IV.—*Achilles' Treatment of Hector's Body*

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Modern scholars accuse Achilles—the hero of the *Iliad* and the *beau idéal* of the Greek Age of Chivalry—of conduct unbecoming a knight in outraging Hector's body and in slaughtering the Trojan youths at the pyre of Patroclus; they offer as corroborative evidence the epithets ἀεικέα and κακά, applied by the poet himself to these acts. The use of these adjectives elsewhere in Homer reveals the weakness of this evidence. On the other hand, the Homeric picture of the Greek Heroic Age makes it clear that the slaughter of prisoners was permitted, and the outraging of an enemy's body in vengeance for the death of a kinsman or friend was required by the knight's code of honor. Trojans and Achaeans alike regard this treatment as normal. Furthermore, the poet has taken great pains to show that Hector intended to outrage the body of Patroclus, and that Achilles was aware of this intention. Achilles' tragic defect of character resulted in his carrying the quarrel with Agamemnon too far, until it brought harm on his friends, including Patroclus. His recognition of this error led him to persist in outraging the body of Hector even after the funeral of Patroclus, until the situation reached an *impasse* which required divine intervention.

The incidents of the *Iliad* are "held together," remarks an ancient commentator,[1] "by the two characters, Achilles and Hector." Achilles is the hero of the poem, but Hector, although a weaker character, is better loved by most modern readers. This is partly because our sympathy is awakened by his death and by the grief of his father, his mother, his wife, of Helen and all the Trojans; we do not see the death of Achilles, although we know that he is soon to die. It may also be true that Hector had a more lovable disposition. The weaker character often wins more affection than the stronger; Menelaus is a more popular hero than Agamemnon. There is at times in a man of decisive character—which Hector

[1] Schol. T on M 9, cf. BT on Ω 3 f. The names of Achilles and of Hector, or their patronymics used alone, are found in the *Iliad* more often than those of any other hero, about 450 times each.

lacked—a hardness that repels affection. Hector's greatness lies in his devotion to family and country. Priam says of him: "Let Achilles slay me once I have taken my son into my arms!" (Ω 226 f.); "The best son I had! the protector of Ilios!" (Ω 499). In the qualities which make Hector loved, Achilles has little chance to shine. He was not fighting in the interest of his country, much less in its defense (A 152–160). In his family life he presents a striking contrast to Hector. The latter grew up in a large family, which was happy and prosperous till Helen came. Achilles was the only son of a goddess and a mortal man, and apparently was brought up without the constant attention of his mother. In the *Iliad* he cannot be seen in the softer aspects of life. He has no wife, his father and son are far away, and his mother is a goddess, needed by him rather than needing his help. His guiding star is not love of country, but honor.[2] This is perhaps a more selfish and less lovable motive of life, but through it Achilles became the *beau idéal* of Greek manhood, the ἀνὴρ τιμοκρατικώτατος, the hero to whom the youths at Sparta sacrificed before entering the fight on Plane-tree Field (Paus. III, 20, 8). Yet for this preeminence he has paid with the loss of the love and possibly the admiration of many of Homer's non-Greek readers. The deeper affection for Hector has led the majority of recent critics to regard Achilles' conduct in avenging Patroclus as so unjustified and so grossly brutal that it becomes for them a blot on the scutcheon of the ideal hero of the Greek Age of Chivalry. It is held that even the poet does not regard his hero as the embodiment of all the knightly virtues, first, because he makes Achilles victorious over Hector through "the treacherous interference of Athena, at once so revolting and so needless," [3] and, secondly, because he passes a moral judgment on the brutality of

[2] αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων (Λ 784), cf. Arist. *Eth. N.* 1123b, 35, τῆς ἀρετῆς γὰρ ἆθλον ἡ τιμή.

[3] Leaf, *Iliad*[2] (1902), Introd. to book XXII, p. 429; cf. Andrew Lang, *Homer and the Epic* (1893), 212.

Achilles in his treatment of Hector's body and in slaughtering twelve Trojan prisoners at the pyre of Patroclus.[4]

To the first assumed belittlement of Achilles by the poet, because of the "revolting and needless interference of Athena" (Leaf and Lang), a sufficient answer is perhaps that in both Homeric poems no mortal except Odysseus, and he only in the adventures which he himself describes, is allowed to achieve greatness without divine assistance. The attitude of Homer in this respect is that of Aeschylus (*Pers.* 347). But the pragmatical vindication of Athena's action is sufficiently indicated by Eustathius (1087, 25, on Π 847): "It is not strange if Athena deceives Hector; it is only a requital for Apollo's part in the death of Patroclus, just as in the funeral games (Ψ 382–397), when Apollo in anger at Diomede has made the latter lose his whip, Athena breaks the axle of the chariot of Eumelus, whom Apollo loved." Athena—Homer's heroine, according to Hayman—always goes her opponent one better! Besides, Hector had taken advantage of the dastardly treatment of Patroclus by Apollo, for he had claimed the *spolia opima* as if he had slain Patroclus in a fair fight.[5] Athena's assistance in the slaying of Hector is far less revolting than Apollo's in the death of Patroclus. She merely brings to an end the *impasse* which the pursuit of Hector had reached,[6] and makes Hector face Achilles, as he had originally resolved to do (X 129 f.). That she returned the spear of Achilles to him (276 f.) influenced the manner of Hector's death, but not the issue of the combat: if both opponents had lacked a spear

[4] Leaf, *Iliad*, note on Z 62; Rothe, *Die Ilias als Dichtung* (1910), 315; van Leeuwen, *Ilias* (1913), notes on Σ 337, X 395; Spiess, *Menschenart und Heldentum in Homers Ilias* (1913), 115 (Spiess recognizes the chivalry of Achilles and the fineness of his character, but thinks his passionate nature led him to overstep the bounds of humanity); Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*[3] (1923), 141.

[5] The poet makes this clear by the comment of Zeus (P 205 f.) that Hector had not taken the armor from the head and shoulders (but from the ground where Apollo had made it fall) of the man he had slain (as he should have done if he wished to wear it himself); cf. *T.A.P.A.* LIV (1923), 117 ff.

[6] Cf. *T.A.P.A.* LXI (1930), 141–145.

the meeting with swords, which regularly followed the attack with spears (H 273), would undoubtedly have resulted in favor of Achilles. Athena's deception of Hector contributes to our sympathy with the latter; it should not lessen our respect for Achilles.

The belief that Homer himself expresses his horror at the form which the vengeance of Achilles takes, by the comments ἀεικέα μήδετο ἔργα (X 395, Ψ 24) and κακὰ δὲ φρεσὶ μήδετο ἔργα (Ψ 176), was held by some ancient critics. Schol. B (on X 395) admits the possibility of the interpretation given by Leaf, Rothe, van Leeuwen, Spiess, and Murray, by giving as an alternative meaning of ἀεικέα, ἢ ἀπρεπῆ. But schol. BT equate the word with αἰκιστικά, and schol. AB argue that Achilles is not showing undue ferocity. The churchman Eustathius, who, like the Stoic commentators, loses no chance to point the moral, insists on ἀπρεπῆ (1276, 1). A study of the phrases ἀεικέα ἔργα, ἔργον ἀεικές, κακὰ ἔργα, and the like, in the two Homeric poems seems to indicate that this view of Eustathius and of the modern scholars cited above is too subjective, and that Homer means by "unseemly" and "evil" in this connection, "that which dishonors or harms the object of the action," without any reference to the moral quality of the act itself, although this may be at times clearly "immoral." We shall consider the application of these phrases first to the gods and then to mortals.

The Greeks after building the wall, without preliminary religious ceremonies, feast all night. Zeus expresses his disapproval by thundering, σφὶν κακὰ μήδετο ἔργα μητίετα Ζεύς (H 478). Odysseus uses the same phrase (ξ 243) and Nestor a similar one (κακὰ μήδετο δαίμων, γ 166) of the troubles that befell the Greeks after leaving Troy. There can be no moral criticism here, and certainly none of Hephaestus, who, when he is told of the infidelity of his spouse, goes to his forge, κακὰ φρεσὶ βυσσοδομεύων (θ 273). The Homeric Greeks did not openly criticize the morals of their divinities; they only "cursed God" for their own plight, cf. also A 97, 341, 398, 456, Π 32, ἀεικέα λοιγόν.

The use of these phrases so many times where a moral quality in the adjectives ἀεικές and κακόν is not to be thought of, seems to show that when Homer uses (Ψ 176) of Achilles, his hero, the same words that he has used of Zeus (H 478), he is intending to convey to his audience no criticism of the morality of the act.

Acts of mortals, unlike those of the gods, may be judged right or wrong. Wrong acts of mortals are called ἀεικέα ἔργα several times in Homer, *e.g.* the infidelity of Clytemnestra (γ 265, λ 429) and of Helen (ψ 222), and the outrageous conduct of the suitors (π 107). But these passages are far outnumbered by those in which the adjectives ἀεικές and κακόν imply solely the harm to the object of the action, and not the injustice of the actor. The "unseemly blows" with which Odysseus threatens Thersites (B 264) are no discredit to Odysseus. When the poet calls the rout of the Achaeans which Nestor saw from the Greek camp (Ξ 13) an ἔργον ἀεικές he is thinking of the harm and shame which the rout brought upon the Greeks. The "unseemly labor" which Eurystheus imposed on Heracles (T 133) is of the same kind as that for which Melampus made Neleus atone (ο 236). In the latter passage van Leeuwen translates ἔργον ἀεικές by "laborem ingentem" (on λ 291–296). That he is right the words of Andromache (Ω 732–734) seem to prove: "And thou, my babe, shalt go with me into captivity, where thou shalt perform unseemly tasks, suffering (ἀεθλεύων, like Heracles and Melampus) under a hard master." We must also remember the phrase κακὰ βυσσοδομεύων, which the poet uses, certainly with approval, of Odysseus (ι 316, ρ 465, ν 184) and of Telemachus (ρ 491), and especially what Odysseus says of the slaughter of the suitors: τῷ καὶ ἀτασθαλίῃσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐπέσπον (χ 416). From all these passages it is seen that the evidence in favor of moral criticism by the poet in the use of the words ἀεικέα ἔργα (X 395, Ψ 24) and κακὰ ἔργα (Ψ 176) is extremely tenuous. The passages indicate rather that the poet in using these phrases of Achilles is merely stating objectively the fullness

of the retribution which Achilles exacted for the slaying of his friend. We are confirmed in this view when we turn to the picture which Homer gives of the Greek Age of Chivalry, and especially when we observe the conduct of the opposing heroes in the fighting before Ilios.

It must be remembered that the Trojans had violated a solemn truce. If the laws of war are not respected in their larger aspects the code of the warrior is likely to suffer both in the precision with which the honor of the soldier is defined and in the way in which the definition is interpreted. We may therefore expect in general a less chivalrous treatment of the enemy by the Greeks because of the treachery of Pandarus. And this we find, for the Greeks spare not a single Trojan who falls into their power. At least five unresisting and helpless Trojans are slain in cold blood by others than Achilles, Adrastus and the two sons of Antimachus by Agamemnon (Z 63 f., Λ 130–147), Dolon by Odysseus (K 455 f.), and Cleobulus by the lesser Ajax (II 330–332). We conclude that, whereas before the truce was broken there had been instances of sparing the life of a prisoner, in the action of the poem the war is waged with bitterness and ferocity.

The charges against Achilles are lack of chivalry in refusing Hector's plea to give back his body for burial and in threatening to throw it to the dogs, and brutality in dragging the body and in slaying twelve Trojan youths at the pyre of Patroclus.[7] These are very serious charges to be brought against the hero of the poem and the man who in later times was regarded as the ideal type of the Greek soldier. Even if they cannot be entirely disproven—as I think they can be disproven—yet at least an examination of the evidence may perhaps help to explain the paradox which they present.

We must first understand the principle which seems to have governed the treatment of the vanquished champion in the

[7] Cf. in addition to the works cited in note 2, Herkenrath, *Der ethische Aufbau der Ilias und Odyssee* (1928), 155; Bowra, *Tradition and Design in the Iliad* (1930), 199, 202.

Heroic Age of Greece. Buchholtz (*Homerische Realien* II, 1 (1881), 326 ff.) states the principle as follows:

> The corpse of the fallen champion was in the fullest sense of the word the property of the victor, that is, he could do with it what he chose. The armor of the vanquished was the trophy of the victor; it meant about what the scalp of the enemy meant to the American Indian. After stripping the corpse the victor often treated the body with inhuman ferocity. Over against this right of the victor is to be put the supreme duty of the party to which the vanquished belonged, especially to his 'next of kin,' to recover the body that it might not be outraged and that it might be given funeral honors.

That this token of honor (*τὸ γὰρ γέρας ἐστὶ θανόντων*) was in the slightest degree due from an enemy there is little evidence in Homer. At the sack of Thebe (Z 414–416) Achilles slew Eetion, but instead of stripping his body he burned his armor on the pyre with the king's body, and heaped up a tomb over the ashes. It is noteworthy that the only individual in the *Iliad*[8] who buries a dead enemy is the one who is accused of the most unchivalrous treatment of the body of an opponent. Certainly in the age of which Homer sings there was felt no obligation to bury the foeman, as there was in the fifth century, when the burial of the enemy was *ὁ Πανελλήνων νόμος* (Eur. *Supp.* 526; cf. Hdt. IX, 78 f.).

Wecklein (Eur. *Supp.* (1912), Einleitung, v) says that in Homer it is a recognized custom for the victor after stripping his dead enemy to throw the body to the dogs and vultures. This statement of Wecklein can be supported by many passages, in fact, one of the common expressions for death in battle is "become the prey of dogs and birds" (A 4 f.). The phrase, "thrown to the dogs," or the like, is used with reference to both friend and foe, *i.e.* as foreboding and threat: Patroclus to Eurypylus (Λ 818), "Ye are likely to sate the dogs in Troy-

[8] In the *Odyssey* Orestes buries Aegisthus along with Clytemnestra (γ 309 f.), but Nestor says (γ 256–261) that Menelaus would have prevented the burial of Aegisthus, if he had arrived in time. Odysseus feels no responsibility to bury the suitors (χ 437, 448–451); their kinsmen bury them (ω 417–419).

land"; Polydamas to Hector (Σ 271), "Many Trojans shall the dogs and vultures eat"; Agamemnon, of the Trojans after the breaking of the truce (Δ 237), "Vultures shall devour their tender flesh"; Hector to Ajax (N 831), "Ye shall sate the dogs and birds"; Odysseus to Socus (Λ 452 ff.), "Thy father and mother shall not close thine eyes, but the vultures shall tear thee"; Diomede to Paris (Λ 394 f.), "He who faces my spear shall redden the earth with his blood, and there shall be more vultures about his body than women (mourners)"; Glaucus to Hector (P 150 ff.), "Sarpedon was thy guest and thy comrade; he was a great help to thy city and to thee thyself.[9] Yet thou didst not have the heart to keep him from the dogs" (that is, from the expected treatment of a slain enemy). This treatment was also meted out to one's own men if they failed as warriors: Agamemnon to the army (B 391–393), "Whomsoever I see disposed to shirk the fighting and linger by the ships, naught shall keep him from the dogs and birds"; Poseidon to Idomeneus (N 232 ff.), "Whosoever is backward in the fighting, may he not return from Troyland, but may he be a prey to the dogs here"; Hector to his army (O 348 ff.); "Whomsoever I find remaining behind <to strip the slain, instead of following me to the ships>, the dogs shall tear his body outside the city walls; his friends shall not give him his share in the fire"; Polydamas to Hector (Σ 282–283), "If Achilles shall attack the city he will never take it; sooner will the dogs devour him"; Priam to Hector (X 41 f.), "If the gods loved Achilles no more than I do, quickly would the dogs and vultures devour him"; Hecuba to Hector (X 86 ff.), "If Achilles slay thee, the swift dogs will devour thee by the ships of the Achaeans"; Andromache, of Hector (X 508 f.), "Now far from thy parents the wriggling worms will devour thee after the dogs have had their fill"; Hecuba to Priam (Ω 209–211), "Doubtless it was his fate from the moment of his birth to sate the dogs at the camp of Achilles"; Athena to Hera (Θ 379),

[9] The reference is to Ξ 426, where Sarpedon is one of those who kept back the Greeks after Ajax had wounded Hector.

"Many a Trojan will sate the dogs and birds"; the poet narrates (Λ 161 f.): "The Trojans lay slaughtered, far dearer to the vultures than to their wives." So in the *Odyssey*, even in times of peace, the suitors threaten Eumaeus (φ 363) and Odysseus (χ 30) with being thrown to the dogs, and Nestor says of Aegisthus (γ 256–260) that if Menelaus had found him alive, the dogs and the birds would have devoured his body on the plain far from the city.

The last passage (γ 256–260) shows most clearly the great difference between the Heroic Age and the fifth century in the attitude towards the dead enemy: Menelaus would have treated the body of Aegisthus—apparently with the approval of Nestor—in exactly the same way that Creon treated the body of Polynices. The fifth-century attitude is summed up in Eur. *Antigone*, frag. 176 N, *θάνατος γὰρ ἀνθρώποισι νεικέων τέλος /ἔχει*, "Death pays the debt in full." In the *Antigone* of Sophocles, Haemon, Antigone, and Tiresias voice the sentiment of the poet's own age; Creon speaks exactly as any Homeric prince would speak, when he says of Polynices, who was slain *πορθῶν δὲ τήνδε γῆν* (518), *οὗτοι ποθ' οὐχθρός, οὐδ' ὅταν θάνῃ, φίλος*" (522). The score of passages just cited from the two Homeric poems leave no room for doubt that in the Heroic Age of Greece the vanquished champion neither claimed nor expected not to be "thrown to the dogs," unless his friends or kinsmen could rescue his body, or unless the victor should be content to receive a ransom in exchange for the body. If we are to judge solely by the evidence from Homer, the only reasons for not "throwing to the dogs" the body of a slain foe are (1) that the combat involved no bitterness, and (2) that the defeated warrior had some claim to unusual respect. The first reason is seen in Hector's offer when he challenges to single combat the best champion of the Greeks (H 76 ff.). The truce has been broken under circumstances such that a renewal is out of the question. Hector offers what atonement he can by a single combat.[10] The economy of the plot does

[10] Cf. *A.J.P.* XLVIII (1927), 148–156.

not permit the encounter to affect the outcome of the war; the combat is merely a passage of arms for honor's sake (cf. 82 ff. and especially 91, *τὸ δ' ἐμὸν κλέος οὔ ποτ' ὀλεῖται*). Hector can propose that the body of the vanquished shall be given back for burial because there is no bitterness in the encounter. How different are the circumstances in book XXII, for which book VII thus furnishes an admirable foil!

The second reason for the willingness to forego the outraging of the slain foeman's body is suggested by Achilles' treatment of the father of Andromache (Z 414–419). Achilles did not even strip Eetion of his armor, *σεβάσσατο γὰρ τό γε θυμῷ*. He had no personal enmity against Eetion, and for some reason—Andromache does not say what the reason was—Achilles felt that he owed the king some respect.[11] This reason, too, does not hold in the encounter between Achilles and Hector. Hector had not met his foe face to face as a brave man should do, but had fled and had offered to fight only when he thought the odds were two to one in his favor.[12] But these are slight considerations when compared with the essential features of the situation. After what had happened on the preceding day only a weak, or at least only a soft-hearted, character could have begged Achilles, as Hector did, to give back his body and not "throw it to the dogs." Sarpedon violated no letter of the code of knighthood when he begged his friends, Hector and Glaucus, to keep his body from falling into the enemy's hands (E 684 f., Π 497–500), but no

[11] Finsler (*Homer* I² (1914), 299, thinks this act of Achilles was perhaps due to his fear of Eetion's ghost; but there is no evidence in Homer of fear of an enemy's ghost. Schol. BT on I 188 suggests that Achilles performed the burial rites for Eetion because he found that the king was of Greek blood. This suggestion—which Finsler does not consider—is altogether reasonable—we remember that Sarpedon too was of Greek descent—, for the tie of kindred blood or of friendship is in Homer the only basis of the obligation to bury a dead body. For the respect (*σέβας*) which Achilles felt for Eetion, cf. Σ 178 f, *σέβας δέ σε θυμὸν ἰκέσθω / Πάτροκλον Τρῴῃσι κυσὶν μέλπηθρα γενέσθαι.*

[12] "Can we fancy Skarphedin, or Gunnar, or Grettir, or Olaf Howard's son flying from one enemy? Can we imagine Lancelot of the Lake . . . retreating from before a single knight? . . . But Hector, the hope of Troy, fled thrice round the walls from a single spear" (Lang, *Homer and the Epic*, 210 f.).

true knight would ever have begged for any mercy at the hands of one whose dearest friend he had slain. Patroclus made no such plea to Hector (Π 844–854). Yet in addition to slaying Patroclus Hector had threatened him with the same treatment which he now seeks to avert from himself: "Thou thoughtest, no doubt, to sack my city and to carry home to Phthia the wives of the Trojans! Thou fool! . . . the vultures shall devour thee here!" [13] (Π 830–833, 836). This was no idle threat; the poet tells us (Ρ 126 f.) that Hector was dragging the body of Patroclus that he might cut off the head and throw the body to the dogs, and (Ρ 272 f.) that Zeus abhorred the thought of Patroclus becoming the prey of Trojan dogs. The Greek leaders expected that this would happen unless they recovered the body: Ajax to Menelaus (Ρ 240 ff.), "I fear not so much for the body of Patroclus, which soon will sate the Trojan dogs and birds, as for my own head and thine"; Menelaus to the Greek chieftains (Ρ 254 f.), "Think shame to yourselves that Patroclus should become the sport of Trojan dogs!" And Achilles knew of Hector's intention to outrage the body and to throw it to the dogs, for Iris had told him (Σ 175–180). Homer has used all the means that were possible to make it clear that Hector intended to throw the body of Patroclus to the dogs—by the words of Hector to Patroclus, by the poet's statement in the narrative, by the thoughts of Zeus, and by the words of two Greek leaders—and he has taken pains to show that Achilles was aware of this intention. It therefore seems an exaggeration of sentimentality, a refusal to let Homer interpret Homer, and the inability to think in terms of the Heroic Age of Greece, which have led so many modern scholars to think the worse of Achilles for refusing Hector's plea not to throw his body to the dogs.

[13] To the five points of similarity which Cauer (*Grundfragen der Homerkritik*[3] (1921), 678) notes as indicating the intention of the poet to emphasize the poetic justice which overtakes Hector, a sixth should be added: Π 836, *σὲ δέ τ' ἐνθάδε γῦπες ἔδονται* > <Χ 335 f., *σὲ μὲν κύνες ἠδ' οἰωνοὶ / ἕλκησουσ' ἀικῶς*. The fate which Hector seeks to avert from himself he had intended to bring upon another; it is also the one which Hector's father, mother, and wife expected would be the natural outcome of his encounter with Achilles; see the passages cited above (p. 48).

The evidence which we have presented from Homer would, we think, acquit Achilles, before any intelligent jury, of the charge of conduct unbecoming a knight of the Greek Heroic Age in refusing Hector's plea and in threatening to throw his body to the dogs. The evidence on the remaining counts, viz. that he showed inhuman ferocity and brutality in dragging Hector's body and in slaying the twelve Trojan youths at the pyre of Patroclus, is of the same nature, and is almost as convincing.

We begin with the two principles already mentioned, the one enunciated by Buchholtz, that the body of the vanquished belongs to the victor to treat as he will, and the other laid down by Creon, as representing with considerable accuracy the feeling of the Heroic Age, that the hatred of an enemy, if he has deeply wronged oneself or one's family or friends or country, does not cease with death. Hector himself recognizes the custom of outraging the enemy's body when he says, *οὐ γὰρ ἐγώ σ' ἔκπαγλον ἀεικιῶ* (X 256).[14] This reveals the soft-hearted warrior, like Menelaus, who alone of any of the heroes on either side in the course of the four days of fighting thinks of sparing the life of an enemy—an attitude of mind for which the poet himself criticizes him (Z 62). In the fighting of the *Iliad*, as it is the duty of the friend or the "next of kin" to prevent the body of the slain from falling into the hands of the enemy, so it is equally incumbent upon the kinsman or friend to avenge the slain by killing the slayer or an opponent of equal rank, and by outraging his body. Coön attacks and wounds Agamemnon in the attempt to avenge the death of his

[14] Bowra (202) thinks that Hector is more chivalrous than Achilles, "for were he victorious he would do the same for the latter." But Hector knows that he will not be victorious (X 300 ff.). If he were more chivalrous, why did he intend to outrage the body of Patroclus, whom he had not slain in a fair fight? Hector recognizes that his plea is in vain, but does not hint that the refusal of the plea is due to Achilles' lack of chivalry; it is only due to lack of pity, *ἦ γὰρ σοί γε σιδήρεος ἐν φρεσὶ θυμός*, X 357. That the refusal of Hector's plea is not the cause or the justification of the death of Achilles, as many scholars think it is, the writer has shown elsewhere (*C.J.* XXIX (1933), 133 f.) to be a view which is not in accordance with the facts.

brother Iphidamas (Λ 248 ff.). Socus attacks and wounds Odysseus in anger at the death of his brother Charops (Λ 426 ff.). Deiphobus, angered at the death of his kinsman Asius, attacks Idomeneus (N 402 ff.); Paris, enraged by the death of his guest-friend Harpalion, slays Euchenor in revenge (N 660 ff.). The Trojans content themselves with slaying an opponent to avenge the death of a friend or kinsman, and never outrage a slain Greek, not because they are less brutal than the Greeks, but because the poet will not permit the Trojan or Trojan ally to show himself thus superior to a Greek. For the same reason no Trojan or Trojan ally secures permanent possession of Greek spoils—no enemy is allowed to "scalp" a Greek. But other Greek heroes besides Achilles outrage the body of a slain foeman. Agamemnon, learning that Pisander is a son of Antimachus, who, when Menelaus entered Troy as an envoy, urged that he be put to death, slays Pisander, although the latter is helpless and a suppliant; he strips his body, and then cuts off both his hands and his head, and throws the head into the throng of fighters (Λ 146 f.)—as though it were a lump of stone (instead of the material embodiment of the personality, cf. α 343).[15] Acamas, brother of Archelochus, slain by Ajax, slays the Boeotian Promachus, who is in the act of dragging away the body of Archelochus. Acamas exclaims that now the penalty for his brother's death is paid in full. This enrages Peneleos, a Boeotian too, who avenges Promachus by slaying Ilioneus by a spear-thrust through the eye. Not content with this, he severs the neck of his victim and, holding the head aloft on his spear, cries out that the grief of the father and mother of Ilioneus will perhaps atone for the tears of the wife of Promachus (Ξ 476 ff.). There is a little more deliberation, but the same justification, in the act of the lesser Ajax (N 202 ff.). He has slain Imbrius, son-in-law of Priam and loved by him as his own son. Hector

[15] In Agamemnon's character as a man, rather than as a warrior, almost the only redeeming feature, as Homer paints him in both poems, is his deep, unselfish, and tender love for Menelaus.

avenges the death of Imbrius by slaying Amphimachus. The body of the latter is rescued by the Greeks, and a *melée* ensues over the body of Imbrius. The two Ajaxes finally succeed in stripping the body, and the lesser Ajax "cut off his head from his tender neck, in anger at the death of Amphimachus," and throws the head at the feet of Hector, "next of kin" to Imbrius. Euphorbus (P 24 ff.) learns from Menelaus that the latter has slain his brother Hyperenor. He cries out: "Now shalt thou pay for him whom thou slewest, causing grief without end to our parents. But I shall stop that grief if I bring them thine head and thine armor." We have seen that Hector intended to cut off the head of Patroclus. This was fully justified by the code of honor which has been indicated by the four examples just given, for Patroclus had slain Cebriones, Hector's half-brother and charioteer. Hector is not to be thought unchivalrous for this, but he does fall short of being a true Homeric knight when he thinks that Achilles, knowing of this threatened outrage to the body of his friend, should be willing to treat Hector's body as that of a foeman who had done him no personal hurt. This feeling of Hector we must assign, as we remarked above, to his tender-heartedness. It is exactly like the impulse of Menelaus to spare Adrastus (cf. Z 62, where the poet by his comment, *αἴσιμα παρειπών*, shows that he himself thinks that Menelaus was not playing the game of war with all its rigor).

We may conclude the evidence that it was entirely in accordance with the Homeric code of honor to outrage the body of a foeman or of his blood relation in order to avenge the death of a dear friend or kinsman, by citing from the last lament of Andromache (Ω 734–737): "or some Achaean will hurl thee (Astyanax) from a tower—a terrible death—because Hector, I ween, has slain his brother or his father or his son." It would be absurd to think that Homer intended to represent the Greeks as more brutally ferocious than the standards of the time permitted.

The fact that a Trojan princess could expect such inhuman

and unnecessary barbarity—according to our standards and those of Periclean Athens—from the leaders of the Greeks as vengeance for the death of a brother or father or son whom Hector had slain, is in itself alone evidence sufficient to secure the acquittal of Achilles on the charge of brutality in dragging the dead body of Hector (and in slaughtering the twelve Trojan youths), for Hector had slain one who was to Achilles all these three. The love and devotion which Hector gave to the many members of his family Achilles gave to Patroclus. The latter, exiled from home when but a lad, and brought up in the home of Peleus (Ψ 84–90), had taken the place of the brother that was denied Achilles. Homer does not describe the love of Achilles for Patroclus; he dramatizes it. The love began, doubtless, as the child's devotion to the "big brother" (Patroclus was older than Achilles, Λ 787), and continued to increase even after the "big brother" had proved to be no match for Achilles in ambition and power. Patroclus repaid the love with deference and fidelity and tactful compliance with the fiery moods of his friend. The perfect harmony and confidence between the two friends is finely depicted in the scene (Π 5–100) in which Achilles yields to the tears and the importunity of Patroclus and lends him his divine armor and his immortal steeds, and in the beautiful prayer to Dodonaean Zeus (Π 233–248). This prayer is like Hector's prayer for Astyanax (Z 476–481), both in the affection which it shows and in its tragic non-fulfillment; compare Z 480 f.: "May he slay a foeman and bring home the bloody spoils," with Π 241, 247 f.: "Grant that glory attend him, far-voiced Zeus . . ., and may he return unharmed to the ships with all his armor."

Andromache tells Hector that he is to her, father, mother, and brother (Z 429 f.); Achilles says much the same of Patroclus (T 321–326): "No greater grief can befall me, not even if I should learn of the death of my father, or of my son, growing up in Scyrus." Patroclus, virtually an adopted brother and as dear as father or son! If Andromache could picture as natural and to be expected the inhuman ferocity

displayed by a Greek to an innocent babe in revenge for the death of brother or father or son, was Achilles unchivalrous and inhumanly ferocious according to the standards of his time if he treated far less inhumanly a dead body in vengeance for the death of one who was as dear to him as all these three?

Furthermore, if judged by the standards of the Greek Heroic Age, the dragging of Hector's body to the ships is not unchivalrous or inhuman. It displays far less brutality than the stabbing of the dead body of Hector by the Greeks (X 371, 375).[16] Hippothous, "doing a service pleasing to Hector and the Trojans," had passed a strap about the ankle of Patroclus and was dragging the body when Ajax slew him (P 289–294). Is the piercing of Hector's ankles essentially more brutal? We must remember the three Greek leaders who cut off the heads of slain Trojans. Certainly the piercing of the ankles of a dead body is not to be compared in brutality with the death which Andromache thinks is to be meted out to Astyanax, and which later legend tells us was actually so meted out. One might also query in what way Hector's body was to be conveyed to the ships. The body of Patroclus, if the Trojans had prevailed over its defenders, would certainly have been dragged by the strap to the walls of Ilios (cf. Σ 174–179 with Ψ 21).

The slaughter of the twelve noble Trojan youths at the pyre of Patroclus, which is the last count in the charge, is undoubtedly the act of Achilles which is most difficult to justify to a

[16] Bowra (199) holds Achilles responsible for this, just as Herkenrath (*op. cit.* 100) blames Hector for permitting the resumption of hostilities after Pandarus had wounded Menelaus. Both these scholars in doing this are violating the only safe rule in Homeric criticism, since we have no other poetry of Homer's time, the wise principle of Aristarchus, Ὅμηρον ἐξ Ὁμήρου σαφηνίζειν. Homer does not hint that Hector might have stopped the advance of the Trojans, nor does he lay the stabbing of the body of Hector by the Greeks to the account of Achilles. Schol. BT, on X 371, give the more reasonable explanation: δημώδους πλήθους τὸ πάθος· αὔξει δὲ τὴν ἀρετὴν τοῦ κειμένου· δ, εἰδυῖα Ἀνδρομάχη φησί, "χωόμενος, ᾧ δή που ἀδελφεὸν ἔκτανεν Ἕκτωρ (Ω 736)," *i.e.* the stabbing of Hector's body testifies both to Hector's prowess and to the recognition, in the code of Heroic ethics, of the victors' right to do what they will with the body of the vanquished.

jury of modern times or even of Periclean Greeks. Homer explains it (Φ 28) as ποινὴν Πατρόκλοιο Μενοιτιάδαο θανόντος. Judged in this light it is seen to be the same in principle as the slaying of Cleobulus (Π 330 f.): the latter, like the twelve youths, was captured alive, βλαφθέντα κατὰ κλόνον. The act of Achilles is more savage only because the captives were allowed to live for a day, which made the killing more deliberate. But there was a similar deliberateness and, we think, a greater savagery in the death which Andromache thinks a Greek may inflict upon Astyanax. The sacking of a city looses passions which spring from a more savage spirit than that which inspired Achilles' vengeance for the death of the beloved Patroclus. The measure of his vengeance was the measure of his love.[17]

Thus far we have refrained from mentioning the stronger and more tragic reason for the slaughter of the twelve youths and for the treatment of Hector's body. This reason does not add justification to the conduct of Achilles, but it does help to explain the paradox to which we have referred.

Achilles recognized that he himself was responsible for the death of his friend (Σ 98 f., 102). He had waited too long before returning to the fighting—for that his mind was made up to do this his words to Ajax show: "I will not bethink me of fighting till Hector comes victorious to the camp, and the ships smoulder in fire; then, methinks, I shall be a match for Hector, when he reaches my barracks and my ship" (I 650–655). It is of course only natural that in comparison with the death of Patroclus his own quarrel with Agamemnon should seem to him a trifling matter. But Homer seems to hint that Achilles felt, after the death of his friend, not that his rage and his retirement from battle had been unjustifiable, but that he had raged too long. After the sun had set on the day of Patroclus' death, all night the Myrmidons and Achilles mourn for Patroclus. Achilles lays his hands on the bosom of his friend's body and begins his lamentation, "showing such

[17] Lewis Campbell, *Religion in Greek Literature* (1898), 57.

grief as a lion shows when a man has robbed his lair of his whelps, and the lion comes back too late" (ὕστερος, Σ 320). Achilles says: "Vain was my promise to thy father, to bring thee home in safety. . . . But since I shall die σεῦ ὕστερος" (333)—too late to save your life by dying myself instead of you (cf. T 329 f.)—"I will not bury thee till I have brought hither the armor and the head of Hector, and have cut the throats of twelve noble sons of the Trojans, in anger at thy death." [18] Achilles has broken his promise to bring Patroclus home alive. What is left for him but to avenge his friend's death to the utmost, and then—to die?

The utter *bouleversement* of Achilles' hopes and ambitions, and the annihilation of his interest in life are made clear by the one note that runs through all that he says (except to Iris, Σ 188–195) from the moment he learns of his friend's death until after the funeral of Patroclus is over—νῦν δέ, "Too late." This note, like the four notes in the introductory movement of Beethoven's *Fifth Symphony*, is sounded (twice) in the first outburst of grief when his mother tries to comfort him (Σ 88, 101), both times as an interjection; van Leeuwen rightly prints a dash after the two words. Achilles uses the phrase νῦν δέ five times in speaking to Thetis (Σ 88, 101, 114, 121; T 23); three times to Agamemnon (T 67, 148, 203, cf. also 206); twice to the dead Patroclus (Σ 333; T 319); twice to the Greeks (T 275; X 391); once to Lycaon (Φ 103); once to Hector (X 271), and once in his prayer to the river Spercheus (Ψ 150). Two repetitions of this dominant theme are especially to be noted as bearing on the point at issue, the chivalrous character of Achilles. The first has been mentioned: "I have broken one promise . . . *now* I promise to bring thee the head of Hector and to slay twelve youths at thy pyre" (Σ 333–337, cf. Ψ 21). The second part of this

[18] σέθεν κταμένοιο χολωθείς (Σ 337); cf., as justification for throwing Astyanax from the tower, χωόμενος, ᾧ δή που ἀδελφεὸν ἔκτανεν Ἕκτωρ (Ω 736); for cutting off the head of Imbrius, κεχολωμένος Ἀμφιμάχοιο (N 203), and, as the reason why Peneleos cut off the head of Archelochus, Πηνέλεῳ δὲ μάλιστα . . . θυμὸν ὄρινεν (Ξ 487).

promise he fulfills, the first he breaks, but only at the command of Zeus (Ω 139 f.), and for this he asks the pardon of Patroclus (Ω 592–595).[19]

The second instance is when Lycaon pleads that the bread once broken between them and the former release for a ransom still bind Achilles to spare his life. Achilles replies (Φ 99 ff.): "Fool! Not a word of ransom! Before Patroclus met his fate I was fain to spare the Trojans. *But now* no Trojan whom Heaven puts into my hands shall escape death, especially if he be a son of Priam." Bowra (199) calls Achilles "reckless of all the restraints which should bind men even in battle," because "he kills Lycaon though he is defenceless." Bowra forgets the killing of the equally defenceless Adrastus, Pisander, Hippolochus, Cleobulus, and Dolon, by Greek heroes, with far less cause. The reason which Achilles gives for refusing Lycaon's plea is adequate, according to the code of the Heroic Age: "But ye shall perish miserably until ye all shall atone for the death of Patroclus and the destruction of the Achaeans whom ye slew *in my absence* (Φ 133 ff.)—the dominant note again, "Too late!"

This motif of all that Achilles says until after the burial of Patroclus is the key to the only charge that can be brought against Achilles as a true knight of the Greek Heroic Age. His wrath against Agamemnon is not condemned in the *Iliad*, either by the poet, or by Athena, or by Zeus, or by Thetis, or by any of his fellow warriors.[20] But that he should persist in

[19] Bowra (200) again neglects the evidence when he says, "unlike Achilles, who cares little for religion except on occasions of high solemnity, Hector is scrupulously religious." The latter half of this statement is true, although the words of Zeus (X 170–172) and of Apollo (Ω 33–34) are better evidence than that which Bowra offers (Z 102, 266; M 243). But is there not equally good evidence for the scrupulousness of Achilles in matters religious? All this evidence Bowra ignores. Achilles instantly obeys the command of Athena (A 216–218) and of Zeus (Ω 139 f.). He is meticulously observant of his lesser duties to the gods (I 219 f., 357). And what more perfect scrupulousness can be found in Homer than the libation to Zeus (Π 225–232) and the prayer to the river Spercheus (Ψ 141–151)?

[20] That is, until after the failure of the embassy; cf., for example, the words of Phoenix (I 522 f.): "Despise not thou the words and the presence of thy best friends, *πρὶν δ' οὔ τι νεμεσητὸν κεχολῶσθαι.*

this wrath after his friend Ajax had begged him to return to the fighting in order to save his friends, was a fault in honor. This is proven by the words of Ajax (I 630 ff.): "Achilles hath let savagery enter his great-hearted spirit and turneth his back on his friends, who in their friendship have *honored* him above the rest"—as Agamemnon had dishonored him. "He knoweth no pity. Many a man taketh 'were-gild' from the slayer of a brother or a son, and forgetteth his wrath. But in thy breast the gods have put an implacable spirit."

In the same way, no law of Greek chivalry in the Heroic Age was broken by Achilles' treatment of Hector's body until Patroclus was buried, cf. schol. A (on P 126): *χαλεπὴ ἡ αἰκία <τοῦ Πατρόκλου>, καὶ συγγνωστὸς ὁ Ἀχιλλεὺς αἰκιζόμενος τὸν Ἕκτορα ἐπ' ἐκδικίᾳ τοῦ φίλου· χαλεπώτερον γὰρ τὸ ἄρξαι τινὸς ἀδικήματος.* But his persistence in dragging the body after the funeral of Patroclus was unknightly, if we can rely on the words of Apollo and their acceptance by all the Olympians save Hera (Ω 44 ff.): "Achilles hath lost all pity and respect. Many a man lost a dear one, an own brother or a son, but such an one had done with mourning and lamentation. Yet Achilles, after avenging his friend by taking Hector's life, *keeps dragging* the body about his dear comrade's tomb. . . . It is the dumb earth"—no longer Hector—"that he insulteth in his rage." The situation, owing to the persistence of Achilles' vengeance, has assumed the same *impasse*, requiring Olympian intervention, that the flight of Hector, due to his fear, reaches at X 208.[21]

The words of Ajax and of Apollo, which have just been quoted, point to the tragic defect of character which brings disaster to Achilles. At the same time they hint at the basis for his claim to represent the prime of manhood in the days of Greek knighthood, and *per contra* indicate wherein Hector fell short of true chivalry. Andrew Lang (*Homer and the Epic*, 210) speaks of the latter hero as "the gallant Hector, 'a very perfect gentle knight'." Bowra (*op. cit.* 193 f.) says of Achilles: "He is not a 'preux chevalier'—Roland would never have

[21] See note 4.

acted as Achilles acted, from injured pride." If these two views are tested by Homer himself they cannot be justified.[22]

In the popular description of the knight there are two essential qualities:

"His plume like a pennon streams on the wanton summer wind.
At the *call of duty* still that white plume shalt thou find."

"*No fear* in his heart must dwell but the *dread* that *shame* may throw
One spot upon that blade so bright, *one stain* on that plume of snow."

Hector exemplifies the first duty of the true knight, but not the second: he fears Ajax (H 216; P 166 f., 230 ff.) and Achilles (X 136), but he never falters in the recognition of his duty or in his fidelity to it. His one fault in honor, boasting of a victory and wearing the *spolia opima* when he had no just claim to either (P 185–187, 205 f.), was due to his fear (P 166–168, 229–232).

Achilles shows the other virtue of the knight,

"A soldier must with honor live or at once with honor die."

Bowra (200) thinks that Achilles "fights for the love of fighting." The only evidence—not given by Bowra—is A 492, *ποθέεσκε δ' ἀυτήν τε πτόλεμόν τε*, for the words of Agamemnon (A 177): *αἰεὶ γάρ τοι ἔρις τε φίλη πόλεμοί τε μάχαι τε*, are uttered in anger, and the speaker is one in whom neither the poet nor most of his audience have confidence. But let it be granted that Achilles loves his *mêtier;* that does not prove that he fights for the love of the fighting. Achilles had the choice

[22] Homer is not likely to have represented his chief hero as inferior in any respect to the hero of the enemy. The objectivity of the Homeric poems renders it highly improbable that among Homer's characters is the poet's *raisonneur*, yet it is rather remarkable that the only two characters, aside, of course, from Phemius and Demodocus, in whom the poet shows any signs of personal interest, are the heroes of the respective poems. Alcinous says that Odysseus has told his tale gracefully and nobly, "like a bard," *i.e.* like Homer himself (λ 367–369, cf. especially *πάντων τ' Ἀργείων σέο τ' αὐτοῦ κήδεα λυγρά*, the themes of *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, respectively). And Achilles, in his barracks when the envoys arrive, is singing *κλέα ἀνδρῶν* (I 189), cf. Eust. 745, 52, *καλῶς ἄρα φιλεῖται τῷ ποιητῇ ὡς οἷα καί τινι ζηλωτῇ τῆς κατ' ἐκεῖνον μουσικῆς.*

between long life and κλέος ἄφθιτον (I 410–416); he chose the latter, which is synonymous with honor, cf. A 352 ff.: "Since I was born to an early death Zeus ought to have granted me honor." It is precisely the slight to his honor which caused his break with Agamemnon—Briseis was only a pawn in the game—cf. I 646–648: "My heart swells with resentment when I remember his vile treatment—as though I were a misprised outlander" (ἀτίμητος μετανάστης, cf. II 59). The highest aim of the knight is not the glory which comes from his prowess, but rather the recognition of his knightly character and worth. Odysseus closes his plea to Achilles (I 302–306) with the promise that the Panachaeans will honor him when he gains glory by killing Hector. This plea has no effect. Phoenix closes his stronger plea with a different use of the same argument (I 603–605): "The Achaeans will honor thee as a god (because of the gifts that Agamemnon has offered); but if thou shalt enter the fighting without the gifts thou wilt not be equally honored." Achilles replies scornfully: "Of such honor I have no need. The honor that I know is mine by the gift of Zeus shall abide with me as long as I breathe." Ajax, more straightforward than Odysseus, more noble than Phoenix, and perhaps better acquainted with Achilles' finer conception of honor, makes a stronger and a more successful plea than either of the others: (to Odysseus) "He doth not consider us, his comrades and friends, who have honored him above any other man in the camp"; (to Achilles) "We are under thy roof, and we have proved ourselves, so far as we could, nearer and dearer to thee than any other." Odysseus and Phoenix *promised* Achilles honor from the *Achaeans* (τίσουσι, 303, 603); Ajax *reminded* him of the honor which they, his best friends (cf. I 198) *had paid* him. Homer, like all good narrators, does not himself analyze the motives of his characters. He does not tell us just what was going on in the mind of Achilles during the two weeks of idleness in his barracks. It is quite probable that Achilles many times reflected that his friends had not stood by him in his quarrel with Agamemnon. There

is a hint of this in his words to Thetis (A 410): "secure the consent of Zeus to aid the Trojans and let these crowd the Achaeans about the ships near the sea, *that all may thoroughly enjoy their king.*[23] We must remember that the first pitched battle of the war, described in books IV–VII, had been fought without Achilles, the hero who had done most of the previous fighting. This thought must have rankled in Achilles' mind. His friends had refused to join him in his "strike." A hero who was less μεγαλόψυχος than Achilles would hardly have refrained from mentioning this. Hector, for example, when Glaucus has charged him with failing to recover the body of Sarpedon, expresses the same depreciation of the services of the Lycians (P 220–226)—the "Myrmidons" of the Trojan army—that Agamemnon shows for the services of Achilles (A 173 ff.), as Eustathius observes (1103, 52). But Achilles is too true a knight to reply thus to Ajax, and Homer makes little of this point. The poet does, however, show us that at the close of the speech of Ajax (I 644–648) Achilles is confronted by the claims of two opposing duties, the duty to his friends (645), "I am fain to agree with all that thou sayest," and the claim of his own honor as a knight (648), "Agamemnon has treated me as an immigrant of no account"—a mere mercenary, as Hector treats Glaucus and the Lycians and the other Trojan allies (Eust. 1103, 42, referring to P 225 f.). Agamemnon has used Achilles to acquire booty; he has given him small pay, and he has turned him off without a word of thanks (A 165–168, cf. I 325–333; A 173–176). Achilles does not refuse the request of Ajax point-blank: he agrees to stay and meet Hector when the Greeks are *in extremis* (I 650–655). His fault in honor is only that he involved his friends—albeit they had failed to stand by him—in disaster, by pressing too far the just claim of his wounded knightly honor. One might even hold that he did not go too far. Zeus granted the re-

[23] C. Fries (*Rh. Mus.* LXXVIII (1929), 144–147) thinks that Achilles, as rebellious vassal, is the leader of the nobles in challenging the overlordship of Agamemnon, *i.e.* that Homer is unsympathetic with Agamemnon not only personally, but also politically.

quest of Thetis (A 509 f.) to give the victory to the Trojans "until the Achaeans should honor Achilles and increase his honor." This Zeus interprets to mean (Λ 193) "until Hector reaches the ships." This argument is, however, probably casuistic. But at least Homer tells us, through Achilles' own words, that the latter recognized his fault in honor (Σ 102 f.):

οὐδέ τι Πατρόκλῳ γενόμην φάος οὐδ' ἑτάροισιν
τοῖς ἄλλοις, οἳ δὴ πολέες δάμεν Ἕκτορι δίῳ.

His offense had been not against the laws of chivalry, but against its spirit. His comrades by their silence and by their co-operation with Agamemnon had virtually taken sides against Achilles, and Patroclus was slain because he forgot the command of Achilles (II 87, 686). But the penalty which Achilles exacted from Agamemnon and from his comrades had been excessive, and his persistence in avenging the slight to his honor had at least exposed Patroclus to danger. His offense against the spirit of chivalry was less than Hector's had been, but to the true knight that Achilles was it seemed greater. Therefore Achilles paid the greater penalty. Jocasta is a less tragic figure than Oedipus, for she pays at once with her life; Oedipus lives on. If Hector had not been slain, but had lived to see, as the result of his one failure to act as the true knight should act, the capture of Troy and the death of his father and son, his fate might have been less pathetic than it is in the *Iliad*, but it would have been far more tragic. It is because he dies at once that he has won the pity of all the ages since Homer. But he has won it at the expense of Achilles.

If for the moment we forget Hector, and read consecutively the speeches of Achilles in books IX, XVI, XVIII, and XIX, his words to Lycaon (Φ 99–113) and to the Greek leaders after he has slain Hector (X 385–390), his prayer to the river Spercheus (Ψ 144–151), his *congé* to Agamemnon (Ψ 890–894), his words to Priam (Ω 518–551), and the description of his first and his last agony of grief for Patroclus (Σ 22–34, Ω 3–13); if

at the same time we remember the universal attitude of the Heroic knight towards the dead body of an enemy who has slain a kinsman or a friend,[24] we shall be forced to conclude, I am very sure, that Achilles was, as Homer undoubtedly meant him to be, the knight *sans peur et sans reproche* of the Greek Heroic Age. As a tragic figure he will stand comparison with any figure in Attic tragedy, according to the Aristotelian definition of the tragic hero. The tragic story of Achilles, as told by Homer, includes a treatment of both the living and the dead enemy which shocks the softer and more sentimental modern view of life, as the treatment of the dead no doubt shocked the "more superstitious" Athenians of the fifth century. But at least Homer produced a great tragedy without using the revolting features of the Theban and Mycenean legends—on which the three Attic poets relied to produce their greatest works.

[24] There is no trace in the *Iliad* of the torturing of a living enemy—so common in medieval times. The brutal treatment of Melanthius (χ 474–477) is meted out to a slave.