The element of suspense is very slight in the Homeric poems; nothing in their entire style is calculated to keep the reader or hearer breathless. The digressions are not meant to keep the reader in suspense, but rather to relax the tension... But an episode that will increase suspense by retarding the action must be so constructed that it will not fill the present entirely, will not put the crisis...entirely out of the reader's mind, and thereby destroy the mood of suspense; the crisis and the suspense must continue, must remain vibrant in the background. But Homer knows no background. What he narrates is for the time being the only present, and fills both the stage and the reader's mind completely.

The separate elements of a phenomenon are most clearly placed in relation to one another; a large number of conjunctions, adverbs, particles, and other syntactical tools, all clearly circumscribed and delicately differentiated in meaning, delimit persons, things, and positions of incidents in respect to one another...; like the separate phenomena themselves, their relationships — their temporal, local, causal, final, consecutive, comparative, concessive, antithetical, and conditional limitations — are brought to light in perfect fullness; so that a continuous rhythmic procession of phenomena passes by, and never is there a form left fragmentary or half-illuminated, never a lacuna, never a gap, never a glimpse of unplumbed depths.

...it would have been easy to present the entire story of the scar as a recollection which awakens in Odysseus' mind... But any such subject-ivistic-perspectivistic procedure, creating a foreground and background, resulting in the present lying open to the depths of the past, is entirely foreign to the Homeric style. The Homeric style knows only a foreground, only a uniformly illuminated, uniformly objective present.

On the one hand, externalized, uniformly illuminated phenomena, at a definite time and in a definite place, connected together without lacunae in a perpetual foreground; thoughts and feelings completely expressed; events taking place in a leisurely fashion and with very little suspense. On the other hand, the externalization of only so much of the phenomena as is necessary for the purpose of the narrative, all else left in obscurity; the decisive points of the narrative alone are emphasized, what lies between is nonexistent; time and place are undefined and call for interpretation; thoughts and feelings remain unexpressed, are only suggested by the silence and fragmentary speeches; the whole...remains mysterious and "fraught with background."
...Homeric heroes, whose destiny is clearly defined and who wake up every morning as if it were the first day of their lives: their emotions, though strong, are simple and find expression instantly.

[Homer's] reality is powerful enough in itself; it ensnares us, weaving its web around us, and that suffices him. And this "real" world into which we are lured exists for itself, contains nothing but itself; the Homeric poems conceal nothing, they contain no teaching and no secret second meaning. Homer can be analyzed...but he cannot be interpreted.