

An Epic Hero Performing a Heroic Epic: Iliad 9.182–95

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Abstrak

This essay proposes a revised version of W. Schadewaldt's (1900–1974) work. His work was done to demonstrate that the Iliad is built on one plan and that, therefore, the poem was created by a single poet. The usefulness of Schadewaldt's work is being rediscovered among English-speaking classicists. Unfortunately, however, his explanation of the whole edifice of the Iliad is offered from a mistaken viewpoint, namely, that the "center of gravity" of whole narrative of the poem is Nestor's suggestion to Patroclus that he go into battle wearing Achilles' armor. I argue that we can better understand the poem by examining the hero Achilles' contradictory attitudes toward *kleos* (fame) as they are narrated in Book 9 of the Iliad. In 9.182–95, Achilles sings an epic poem longing for traditional *kleos*, yet immediately thereafter he denies the usual way to *kleos*; and declares that he will quit the battlefield. Through consideration of these contrasting attitudes we can better understand both the nature of the Iliad as epic narration and the nature of its hero, Achilles.