

## VALUES, GOALS, AND EMOTIONS IN THE *ILIAD*

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THIS paper will be concerned with the values, goals, emotions, and behavior of some of the principal characters of the Homeric poems and with the relationship between the respective values of the characters, the poet or poets, the original audiences or readership, audiences or readers in the fifth and fourth centuries B.C., and readers in the twentieth century A.D.<sup>1</sup> In the paper, "goals" signifies such clearly envisioned ends as capturing Troy, creating social harmony, or increasing the gross national product. "Values," on the other hand, signifies what is expressed by value-terms applied to persons or actions to commend or decry them: "it is *aischron* to be defeated," "eating people is wrong," "the *agathos* must fight bravely." It is likely that the value-terms of a community are employed to commend persons and actions whose characteristics and behavior are believed to conduce to the attainment of the community's goals, whatever these may be; but it should be immediately apparent that the values expressed by the value-terms may in fact prove not to facilitate the attainment of the goals, whether generally or in a particular case. For example, that Homeric characters apply unfavorable epithets to war and strife, and hence do not regard war and strife as desirable goals, does not demonstrate that Homeric values are not productive of war and strife.<sup>2</sup> (Homeric society is not unique in this respect.) "Emotions" is used in the familiar sense of the term; but it is worth pointing out at once that emotions may sometimes elicit behavior not in accordance with values and also prevent or render more difficult the attainment of goals, whether of the individual or the group.

To illustrate the interplay of values, goals, and emotions in the behavior of Homeric characters, detailed discussion of some important passages will be necessary. The speech of Sarpedon to Glaucus in *Iliad* 12 is illuminating. Zeus stirs on Sarpedon against the Greek wall at a time when the battle is going very badly for the Greeks, and Sarpedon in his turn urges Glaucus to join him in the attack (310–21):

"Glaucus, why do you and I enjoy a life of high status and possessions<sup>3</sup> in Lycia, with a seat of honor, meat, and full cups, and all men look upon us as if we were gods,

1. Versions of this paper were read at Boston College in March 1980 in the Boston College Humanities Series and at Valparaiso University in April 1980.

2. As H. Lloyd-Jones assumes in *The Justice of Zeus* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1971), p. 12. Though unfavorable epithets are frequently applied to war in Homer, *φιλοπτόλεμος* itself seems to be always either commendatory or merely descriptive. See *Il.* 16. 65, 16. 90, 16. 835, 17. 194, 17. 224, 19. 269, 20. 351, 21. 86, 23. 5, 23. 129.

3. *Τετιμήμεσθα*. The translation is intended to emphasize both the perfect aspect of the verb and the Homeric sense of *time*, for which see A. W. H. Adkins, "'Honour' and 'Punishment' in the Homeric Poems," *BICS* 7 (1960): 23–32.

and we are allotted a large piece of land by the banks of the Xanthus, a fine portion of vineyard, and wheat-bearing ploughland? Therefore we ought to stand among the foremost Lycians and face the heat of battle, so that one of the close-armored Lycians may say 'Not ingloriously do our kings rule throughout Lycia, and eat fat sheep, and drink choice wine. No; they have excellent strength, and fight in the foremost ranks of the Lycians.'"

Evidently noblemen (319 βασιλῆες) are expected to fight in positions of special danger, and they enjoy certain privileges. Sarpedon reminds Glaucus of his privileges, his *time*, and alleges that they are doing nothing to earn their *time* at the moment. But it is also clear that Glaucus and Sarpedon have not been elected to their high position in virtue of great strength and warlike valor: they are hereditary noblemen who have privileges and therefore (315 τὼ νῦν χρή) ought to fight bravely. Their wealth gives them capabilities which mere strength could not provide: these noblemen possess a chariot, full body armor, a large shield, a sword, and two throwing-spears,<sup>4</sup> and are, in fact, among the few well-armed members of the society portrayed in the poems.<sup>5</sup> The full panoply of the Homeric warrior is expensive. Weapons are scarce. The first act of the warrior on slaying his foe is to try to strip him of his armor, while the comrades of the dead man attempt to rescue both warrior and armor.<sup>6</sup> We may note Achilles' situation in *Iliad* 18, when Thetis reminds Achilles that Zeus has caused disaster to the Greeks as Achilles asked; and he replies (79):

"Mother mine, those things has the Olympian indeed accomplished for me; but what pleasure have I in them, since my dear comrade Patroclus is dead, Patroclus whom I honored and benefited (*tiein*) above all my comrades, as much as my own head. Him I have lost, and Hector has killed him and stripped off the fine strong armor, a wonder to behold. Them, glorious gifts, did the gods give to Peleus on the day when they cast you into the bed of a mortal man."

Even if Peleus' armor was a gift from the gods, do we really expect Achilles to mention its loss in the same breath as when he speaks of the death of a dear friend? If we do not, if we suppose that a hero should be less materialistic, we completely misunderstand the situation and values of the Homeric warrior. Even the great Achilles has no spare armor; and, however wrathful and grieved he may be now that Patroclus is dead, he cannot return to the fighting until Hephaestus the smith-god makes him some more.

From Sarpedon's speech to Glaucus discussed above, it may appear that the characters of the Homeric poems value most highly those who are most effective in attaining the goals of the society: Homeric society

4. In *Il.* 12. 294–98, just before the passage quoted in the text, Sarpedon is described as holding in front of himself his shield made of bronze over oxhide, and brandishing his two spears.

5. A few passages suggest hoplite fighting by large groups of heavily armed men (e.g., 13. 125–35), but the presence or absence from the fighting of a few named warriors is usually treated as being of crucial importance.

6. Indeed, ἐναρῖζειν and ἐξεναρῖζειν are used in the sense of "kill," as in 11. 337, 14. 24 (ἐναρῖζειν), 6. 30, and 6. 35 (ἐξεναρῖζειν), evidently because stripping the dead warrior of his armor was the first concern of his killer.

is in urgent need of successful warriors to defend its primary social, political, and economic units,<sup>7</sup> and the best-armed and bravest are most highly valued. In an important sense the judgment is justified: it is difficult to suppose that a Homeric *oikos*<sup>8</sup> or a Homeric army contingent would long survive without vigorous and successful leadership and, where necessary, fighting. Yet those values may in fact prevent the attainment of the goals which they are believed to serve, as consideration of the quarrel between Agamemnon and Achilles will quickly demonstrate.

At the beginning of the *Iliad*, the priest Chryses comes to the Greek camp in the hope of ransoming his daughter Chryseis. The Greek soldiers urge Agamemnon to accept, but he sends Chryses away with a dusty answer. Chryses prays to Apollo to send a plague on the Greek army. Apollo does so and is not to be placated until Chryseis is returned to her father. The soothsayer Calchas discloses Apollo's demands. Agamemnon immediately blames Calchas for the bad news and proclaims that he prefers Chryseis even to his wife Clytemnestra, but he ends (1. 116–20):

“Yet even so I am willing to give Chryseis back, if that is more advantageous. I wish the army to be safe rather than destroyed. But furnish me with a prize (*γέρας*) so that I may not be the only member of the Greek army who is without a prize, since that is not appropriate. For you all see that my prize is going elsewhere.”

To the modern reader Agamemnon's request may appear entirely reasonable. The Greek army is besieging Troy not only to recover Helen and the possessions which Paris carried off with her but also to gain as much booty as possible from the sack of Troy and other towns. (Chryseis was thus acquired in the first place.) Agamemnon naturally wants his (large) share of booty and is not willing to relinquish any without due recompense. Yet Achilles replies in an angry and insulting tone, calling Agamemnon most rapacious (122 φιλοκτεανώτατος). He points out that all the booty so far acquired has already been divided up, but he ends by promising that the Greeks will make Agamemnon a threefold or fourfold recompense after the capture of Troy.

Once again the suggestion may appear reasonable. But Agamemnon replies in great anger, accusing Achilles of bad faith (131–39). It will suffice Agamemnon if the Greeks give him a prize; but, if they do not, Agamemnon will come and take a prize from Achilles, Ajax, or Odysseus. Then, however, he adds that they can all consider the matter later, and makes plans to send Chryseis back to her father (140–47).

These speeches reveal quickness of temper, emotions kept with difficulty on a leash. The speakers know what is really more advantageous for them. Agamemnon, as commander-in-chief, is responsible for the safety and success of the entire expedition. Achilles and Agamemnon both know that it would be better for the latter to receive threefold or fourfold recompense. Agamemnon knows that it would be disastrous to disregard

7. See A. W. H. Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility: A Study in Greek Values* (Oxford: 1960), ch. 3 passim; idem, “Honour,” passim.

8. See M. I. Finley, *The World of Odysseus*<sup>2</sup> (New York, 1978), pp. 56–63, 70, 83–85, 94, 103–6.

the commands of Apollo. Yet they preface their remarks with insults and emotive language which may prevent the attainment of the material advantages which they have come to Troy to secure for themselves. As the assembly proceeds, other speeches follow the same pattern; and it may be that the initial insults fulfill the function of a culturally acceptable safety valve, to discharge the speaker's emotions before he comes to practical proposals. (Athena, as we shall see, even while discouraging Achilles from killing Agamemnon, gives him permission to insult Agamemnon.) But there is always the danger that offensive words will be followed by offensive deeds; and the danger is not averted in *Iliad* 1.

The altercation proceeds. Achilles ignores Agamemnon's last proposal, that they should now make plans to return Chryseis to her father (149–71). (Chryseis is returned, 308–11.) Achilles again imputes greed to Agamemnon and inquires how any of the Greeks will be willing to obey him if he behaves in this way. The Trojans have done him, Achilles, no harm; he has come to win *time* for Menelaus and Agamemnon.<sup>9</sup> He has, of course, also come to win booty for himself; he complains that he does a greater share of the fighting but gets an inferior share of the booty. He will now return home to Phthia, since it is more to his advantage to do so; he will not stay here and win *time* for Agamemnon while he is himself without *time*.

Agamemnon tells Achilles to go if he wishes (173–87). He will not beseech Achilles to remain for his sake. There are others, and especially Zeus, who will give him *time*. Achilles is the most hateful to him of the leaders (*βασίλῆες*), since Achilles is quarrelsome. If Achilles is physically strong, strength is a divine gift. Let Achilles go home; Agamemnon cares nothing for his wrath. Agamemnon concludes (182–87):

"Since Apollo is taking Chryseis from me, her I will send home with my ship and my comrades; and I will go myself to your tent and fetch Briseis of the beautiful cheeks, your prize, so that you may know how much more politically powerful (*φέρτερος*) than you I am, and others too may shrink from speaking and acting as if they were my equals."

These five speeches have followed a pattern. Angry words and abuse have been followed by a statement of intent to perform an action. But in each of the first four the action or proposed action, as described, is inoffensive or much less offensive than the abuse: (1) Agamemnon will return Chryseis, since it is in the army's interest that he do so; (2) the Greeks will recompense Agamemnon threefold or fourfold if he waits until they capture Troy; (3) shelving the question of a replacement prize for the moment, Agamemnon will arrange for the return of Chryseis; (4) Achilles will go home to Phthia. But now Agamemnon, after a somewhat contemptuous dismissal of the claims of Achilles' physical strength, bids Achilles go home if he wishes but proclaims that he will deprive Achilles of Briseis first. The action intended is now offensive and threatening; but

9. For the meaning, see Adkins, "'Honour,'" *passim*.

it is interesting to note that even now Agamemnon's stated intent is more offensive than the actions he performs: he says that he will go himself and take Briseis, whereas he in fact sends his "heralds," Talthylus and Eurybates, an action which at least lessens the likelihood of bloodshed.<sup>10</sup>

In the insulting passage of his earlier speech (147–68), Achilles intimated that he was a better warrior than Agamemnon, which is a powerful slur; but his intended action, returning to Phthia, was not directly offensive. Agamemnon, however, follows insulting words with a threatened action which implies that Achilles is unable to defend himself and his own, and whether the inability derives from political or physical weakness the implication is insulting and must be actively, violently resisted.

Or so one would expect; and indeed Achilles is bitterly affronted and debates with himself whether to draw his sword, break up the assembly, and kill Agamemnon,<sup>11</sup> "or check his anger and restrain his *thumos*." He is just drawing his great sword from its scabbard when Athena comes from Olympus to check his action, saying (207–14):

"I have come from heaven to check your might, if you will obey me. White-armed Hera has sent me, since she *philein* and cares for you equally. Come, cease from your strife and do not draw your sword. Rather abuse Agamemnon with words and tell him how it shall be. For thus I will tell you, and thus it shall be accomplished. One day three times as many glorious gifts shall be yours in consequence of this hybris. But do you restrain yourself and obey us."

And Achilles does. When Achilles made a similar offer of threefold or fourfold recompense earlier, Agamemnon was unmoved. The reason is not that Agamemnon's character differs from that of Achilles but that the consequences of disobeying Athena or Hera are different from those of disobeying Achilles. As Achilles says, "One must hearken to your words, goddess, even when one is very enraged. For so it is more advantageous (*ameinon*): the gods listen to a man who obeys them" (216–18). So, on prudential grounds, Achilles obeys Athena and confines himself to abusing Agamemnon. He does not stint his words (225–30):

"Sot, with the eyes of a dog and the heart of a deer, you have never steeled yourself in your *thumos* to arm yourself for war along with the people, nor yet to go to ambush with the bravest chieftains of the Greeks. That seems to you to be doom. It is much more advantageous throughout the broad army of the Greeks to take away the gifts from anyone who speaks against you."

In Sarpedon's speech to Glaucus, Sarpedon made it clear that the privileges of the prominent warriors portrayed in the Homeric poems were deemed to depend on their outstanding prowess in war. The prowess is denoted and commended by the abstract noun *arete*, the warrior com-

10. True, he says (324–25) that he will come himself with greater numbers if Achilles does not give up Briseis to the heralds; but the action is less offensive. (There is no indication that Achilles, or anyone else, regards it as offensive to send underlings rather than to come oneself on such an errand.) Achilles later (9. 372–73) claims that Agamemnon dare not look him in the face.

11. He uses the word *ἐναπίζειν* (n. 6) in a context in which its literal meaning would presumably be inappropriate.

mended by the adjectives *agathos*, *esthlos*, or *aristos*.<sup>12</sup> The material advantages are denoted and commended by the noun *time*: *time* is status-conferring goods. Since status and material advantage are desirables, the prominent warrior wishes to be judged to be *agathos* and to acquire *time*. He will accordingly fight bravely in the foremost ranks when necessary. But he will naturally expect his reward, his *time*; and it seems reasonable that the more *agathos* he is, the more *time* he will expect. The *agathos* will accordingly not merely fight the enemy in war, he will vie and compete for *time* with other prominent warriors on his own side. But Achilles now claims that Agamemnon is a coward who relies on others to do his fighting, and he has already complained that Agamemnon receives better prizes than does Achilles. The reason is clear: Agamemnon is politically more powerful than Achilles. Agamemnon claims to be "best" (*aristos*) on the basis of his greater political power (and since he does receive the most *time* the claim must be accepted in general); Achilles claims to be "best" (*aristos*) in virtue of being the best warrior, and Agamemnon's words at 177–78 imply that Achilles has constantly set his prowess as a claim for better treatment against the claims of Agamemnon's greater political power. Now Achilles' insults go further: not merely does Agamemnon receive better prizes than he deserves, he does not fight at all and takes the prizes from those who do. Achilles alleges that, as a warrior, Agamemnon falls utterly short of the expectations of his society and that therefore he does not deserve to be termed *agathos* or to receive *time*.

Yet Achilles is uneasy about his own situation. We know, and the poet knows, and Achilles knows, that Achilles has yielded to Athena and Hera, two goddesses, in not killing Agamemnon on the spot and that he has been promised abundant recompense. But to the others present it must appear that Achilles has backed down before Agamemnon as one more *agathos* than he, whether in terms of military prowess or of political power; and this concession ill befits one who claims to be *aristos* of the Greeks, as will appear. Achilles' situation is particularly difficult in a shame culture, where it is as important to avoid the imputation of cowardice as to avoid cowardice itself.<sup>13</sup> Achilles' uneasiness expresses itself in the next two lines: " 'You are a king who devours his people, since you rule over mere nobodies (*outidanoi*); else would you now have perpetrated your last insult, son of Atreus' " (231–32).

The words are a generalization, but they evidently include Achilles himself in the depreciation. Indeed, in the present case they include Achilles alone, since he alone is called upon to avenge the insults and losses which he suffers. The goal of the Homeric *agathos* is to protect and if possible increase his *time*, status-conferring possessions; and he must do it for himself.<sup>14</sup> Consequently, the Homeric *agathos* is always insecure

12. See *Merit and Responsibility*, ch. 3 passim.

13. Cf. the similar anxieties of Diomedes in retreating before Zeus' thunderbolt (*Il.* 8. 147–56), discussed in Adkins, *Merit and Responsibility*, pp. 48–49. He fears that Hector may be able to claim that Diomedes retreated before him.

14. See "Honour," pp. 23–32.

and feels insecure.<sup>15</sup> In losing Briseis, even if Briseis is regarded as merely animate booty, Achilles is losing *time*, as he indicates in 244 and had indicated earlier in 171. It may be his uneasiness that leads him now to swear a solemn, awe-inspiring but somewhat elliptical oath. He does not say that he will retire to his tent and does not retract his threat, uttered in 169–71, of returning to Phthia. His speech ends (240–44):

“Verily one day a longing for Achilles will come upon all the sons of the Achaeans. But on that day, grieved at heart though you will be, Agamemnon, you will be unable to assist them at all when they fall dying in great numbers at the hands of man-slaying Hector. You will tear your *thumos* within, distressed that you gave no *time* to the *aristos* of the Achaeans.”

Achilles is uneasy at not having taken revenge on Agamemnon at once; but he insists that he is the *aristos* of the Greeks and consequently cannot be denied *time* with impunity, since the Greeks cannot succeed without him. He now throws down the speaker’s staff and resumes his seat. Agamemnon fumes with anger opposite to him. The aged Nestor now rises and attempts to recall them to the major goal of their expedition to Troy (254–58):

“Well-a-day, a great grief is coming upon the Achaean land. Surely Priam and the sons of Priam and the other Trojans would rejoice greatly if they discovered that the two of you were quarreling, you who are foremost among the Greeks in counsel and in fighting.”

Nestor urges both of them to take his advice: each is younger than he. But he does not rely merely on respect due to age. He tells Achilles and Agamemnon that in his youth he consorted with warriors greater even than they are; and those warriors did not make light of him. He reels off a list of the mightiest warriors of an earlier generation, including Theseus, “like to the immortal gods.” They were the mightiest of mortal men, and they fought with the mightiest; and they invited Nestor to fight by their side. No one now alive could fight in such company; and they listened to Nestor’s advice and followed it.

The mere ability to give good advice does not guarantee a hearing in a Homeric assembly. It is not sufficient, and one may doubt whether it is necessary. The necessity is to be a doughty warrior or to have been a doughty warrior, and Nestor claims that in his youth he was a doughtier warrior than either Agamemnon or Achilles now is. It is one’s status in the warrior community that confers the expectation of being listened to with respect.<sup>16</sup> True, Nestor also insists that his advice is good (274–84):

15. His characteristic quickness of temper may be a consequence. I have discussed possible relationships between Greek values and Greek psychology in *From the Many to the One: A Study of Personality and Views of Human Nature in the Context of Ancient Greek Society, Values and Beliefs* (London and Ithaca, 1970).

16. Nestor’s words might suggest that the best warrior was deemed to give the best advice, but in fact it is acknowledged that some are better warriors and some better counselors, e.g., *Il.* 13. 726–35, 18. 252.

"Do you too take my advice, since it is more advantageous to do so. Do not you, *agathos* though you are, take the girl from him, but leave her as [or "since"] the sons of the Achaeans gave her first as a prize to him. And you, son of Peleus—do not wish to strive face to face with a king, since a scepter-wielding king to whom Zeus has given glory has not a share of *time* that is merely like that of other men. If you, Achilles, are strong, and a goddess mother bore you, yet he is more powerful since he rules over a greater number of men. Son of Atreus, check your might; but I beseech Achilles to lay aside his anger, Achilles who is a mighty bulwark against destructive war for all the Greeks."

Nestor's speech is evidently an exercise in Homeric diplomacy. "You who excel the Greeks in counsel and fighting" must be untrue in one sense, since Nestor is claiming to give better counsel; and it leaves unclear, probably deliberately, whether Achilles and Agamemnon are both superior to the rest in fighting and in counsel, or Agamemnon in counsel, Achilles in fighting. (Each is a sufficiently successful warrior to be listened to in council: Achilles' insult in 225–28 is a ridiculous overstatement.) Whatever be the case, Nestor's advice is clear: those who are skilled in counsel and warfare should prudently direct their warrior skills toward the goal which they share: the increase of their *time* by the capture and sack of Troy. Nestor asks that one or other of them should refrain (275–84). Of course, if Agamemnon does not take Briseis, Achilles has no cause for anger; only if Agamemnon does take Briseis need Achilles check his anger.

Both have good reasons to accept, for acceptance will aid them to secure their personal goals of increasing their own *time*. Agamemnon has been promised threefold or fourfold recompense later, when the Greeks capture Troy, and Athena has promised Achilles threefold recompense (by means unspecified) if only he will not kill Agamemnon. Again, Athena suggested that Achilles confine himself to insulting Agamemnon. She did not suggest that he withdraw from the fighting, and it would be possible for Achilles, having delivered himself of his insults, to fight on as before even deprived of Briseis, were he only to calculate the best means to his (and Agamemnon's) goal of gaining great material advantage by capturing Troy.

But goals are different from values, and even when the values are held because they are believed to be conducive to the goals, they may take precedence even when they are not so conducive. Earlier, Achilles was uneasy about following Athena's instructions, even though a personal advantage was thereby maximized. Now Agamemnon replies to Nestor (286–91):

"Yes indeed, old man, you have spoken all this *kata moiran*. But this man wishes to be superior to all others, to control all, to rule over all, to give commands to all; but I think that there is someone who will not obey him. Suppose the immortal gods have made him a spearman, is that a reason for him to pour forth insults?"

Achilles replies (293–96):

"Indeed I should be called inferior (*deilos*) and of no account (*outidanos*) if I am to yield to your commands in all things. Give these orders to others, do not utter instructions to me, for I think I shall no longer obey you."



When Agamemnon says that Nestor has spoken *kata moiran*, the sense is not entirely clear. *Moirā* in Homeric and other early Greek expresses the "share" in life which one has: not merely its length, but one's possessions, birth, and everything else which contributes to determining one's status in a stratified society.<sup>17</sup> To speak or act *kata moiran*, accordingly, is to act in accordance with one's own status and the status of others involved in the situation, and it is easy to derive from this usage a vaguer idea of acting appropriately, in accordance with the demands of the situation. It could be argued that Agamemnon is approving generally of Nestor's analysis of the situation, including the reminder that the quarrel can cause only woe to the Greeks and joy to the Trojans. In that case, Agamemnon deliberately sweeps all this aside in his anger against the presumption, as he sees it, of Achilles. However, *moira* here could be given precise and particular reference: Nestor reminded Achilles that a king has a larger *moira* of *time* than other men and hence greater status, power, and authority (278–79). If *kata moiran* is thus interpreted, Agamemnon is expressing satisfaction with this portion of Nestor's speech but complaining that Achilles will not acknowledge his superior authority. In which case Agamemnon's rejection of the larger good of his army is not at the forefront of his mind and is merely a consequence of the manner in which he evaluates the situation. He evidently means to take and keep Briseis, but it is worth noting that Briseis does not appear in Agamemnon's reply to Nestor nor yet in that part of Achilles' speech that has been quoted so far. Achilles and Agamemnon are here concerned with the claims which arise from their status, in particular with the conflict between the claims of political power and those of warrior might. Each of the two men is *aristos* in his own way, and no one can effectively arbitrate between them. The speeches are well composed, for this question is indeed at the heart of their dispute, Briseis in a sense being merely the occasion of the strife. (This judgment is warranted on either interpretation of *kata moiran*.)

Achilles now continues (297–303):

"Another thing will I tell you, and do you [Agamemnon] store it up in your mind. I will not fight with my hands for the sake of the girl, neither with you nor with anyone else, since you [Greeks] have taken from me her whom you gave me. But of the other possessions which I have by my swift black ship, you [Agamemnon] could not seize and carry off any against my will. Come on, now, try, so that these too may know; and swiftly will your black blood flow around my spear."

In 231 Achilles ascribed Agamemnon's ability to deprive others of their prizes to the fact that he rules over mere nobodies (*outidanoi*), implicitly including Achilles himself. He now explicitly and indignantly rejects the imputation of being an *outidanos* (293); but, if he is not, how is Agamemnon able to take his prize from him without a fight? Achilles offers a convenient fiction to save face: he says that he will not fight to keep

17. See *Merit and Responsibility*, ch. 2, and A. W. H. Adkins, "Homeric Gods and the Values of Homeric Society," *JHS* 92 (1972): 1–19.

Briseis since the Greek soldiers as a group, who allotted Briseis to him, are now taking her away. The reason is a fiction, for the decision to take Briseis is Agamemnon's alone; but it serves to distinguish Briseis from Achilles' other possessions, for which he proclaims that he will fight and fight successfully. (Though the last lines of the speech are designed to restore Achilles' self-esteem, they have a wider purpose: were a Homeric *agathos* to prove unable to defend his possessions, he would be unlikely to retain them for very long.)<sup>18</sup>

So now the plot's wound up, and we see the manner in which values and long-term goals may conflict. In order to maximize his *time*, Agamemnon would be well advised to wait for the promised threefold or fourfold compensation later; and as commander-in-chief of the Greek army he would be well advised not to antagonize his mightiest warrior, for it will be *aischron*, the most powerful term of value available to decry an action or state of affairs, for Agamemnon if the Greek army fails to capture Troy. Nestor adjures him, *agathos* though he is, not to take Briseis from Achilles. The form of the expression, however, indicates that *qua agathos* Agamemnon has some claim to do so;<sup>19</sup> and, since *agathos* and *arete* commend competitive excellences,<sup>20</sup> Agamemnon is likely to regard it as a failure, and so *aischron*, not to carry out an expressed intention of acquiring *time*, particularly since others may suppose that he refrains from taking Briseis out of fear of Achilles. It is the expression of intention, and the possible interpretation of his motive for refraining, that puts Agamemnon's prestige as an *agathos* at hazard. Of course, the capture of Troy would demonstrate Agamemnon's *arete* far more than the taking of Briseis from Achilles; but Agamemnon does not at the moment believe that he cannot capture Troy without Achilles, and the *aischron* of not now succeeding in taking Briseis is immediate. True, Agamemnon gains some *time* in taking Briseis, but the goal is evidently to maximize one's *time*, and Nestor's speech (254–58) clearly indicated the most likely means to that end.

Much worse is the condition of Achilles after Agamemnon takes Briseis. Hera and Athena have indeed promised him threefold *time* later, without specifying that he must withdraw from the fighting to get it. But he has lost *time* (Briseis) now as a result of Agamemnon's behavior and evidently fears that he may be thought to have acquiesced in the loss out of cowardice. He is, not surprisingly, angry and distressed. It is he, not Agamemnon, whose condition is now *aischron*, for it is he, not Agamemnon, who has suffered loss of *time*. Since he has been forbidden by Hera and Athena to wipe out his shame by killing Agamemnon, he withdraws in his *atimos* state. It is not *aischron* for him if the Greeks fail in his absence to capture Troy, for he is not commander-in-chief of the Greek army; and it is not childish of him to withdraw, since the primary demand upon the

18. Cf. the situation in the palace of Odysseus, in what passes for peace in the Homeric world, while Odysseus is on his wanderings and Telemachus not yet grown up.

19. See *Merit and Responsibility*, pp. 37–38, 49–57.

20. *Ibid.*, ch. 3.

Greek *agathos* is to defend his own *time* and that of his group—oikos or army contingent—successfully against all comers.<sup>21</sup> One's amount of *time* locates one on a scale of *time* at the top of which are the immortal gods, who have more strength, *arete*, and *time* than have human beings (*Il.* 9. 498) and at whose bottom is the homeless wandering beggar, who has no *time* of his own and must be supplied with it by others.<sup>22</sup> Achilles twice complains (*Il.* 9. 648 and 16. 59) that Agamemnon has treated him as if he were a wanderer without *time*.

It was not immediately *aischron* for Agamemnon to deprive Achilles of Briseis, for it represented a (short-term) success; but Agamemnon very quickly discovered that it was a serious mistake and one likely to lead quickly to a situation that was *aischron* in the extreme, for Achilles promptly asked his mother, the sea-goddess Thetis, to ask Zeus to insure that the Greeks could not win without Achilles.

In *Iliad* 9 occurs Agamemnon's unsuccessful attempt to placate Achilles, and in *Iliad* 19 Achilles abandons his wrath. The values manifested in these books are relevant to the present discussion: how are Achilles and Agamemnon evaluated?

In 9. 18–22, Agamemnon, as a response to Trojan success, says that Zeus has “bound him with heavy *ate*” (18), deceived him (21), and bids him return ill-famed (*duskleēs*) to Greece, since he has lost many soldiers (22). As in Book 19,<sup>23</sup> he regards his action as a mistake, brought about by Zeus. Nestor speaks of Agamemnon as having “yielded to his great-hearted *thumos*” (109–10) and deprived of *time* a warrior to whom the gods gave *time*. He proposes that the Greeks now consider how to propitiate Achilles with gifts and “sweet words.” (Observe that Nestor supposes that even sumptuous gifts may not suffice: Achilles may have to be persuaded by skilful rhetoric to lay aside his wrath.)

Agamemnon in reply admits to *ate*: “I was blinded by *ate*, I do not myself deny it. The man whom Zeus *philein* as he has now *tiein* [Achilles] is worth many men” (116–18). The *ate* consists in mistakenly undervaluing Achilles: Agamemnon is not confessing to a “cooperative” moral error, to a failure in justice.<sup>24</sup> But, since he was blinded by *ate*, he is willing to give abundant recompense, which he itemizes (121–57). He then adds that Achilles should acknowledge Agamemnon's superior political power (157–61). We might suppose that this demand caused the failure of the embassy, but in fact Odysseus does not include the last five lines of Agamemnon's speech when he transmits the terms of Agamemnon's offer (9. 264–300).

When Phoenix, Ajax, and Odysseus, the three ambassadors, arrive at Achilles' “tent,” Achilles terms them *philoī* (197) and says that they are most *philoī* of the Greeks to him even in his wrath; and he sets refreshment before them.

21. See “Honour,” pp. 23–32.

22. For the meaning of *epitimetor*, etc., see *ibid.*, pp. 25, 26, 31.

23. See below, pp. 312–13.

24. For “cooperative,” *Merit and Responsibility*, ch. 1 and *passim*. Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus*, p. 15, takes a different view, which is discussed in the appendix to the present paper.

After the appropriate preliminaries, Odysseus begins to speak (225); and the manner of his speech indicates that he does not suppose that gifts, however sumptuous, can be relied upon to soften Achilles' heart. First he compliments Achilles on the excellence of the fare he has set before them (225–28). Next he speaks of the desperate plight of the Greeks, indicates that Achilles alone can save them, and says that if he ever intends to help he should do so now before it is too late.

Thus far (225–51) Odysseus has been playing upon Achilles' emotions. He now recalls Peleus' advice to Achilles when Achilles was setting off for war. The advice naturally depends upon Homeric values. Peleus said (254–58):

"My child, Athena and Hera will give you strength, if they are willing; but do you check your great-hearted *thumos* in your chest. *Philophrosune* [friendly cooperation] is *ameinōn* [better, more advantageous, for Achilles]. Cease from strife that plans harm, so that the Greeks, young and old, may the more *tiein* you [give you more *time*]."

Odysseus claims that Achilles has forgotten Peleus' words and urges him even now to abandon his anger. "Agamemnon is offering to give you worthy gifts when you have abandoned your wrath."

Odysseus' rhetoric does not adequately represent Achilles' situation. Peleus assured Achilles that, if he cooperated with the other Greeks in fighting the Trojans, it would be more advantageous for him, since he would obtain more *time*. As the speech of Sarpedon indicated, it is *time* that induces the Homeric warrior to fight bravely; and *time* is essentially conferred by transfer of material goods.<sup>25</sup> But Achilles complained in *Iliad* 1 that he was the best warrior, that he did not get the best prizes, and that now, the final insult, he had been deprived of a prize already allotted. He might well claim that in Agamemnon's army *philophrosune* was not more advantageous, and if it is not more advantageous it is not choice-worthy.

Again, Achilles politely welcomes the ambassadors as *philoi* (197) and clearly he is emotionally affected by their presence; but *philotes* in Homer requires actual beneficial action when such action is needed,<sup>26</sup> and it becomes apparent during *Iliad* 9 that the Greeks have not in fact helped Achilles in his crisis.<sup>27</sup>

Odysseus now enumerates Agamemnon's offered gifts (262–99), but he evidently realizes that the gifts may not persuade Achilles (300–304):

"But if Agamemnon and his gifts have become all the more hateful to you, pity the Panachaeans who are suffering throughout the army. They will *tiein* you as they would *tiein* a god.<sup>28</sup> For you could win very great glory in their eyes. For now you might kill Hector,"

25. See "Honour," passim. Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus*, pp. 16–17, pays insufficient attention to the close links between *time* and material goods. The closing lines of Phoenix's speech furnish a very clear example.

26. See A. W. H. Adkins, "'Friendship' and 'Self-Sufficiency' in Homer and Aristotle," *CQ* 13 (1963): 30–45.

27. See below, pp. 305, 311–12.

28. For the meaning, see "Honour," passim, "Homeric Gods," pp. 3–11.

since Hector claims that none of the Greeks before Troy is a match for him and now comes close to the Greek army (304–6).

Odysseus concedes that Achilles' anger against Agamemnon may be too strong to allow Achilles to accept his gifts and he evidently regards such an attitude as reasonable; but he offers Achilles *time* from the other Greeks and plays upon his competitive spirit by reporting Hector's boasts to him.

Achilles makes a long and emotional reply in rejection of Agamemnon's offer and Odysseus' other inducements (308–429). He gives his first reasons in 315–20, and a careful translation is very important:

"I do not think that either Agamemnon son of Atreus or the other Greeks will persuade me, since it turns out there is/was no gratitude for always fighting relentlessly against enemy warriors. There is/was an equal *moira* [share] for one who stayed [back from the fighting] and for anyone who fought mightily. The *kakos* and the *esthlos* are/were in one and the same *time*, and the idle man and the man who has done much alike die/died."

In this passage the only present tense is *οἶω* (315), and the only future is *πείσμεν* (315); these certainly refer to Achilles' present and future behavior. Elsewhere, the only expressed tenses are the imperfect *ἦεν* (316), the optative *πολεμίζοι* (318), and the aorist *κάτθαν'* in 320. It is true that *ἦεν* is to be treated as an inferential imperfect,<sup>29</sup> *κάτθαν'* as a gnomic aorist, so that Achilles is primarily referring to the present. But to a Greek speaker the verb forms are identical with those used to express pastness. If Achilles wishes to avoid accepting the possibility that Agamemnon's present and future behavior to him will be different from his past behavior, the Greek language offers him resources for doing so which are not available in English. Achilles continues to recall Agamemnon's past actions and his own, using the imperfect or iterative tenses for the most part. In 330–36 the tenses are very expressive. Achilles was wont to give (*δόσκειν*) to Agamemnon all the booty he captured. Agamemnon used to stay behind (*μένων*, an echo of *μένοντι* in 318) and was wont to keep (333 *ἔχεσκειν*) much for himself and divide up (333 *δασάσκειτο*) a little for the others. He was wont to give (334 *δίδου*) other prizes to warriors and kings, and theirs remain in their possession. From Achilles alone of the Greeks did he take (336 *εἶλετ'*) a prize, and her he keeps (336 *ἔχει*), a bedfellow who pleases his *thumos*.

Achilles, then, emphasizes the characteristic pattern of his relationship with Agamemnon before turning to Agamemnon's single past act of taking Briseis, expressed by the aorist *εἶλετ'*, and his continuous possession of her up to the present, expressed by the present tense *ἔχει*. Attention has usually been drawn to Agamemnon's offer to swear an oath (9. 132) that he has not slept with Briseis, and Achilles' failure to mention the oath doubtless indicates his emotional state. But he is complaining not merely

29. See, e.g., J. D. Denniston, *Greek Particles*<sup>2</sup> (Oxford, 1966), pp. 36–37.

of the loss of Briseis but of Agamemnon's continued unfairness in dividing booty. Briseis is here the climax of Achilles' complaints: not merely are/were the shares consistently unfair, but Agamemnon does not even let Achilles keep what was distributed.

Odysseus suggested to Achilles the glory he could gain by killing Hector (9. 303–6). Achilles agrees that they cannot defeat Hector without him but says that he will go home to Phthia and that the booty he will take home from Troy, when added to his possessions in Phthia, will suffice him (347–67). Agamemnon's gifts are hateful to him, and no matter how many gifts he offered he could not persuade Achilles "until he has given full requital for the insult that grieves my *thumos*" (387). He declines to marry any daughter of Agamemnon, even should she have the beauty of Aphrodite and the skills of Athena. Let Agamemnon choose for his daughter some Achaean who is more kingly than Achilles (392). Peleus will find him a wife, the daughter of one of the *aristeis* who protect cities. Achilles is minded to go home and enjoy the property of Peleus. The wealth of Troy is not worth Achilles' life; and his mother has informed him that he has the choice of a long life without glory or a brief and glorious existence before he is killed in battle in the land of Troy. He advises all to return home, since Zeus is protecting Troy. At all events, they must make plans without him.

Should Achilles have been persuaded? What do we mean by "should" here? In *Iliad* 1, Achilles was in an *aischron* situation, Agamemnon was not. Agamemnon will be in a very *aischron* situation should the Greeks fail to take Troy. Failure to take Troy is not *aischron* for Achilles in the same way, since he is not commander-in-chief; and it is certainly not *aischron* for Achilles to refuse to help Agamemnon to capture Troy. Were it *aischron*, some speaker would have made the point during the attempts to placate Achilles. Furthermore, restitution of *time* is not a matter of mere arithmetic, for *time* is not merely material goods, but material goods with a high emotive charge. If a Homeric *agathos* loses *n* units of *time* as a result of another's action, the restoration of *n* units will not suffice to placate him. There must be an addition to soothe hurt feelings and restore self-confidence. And who, save the affronted party, can determine how large the addition should be? As in *Iliad* 1, no one can arbitrate effectively between Agamemnon and Achilles.

Nor are Achilles' doubts entirely unjustified. He complained about Agamemnon's habitual method of distributing booty as well as his loss of Briseis. Agamemnon has made no promise of changing his ways and indeed insisted that Achilles recognize his political superiority (9. 160–61). What guarantee has Achilles that Agamemnon will not behave in the same way again, should he feel that he can get away with it? No other *agathos* helped Achilles in *Iliad* 1,<sup>30</sup> and indeed the values of the *agathos* do not require that anyone should. One might argue that Agamemnon's

30. Though Agamemnon threatened not only Achilles with the loss of a prize but also Ajax and Odysseus, not even they (the present ambassadors) said a word to restrain Agamemnon.

son-in-law should be fairly safe; but it is evident (391–92) that Achilles is irked by the thought of being Agamemnon's son-in-law, doubtless because he might be—would be?—thought to have married above his station. The most effective method of demonstrating that it is more important to be *aristos* in warlike prowess than politically *aristos* is to allow the Greeks to fail to capture Troy. Once again, if we assume that Achilles' goal is to maximize his material *time*, achievement of the goal is being hampered by his values, by his need to demonstrate his *arete* to himself and others. If we suppose him to have changed his goal and that he now wishes to enjoy moderate prosperity quietly in Phthia, then Odysseus' speech entirely mistook the new situation. But Achilles said as early as *Iliad* 1. 169 that he would return to Phthia, and he has not yet done so; and he does not do so now, though there was/would have been time before Patroclus went out to fight. We should remember Sarpedon once again.<sup>31</sup> He would not have advised Glaucus to fight in the position of greatest danger if otherwise he would live for ever, but as it is, "Since countless *keres* of death stand nearby, and it is not possible for mortal to flee or escape them, let us go, and we shall either furnish *euchos* to another, or he to us" (12. 326–28). The importance of leaving behind an immortal memory of one's *arete* itself may work against the prudent maximizing either of one's *time* or of one's time to enjoy it. But Achilles is behaving in a manner entirely in accord with *arete*-values.

After an awed silence Phoenix bursts into tears and, as a beneficiary of Peleus who helped to bring up Achilles, says that he will not be parted from Achilles if Achilles is determined to return and will not defend the ships "since anger has fallen upon your *thumos*." Phoenix attributes Achilles' attitude to anger, but he does not censure it for that reason. Righteous indignation is eminently respectable in ancient Greece. He embarks upon the type of long digression beloved of the Homeric orator (438–95) before beginning his attempt to persuade Achilles. Then (496) he bids Achilles subdue his mighty *thumos*:

"The gods themselves can be turned aside from their purposes; and their *arete*, *time*, and strength are greater than a man's. Yet them do mortals turn aside with sacrifices and gentle prayers and fat and savor of sacrifice, praying when anyone transgresses and errs."

The parallel drawn by Phoenix between their beseeching Achilles and the average mortal praying to the Olympian gods is inexact. The average mortal cannot damage the *time* of the gods as seriously as Agamemnon damaged Achilles' *time*. Those few mortals who were admitted to the companionship of the gods and seriously damaged their *time* were not able to placate them: it is they—Tantalus, Sisyphus, and Ixion—who are punished after death in the Homeric Hades, from which punishment is otherwise absent.<sup>32</sup>

31. Above, pp. 292–94.

32. See *Merit and Responsibility*, pp. 67 and 81, n. 14.

Phoenix now produces his famous but rather obscure account of the Litai, prayers (502–14):

"The Prayers are the daughters of mighty Zeus. They are lame and wrinkled, and sidelong of glance; and they come behind Ate and observe her. Ate is strong and swift-footed, so that she far outruns all Prayers and arrives first over all the earth, harming mankind; but they heal the damage after her. The daughters of Zeus greatly benefit anyone who reveres them when they approach him, and they listen when he prays; but if anyone rebuffs them and replies in harsh terms, they go and pray to Zeus son of Cronos that Ate may come upon him, so that he may be harmed and *apotinein* [lose time]. But, Achilles, grant that *time* accompany the daughters of Zeus [i.e., that they receive *time*]*—time*, which prevails upon the mind of others too, *esthloi* though they be."

The connections of thought are a little obscure here. The three ambassadors have come to beseech Achilles to return to the fighting; the only *ate* mentioned thus far in *Iliad* 9 is Agamemnon's (115–16). So one might suppose the *ate* in question to be Agamemnon's and the prayers those of the three ambassadors. This interpretation fits the idea of Ate as swift-footed and Prayers as coming later to heal the damage; and 508–9 are compatible with the *ate* being Agamemnon's; but in 510–12 Phoenix seems to be threatening Achilles that, if he does not listen to the Prayers, they will go to beseech Zeus to send Ate upon Achilles. To this the relative swift-footedness of Ate seems irrelevant: the subject seems to have been changed. Now what is meant? Presumably not that Achilles is already displaying *ate*. There is no suggestion of this in *Iliad* 1–9 up to this point in Book 9 at all events, and the suggestion that his reply to Odysseus' prayer manifests *ate* ill suits the alleged slow-footedness of Litai and their tendency to arrive later. If it is meant that Achilles will subsequently display *ate*, precisely what constitutes his *ate*? When, in fact, is the word *ate* (or its cognates) used of Achilles, or by Achilles of himself, in the *Iliad*?

*Ate* is ascribed to Agamemnon in the *Iliad* more frequently than to any other hero.<sup>33</sup> If the passage concerning the Litai threatens Achilles with *ate* and the poet is capable of handling the idea as a theme of his poem rather than an obiter dictum, we should expect Achilles to lament his *ate* when Patroclus is killed or when he subsequently renounces his wrath against Agamemnon. In fact, when Patroclus exceeds Achilles' instructions the poet comments (16. 684–87):

"Patroclus, having given commands to his horses and to Automedon, pursued the

33. In the *Iliad*, *ἄαω* is used five times with reference to Agamemnon (8. 327, 9. 116, 9. 119, 19. 136, 19. 137), twice of Zeus (19. 95, 19. 113), once of Patroclus (16. 684), once of Oeneus (9. 537), once of Agastrophus (11. 340), and twice generally (19. 91, 19. 129). *ἄτῃ* is used six times with reference to a mental state of Agamemnon (1. 412, 2. 111, 9. 18, 16. 274, 19. 88, 19. 136), twice of Paris' mental state (6. 356, 24. 28), once of Dolon's (10. 391), and twice generally (8. 237, 24. 480). Of the other seven examples, six are used of the goddess, of which four refer to her general effect (9. 504, 9. 505, 9. 512, 19. 81), two to her effect upon Zeus on a particular occasion (19. 126, 19. 129), and one to the dazing effects of a physical blow (Patroclus, 16. 805). If the physical example is excluded, *ἄαω* and *ἄτῃ* are used eleven times of Agamemnon in the *Iliad*, ten times of other named individuals.



Trojans and Lycians and was filled with great *ate* (μέγ' ἄασθη), fool that he was. If he had followed Achilles' advice he would have escaped the evil doom of black death."

Patroclus' death is due to his own *ate*, not Achilles'. When Achilles makes his peace with Agamemnon, he says (19. 270–74):

"Father Zeus, you give great *atai* to men. Otherwise never would Agamemnon have utterly stirred up the anger in my chest nor ruthlessly<sup>34</sup> taken the girl away against my will. But Zeus wished death to come upon many of the Greeks."

Now if the Litai passage threatened Achilles as well as Agamemnon with *ate* and the poet now wished to indicate that Achilles realizes that *ate* has in fact come upon him, here is Homer's opportunity. But it seems impossible to read "never could Agamemnon have . . . stirred up the anger in my chest" as "never would I have acted from *ate*" (that is to say, Agamemnon would have done what he did, but I would not have been angry) in the light of the remainder of the sentence. The taking of Briseis manifests Agamemnon's *ate*. Agamemnon is the subject of both clauses, and nothing in the design of the sentence or the context suggests that Achilles is referring to two examples of *ate*, his own and Agamemnon's. Since *Iliad* 2. 111, Agamemnon has referred repeatedly to his own *ate*: if the poet wanted to convey to the audience as a pivotal idea of his poem that Achilles too was smitten with *ate* at least from *Iliad* 9, these are surely not suitable words with which to convey that message. Agamemnon displayed *ate* in taking Briseis from Achilles and in angering him (which is indeed the consequence of Agamemnon's taking Briseis). Achilles is in fact accepting Agamemnon's apology, agreeing that *ate* was the cause of Agamemnon's behavior, and accepting also his face-saving ascription of responsibility to Zeus.<sup>35</sup>

To return to *Iliad* 9. Phoenix now tells Achilles that if Agamemnon were not offering gifts Phoenix would not advise Achilles to return to the fighting (515). But he is offering abundant gifts, and he has sent *aristoi* who are *philtatoi* to Achilles to beseech him. Phoenix begs Achilles not to "put to shame the speeches or feet" of the ambassadors, saying that it was not *nemesseton* for Achilles to be angry before (522).

Phoenix is evidently arguing that Agamemnon's gifts and his choice of ambassadors have changed the situation, and many scholars have argued that Achilles is in the wrong at least from this point in *Iliad* 9 onward. But the situation must be evaluated in Homeric terms. All three ambassadors argue that a condition of *philotes* now exists—or should exist—between Agamemnon and the Greek army on the one side and Achilles on the other or, if Achilles' anger against Agamemnon is implacable, between the Greeks in general and Achilles. But Achilles is not bound to accept the ambassadors' arguments, and I have given a number of reasons arising from Homeric values why he should not accept them.

34. Ἀμύχανος is rendered "irresistibly" by the lexica, but Achilles would not have conceded that Agamemnon was stronger than he.

35. For which see E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley, 1951), ch. 1. Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus*, p. 23, assumes without argument that Achilles is referring to his own *ate*.

Furthermore, most scholars who have discussed Achilles' behavior here have failed to observe that a precisely similar situation occurs at the climax of the *Odyssey*. In *Odyssey* 22 Odysseus shoots Antinous and reveals his own identity. In reply, Eurymachus blames Antinous, saying that Antinous' plan was to murder Telemachus and become king of Ithaca himself. But he beseeches Odysseus to spare his own people. (He evidently hopes to include the suitors and Odysseus in the same cooperating group, and this is the strategy of the ambassadors to Achilles also.) Eurymachus offers "*time* worth twenty cattle" from each suitor and gold and silver, until Odysseus' heart is gladdened. "Up to that time it is not *nemesseton* for you to be angry."

Eurymachus uses the same words as Phoenix. (The phrase occurs only on these two occasions in the Homeric poems.) Odysseus is as unmoved as was Achilles, saying that if the suitors gave him all their patrimony and anything else they could offer he would still kill them all; and he carries out his threat. No other human being has the authority to arbitrate between Odysseus and the suitors or between Achilles and Agamemnon: only Achilles and Odysseus in their respective poems can decide how much compensation is enough.

In slaying the suitors Odysseus has not imposed a judicial penalty on them. He has declared war on them and in doing so has destroyed "the bulwark of the polis, the *aristoi* of the youths in Ithaca." Odysseus and his like were termed *agathos*, and given *time*, originally because they were deemed most effective in attaining the necessary goal of security for the community.<sup>36</sup> To manifest or reassert his *arete* and regain his *time*, Odysseus has diminished the community's ability to defend itself successfully, as in their own way did Hector and—deliberately—Achilles.<sup>37</sup>

When the suitors' relatives learn what Odysseus has done, they severally bury their own dead and call an assembly. Eupheithes, the father of Antinous, reflects on the many *esthloi* and ships that Odysseus lost on his travels and the *aristoi* he has killed on his return. The relatives will all be ashamed forever if they do not take revenge; Eupheithes himself would find life not worth living (*Od.* 24. 426–37). But now Medon, Odysseus' herald, arrives and says that the gods were on Odysseus' side and gives eyewitness testimony that one deity (Athena) was present in person (24. 443–49). Halitherses rebukes the suitors' parents (24. 454–62), saying that they should have restrained their sons from performing a *mega ergon* (458). He advises them not to go, for they may draw down upon themselves additional harm. Nevertheless, more than half of them do. A brief skirmish ensues, Eupheithes is killed by the aged Laertes (521–25), and Odysseus and Telemachus would have killed all the rest (528) had not Athena bidden them stop (529–32) and Zeus hurled a thunderbolt (539). Oaths are then administered (24. 545–48).

36. See *Merit and Responsibility*, ch. 3. The Bow-Test is a test of *arete*, as the suitors realize (*Od.* 21. 325–29).

37. See p. 313 for Hector.

The suitors' parents are naturally bitterly grieved and resentful at Odysseus' action and wish to wipe out the shame that would be theirs if they did not take revenge. But those not directly involved as kin—Medon, Halitherses, Zeus, and Athena—clearly do not blame Odysseus for what he has done, which was indeed planned by Athena (24. 478–86). Medon warns the parents that a god was helping Odysseus, and Halitherses blames them for not restraining the suitors. Since Odysseus is not censured for rejecting the suitors' offered compensation, have we any reason to suppose that Achilles is censured for rejecting Agamemnon's? Scholars who see a difference between the values of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* usually regard the *Odyssey* as more "advanced."<sup>38</sup>

Phoenix now embarks upon one of the illustrative digressions beloved of the Homeric orator (524–605). He draws a parallel between the situation of Achilles and that of Meleager, upon whom also came anger, "which swells the mind in the chest even of those who are wise." Meleager in anger refused to defend his city though the old men besought him and promised him a great gift (576). His father Oeneus besought him, as did his sisters, his mother, and his *philtatoi* comrades. Meleager refused. But when the enemy were about to burn the city, Meleager's wife besought him; and Meleager then armed himself and drove away the enemy; but he received no gifts, evidently because he had to defend the city or perish himself. Phoenix points the relevance to Achilles' case (600–605):

"But do you not have these thoughts in your mind, and may not a *daimon* turn you in that direction, my *philos*. It would be worse [*kakion*, more harmful to you] to defend the ships when they are burning. Rather return now to the fighting when you are offered gifts, for the Achaeans will *tiein* you equally with a god. But if you go to the man-destroying war without gifts, you will not be equally *timeeis*, though you have driven away the war."

The purpose of this digression is to point out that one may lose *time*, gifts, by delaying one's aid for too long. Meleager is not censured; and the word *ate* is not applied to his state of mind or to his condition when he has lost *time*, gifts. But since the acquisition of *time* is the goal of the Homeric warrior, the suggestion that Achilles may lose *time* by delay might be expected to move him.

But Achilles replies (607–19) that he does not need this *time*; he thinks he possesses *time* as a result of the *aisa*, apportionment, of Zeus. In consequence, he will remain by the ships as long as he lives.<sup>39</sup> He reproves Phoenix for taking Agamemnon's part. He says that it is *kalon* for Phoenix to have the same friends and enemies as Achilles, since Phoenix is his *philos*.

As was said above, only Achilles can decide how much *time* is enough. Here he says—rather obscurely—that he has enough *time* from Zeus.

38. One might claim that the audience was intended to reject the values of the *Odyssey* also. The general question of rejection of values is discussed at pp. 314–15.

39. In the *Iliad* Achilles sometimes speaks as if he intended to return to Phthia at once, sometimes as if he intended to remain by the ships, even in the same speech (contrast 9. 608–10 and 9. 618–19). Presumably the poet thus expresses Achilles' anger and agitation.

Presumably he is alluding to the fact that Zeus' hampering of the Greeks increases Achilles' status.

Phoenix makes no response. Now Ajax makes his attempt (624–42). He advises Odysseus that they should return to the other Greeks and report failure. Until 636 he does not address Achilles in the second person but refers to him in his presence in the third person, which in itself seems unlikely to placate Achilles. He says that Achilles has made his "great-hearted spirit" fierce and that Achilles is stubborn and pitiless and does not take account of the *philotes* of his comrades with which they used to *tiein* him by the ships above all others. Even the kin of a murdered man accept compensation, but (and here he returns to Achilles), "The gods have put an implacable and *kakos*<sup>40</sup> spirit in you because of one girl; but we are offering you seven excellent girls and many other things as well" (637). He begs Achilles to be favorable to them and to revere his "hall." The embassy is under Achilles' roof, and they are eager to be "nearest and dearest," most *philoi* of all the Achaeans.

Achilles says in reply that all that Ajax said was spoken *kata thumon*. "But my heart swells with anger when I remember with what indignity Agamemnon treated me among the Greeks, as if I were an *atimetos metanastes*, a wanderer without *time*." He says that he will fight when Hector reaches the ships and indeed when he reaches Achilles' own ship. The ambassadors are naturally downcast; but how unreasonable is Achilles' attitude? Ajax is contrasting Agamemnon's behavior with that of the rest of the Greeks. By "we used to *tiein* him" (631) Ajax evidently means that the Greeks, in dividing up booty, gave him a good share; but (a) Agamemnon received a better share, and this is part of the ground for Achilles' anger from *Iliad* 1 onward, (b) Achilles has rejected Agamemnon's gifts, and there has been no mention of the other Greeks giving him placating gifts, (c) as Achilles has just said, Agamemnon treated him as if he were a mere nobody, a wandering beggar, and (as Achilles might have added) the other Greek *agathoi* did nothing to restrain Agamemnon and nothing has been said to suggest that they would do anything in the future should the situation recur.<sup>41</sup> Agamemnon expressed his intention of taking Briseis at a full assembly; and the present ambassadors, Odysseus, the cleverest of the Greeks, and Ajax, one of the doughtiest, together with all the other *agathoi*, sat there and said nothing. Had they all threat-

40. That is to say, a *thumos* hurtful to the other Greeks, as, e.g., a *kake eris* is a hurtful *eris* (*Il.* 3. 7).

41. One might suppose that Halitherses' rebuke of the suitors' parents for not restraining their children (above, p. 309) represented a development in values. Possibly; but that a parent should control his children must be expected (by the parent himself, as well as by the community) long before extrafamilial intervention is expected. (Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus*, p. 19, claims that Achilles "knows . . . what he ought to do." This judgment rests on "in accordance with my *thumos*," which suggests rather an emotional response, as in *Il.* 1. 136, where Agamemnon asks for a prize "in accordance with my *thumos*.") In terms of "ought," one might inquire whether Achilles should maximize his *time* or emphasize his *arete*, if the two are incompatible. The maintenance of one's self-image as an *agathos* takes precedence; and it is this self-image which Agamemnon's behavior has damaged for Achilles and which he wishes to restore by watching Agamemnon go down to disaster for lack of his help.

ened to go home if Agamemnon took Briseis, Agamemnon would have been compelled to abandon his intent.

Homeric values do not require the other chieftains to take Achilles' part in a dispute with Agamemnon and actively restrain him from depriving Achilles of Briseis. Achilles could not effectively censure them for failing to do so. Indeed, he is evidently not even angry with them. But he might well be unmoved by their protestations of past *philotes* and *time*, which require effective action. (Their "eagerness" [641 μέμαμεν] to be "nearest and most *philoi*" to Achilles surely betrays their realization that they have not helped Achilles when Achilles needed help.) *Philophrosune* is choiceworthy because—or when—it is *ameinon*, more beneficial, for the person who displays it; and in Agamemnon's army *philophrosune* has proved not to be *ameinon*, for Achilles at all events. When Achilles in his final reply to the embassy reverts to Agamemnon's treatment of him, his behavior is not childish nor unreasonable: however the rest of the Greeks behave to him, he has no guarantee of better treatment from Agamemnon in the future or of assistance from the other Greek leaders, should Agamemnon behave similarly again.

When the embassy returns, Agamemnon asks Odysseus (673–75) whether Achilles has been persuaded, "or does anger still possess his great-hearted spirit?" Agamemnon evidently quite expects Achilles to refuse, and he utters no word of censure. Nor does Diomedes. He expresses regret that Agamemnon sent the embassy, since it will make Achilles prouder (*agēnōr*) than ever; but such pride is not a reprehensible quality in the world of the poems.

I conclude that, though the ambassadors and the Greeks in general regret Achilles' behavior, they are unable effectively to censure it in terms of the Homeric values which evoked the behavior in the first place, whereas Agamemnon's behavior is repeatedly censured, both by others and by himself, for it has led to an ignominious failure.

In *Iliad* 19 Achilles gives up his wrath against Agamemnon. Indeed, Achilles renounced it when Patroclus was killed; but the formal apology of Agamemnon is made here. Agamemnon says (85–91):

"The Greeks often . . . assailed me with hostile language [because of my treatment of Achilles]; but I am not the cause, *aitios*; rather Zeus and Moira and the Fury that walks in darkness are the cause, the powers which cast fierce *ate*, blindness, into my mind in the assembly on that day when I myself took Achilles' prize from him. But what could I do? The goddess brings all things to pass, *Ate*, the eldest daughter of Zeus, the powerful one, who blinds everyone."

It is even clearer than in *Iliad* 9 that Agamemnon is not admitting to a moral blindness. He compares his blindness with that of Zeus on the day when Alcmena was to give birth to Zeus' son Heracles. Hera hated Heracles already and induced Zeus to promise that the son of his who was born that day should rule. Zeus, discerning no deceit, promised; whereupon Hera delayed the birth of Heracles and advanced that of Eurystheus, another child of Zeus' blood. Zeus' promise was fulfilled in the person of Eurystheus, for whom Heracles performed his labors.

If there is a moral failing here, it is not on Zeus' part but Hera's. Zeus was cheated and made a mistake, and it is to "mistake" that Agamemnon is assimilating his behavior toward Achilles. The reason seems clear. Agamemnon's primary goal is to capture Troy. It must be, for as commander-in-chief of the Greek army he would suffer both great disadvantage and also great shame, *elencheie*, were Troy not to be captured, as Odysseus said in *Iliad* 2. 284–98, and his condition would be very *aischron*. Agamemnon knows that he wishes to avoid *elencheie* and what is *aischron*, for both are conditions which the Homeric *agathos* must at all times avoid. Only a mistake could have brought Agamemnon to such a situation, and we can perceive the nature of the mistake. Agamemnon had two goals: to capture Troy and to take Briseis from Achilles. He believed his goals to be compatible; but he soon discovered that they were not, for the absence of Achilles brought disaster upon the Greek army. Having discovered the incompatibility of his goals, he naturally renounces the minor for the sake of the major, acknowledges his mistake, and does his best to bring Achilles back into the fighting. Had Agamemnon been able to take Briseis, and offend Achilles, without diminishing the effectiveness of the Greek expeditionary force, he would not have regarded his action as caused by *ate* and could not have been effectively rebuked, since he would not have been harming his *arete* in any way. In that case, Achilles could have returned to Phthia or sat idly on the seashore, as he preferred: he, not Agamemnon, would have been *atimos*, and the situation would have been *aischron* for Achilles, not Agamemnon.

Hector's evaluation of his position in *Iliad* 22 is in an important respect similar. True, Achilles and Agamemnon are attacking while Hector is defending; Achilles and Agamemnon are trying to win while Hector and the Trojans are desperately trying not to lose; provided they survive, Achilles and Agamemnon can return to their own palaces, even if the expedition is a failure, while failure for Hector and the Trojans means death or slavery. Yet Hector, like Achilles and Agamemnon, can be induced by his values to prefer his own glory, status, and reputation as a warrior—even at the cost of his own life—to the well-being of the polis for whose defense he is primarily responsible.

In *Iliad* 22, Hector remains alone outside the walls of Troy awaiting the approach of Achilles who will fight him in single combat. Priam, his father, implores him to retreat within the walls, to live and fight another day. Achilles is much stronger than Hector; he has already killed many of Priam's numerous sons. Indeed, even now Priam cannot see Lycaon and Polydorus among the routed Trojan army. If they are dead, Priam and Hecuba will be grieved, but the Trojans in general will be much less grieved, provided that Hector does not fall at the hands of Achilles. Let Hector come within the walls, so that he may keep the Trojans safe and that Priam may not see Troy sacked and destroyed in his old age. Hecuba displays her breasts and adds an emotional plea.

We may recall Nestor's attempt to mediate in *Iliad* 1 by reminding Achilles and Agamemnon of the greater good of the Greek army. Hector is as unmoved as were Achilles and Agamemnon. He reflects that if he

retreats within the walls Polydamas will bring *elencheie* upon him. Polydamas advised retreat on the night when Achilles returned to the fighting. Hector did not take his advice. Better if he had done so, for Trojan casualties have been heavy (104–7):

“But now, since I have destroyed the people by my folly, I feel *aidos*, shame, before the Trojans, men and women, lest someone more *kakos* than I should say, ‘Hector, relying on his might, has destroyed the city.’”

Such words from an inferior would increase Hector’s *elencheie* and shame. Better, he reflects, to meet Achilles and kill him (which would of course be glorious, though Hector cannot hope to achieve it) or perish at Achilles’ hands with fair fame (*eukleiōs*) before the city. Hector also considers the possibility of laying down his weapons and offering to return Helen and her possessions and give half of the wealth of Troy to the Greeks. But if he approaches Achilles unarmed, Achilles will not pity or respect him but will kill him “like a woman.”

Hector will not withdraw into the city because he fears that Polydamas, or some *kakos*, may shame him; and he will not try to negotiate a settlement with Achilles because Achilles might kill him unarmed, which would be both harmful and shameful for him. Avoidance of disgrace for himself prevents him from considering the interests of the polis as a whole. The resemblance to the behavior of Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 is in this respect very close.

These are *prima facie* the values of the Greek and Trojan warriors portrayed in the Homeric poems, accepted by characters, poet, and audience alike. Assume for the moment that the values are as described and recall Sarpedon’s explanation why the best-armed soldiers are given great *time* by the other members of society: do their inferiors get value for the *time* given, and do the services performed by the warriors warrant their being termed *agathoi* and accorded the most powerful word of praise for a man available in the society? Again, does the *agathos*’ view of what is required of him by his *arete*—his values—enable him on all occasions most effectively to attain either his own goals or those of society in general?

That all the members of a society like that portrayed in the Homeric poems, a society of virtually autonomous oikoi in peace and virtually autonomous contingents in war, should value most highly those best able to insure the continued existence of the group and also those qualities in the favored individuals—the warrior excellences—which are thought to be most effective in achieving that goal is not surprising. Furthermore, a just but ineffective warrior would evidently be much more disastrous as the head of an oikos or army contingent than would an effective but unjust warrior, and we may suppose that anyone in such a society would tolerate some injustice, if need be, in exchange for effective protection. But it appears that the values of the warrior, his need to behave in a manner which will reassure him of his *arete*, may readily lead him to courses of action which prevent the attainment either of the society’s goals or his own.

In consequence, some scholars deny that the values of the poem are

the values of the poet and claim that the original audience was intended by the poet to reject these values in favor of others.<sup>42</sup> The rest of this paper will consider this claim.

There are three ways in which such rejection could be achieved. The poet might explicitly reject the values in some part of the *Iliad* not yet discussed, or he could indicate their unacceptability by showing how their acceptance leads to intolerable results, or the audience might already hold values which would lead them to reject the values of Homer's characters.

Consider first the possibility that the poet explicitly rejects the values of the Homeric warrior. Since there is a widespread belief that *Iliad* 24 in some sense cancels the values of the earlier books, *Iliad* 24 must be examined in some detail. Emphasis is usually laid upon the meeting between Achilles and Priam, but we should examine that scene in its context before deciding what effect it was intended to produce on the reader or audience in early Greece.

At the beginning of *Iliad* 24, the values are those of the earlier books. Achilles continues to drag the corpse of Hector around Patroclus' tomb. Most of the gods disapprove, but the partisans of the Greeks—Hera, Poseidon, and Athena—oppose the suggestion that Hermes steal the corpse (*Il.* 24. 23–26). Apollo then berates the gods for their hardness of heart. Did not Hector sacrifice to them? Surely they should enable Priam to bury his son. They are helping the fierce and pitiless Achilles. Others have lost dearer friends or relations without behaving in this manner. "Perhaps, *agathos* though he be, we may be angry with him."

Hera replies in a fury. To behave as Apollo suggests would be to assign equal *time* to Achilles and Hector. But Hector is a mere mortal, whereas Achilles is the son of a goddess, a goddess whom Hera brought up and gave in marriage to Peleus. "You gods all went to the wedding; and you took your lyre to the feast, comrade of *kakoi*, ever disloyal."

In Hera's eyes, to give the same *time* to a mere mortal and to Achilles would be shocking; for, though Achilles must die, he is descended from the gods—and in a legal marriage, too, not as the fruit of one of Zeus' roving amours. Achilles merits more *time* since he is more *agathos*; Hector is dismissed by Hera as a mere *kakos*. No god evaluates the situation differently, but Zeus mediates. Hera may be assured (66): Hector and Achilles shall not have the same *time*. Yet Hector was most *philos* of the mortals in Ilium, for he always gave due sacrifice. Let the gods accordingly send Achilles' mother Thetis to tell Achilles to accept an appropriate ransom for Hector's body from Priam, while Iris shall be sent to Priam to tell him to ransom his son and take gifts to Achilles to gladden his *thumos* (119). Priam is to have Hector's body, for Hector's sacrifices have established a claim against deity and constitute him a *philos*,<sup>43</sup> but Achilles is not to give up the body gratis, as Agamemnon was compelled to sur-

42. Most recently, E. A. Havelock in *The Greek Concept of Justice from Its Shadow in Homer to Its Substance in Plato* (Cambridge, Mass., 1978); but the list of scholars who have simply assumed that Homer and his earliest audiences must have agreed with them in values, even though Homer's characters do not, is very long indeed.

43. See "Friendship," *passim*, and "Homeric Gods," pp. 11–17.



render Chryseis in *Iliad* 1. He is to receive a large ransom, *time*, for his claims as one of higher status than Hector cannot be gainsaid.

The evaluations, based on *arete*, *time*, and *philotes*, are traditional. There is no change here.<sup>44</sup>

Thetis gives Achilles Zeus' message, with some advice of her own:

"My child, how long will you eat out your heart in grief and woe, with no thought of food or bed? It is good for you to go to bed with a woman, for you will not live long. Already death and harsh *moira* are standing by you. Listen to me straightway. I bring you a command from Zeus. He says that the gods are angry with you and that he is worth more than all the other immortals because with maddened mind you retain Hector by the ships and have not accepted a ransom for him. Come now, ransom him; receive a ransom for the corpse."

Achilles replies forthwith: "So be it. If the Olympian himself bids me do this . . . whoever brings the ransom may take away the body" (138). Achilles complies immediately, as he complied with Athena's instructions in *Iliad* 1; and as in *Iliad* 1, there is a quid pro quo: a large ransom is guaranteed.

When Iris goes to Priam to bid him ransom Hector's corpse (159–87), there is much altercation between Hecuba and Priam (194–227), who disagree about the manner in which Achilles is likely to treat Priam. But what is of most interest here is Priam's evaluation of the Trojans who cross his path at this time (239–46):

"Begone, worthless wretches, causes of shame (*elencheie*). Have you not reasons for lament of your own at home, in that you come plaguing me? Is it not sufficient for you that Zeus has brought on me the grief of losing the *aristos* of my sons? But you yourselves will come to realize this. For you will be an easier prey for the Greeks now that he is dead."

He then turns to his sorrowing sons and rebukes them (253–62):

"Bestir yourselves, *kaka* [inferior] children, causes of shame. Would that all of you had been slain by the ships rather than Hector. All wretched am I, since I begat *aristoi* sons in broad Troy, of whom not one, I say, is left, godlike Mestor and Troilus the warrior charioteer and Hector who was a god among men and seemed to be the child not of a mortal man but of a god. Ares killed them, and all that are left are causes of shame (*elenchea*), liars and dancers, best (*aristoi*) at choral dancing, plunderers of lambs and kids among your own people."

Evidently Priam still admires the warrior excellences most highly. The reason is clear: Hector was a bulwark of Troy and the Trojans, and Troy and the Trojans will now be much easier for the Greeks to capture and to kill. There is no indication that Priam realizes that these selfsame warrior values induced Hector to die in hopeless combat with Achilles rather than retreating with the other Trojan warriors into Troy, to fight and defend Troy another day.

When the disguised Hermes meets Priam as he is driving the wagon

44. See "Homeric Gods," passim. Lloyd-Jones' discussion of *Iliad* 24, *Justice of Zeus*, p. 22, omits all mention of the values discussed here, even though Zeus' values are involved.

with the ransom over the Trojan plain, he emphasizes Priam's danger but says that he will do Priam no harm and will indeed protect him from others, since he likens Priam to his own father (371). He thus introduces a motif which will be more fully employed when Priam and Achilles meet. Hermes also asks whether the Trojans are now abandoning their city in terror, since the *aristos* of the Trojans is dead. Once again Hector receives the usual Homeric evaluation for a brave warrior: there is no criticism of his behavior.

Hermes has introduced himself as one of Achilles' Myrmidons. Priam offers him a gift in recompense for his aid, but the supposed Myrmidon refuses in fear of what Achilles would do if he deprived Achilles of part of the ransom. Achilles' response to the deprivation of an already distributed prize occasioned the woes of the Greek army throughout most of the *Iliad*. He was then concerned both with loss of material *time* and with loss of status before the whole Greek army. Hermes now expects Achilles to be equally angry at the loss of a gift not yet given, where no similar loss of status would be involved. The picture so far is not that of a less irascible Achilles. But perhaps Homer is preparing for a sudden *coup de théâtre*.

Hermes safely conducts Priam to Achilles' "tent" and leaves him with the advice to go in and clasp the knees of Achilles and beseech him in the name of his father, his mother, and his child, in order to stir up Achilles' *thumos* (465–67). Priam does so. He bids Achilles to remember his own father, to remember that those who live near Peleus may well be causing him woe, since he has no effective defender. But Peleus can still hope that Achilles, his one son, will return safely, whereas Priam had many *aristoi* sons, all of whom are dead, and (499–506):

"The one remaining son, Hector, who protected the city and its inhabitants—him you slew recently, defending his fatherland. For his sake I have come to the ships of the Greeks to ransom his body from you; and I bring boundless ransom. But reverence the gods, Achilles, and pity me myself, remembering your own father. I am the more pitiable, for I have endured what no other mortal man yet endured, to bring to my mouth the hand of the man who slew my son."

The immediate consequence of this speech is that Achilles remembers and laments Peleus and Patroclus, and Priam, man-slaying Hector (509 Έκτορος ἀνδροφόνου). "Man-slaying" is an epithet used eleven times (out of sixteen occurrences in all) of Hector in the *Iliad*. Those who find new values in *Iliad* 24 are presumably likely to find the epithet inappropriate, since one would expect different aspects of Hector's character to be emphasized, if their interpretation were correct. Such interpreters might term "man-slaying" a thoughtless application of a common formula or an adjective intended to indicate to the audience the inappropriateness of the values of the earlier books of the *Iliad*, which have brought Priam and the Trojans to such a situation as this. But it is worth observing that no rejection of the values of the earlier books has been observable thus far, that it is as a mighty warrior and defender that Hector has been

remembered and praised, and that there is no way of being a mighty warrior and defender without killing men.

But after lamenting Peleus and Patroclus, Achilles begins to pity Priam's misfortunes and his most recent woe of having to come face to face with the man who has slain so many of Priam's *esthloi* sons. Priam must have an iron heart. He now bids Priam to sit down and try to control his grief: "For the gods have spun for wretched mortals the lot of living in woe, while they themselves are free from care" (525–26).

There follows the famous account of the Jars at the Threshold of Zeus. Though some may have a life which is all *kaka*, woes, none may have a life that is all blessings, as witness Peleus and Priam. Priam was blessed in his wealth, his power, his family, for most of his life, but (547–50):

"Since the heavenly gods brought woe upon you, ever are there battles and the slaughter of men around the city. Endure, do not grieve incessantly in your *thumos*. For you will achieve nothing by lamenting for your son."

This scene is one of the most poignant in Greek literature, but its poignancy should not lead us to ascribe values and insights to it which are not present. Zeus is portrayed as sending upon mankind woes over whose existence they have no control, and wars are as "given" as plagues and famines. There is no reflection in the text that, had men different values and different social and political organization, wars might be avoided. (I am not suggesting that such reflection would be appropriate to an oral epic poem.<sup>45</sup> Far from it: I am merely arguing against those who see as the "message" of the *Iliad* an implied or explicit quietism or pacifism or suppose its goal to be the inculcation of justice and cooperative excellences.)

Priam asks that there be no delay (552–58). Let Achilles receive the ransom at once, and allow Priam to see the body of Hector. Immediately Achilles replies, "Do not anger me, old man" (560). He intends to grant possession of the body to Priam; Thetis came from Zeus to bid him to do so; he realizes that Priam could not have reached Achilles' tent safely without divine aid. Yet he must warn Priam: "Do not stir up my *thumos* further in my grief, lest I do not spare even you in my tent, suppliant though you are, and I wrongfully disobey the orders of Zeus" (568–70).<sup>46</sup>

Priam obeys in fear and trembling. Achilles springs into action "like a lion" with two comrades and unloads the ransom. He gives orders to attendants to wash and anoint the corpse of Hector so that Priam may not see it in its present state lest "[Priam] should not check his anger in his grieving heart when he sees his son, and Achilles' heart should be stirred up, and Achilles kill Priam and disobey the commands of Zeus" (584–86). Despite the scene of sympathy and indeed empathy through which he has just passed, despite the reflections that woes are sent by the

45. Even in the fifth century Bacchylides ascribes war and civil strife to *aisa*, one's lot. See A. W. H. Adkins, *Moral Values and Political Behavior in Ancient Greece* (London and Toronto, 1972), p. 95.

46. The orders transmitted by Thetis, not the general prohibition against harming accepted suppliants, seem to be meant.

gods and that mankind must bear them as best they can, Priam shows no sign of resignation here. Righteous indignation may break forth at any moment. Achilles' situation may appear less fraught with emotion. Yet it is feared that he too may be angry, whether in response to Priam's insistence on seeing Hector now or in response to Priam's anger at seeing the unwashed corpse of Hector. In *Iliad* 1 Achilles was enraged at losing a live girl for whom he felt at least a powerful sexual desire.<sup>47</sup> He gave her up without immediate recompense and refrained from killing Agamemnon, who took her, because Athena commanded him not to and promised threefold recompense in the future. In *Iliad* 24 Achilles fears he may become enraged and kill Priam if Priam tries to insist that the body be given up to him quickly. Zeus himself has bidden Achilles give up the body in exchange for abundant ransom already present. Is this a less irascible Achilles endowed with new insights and values? It might be argued that Achilles is more irascible than in *Iliad* 1, since the corpse of Hector is of no conceivable practical use to him; one might reply that throughout the later books of the *Iliad* Achilles' primary motive is his grief for Patroclus and that Hector killed Patroclus. At all events, Achilles is not less irascible in *Iliad* 24 than in *Iliad* 1 and possesses no discernible new insights.

Now Achilles apostrophizes Patroclus (592–95):

"Do not be angry with me, Patroclus, if you hear, even though you are in Hades, that I have given up glorious Hector to his father, since he gave me no unseemly ransom. I will give you an appropriate share of these things too."

Achilles and Priam are grieved and may become angry. Patroclus may become angry if he learns that Hector has been restored to Priam; but Achilles hopes that an appropriate allocation of *time* may avert Patroclus' anger, just as it is hoped that Achilles' grief and anger may be assuaged by the *time* he has received from Priam. The gifts may not achieve this purpose. As in *Iliad* 9, anger may be unappeasable; but the method of appeasement in *Iliad* 24 is that of the rest of the *Iliad*, and the values and attitudes of the characters are unchanged.

When Hector is brought back within the walls of Troy, lamentations are uttered over him. Andromache speaks first, "holding the head of man-slaying Hector in her hands." Her speech is worth quoting in full, since it furnishes an ideal opportunity for the poet to express any insights and doubts he may have about his characters' values. Andromache says (725–45):

"Husband,<sup>48</sup> you have perished young from life, and you leave me widowed in your halls. Our son is still an infant, the son whom you and I bore, unhappy ones. I do not think he will come to manhood. Ere that this city will be utterly sacked; for you have perished, you its guardian who were wont to protect it and kept safe its wives and

47. Briseis' status as *time* is more important. After all the indignation of *Iliad* 9, Achilles is sleeping with another girl-prize in 9. 664–65. Were the *Iliad* concerned with romantic love, Homer might be hinting at Achilles' insincerity; but Achilles' indignation at losing *time* is perfectly sincere.

48. Literally, "man." The connotation of "warrior" is also present.

infant children. They will soon depart on the swift ships, and I with them; and you, my child, will either accompany me, and perform unseemly tasks (*erga aeikea*), toiling for a harsh lord, or one of the Greeks will take you and hurl you in anger to a grievous death from the tower, a Greek whose brother or father, or even son, Hector slew, since very many of the Greeks bit the dust at Hector's hands. For your father was not gentle in the baneful fighting; *and so* the people are bewailing him throughout the city, and you have left a dreadful grief and woe for your parents, Hector; and for me especially bitter griefs remain, for as you were dying you did not stretch out your hands from the bed to me, nor did you say any wise word, which I might ever remember as I weep for you night and day" (emphasis added).

There are no new insights here. Hector was the best and bravest defender of Troy. He was admired in life, and is mourned in death, for his warrior excellences. He kept Troy safe, with its wives and children. There is no hope now. Astyanax may be singled out for revenge by a Greek who has lost a close relative at Hector's hands, but Hector is not blamed for this. Hector's warrior might is the reason why his son may be killed, but it is also why the people of Troy, and Priam and Hecuba, feel special grief at his death. (Cf. what Priam said in *Iliad* 22. 46–55, discussed above.<sup>49</sup>) There is no complaint of any kind about Hector's values or behavior and no reflection that the personal hero-values of Hector have led to his death and to the doom of Troy, much less that were values different war might be averted.

Hecuba takes up a theme which runs through *Iliad* 24 but is by no means peculiar to it: it is beneficial to sacrifice to the Olympian gods (748–59). As a mere mortal, one may not have the same *time* as Achilles, and a large ransom may have to be paid for one's body; but the gods will see to it that Achilles can do that body no harm, try as he may. These are hardly new values and are certainly not the values that some have claimed for *Iliad* 24.

Helen speaks last, recalling the many kindnesses Hector, and Hector alone, did her while she has been in Troy, the cause of the Trojan War (762–75). She has no word of criticism for Hector.<sup>50</sup>

49. Above, p. 313.

50. Helen does not criticize Hector, and there is no indication that the poet wishes to find fault. Some modern readers may well suppose that the Trojans should have sent Helen back to Greece on the next ship or at all events have handed her and her possessions over to the Greeks as soon as the expeditionary force arrived; but, though the Trojans or Priam himself could presumably have imposed such a solution at any time, they did not; and Priam's sole relevant comment on the subject (*Il.* 3. 164–65) is that not Helen but the gods are responsible for the situation. (Lloyd-Jones, *Justice of Zeus*, p. 24, maintains that this usage of "not *aitios*" is, like the other usages in Homer, not exculpatory; but Priam apparently adduces it as a reason for treating Helen kindly, while Agamemnon's claim to be not *aitios*, *Il.* 19. 86, does not alter the attitude of the other Greeks to him or to his actions.) In Priam's eyes, it was the gods who brought upon him the war with the Greeks—an attitude to the causation of wars precisely similar to that of the Jars of Zeus (*Il.* 24. 527–33, discussed above, p. 318). Immediately before Priam's comment, Trojan elders, explicitly said to be prudent (3. 148 *πεινυμένω*), say that it is reasonable for the Greeks and Trojans to suffer woes for a long time for such a woman, whose beauty is like that of immortal goddesses. True, they add that nevertheless she should now be returned on shipboard and cease to be a bane to them and their children. But even this is uttered in the text of the proposed single combat between Paris and Menelaus: there is no suggestion that Helen should now be handed over unless Menelaus kills Paris. Furthermore, both in *Iliad* 3 and in *Iliad* 24 all the terminology used implies that Paris and Helen are man and wife (e.g., Helen speaks of Priam as her father-in-law, *Il.* 3. 172, 24. 770).

The function of these laments in the poem is apparently to sum up the life of Hector in its different relationships: he was a gallant defender of Troy against its foes, he fulfilled the requirements of the Olympian religion, and he was gentle to those within the city whom it was his function to protect—even Helen.

Throughout *Iliad* 24 there seems to be no overt criticism or alteration of the heroic values of the poem, as these are expressed in the earlier books. However, it is worth considering one more incident in the *Iliad* where such criticism might be expected to occur.

On learning of the death of Patroclus (*Il.* 18. 20) Achilles is distraught. His lamentations are heard by his mother Thetis in the depths of the sea, and she comes to him to discover what is the matter. After telling her of the death of Patroclus and the loss of Achilles' armor, Achilles says that his *thumos* now bids him kill Hector, even if his own death must closely follow upon it, as it must. He regrets his absence from the fighting, his failure to help either Patroclus or the rest of the Greeks, many of whom have been killed as a result. He sat by the ships, a mere burden on the earth, though (*Il.* 18. 105–11)

"I am unequalled by any of the other Achaeans in war. In counsel, others are better. Would that strife might perish from gods and men, and anger too, anger which causes even a thoughtful man to grow wrathful, anger which is much sweeter than honey as it drifts down and grows like smoke in the breast of men; as on this occasion Agamemnon, lord of men, caused anger in me."

Achilles acknowledges the disastrous effects of his anger, but he shows no insight into the manner in which his values and the values of his society encourage anger and even render its occurrence almost inevitable. His acknowledgment that others are better in counsel may refer to the speech of Nestor in *Iliad* 1 or to the three ambassadors' speeches in *Iliad* 9, but he does not realize how his values induced him not to be persuaded by the advice there given. Achilles knows that anger is sweeter than honey, but he does not realize why anger is so sweet to one who holds his values. He is living by the same values even now, and even in *Iliad* 24, as has been shown. He shows no realization that other values would be possible.<sup>51</sup>

I conclude that the *Iliad* expresses no overt criticism of the heroic values which it portrays in action. When Agamemnon brings the Greek army close to disaster, when Achilles is plunged in grief at the death of Patroclus, the poet ascribes Agamemnon's behavior to *ate*, Achilles' to anger, not to the values which they hold; and the same is true of Hector. But is there covert criticism? Covert criticism would be possible in two situations: either the original audience for whom the poems were composed already held different values and would immediately find fault with the values and behavior of Agamemnon, Achilles, and the rest; or the original audience (but not the poet) had values approximating to those of the char-

51. Nor does he nor anyone else ascribe his behavior to *ate*, unless *Il.* 19. 270–74 be so read.

acters in the *Iliad*, but on hearing the *Iliad* performed would be induced to reflect and realize what is unsuitable about values which lead to such dire consequences and change their own values accordingly.

I have argued at length elsewhere<sup>52</sup> that the competitive martial excellences of Homer retain their precedence<sup>53</sup> over other values in later Greece, virtually unchallenged for a very long time. Let me cite one example. In Herodotus 3. 80–82 there is a discussion of the best type of constitution. Darius, attacking oligarchy (the rule of *agathoi*), states that, when each of a group of men exercises his *arete* in public life, the result is dissension and civil strife. The discussion in Herodotus draws on sophistic thought and is hence “advanced” for its day: in the later fifth century *arete* remains competitive, even in domestic politics. There is no sign for several centuries after Homer of existing “more advanced” values in terms of which Homeric values might be criticized, much less of any such enlightenment resulting from study of the Homeric poems.<sup>54</sup> A principal witness that Homeric values were usually taken to be admirable is Plato, who disapproved strongly of them himself. Plato was a literary genius and both admired and wrote poetry: his objections to existing poetry were ethical, and to poetry in general, ontological and epistemological.<sup>55</sup> Plato was also an aristocrat and an intellectual and on both grounds held a low opinion of most members of the human race. Could he have said to the Greek in the street “You are reading Homer stupidly and incorrectly; properly read and reflected upon, the *Iliad* inculcates sound civic values in the following manner,” he would surely have derived great pleasure from so doing. Instead, he drove Homer and the rest of the poets from his ideal cities, precisely because they were subversive of good civic values and behavior.<sup>56</sup> (One might claim that the eighth-century audience was more perceptive, but the onus of proving that proposition rests with those who wish to maintain it. I see no evidence for it whatsoever.)

The Greeks in general, then, admired Homeric values; and no one in the classical Greek world suggests that Homer’s purpose was in fact to commend more “cooperative,” civic values. We can give sage advice to Achilles,<sup>57</sup> Agamemnon, Hector, and the rest, for we have the advantage

52. See *Merit and Responsibility*, passim, *From the Many to the One*, passim, and *Moral Values*, passim.

53. “Cooperative” excellences are not unvalued, merely less valued in a crisis where there is a clash between the claims of “competitive” and “cooperative” excellences. See *Merit and Responsibility*, p. 61.

54. Xenophanes disapproved of Homer’s gods on ethical grounds; but nothing suggests that the study of Homer’s gods, rather than his own thoughts on deity, led him to a more elevated view of deity. Such fragments of his thought as survive suggest that a combination of philosophy and observation of beliefs in different societies led him to his views on deity. His sharply critical tone clearly indicates that he did not suppose that Homer was portraying ethically inferior deities in order to lead the reader to a higher view of deity. See frags. B 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 16, 23, 24, 25, 26 D.–K.

55. When ontological and epistemological considerations were not to the fore, Plato might have used ethically acceptable poetry for inculcation of *orthē doxa*, “right opinion.”

56. See *Pl. Rep.* 386B8–C1, 387B1–5, 387D11–E1, 388D2–7, 389D7–E2, 390A4–5, 390E4–391A1.

57. In later antiquity, Epictetus enjoyed giving advice to Achilles, e.g., *Disc.* 4, 10, 31–36. Since it was important to the Stoics that the Homeric poems be ethically acceptable, Epictetus assumes that Homer’s purpose in portraying an emotional Achilles was to make a point of Stoic ethics. For similar reasons, the Stoics allegorized the Homeric gods (cf. Heraclitus *Allegories of Homer*). One should re-

of not being Homeric warriors and have had the benefit, not shared by Homer and his contemporaries, of some 2,500 years of moral philosophy; and, when we are giving our sage advice or drawing our sage conclusions about Homeric values, we forget that we are employing very sophisticated thought processes on a situation with which we are not personally involved. But let us change the context, and maybe we are not quite so sage. The values of the Homeric hero are essentially the values of the modern nation-state. Suppose one were to claim that the wars and many other troubles of the modern world are caused by the values of the nation-state in precisely the same way as the strife and other troubles of the Homeric world were caused by the values of the Homeric hero.<sup>58</sup> I believe

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member that Epictetus is more than eight centuries distant from Homer: his ethical reading is no more plausible than Heraclitus' allegories; and Plato has clearly encountered no such interpretation.

58. This journal is not an appropriate place for a detailed discussion of the values of the modern nation-state; but the reader is invited to read and reflect upon debates at the League of Nations and United Nations, with particular reference to the value-terms employed by the speakers, and to ponder upon the resemblance between Nestor's position vis-à-vis Achilles and Agamemnon in *Iliad* 1 and the position of the Secretary-General of the United Nations vis-à-vis the governments of individual nation-states and the resemblance between the values with which they evaluate their respective positions. The debates in the British House of Commons on the Suez Canal incident in 1956 and the proposed entry of Britain into the European Economic Community in 1972 also are illuminating. For the latter, see Hansard, *Parliamentary Debates: Commons* 829 (Jan. 17–28, 1972): 677–800 (Jan. 20). Note particularly col. 692, "if unacceptable situations should arise, the very survival of the community would demand that the institutions find an equitable solution" (Government statement quoted by Mr. Shore without enthusiasm, and glossed as "the simple statement that there would be a grave crisis"), and col. 720, where Mr. Murray inquired, with reference to the same Government statement, "How is it to be enforced?" Note also statements about sovereignty, of Britain and the House of Commons, in cols. 707 and 759 and especially those of Sir D. Walker-Smith in col. 752 and Mr. J. Enoch Powell in *Parliamentary Debates: Commons* 848 (Dec. 11–22, 1972): 1274–76. The foregoing sentiments were uttered in comment on peaceful negotiations. The Suez Canal debates of August 2, 1956 (*Parliamentary Debates: Commons* 557 [July 23–Aug. 2, 1956]: 1602–721) took place in the immediate aftermath of Nasser's expropriation of the Suez Canal Company a few days earlier, in a much more martial atmosphere. Though some internationalist sentiments were expressed, the leaders of all three parties, and the great majority of the inhabitants of Britain, were in favor of teaching Nasser a lesson by force. It was left to Mr. Henry Osborne (cols. 1673–74) to reflect upon the general situation in words which seem to me worth quoting at some length. "This is just one incident in a long chain, which stems from the conflict of a contracting world upon the structure of the national sovereign state . . . we must remember . . . that the Egyptians under Colonel Nasser merely want to be like us. They want to have power. They want to be able, as they see that we have been able in the past, to push other nations around. . . . In other words, they want to make it plain that theirs is a sovereign nation state, and we cannot complain, if we ourselves insist that Britain must be a sovereign nation state. If we cherish and maintain inviolate the theory that a nation must be a sovereign nation, that nations should properly have their own armed forces, by implication then we admit that that nation state can do what the devil it likes. There is no such thing as international law or justice when we accept that proposition. I noticed that the Foreign Secretary said that we must set up an international system in which we can have confidence. But if we have confidence because we control it, those thus controlled will have no confidence. That is the snag in any system of international collaboration between sovereign nation states. . . . We are going to delude ourselves if we think that we have only to take this problem to the United Nations and we will get the solution we want. Suppose that United Nations renders a solution that Britain does not like? Is it to be able to enforce it upon us in the same way as we hope it will now enforce on Colonel Nasser a decision which he will not like?" After 2,500 years of philosophy and several hundred years of the experience of living in nation-states, some few are able to draw conclusions as that. The vast majority do not; even of those who do it is not evident how many realize how radical a change of values would be needed in order to render cooperative behavior between nation-states acceptable to a nation-state which was experiencing a serious loss as a result of cooperation; and I can think of no one at all who has any idea how to bring such a change of values about. In these circumstances, I see no reason to suppose that Homer or his eighth-century audience drew any of the conclusions about the unacceptability of Homeric values that are sometimes, with no evidence at all, ascribed to them; and it should be evident that I see no reason to sneer at them for failing to do so.



the claim to be true, and I am certainly not the first to make it with respect to the nation-state. Among others, Bertrand Russell argued the case at length, repeatedly, and with his wonted clarity.<sup>59</sup> Yet I should be surprised if, even of my far-from-average readership, more than five percent agreed with me; and I should be amazed if more than five percent of a random sample of Americans (or British, or French, or Germans) did so. Their disagreement strengthens my case: if explicit argument produces so little effect on those actually living in a situation in the twentieth century A.D., why should we believe that a more oblique method was more effective in the eighth century B.C., particularly when there is no evidence to suggest that any such effect was produced or intended?

We may consider also the copious quantity of poetry and prose fiction concerned with the present century's wars. In this poetry and prose much that is pitiable is narrated, and many value judgments, some more perceptive than others, are passed. Yet it must be rare indeed for any character in these works to reflect upon the values of his society and equally rare for any reader to be induced to do so by what he has read, whatever the intensity of the sorrow and pity evoked by it. Homer applies unpleasant adjectives to war; so do we. Yet the values of Homer's characters lead inevitably to war and strife, though neither Homer, nor his characters, nor his ancient audience, realized the fact or reflected upon it. For them, as for us, values furnish the framework within which we judge and act. The consequences of our judgments and actions may be dire. When they are, we in the twentieth century might be induced to reflect upon our values; but we are much more likely to reflect "Life's like that," which is the message of the Jars at the Threshold of Zeus. The theme of the *Iliad* is war; the theme of Book 24 may be also, in the words of Wilfred Owen, the pity of war. Anyone unmoved to pity by the meeting of Priam and Achilles in *Iliad* 24 is probably already dead; but pity affects the emotions rather than the mind and need not lead to new insight. At all events, I see nothing to suggest that the pity of Homer enlightened early Greek values; and I am not altogether sanguine about our own situation.

#### APPENDIX: THE "ATE" OF AGAMEMNON

The most memorable *ate* in the *Iliad* is Agamemnon's, with reference to which Lloyd-Jones writes, "Moral error and mistake are in Greek thinking often not easy to distinguish, but it seems fair to say that Nestor tells

59. See (to take two works written more than forty years apart) *Why Men Fight* (New York, 1917) and *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare* (London, 1959). Russell sees clearly the dangers of patriotism and national pride as commonly understood: *Why Men Fight*, pp. 56-58, 63, 83, *Common Sense and Nuclear Warfare*, pp. 31 (where the train of thought ascribed to the "practical politician" may be compared with that of Agamemnon and Achilles in *Il.* 1. 285-303), 40-41, 45 (where Russell is less blithe than Athena about the harmlessness of threats and insults). But it is not clear that he appreciates the extent to which opinion is constantly moulded by the common value-terms which, learned in our formative years together with their ranges of application, play a pervasive and for the most part unperceived role in the development of our usually unchallenged assumptions about the manner in which it is appropriate for states to behave toward other states.

Agamemnon that in the quarrel with Achilles he was in the wrong" and "Agamemnon has already admitted this."<sup>60</sup> Lloyd-Jones is discussing *Iliad* 9. 96–113 and 9. 17–28, especially 9. 18. Now Lloyd-Jones renders *ate* in 9. 18 as "[Agamemnon's] own disastrous mistake,"<sup>61</sup> so that he is not—or should not be—denying that in 9. 115–61 and especially 9. 115–20 Agamemnon's *ate* includes a component of mistake, but claiming that it also includes a component of moral error.

In fact, all Agamemnon's laments over his *ate* occur in contexts of his failure to take Troy; but not all of them concern his quarrel with Achilles. In 2. 111 he is concerned with his general failure to capture Troy after nine years of effort and does not mention Achilles, who is first mentioned by Thersites, 2. 239, who does not speak of *ate*; and in 2. 375–80, where Agamemnon refers to his quarrel with Achilles but seems to regard it as delaying rather than preventing the capture of Troy (2. 379–80), he does not use the word *ate*. In *Iliad* 9. 17–28, a speech closely resembling 2. 110–41 (2. 111–18 = 9. 18–25), he is again concerned with his general failure and refers to *ate* at 2. 18 in the context of Zeus' deception of him: Achilles is not mentioned until Nestor refers to him at 9. 107, whereupon Agamemnon again refers to *ate* (9. 115–18). In 19. 78–144 Agamemnon's comparison of his own situation with Zeus' *ate*-mistake (19. 95–133), where the moral error is Hera's, indicates the manner in which he understands his own *ate*. Again, in *Iliad* 8. 236 he speaks of Zeus bringing *ate* upon mighty kings and depriving them of their glory in the context of a disaster which is imputed to the deficiencies of the Greek chieftains as warriors (8. 228–35), not to Agamemnon's angering of Achilles or any other action performed by Agamemnon in particular.

Lloyd-Jones suggests that, if Nestor and the other Greek leaders supposed Agamemnon to be in the right but that the situation demanded that Agamemnon offer atonement to Achilles, Nestor would have said "Son of Atreus, in your quarrel with Achilles, everything you said was right; but Achilles is much loved by Zeus, and without him we shall be driven into the sea; for the army's sake swallow your pride and offer him atonement."<sup>62</sup> That is not what Nestor does say. But if Agamemnon was in the wrong to take Briseis, and that "wrong" means "unjust" or something similar and is expressed by *ate*, why did Nestor not say in *Iliad* 1. 253–84, where he was exerting every effort to prevent the quarrel, that it would be *ate* for Agamemnon to take Briseis from Achilles? One might argue (see p. 298) that in that speech Nestor comes down rather on the side of Agamemnon; he certainly does not say that Achilles is in the right, Agamemnon in the wrong. He offers prudential grounds to each in favor of not quarreling. (He does not use the word *ate*, even when referring to the joy which the quarrel would cause the Trojans: the consequences he envisages would be unpleasant for the Greeks but fall far short of disaster.)

60. *Justice of Zeus*, p. 15.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 14.

62. *Ibid.*

To sum up: *ate* is not used of what we should distinguish as moral error unless it fails, leads to unpleasant consequences; mistake by definition leads to failure or unpleasant consequences, and if these are sufficiently severe the action will be stigmatized as *ate* (2. 110–41, 19. 95–133) even if the mistake is caused by the deception of another (19. 95–133) or the failure or unpleasant consequences result from the deficiencies of others (8. 228–36). It is the failure or unpleasant consequences that constitute the criterion for using the term *ate*; and, if what we should term a moral error becomes *ate* only when the consequences become unpleasant, it seems difficult to argue that *ate* denotes and decries moral error *qua* moral error.

The words which Lloyd-Jones suggests that Nestor might have uttered to Agamemnon would be worth uttering in a society in which being just, in the right, was of the highest importance. Homeric society is not such a society. The cooperative excellences are not unvalued, but less valued,<sup>63</sup> and in a crisis take second place. The achievement of success and the avoidance of failure are so important that it no longer matters to Nestor, to Agamemnon, or to the Greeks in general whether Agamemnon or Achilles is in the right or not, but whether the capture of Troy can be assured, or—even more urgently—the Trojans kept from burning the ships.

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63. *Merit and Responsibility*, p. 61.