Heroes Dialogue 02: Total Recall Through Song
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Blade Runner
- Clip from Ridley Scott’s Blade Runner: super-replicate Rachel with implanted memories and “experiences”
- When a character says he remembers something, memory may be his own or the memory of the entire tradition.
  o The conceit in the poetry is that the characters don’t just remember something but they recall as if they experienced it themselves
- Another clip: Rachel plays the piano and the music becomes part of her, and it doesn’t matter who experiences it. The tune in the background: “you’re too good to be true, can’t take my eyes off of you”. She lets her hair down (!); the importance of curly hair
  o E.g. Zeus’s cascading curly hair = ambrosial (eroticised in the Iliad)

Memnêmai
- “I have total recall (of an event)” (special contexts); like reliving the event, even if you did not experience it
- “I remember” (ordinary contexts), “I have memories”

Focus Passage A (on handout): Iliad IX 527-528
- Phoenix says memnêmai about something that happened before his time
  o Phoenix: “I’m speaking with the voice of the medium”
- How does performance matter in the Iliad?
  o Old man says “Sing to me, goddess, the anger of Achilles” to the Muse (aka absolute rememberer)—what we hear is what the Muses saw = total recall
  o Muse as the goddess of absolute total recall
  o Memory = reality
- Old man speaks to his philoi: “near and dear ones” (special contexts) vs. “friends” (ordinary contexts)
  o Achilles is part of this audience and is doing something morally wrong (in the eyes of the old man) so the old man Phoenix is trying to use these klea to convince him to act otherwise
  o The total recall = kleos
- Phoenix performs “klea andrôn” (glories of men)

1 The master narrator.
In order to understand the ainos, the listeners must be

1. sophoi (skilled)—related to the listeners’ intellectual bonding
2. agathoi (noble)—moral bonding
3. philoi (near and dear)—emotional bonding

As we will see, Achilles at this point does not fulfill the criteria for the ideal listener.

**Focus Passage C: Iliad II 484-487**
- Speaker re-invokes the Muses as goddesses of total recall (kleos) since they were there and Phoenix and co. are just hearing the kleos

**Focus Passage D: Iliad IX 186-191**
- Achilles chilling in his tent, singing the klea andrôn (the narrative doesn’t say what klea andrôn; some speculate it was the Iliad itself)
  - What is the significance of this guitar?
- Patroklos (Achilles’s philos) also sitting there and waiting for his turn to sing
  - As metaphor (meaning by substitution)
- (Parry and Lord on the mid-1930s epic song-singing/oral poetry (in the former Yugoslavia), referring to this very passage
  - Bartok (ethnomusicologist)

**Focus Passage E: Iliad 550-602**
- Phoenix is telling this story about Meleager || that of Achilles
- When Meleager is in his room, elders, priests, old warrior, sisters, mothers, comrades, wife (Kleopatra) all come to beg him to help (in ascending scale of affection)
  - Kleo-patra (Meleager’s wife) || Patro-kles (Achilles’s closest friend)
  - Patro-klês: he who has the kleos/klea of the ancestors
  - How does this relate to the name Hera-klês?