individual analysis could do little more than scratch the surface of what is in fact a vast subject. It is the sincere hope of the editors that the insights collected in this volume will inspire new and more research that will enlarge, refine or modify the picture presented here.

¹ Darbo-Peschanski 2000.

² For an interesting set of examples and bibliography, see Allan & Buijs 2007.