

- p. 52 Our Odyssey is constructed, as it stands, in the following way: two threads of narrative are spun separately, one after the other, and then united. First, the poet describes ; when that is more or less finished, he starts afresh and recounts the ; when that story too is finished he picks up the first thread and unites it with the second, twisting them into a single strand Here then are three episodes which are, as a matter of fact, narrated separately; and many have been led by their study of the evidence to believe that all three were originally composed separately, later conjoined into the continuous narrative which we read today by a hand which is relatively late and absolutely incompetent.
- p. 64 Events which occur simultaneously cannot be narrated simultaneously: they must be described one after the other, and the story-teller may or may not tell us that, although narrated in succession, they were really simultaneous; ...
- p. 65 Now the early Greek Epic observes a simple rule: it is the general practice not only to narrate simultaneous events successively, but also to represent them as if they had actually occurred successively.
- p. 72 First, the weaving of the two threads into a single strand in the Fifteenth Book reveals an uncommonly skilful hand; the technique is delicate, and considerably in advance of earlier methods. It is certainly not possible to disentangle the two threads at this point; and we must conclude that the stories of Telemachus and Odysseus are organically connected in our Odyssey, though we cannot exclude the possibility that a poet who composed our Odyssey substantially as it exists today found before him a traditional version of the Wanderings of Odysseus, which he adopted as the nucleus of a much larger poem beginning with the story of Telemachus and ending with the killing of the Suitors of Penelope. That is to say, what is well enough known, that if our Odyssey is substantially the achievement of one poet, we cannot tell how much he took over more or less unchanged from earlier tradition.
- p. 95 in this region of the poem, as well elsewhere, we find that Unity of Authorship is a concept not only not suggested by the evidence but in some respects plainly contrary to it.
- p. 96 . . . Who introduced these disjointed fragments of alien versions into a more or less coherent narrative . . . ?
- p. 97 we infer that some of the faults in our text are due to that first editor
- p.137 To the questions how, when, and where the Iliad and Odyssey were composed we can give none but vague answers . . . There is not . . . never has been, any reliable historical record of these matters. The fact that tradition attached to both poems a single name, Homer, would be instructive if we knew what it meant. Taken literally, that tradition is certainly misleading: whether one man composed (substantially) either poem may be eternally disputed; that the same man did not compose both I take to be beyond question. The attribution of both Iliad and Odyssey . . . to Homer may, for all we know, mean no more than that a poet of this name was preeminent among those through whose hands the traditional poems passed towards the end of a long period of development: we should still not know in what form the poems existed before him, or how much of their final shape and substance was his work.
- p. 159 . . . the reason why the Iliad is ignored by the Odyssean poet is simply that the Iliad was unknown to him.