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PEACE AND THE EPIC HERO IN THE “ILIAD”

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ABSTRACT

Often lost on the gory and glory-ridden battlefields of the *Iliad* is the theme of peace. This poem is an epic of war; what place does peace have in it? Actually, peace is of great significance to the *Iliad* and its characters, the epic heroes. Peace is found in abundance throughout the *Iliad*, not in the poem's current reality, but in places such as, but not limited to, the Shield of Achilles, similes, objects, and characters' longings for and reflections on past peace, present peace-parallels, and various conceptions of peace in the future. Together, these create an image of the world beyond the war, the full Iliadic world. However, the idea of peace in the *Iliad* raises a problem: how does the epic hero, a character predicated on war, exist, function, and maintain and even augment his status during peace? To answer this question, I turn to the instances of civic and quasi-civic action in the *Iliad* in tandem with the peaceful world described above. Civic function is seen throughout the scenes of peace, especially the Shield of Achilles, and is mirrored in the assemblies of the Achaeans and the funeral games of Patroklos. Upon my analysis of the correlation between civic and peaceful settings, in conjunction with characters who act in the role of quasi-civic leadership, it would seem that in order to understand how the epic hero functions outside of war and how the hero improves his status during peacetime, one must look no further than the hero's civic role.

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Introduction

The *Iliad*, in simplest terms, can clearly be defined as a war-epic; I deem this a relatively obvious assertion. The poem is centered on the struggle of “epic heroes” who strive for glory (κλέος), honor (τιμή), and excellence (ἀρετή)¹ in combat, as well as a heroic death in battle, all of which will effectuate a sort of immortality for them after death. Unlike other episodes of the Epic Cycle where heroes are granted true immortality by the gods, such as after the deaths of Memnon and Achilles in the *Aithiopsis*, the *Iliad*'s conception of death leaves no room for god-like immortality.² Death is doom, death is final; the only means of immortality are one's deeds and legacy. The stress in the *Iliad* centers around this finality of death and the absolute need of physical prizes and honors and of tangible glory, especially for Achilles who has confronted and embraced his prophesied doom.

However, what is easily overlooked within this poem of war and mortality is the underlying theme of peace that is evident throughout the *Iliad*. Peace is found in several manifestations, including similes that exist among some of the most brutal scenes, in varying reflections of the past, present, and potential future, and the culmination of peaceful images found on the Shield of Achilles. Some scholars, such as G.S. Kirk imply that these are somewhat frivolous inclusions into the poem,³ some dismiss it as “ornamental elaboration,”⁴ while others such as M.I. Finley write off similar sentiments and literary tropes in the *Odyssey* as incongruous and anachronistic;⁵ even others suggest that they are simply there for the sake of artistic contrast

¹ For reference to Greek words, see Appendix.

² Schein 1984, 25-7.

³ Kirk 1976, 11-12.

⁴ Hubbard 1992, 16.

⁵ Finley 1977, 97.

and relief from the heavy-handed themes of war and death.⁶ However, as much as the Shield of Achilles does act as relief from the war-oriented events of the plot, the frequency and placement of these peaceful images suggest a much more pertinent role in the framework of the poem. The Shield of Achilles is absolutely essential in order to put these peaceful images into context, reflecting a world into which the characters and events of the *Iliad* are but a part. I suggest that the theme of peace in the *Iliad* highlights the worldly context of the war-focused *Iliad*. It reminds the reader that war is not so all-consuming as the epic makes it out to be and is in fact a small part of life. However, it is still present and destroys not only the physical lives of men, but also their livelihood and the pleasures of life. The shield gives peace and war their cosmic context, which is very important in understanding the significance of the war and the deaths of heroes. To further clarify, this is not to say that the *Iliad* is in any way anti-war, but I would not argue that it is pro-war either; it is a story about war that strives to show the reality of war as a part of the world in a literary fashion.

The primary perceived contradiction of the peace theme is the epic hero. This is a character predicated upon war, for combat is the context wherein he is able to acquire glory, honor, and immortality with respect to his legacy. Oftentimes, the epic hero is shown in a somewhat limited light, with the only means of acquiring honor being through battle and death. However, as I have interpreted the *Iliad* in light of the pervasive theme of peace, there seems to be another side of the hero's acquisition of τιμή, ἀρετή, and κλέος, and that is through service in the civic sector during peacetime. The actions of the hero in a civic context are very important to his image as a hero and a leader; in fact, I would argue that they are necessary in order to complete the hero as a respected member of his community. By interpreting the *Iliad* through this alternative lens, I seek to illuminate the world in which the *Iliad* resides, and that the epic hero is

⁶ Taplin 1980, 13.

not limited by the confines of war in his purpose, but is a character that can maintain and augment his position and honor, and ultimately thrive, during times of peace.

Chapter 1

The Shield of Achilles and the Similes

There is a certain irony to the fact that the *Shield* of Achilles is so essential to the theme of peace in the *Iliad*. It is an accouterment of war, a weapon, a portion of Achilles' armor with which he is adorned for the purpose of fighting and ultimately killing Hektor. It is the Shield with which Achilles deflects Hektor's vain spear-throw (22.289-292). It is the Shield made for Achilles by Hephaistos upon the entreaty of Thetis,⁷ an object of divine nature, imbued with divine power, and a facilitation of Achilles' divine and fatal wrath. It is thus so much more striking that this shield is ornamented overwhelmingly with scenes of peacetime, with only select portions depicting the world of war of which the Shield is inherently a part. In fact, I would go so far as to say that the Shield is the essential framework for understanding peace in the *Iliad*, for it not only contextualizes the Trojan War into the overarching Iliadic world, but it also sets war in general into its place in the cosmic order, as well as the broader setting of the surrounding world and peacetime.

The Microcosmic Shield

Essentially, the Shield of Achilles is a microcosm of the Iliadic world and of the world in general, as its contents are both vague enough to encompass the world as a whole, but are so relevant as to be relatable to the events of the *Iliad* itself. As Taplin points out, this is not to say

⁷ *Iliad* 18.428-461: Thetis engages in a lengthy entreaty to Hephaistos to make Achilles new armor so that he may reenter the battle and avenge Patroklos. The importance of the Shield is evident considering the 129 lines (478-607) devoted to describing the Shield, while the rest of the armor receives a paltry nine lines (608-616).

that it is a reflection or miniature of everything in the world, much less every event or aspect of the *Iliad*, nor is it a utopia,⁸ but it certainly captures a more accurate scope of human action within the *Iliad* and the world beyond the actions of men during war. The Shield achieves its purpose by, first of all, acting as an inverse reflection of the *Iliad* as a whole, and second of all, acting as the groundwork from which the similes of the *Iliad* derive and become significant. The various layers of the Shield work to highlight the world of the *Iliad* and that of its readers (or listeners) with a literal picture of the world's confines and *all* that occurs within.

The first and final layers of the Shield cosmically encompass the contents between them. The first layer of the shield contains the earth, the heavens and the sea, and the sun and moon along with the constellations of the Heavens. The final layer on the Shield's rim, surrounding all the rest, is the river Oceanus, the mythological boundary of the world. It is in-between these various firmaments and boundaries that the human world of peace and war, and specifically the *Iliad*, take place. Thus the cosmic place of war and peace, of life and death, is established with these borders, and while they themselves are scant of detail, Homer does this to emphasize the human world within, the world of the *Iliad*.⁹

As an image of the world within which the *Iliad* is placed, the Shield thus depicts a sort of sub-microcosm of the war in the City at War. The first lines describing the City at War (18.509-10) are as follows:

τὴν δ' ἑτέρην πόλιν ἀμφὶ δὺο στρατοὶ ἦατο λαῶν
τεύχεσι λαμπόμενοι

“But around the other city two armies of men were camping, shining with their implements of war.”

⁸ Taplin 1980, 12.

⁹ Schein 1984, 140.

This host surrounding the city clearly parallels the Achaeans, and in accordance with Taplin¹⁰ further mirrors the Greek army in its division, which is representative of the feud between Achilles and Agamemnon. The city itself can thus be seen as representing Troy, especially in light of lines 18.514-6:

τειχος μὲν ῥ' ἄλοχοί τε φίλαι καὶ νήπια τέκνα
 ῥύατ' ἔφεσταότες, μετὰ δ' ἄνδρες οὐς ἔχε γῆρας...

“The beloved wives and young children standing upon the walls guarded the city, and with them the men whom old age held.” This is not only reminiscent of Priam, Andromache with Astyanax, and Helen gazing upon the battlefield from the fabled walls of Troy, but, as Taplin suggests¹¹, Hector’s orders in 8.518-22 to let the young boys, elderly men, and women of the city keep watch lest the enemy make a secret attack while the warriors are in the field. Finally, lines 18.533-40 describe in gruesome detail a terrible and bloody encounter between the defenders of the city and the besieging forces by a riverbank. Even the landscape of the city on the shield echoes that of Troy, and this entire scene is evocative of Achilles’ slaughter of Trojans upon the banks of the Skamandros in Book 21.

Like the City at War, the City at Peace is also representative of Troy, but in a clearly different manner. This city is all that Troy used to be: a rich and prosperous urban center, adorned with marriages, festivals, dance, and most importantly joy. Epithets describing Troy, such as “of broad streets” (2.12, 9.28, 14.88, etc.), imply that Troy as a city is and was at the pinnacle of civilization,¹² and even when Achilles treats with Priam over the body of Hektor in Book 24.543-8, he alludes to its glory in a time before the Achaeans came:

¹⁰ Taplin 1980, 6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Broadman, *et. al.* 1986, 49.

καὶ σὲ γέρον τὸ πρὶν μὲν ἀκούομεν ὄλβιον εἶναι:
 ὄσσον Λέσβος ἄνω Μάκαρος ἔδος ἐντὸς ἐέργει
 καὶ Φρυγίη καθύπερθε καὶ Ἑλλήσποντος ἀπείρων,
 τῶν σε γέρον πλούτῳ τε καὶ υἰάσι φασὶ κεκάσθαι.
 αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ τοι πῆμα τόδ' ἤγαγον Οὐρανίῳνες
 αἰεὶ τοι περὶ ἄστῳ μάχαι τ' ἀνδροκτασίαι τε.

“And we hear that you, old man, were prosperous before: as much as Lesbos, the abode of Makar, was a barrier to the north, and Phrygia from the north and the boundless Hellespont too, they say that you excelled over these in wealth and sons. However, ever since the Uranian gods brought this suffering to you, always around your city there are battles and men being slaughtered.”

The close juxtaposition of these two cities on the Shield link the two as one, creating a powerful contrast of war and peace in urban life;¹³ furthermore, as it is plausible to assume that the City at Peace and the City at War are the same city, the scenes of agriculture and rural activity can also be assumed to be the territory around the city, forming a complete city-state. The microcosmic nature of the shield is thus simplified to city and country within the confines of the universe.

The juxtaposition is especially powerful considering that the City at Peace is described before the City at War; just so, the Trojans lament the war in the now, and they reflect on a peace that existed before the Greeks landed on their shore. Furthermore, the placement of the City at War between the various scenes of peacetime, namely the City at Peace and the rural scenes is also a matter of two-fold significance. On the one hand, it implies the literal division between a city and its countryside during war. Activities such as farming and pasturing, which are inherently connected with the fully civilized society of city and countryside are seen to be disrupted by the war throughout the *Iliad*, such as the pasturing scene of Aeneas at 20.89-23, and the fact that the

¹³ Porter (1972, 19) cites several examples of characteristically strong Homeric contrasts, the number of which he describes as “legion,” including the following from the Shield alone: the proximity of the cities at Peace and War, the intrusion of the violence of lions (starting at 18.579) to the peace already described from 18.541, the beauty of the shield with the ugliness of the fight, and others from the *Iliad* in general that underline one with its opposite. See Porter (1972) at 14-16 where he talks about an entire class of similes that deal with the productivity of peacetime vs. the destruction of war.

plain of Troy has been twisted from productive, civilized activity to the stage of battle, carnage, and destruction. Furthermore, it symbolizes the disruption that war drives into a wholly peaceful world and that this one event shatters peace in all of its aspects.

The portion of the Shield most important to the relationship between peace and the epic hero comes from the City at Peace scene. This is the scene of the assembly, and law court, and the just arbitrator (18.497-508). This ideal and functional process and dispensation of justice (δίκη) establishes a standard for the various civic assemblies in the *Iliad*. It is the lens through which the failed assembly of Book 1, the well-arbitrated Funeral Games of Patroklos, and the civic place of heroes throughout the *Iliad* must be viewed. Its placement is also significant, for up until this point the action of the *Iliad* has been driven by that failed assembly of Book 1, the fiasco of which is emphasized by the City at Peace. Seeing this example of proper arbitration then sets the stage for a mirroring of these events in Book 23, which are much more proximal. In a way, the Shield then sets the stage for the success of Achilles in arbitrating the funeral games. I will deal with this aspect of the Shield in much greater detail later in this paper.

The Shield of Achilles is not an idealization of peace and war, but in fact to a degree it attempts to show the reality of life and to serve as a reminder that war is not so all-consuming as the *Iliad* itself suggests. As much as the *Iliad* is focused on the events of the Trojan War and is only intermittently infiltrated by allusions to peace through the similes and reflections on the times, the Shield inversely depicts peace as the dominant state of the world, relegating war to its proper place; this is much more along the lines of real life, the life of the Epic's audience.

Although the Shield serves as a reminder that war is but a small part of the world, it also illustrates war's capacity to destroy all that peacetime has to offer in terms of happiness, levity, and order. This lends even further perspective to life, for many of the pleasures of peace which can be taken for granted, such as successful harvest, dances, and festivals all are affected and brought low by war (parallel to reminiscing about Troy's glorious past, different locations,

objects, and things used in peacetime before the Achaeans came).

One more aspect of the Shield's realism that deserves attention is that violence is not only in the domain of war but is also possible in peacetime. The Shield juxtaposes war with a world of peace, and while peace is full of joyful activities and prosperity (which are markedly lacking in war), and the relative absence of man-made death and destruction is highlighted therein, this is not to say that peacetime is absolutely bereft of violence. There is certainly violence found in nature, and for shepherds and herders the threat of violence is a daily possibility as the lions among cattle shows (18.579-586). It is possible to see the lions' intrusion into peacetime as symbolizing war's same intrusion, but in terms of the Shield's depiction of peace it is most important to note that this is an everyday, natural sort of violence, yet one that has extraordinarily destructive power. In terms of the Shield as well as of other lion references throughout the *Iliad*, Homer expresses the dichotomy of the lion in similes both as a symbol of war and as a natural intrusion within peacetime. This dichotomy is realized in Book 20.89-93:

οὐ μὲν γὰρ νῦν πρῶτα ποδώκεος ἄντ' Ἀχιλῆος
 στήσομαι, ἀλλ' ἤδη με καὶ ἄλλοτε δουρὶ φόβησεν
 ἐξ Ἴδης, ὅτε βουσὶν ἐπήλυθεν ἡμετέρησι,
 πέρσε δὲ Λυρνησσὸν καὶ Πήδασον.

“For I will not stand against swift-footed Achilles now for the first time but indeed also he put me to flight with the spear at another time from Ida, when he came upon our cattle, and he sacked Lyrnessos and Pedasos.”

Achilles attacking the cattle takes the role of the lion, a popular comparison for Achilles but also for heroes in general. On the one hand, this scene is very reminiscent of the Shield's lions-among-cattle, yet on the other it twists and skews it. It shows both sides of the lion-motif in one vignette. The scene itself mirrors the Shield's scene which takes place in peacetime, not war, while at the same time it illustrates that war is pervasive to the point of infiltrating a peacetime activity. By

extension, this scene thus shows the lengths to which war distorts the normal, and turns the ordinary on its head.

Even the City at Peace is not exempt from violence and death. The entire premise of the just law court is concerning the blood price of murder. However, it is the manner in which the case is dealt that allows this violence to exist in the context of peace. Murder is an anomaly of peacetime, subject to arbitration and justice as the Shield makes clear in 18.497-508, whereas in war killing loses its social stigma. In war the norms, values, and taboos of society are utterly inverted. While in war killing is glorified, death rewards the killer with material gain, and being killed grants one everlasting glory, in this civic context murder is a crime and requires restitution and payment to the family of the victim by the murderer; there is no glory in killing or death. The assemblies, arbitrators, judges, and the presiding concept of justice, an idea which is warped and at times lost in war, are the peaceful ways to arbitrate such a conflict, instead of with more killing as in war. Almost counterintuitively these examples of violence in peacetime actually further alienate peace from war. More importantly, the fact that Homer includes scenes of violence and death in the context of peacetime highlights the realism with respect to life and death that the Shield of Achilles is meant to capture. The Shield acknowledges violent death as a reality, albeit a rare reality, of peacetime, but thereby highlights the intrinsic difference between peace and war.

Similes in the *Iliad*

The similes of the *Iliad* work in concord with the Shield to contextualize the war within a world of peace. The typical definition of the similes is that they lend variety and contrast to the narrative, acting as a respite from the “monochromatic” subject matter of war, but David Porter

argues that this analysis only begins to scratch the surface of the similes' importance.¹⁴ He states that the huge and "violent" contrast and radical juxtaposition of subject matter draws out Homer's "tragic awareness," his understanding of the savagery of war and purpose of underlining the tragic and savage elements against the glory of a hero, as well as the inversion of norms. This tragic awareness allows the similes with their natural beauty not only to provide relieving contrast, but also to intensify and bring complexity to the action of the poem.¹⁵ This calls into question heroic values in light of true human conceptions of war, an issue which I will discuss later in this paper.

I have no quarrel with Porter's analysis; I am in accord with it. However, as often seems to be the case in the scholarship of Homeric simile, such as that of Porter, the tendency is to view and use the Shield within the context of the similes as a genre.¹⁶ I do not believe that this perspective gives the Shield enough credit. In fact, I would argue that not only should the Shield be understood within the context of the similes, but that it is also possible to understand the similes within the context of the Shield. They are related aspects of the *Iliad* which overlap, complement, and derive context from each other. In terms of their related peaceful content, I tend to view the Shield as being central to the overall importance of the simile genre. Although it does not make its appearance until late in Book 18, the Shield, having established the war within its cosmic context as a microcosm of the *Iliad*'s world, forms the bond between the otherwise disparate and event-specific similes. Furthermore, the similes may interrelate in the motifs that they use, but this does not reveal much more than the formulaic natures of the motifs of these similes. The Shield creates a world wherein the similes can exist, showing overwhelmingly society at peace and the human activity that takes place at this time.

¹⁴ See Porter (1972, 11-12, 21) also concerning the "violent" contrast of subject matter and Homer's "tragic awareness."

¹⁵ Pratt Jr. 1956, 341-2.

¹⁶ Porter 1972, 19 (see note 14).

Of course, the Shield itself does not encompass the entire corpus of peace-oriented similes— although there are several similes which I will elucidate shortly that share their motifs with the Shield— as these literary tools are multifarious in both number and subject matter. However, it is conceivable that any of the peacetime similes *could* exist in the context, the world, which the Shield provides. While the similes individually and briefly break the war-wrought tension of the *Iliad*, the Shield is in a way both the ultimate simile in its contextualization of the conflict, giving the reader a large respite from war after three-quarters of the war epic has already passed, and more importantly the locus in which the similes are linked and where they garner an overarching meaning. Conversely, this drastic shift in subject matter in the similes also can serve to intensify the matters at hand rather than relieve.¹⁷ Indeed the Shield of Achilles, a weapon of war adorned with scenes of peace and scenes bearing much relevance to Achilles' life does lend an intensity to the ἀριστεία of Achilles as well as to his life, descent into bloodlust and inhumanity, and his return to civilized life by the end of the *Iliad*; once again, the Shield and similes share a function and yet the Shield does so on a much greater level and also in a way that connects the events of the *Iliad* and the similes therein. I believe that the Shield is what gives the similes significance beyond that of simple tools of contrast.

The similes take scenes of peacetime, such as agriculture, herding, and nature, and couple them with the events of war.¹⁸ The scenes over which peace similes are very often juxtaposed are those of the gory injury and death of heroes.¹⁹ They not only work to highlight the savage and pathetic nature of war, but they also deflect the sympathy of the reader to the one being killed, not the warrior who is gaining glory.²⁰ Although those who are killed are often unheralded lesser heroes whose only purpose seems to be to die, through the similes Homer shows off his artistic

¹⁷ Taplin (1980) discusses the tension and intensification caused by the similes at 15 and 3.

¹⁸ Porter 1972, 11.

¹⁹ Taplin 1980, 15.

²⁰ Schein 1984, 72-3.

and literary refinement in his ability to create individuality for his characters and beauty out of death.²¹ The similes tend to reflect images from the Shield itself, or at least matters that are in accord with the types of images on the Shield. I will only mention a few here, as the similes in the *Iliad* are quite numerous. One example of an agriculturally themed simile comes during the encounter between Menelaos and Helenos, son of Priam, as the Trojans are fighting among the Achaean ships (13.586-592):

Πριαμίδης μὲν ἔπειτα κατὰ στῆθος βάλεν ἰῶ
 θώρηκος γύαλον, ἀπὸ δ' ἔπτατο πικρὸς οἴστός.
 ὡς δ' ὄτ' ἀπὸ πλατέος πτυόφιν μεγάλην κατ' ἀλωήν
 θρόσκωσιν κύαμοι μελανόχροες ἢ ἐρέβινθοι
 πνοιῇ ὑπο λιγυρῇ καὶ λικμητῆρος ἐρωῇ,
 ὡς ἀπὸ θώρηκος Μενελάου κυδαλίμοιο
 πολλὸν ἀποπλαγχθεὶς ἐκὰς ἔπτατο πικρὸς οἴστός.

“Then the son of Priam struck the hollow of his breastplate over his chest with an arrow, but the bitter arrow sprang away. As when upon a great threshing floor from the broad-bladed shovel the black-skinned beans or the chickpeas spring high under the shrill wind and the force of the winnowing fan, so too back from the breast-plate of glorious Menelaos the bitter arrow sprang far away, having been driven far off.”

The failure of Helenos' arrow is followed by the javelin of Menelaos hitting its mark, driving through the son of Priam's bow and lodging itself in his hand (18.593-5); Helenos then retreats (18.596-7), “dangling his wounded hand and dragging the ash spear with it.” Although he is only wounded, this simile succeeds in coupling the nonchalant threshing floor with a failed strike that precedes a gory wound. This threshing-floor motif is used other times as well, such as 20.495-502, comparing Achilles's chariot trampling the slain to an ox crushing barley, as well as at 5.499-505 in relation to the Achaean horses and chariots kicking up a cloud of dust.

One of the *Iliad*'s more moving and intense similes of especial poignancy is that

²¹ Pratt Jr. 1956, 342.

describing the death of Simoeisios (4.473-89), directly relating his demise to a tranquil scene of nature:

ἔνθ' ἔβαλ' Ἀνθεμίωνος υἷον Τελαμώνιος Αἴας
 ἠΐθεον θαλερόν Σιμοείσιον, ὃν ποτε μήτηρ
 Ἴδηθεν κατιοῦσα παρ' ὄχθησιν Σιμόεντος
 γείνατ', ἐπεὶ ῥα τοκεῦσιν ἄμ' ἔσπετο μῆλα ιδέσθαι:
 τοῦνεκά μιν κάλεον Σιμοείσιον: οὐδὲ τοκεῦσι
 θρέπτρα φίλοις ἀπέδωκε, μινυνθάδιος δέ οἱ αἰῶν
 ἔπλεθ' ὑπ' Αἴαντος μεγαθύμου δουρὶ δαμέντι.
 πρῶτον γάρ μιν ἰόντα βάλε στῆθος παρὰ μαζὸν
 δεξιόν: ἀντικρὺ δὲ δι' ὤμου χάλκεον ἔγχος
 ἦλθεν: ὁ δ' ἐν κονίησι χαμαὶ πέσεν αἴγειρος ὡς
 ἢ ῥά τ' ἐν εἰαμενῇ ἔλεος μέγαλοιο πεφύκει
 λείη, ἀτάρ τέ οἱ ὄζοι ἐπ' ἀκροτάτῃ πεφύασι:
 τὴν μὲν θ' ἀρματοπηγὸς ἀνὴρ αἴθωνι σιδήρῳ
 ἐξέταμ', ὄφρα ἴτυν κάμψῃ περικαλλεῖ δίφρῳ:
 ἢ μὲν τ' ἀζομένη κεῖται ποταμοῖο παρ' ὄχθας.
 τοῖον ἄρ' Ἀνθεμίδην Σιμοείσιον ἐξενάριξεν
 Αἴας διογενῆς.

“Then Ajax son of Telamon struck down (killed) the son of Anthemion, unmarried, blooming Simoeisios, whom at one time his mother, coming down from Ida beside the banks of the Simoeis, bore when she followed together with her parents to see the sheep. Therefore they called him Simoeisios. And he did not give repayment to his beloved parents for rearing him, but life was brief for him, having been conquered under the spear of great-heated Ajax. For as he was moving out in front, Ajax hit his chest beside the right nipple; and straight through his shoulder the bronze spear went, and he fell in the dust to the ground like a black poplar which in the meadow of a great marsh it had grown up smooth, yet its branches grew at the very top; this one which a man who makes chariots cuts down with glittering iron, so that he may bend it into a wheel for a beautiful war-chariot; and having dried up it lies beside the riverbank. As such Ajax sprung from Zeus killed the son of Anthemion, Simoeisios.”

One of the first adjectives used to describe Simoeisios is θαλερόν, which can be translated as “vigorous” or “stout,” but concerning young men the sense of the word is “blooming.” The

“blooming” Simoeisios is then compared to a poplar tree in a lowland marsh, but this peaceful scene is intruded upon by allusion to war as the tree is felled for the manufacture of a chariot. As the tree is cut down for the purpose of war, so too was Simoeisios cut down, his youthful, blooming potential stymied, for the war-like purpose of Ajax’s glory.²² The smooth nature of the tree and the branches only at the top emphasizes his adolescence; from this description one imagines a youth, hairless other than his head, truly only a boy. Finally, his father’s name, Anthemion, is related to the word ἄνθος (flower), lending even more complexity to Simoeisios’ botanical complexion. The restraint and beauty of the natural scene coupled with the sentimental reflection on his family greatly intensifies his tragic young death.²³ The floral and exquisitely peaceful nature of this simile coupled with such a graphic death underscores the powerful dichotomy between war and peace.

These examples of agricultural and nature similes do not directly reflect events and images from the Shield of Achilles, but they do take the reader away from the battle and to this world of peace. This final simile (12.290-308) which likens Sarpedon to a lion among horn-curved cattle exemplifies those similes which recreate scenes that are seen on the Shield itself, calling attention to the inherent bond between the similes via the Shield.

οὐδ’ ἄν πω τότε γε Τρῶες καὶ φαίδιμος Ἴκτωρ
 τείχεος ἐρρήξαντο πύλας καὶ μακρὸν ὄχημα,
 εἰ μὴ ἄρ’ υἱὸν ἐὼν Σαρπηδόνα μητίετα Ζεὺς
 ὄρσεν ἐπ’ Ἀργείοισι λέονθ’ ὡς βουσὶν ἔλιξιν.....²⁴
τὴν ἄρ’ ὅ γε πρόσθε σχόμενος δύο δοῦρε τινάσσων
 βῆ ῥ’ ἴμεν ὡς τε λέων ὀρεσίτροφος, ὃς τ’ ἐπιδευῆς
 δηρὸν ἔη κρειῶν, κέλεται δέ ἐ θυμὸς ἀγήνωρ
 μήλων πειρήσοντα καὶ ἐς πυκινὸν δόμον ἐλθεῖν:
 εἶ περ γάρ χ’ εὗρησι παρ’ αὐτόφι βώτορας ἄνδρας

²² Schein (1984) analyzes the death of Simoeisios from 74-75, making the connections between the tree’s disposition and Simoeisios’ youth (75), as well as the various botanical parallels (74).

²³ Pratt Jr. 1956, 341.

²⁴ I exclude lines 294-297, as they only describe Sarpedon’s shield and are of little consequence in terms of the simile.

σὺν κυσὶ καὶ δούρεσσι φυλάσσοντας περὶ μῆλα,
 οὐ ρά τ' ἀπείρητος μέμονε σταθμοῖο δῖεσθαι,
 ἀλλ' ὁ γ' ἄρ' ἦ ἤρπαξε μετάλμενος, ἠὲ καὶ αὐτὸς
 ἔβλητ' ἐν πρώτοισι θοῆς ἀπὸ χειρὸς ἄκοντι.
 ὣς ρά τότε ἀντίθεον Σαρπηδόνα θυμὸς ἀνήκε
 τεῖχος ἐπαῖξαι διὰ τε ῥήξασθαι ἐπάλλξεις.

“And not even then would the Trojans and glorious Hektor have broken asunder the gates of the wall and the long door-bar, if Zeus the counselor had not urged his own son, Sarpedon, against the Argives, like a lion against horn-curved cattle.... Holding this shield before him and brandishing two spears, he set out to go forth like a mountain-bred lion, who for a long time has been lacking meat, and the courageous heart urges him to go into close sheepfold and to make an attempt on the sheep flocks. For even though he finds herdsmen in that very spot, guarding about their sheep-flocks with spears and with dogs, regardless he does not wish to break away from the steading without making an attempt on it, but he either springs forth and seizes a sheep, or else he himself is hit in the first attacks with a spear from a swift hand. So at this time his spirit drove on godlike Sarpedon to rush upon the wall and break through the battlements.”

This scene calls to mind the aforementioned lines 579-586 of Book 18, which describe lions attacking “horn-curved cattle” while the herdsmen and their dogs attempt to ward them off in vain; these details are mirrored in the simile of Sarpedon. The Shield’s depiction of the lions places them within the context of peacetime, not war, but in this simile’s derivation from the Shield the lion in a way represents war. There is a raw power afforded to the lion which irreparably disrupts the peacetime on the Shield. The same power can be attributed to war, as it has the capability of destroying all the good that peace has to offer. I say “irreparably” because of the futility within the lion-cattle motif of the herdsmen or the dogs to drive them off and the fact that on the Shield the lions succeed in killing and devouring the bull. The bull is dead and the lions cannot be removed, just as the blood-stain of war cannot be washed away as war kills heroes and innocents who cannot be brought back.

In addition, the lion is a common comparison for heroes especially when they are fully immersed in the spirit of war and blood-lust. Lions symbolize the potential, unbridled violence inherent in man that could absolutely disrupt society.²⁵ In fact, twenty-eight times the lion-simile is used in the *Iliad* with respect to heroes.²⁶ With this sort of comparison Homer hails the past and concurrent artistic tradition throughout the ancient world, from Bronze Age Mycenae to the Neo-Assyrian kings, of the lion as “the image of success in both war and hunting.”²⁷ When heroes are made to be lions, there is little that man can do to stop them. Achilles, the greatest warrior of all the heroes at Troy, is very much associated with the lion. In the midst of his ἀριστεία, Achilles is most associated with the lion, especially in his response to Hektor's entreaty that he swear that they will respect the other's corpse once the fighting has finished (22.250-9), “...there are no trustworthy oaths among lions and men... (22.262)” and afterwards when he is said to be acting like a lion by Apollo at the beginning of Book 24 (41-2). Agamemnon also is compared to a lion among cattle when he pushes the Trojans in retreat at 11.170-178. This instance most mirrors that of the Shield in the language, as in both cases (11.176; 18.583) the lions “gulp down the...blood and...entrails.” The phrase is all but identical in terms of the Greek in both cases. The main difference is evident in the particular adjectives, as in the former the entrails (ἔγκαια) are modified with πάντα (all) and in the latter the blood (αἷμα) is described as μέλαν (dark, black).

Likewise, the lion comparison highlights Sarpedon's power at this time, for after being compared to a lion Sarpedon leads his Lykians against the ramparts of the Achaians (12.330 ff.) and their power is so overwhelming that Menestheos is forced to call the two powerful Aiantes and others to come to his aid, for he knows that his sector cannot fend off this lion-like man and his army (12.331-350). The fact that this comparison is used on both sides of the conflict, Trojan and Greek, highlights the universality of the similes and the Shield. Furthermore, the universality

²⁵ Hubbard 1992, 32.

²⁶ Alden 2005, 335.

²⁷ Schein 1984, 79.

of the similes and the Shield shows how both of these things encompass the entire epic and create a full picture of the world.

In their various topics, sizes, and forms, the similes along with the Shield of Achilles form the basis of peace in the *Iliad*. They recall the world outside of the Trojan War, a world of peace and prosperity, dances and marriages. They whisk the readers away from the battlefield and reestablish life's true order and perspective, if only for a brief moment. They highlight war's savagery and wanton destruction, and they evoke sympathy for those who are suffering. They are meant to engage the pathos of the reader. Homer takes the engagement of pathos a step further in his characters, and I find that this is most evident in characters' past, present, and future conceptions of peace.

Chapter 2

Characters and Conceptions of Peace

As I described in the previous chapter, the Shield of Achilles and the similes are very important for understanding peace in the *Iliad*. They serve to contextualize war within the world of the *Iliad* as well as the world in general, functioning on both micro and macro levels to do so. For instance, the Shield depicts an entire Iliadic world, while the derivative similes focus more on specific characters or events, linking them to this alternative yet accompanying world of peace. Considering all of this, I believe that the crux of the similes and the Shield is to bring to light to the fact that the *Iliad*, a poem about war, can only exist because of peace, a peace that was past, a peace that could and should be in the now, and a peace that will one way or another exist in the future. Thus the Shield and similes serve a second purpose, which is to establish the classification of the *Iliad* in parallelisms.

Without taking the Shield and similes into full account, it is very easy to perceive the *Iliad* as a story of absolutes, of war and of death. This perspective places significant limitations upon the artistic depth of the *Iliad*, essentially denying the poem the level of complexity that analysis shows certainly exists.²⁸ While scholars such as Walter Marg have called the *Iliad* a “poem of death,”²⁹ it is much more appropriate to follow the analysis of Griffin in identifying the *Iliad* as a poem of life *and* death, if not only for the importance of Achilles’ struggle concerning long life at home or a premature but glorious death at Troy.³⁰ Achilles struggle and eventual

²⁸ Schein (1984, 84) poses the idea that the *Iliad* must not only be a poem of death, but a poem of life and thus of mortality. The realism that Homer is able to depict as a result of this “mortality” lens is indicative of his artistry; thus if a simple and absolutist point of view is adopted when analyzing the *Iliad*, this complexity is lost.

²⁹ Marg 1973, 13.

³⁰ Griffin 1980, 95; see note 29 for Schein’s concurrent point of view.

acceptance of his imminent death extract the poignancy of what it means to live and die.

Especially because of Achilles, but also seen in the dialogues and monologues of other characters, the driving force of the *Iliad*'s plot lies in the contradictions between the values of the epic hero and the inherent desires of human nature.

While I will expand upon the latter matter later in this chapter, it is crucial to bring up this parallelism at this point in my discussion, because the yin and yang of life and death is innately connected to what the Shield and similes illuminate: the contextualization of the war through its juxtaposition with peace. The *Iliad* is not a poem of war, or a poem of peace as Simone Weil would have it,³¹ but a poem of peace and war. This is the reality of the poem as revealed through the Shield and the similes, but it is the reality for the characters within the *Iliad* as can be gathered from various references to the peace before the war, the peace that is to come, and the efforts of some to put the war aside in the present. The reality of the former peace is also brought to light through various objects and places whose significance is now only a remnant of peacetime. The examples which I shall analyze in this chapter are significant because they engage the parallel nature of the *Iliad* as a poem of war and peace, of life and death, thereby further lending importance to the theme of peace in the *Iliad*.

The Past

Homer places a great deal of significance upon the past in the *Iliad*, both a heroic past (see Nestor at 1.260-72) and also a past of peace. The gravity of the latter is brought out in particular through objects and the lamentations of characters for a glorious past that they once knew. The similes in particular function in this way as well. They hearken back to the peace before the war, as well as to the world in which war is placed. A few pertinent passages which I

³¹ Weil 1965, 5-30.

already discussed include 4.473-89 and 24.543-548. This latter scene as a whole acts to resolve the story, bringing the cycle of Achilles' wrath to a close. He treats Priam with civility, allowing his humanity to return to him and his vengeful wrath to dissipate. There is certainly a poignancy to the pathos extracted from the characters in these similes and scenes. The insertion of these reflections upon the past juxtaposes a present war-consumed reality with a peaceful past, which shows how many of the jollities of peace-time have been destroyed by war, a "real-life" manifestation of what the Shield of Achilles is meant to do.

Homer makes use of several objects and places to contrast the war that is now with the peace of the past. One of the examples discussed most in scholarship can be found at 22.147-56:

οἱ δὲ παρὰ σκοπιὴν καὶ ἐρινεὸν ἠνεμόεντα
 τεῖχος αἰὲν ὑπ' ἑκ κατ' ἀμαξιτὸν ἐσσεύοντο,
 κρουνῶ δ' ἴκανον καλλιρρόω: ἔνθα δὲ πηγαὶ
 δοιαὶ ἀναΐσσουσι Σκαμάνδρου δινήεντος.
 ἦ μὲν γάρ θ' ὕδατι λιαρῶ ῥέει, ἀμφὶ δὲ καπνὸς
 γίγνεται ἐξ αὐτῆς ὡς εἰ πυρὸς αἰθομένοιο:
 ἦ δ' ἑτέρη θέρεϊ προρέει εἴκυῖα χαλάζῃ,
 ἦ χιόνι ψυχρῇ ἢ ἐξ ὕδατος κρυστάλλῳ.
 ἔνθα δ' ἐπ' αὐτῶν πλυνοὶ εὐρέες ἐγγυς ἔασι
 καλοὶ λαΐνεοι, ὅθι εἴματα σιγαλόεντα
 πλύνεσκον Τρώων ἄλοχοι καλαὶ τε θύγατρες
 τὸ πρὶν ἐπ' εἰρήνης πρὶν ἐλθεῖν υἴας Ἀχαιῶν.

"And they ran beside the watch-tower and the windy fig-tree, always away from under the wall and upon the wagon-road, and they came to the two beautifully flowing springs. In this place two streams of the whirling Skamandros spring up. For the one flows with warm water and on both sides steam issues forth from it as if from a burning fire. But the other flows forth in summertime akin to hail or cold snow or ice formed from the water. But also in this place, beside and nearby these very things, were the broad washing-troughs, magnificent and made of stone, where the lovely wives and daughters of the Trojans used to wash the splendid garments; this was before, in the time of peace, before the sons of the Achaeans came."

These springs under the walls of Troy, with their exclusive link to peacetime, are so incredibly

poignant because they are described as Achilles is murderously chasing Hektor around the walls of Troy. In the midst of this climactic scene, “Homer suspends an image of the normal domestic life of Troy ‘before the sons of the Achaians came (22.156).’”³² In contrast to the vicious climax of a battle, the sphere of men, the women’s peacetime and domestic domain, washing garments in the springs of Skamandros, is presented. This gendered approach to war is also seen in the interaction between Hektor and Andromache in Book 6 which I shall describe in the next section. In short, war is the domain of man as Hektor states at 6.492, and women tend to be associated with peacetime as is depicted in similes and objects such as this. As is the case with so many of Homer’s similes, a scene of absolute peace, calm, and everyday significance intrudes upon a scene of battle and the horror thereof.

This scene garners further noteworthiness for the reader knows what fate is about to befall Hektor. What has been foretold about Hektor by Priam at 22.39-43 is about to be fulfilled. This is the pinnacle of Achilles’ ἀριστεία, his moment of victory. His vengeance is at hand, yet Homer digresses about a couple of well-springs which likely did not exist at all or have a previous poetic tradition were plausibly entirely his own invention.³³ At one of the most dramatic points of the *Iliad* the reader is diverted from the fatal action at hand to the most undramatic of places. In this scene Homer’s literary prowess is at its zenith with this “invention of tragic contrast.” The blatant contrast of these two scenes, so close in physical proximity in the *Iliad*, confronts the audience directly, on one hand relieving them for a moment from the terrible events which are taking place, but also intensely reminding them of the loss caused by the war. The focus on loss transcends an unpretentious well-spring to the great men who have been lost in this tragic conflict, as well as even more poignantly what and who shall be lost, in this case “the life

³² Schein 1984, 76.

³³ On Homer’s invention of the wellsprings as exhibiting “tragic contrast,” as well as the significance of The Tomb of Ilos as a place of former glory for the Trojans yet now the place of their failures, see Griffin 1980, 21-23.

of tender domesticity,”³⁴ Hektor, the greatest of the Trojans, but even further Achilles, a “far better man” (22.158) than even Hektor.

Another location of import with respect to past peace is the Tomb of Ilos, son of Dardanos, namesake of Ilion and the *Iliad*. The significance of this tomb lies not with its resident, who is no more than a venerable name, but with what it represents. Twice is this tomb brought up in Book 11, and then again in Book 24 the tomb is where Priam rests and is met by Hermes as the king of Troy makes his way to the Achaean ships to ransom the body of Hektor from Achilles.

As Agamemnon is engaging in his heroic killing spree and is putting the Trojans to flight, Homer mentions that in their retreat they pass this tomb on their way to the city (11.165-8). Once a venerable spot and a reminder of Troy’s long and prosperous history, now “Agamemnon slaughters the descendants of Ilos upon his tomb.”³⁵ Later in Book 11 within lines 369-79 the tomb is again significant to the action of the poem, as Paris, “leaning on the man-made column upon the barrow of Ilos, the son of Dardanos, an elder of the people in days of old (11.371-2),” hides behind it in order to shoot Diomedes as the latter strips Agastrophos of his armor (11.373). Paris succeeds in inflicting a minor foot wound upon Diomedes, and “from his place of ambush he sprang and boasting he spoke his speech of triumph (11.379),” but his foolish and ill-conceived rejoicing is met by the threatening ridicule of Diomedes, who makes clear his disdain for cowardly archers (11.385-395).

The Tomb of Ilos is an interesting inclusion into these scenes due to the contrasting nature of what it represents and what happens in the scenes in which it is mentioned. Carved into the landscape of Troy are this local hero and his κλέος, hearkening back to a glorious and heroic Trojan past. Converse to what it represents, it tends to be a landmark around which the events are

³⁴ Schein 1984, 76.

³⁵ Griffin 1980, 23.

most inglorious and unheroic for the Trojans, such as their retreat and Paris' vacuous and pathetic celebration of his unsuccessful attack of Diomedes.

Furthermore, the tomb of this ancestral Trojan tends to be brought up in the midst of Trojan death or, in the case of Paris, failure. It is a portent of the fall of Troy. Agamemnon slaughters the Trojans and they flee past this tomb; death is imminent for these children of Ilos, and thus by extension death is coming to Ilion. Priam stops at this tomb on the way to recover Hektor's body, Hektor who was the bulwark of the Trojans and whose death is inextricably linked to the fall of Troy. It constantly serves as a reminder and reflection of the death of the Trojans and of Ilion itself. Thus the pathos of Priam's mournful journey and goal in supplicating Achilles for the body of his slaughtered son gains greater poignancy, not only because he stops at this grave which has already been associated with the antithesis of the bloody fighting, but because of Hektor's death signifying the fall of Troy, or Ilion. Finally, Paris fails to kill Diomedes after hiding behind this tomb, showing that even in the presence of an emblem of Troy's heroic and illustrious past Paris cannot be heroic, and that the Trojans will ultimately fail. The tomb is contextualized by Trojan death and failure: it is both a reminder of Troy's past glory, happiness, and peace, and is a grave omen of the fate that shall befall all of Troy.

A final example of a doleful reflection on Troy's peaceful past comes from the rather ridiculous divine family-feud, the Battle of the Gods, in Book 21. After Hera convinces Hephaistos to cease his quarrel with the river Xanthos (21.379-80), the other gods are incited to fight among themselves, much to the amusement of Zeus (21.389), and Athena and Ares are the first to come to blows. Ares resents Athena for supporting Diomedes' attack upon him and attempts to strike first with a thrust from his spear. Athena responds as such (21.403-8):

ἦ δ' ἀναχασσαμένη λίθον εἴλετο χειρὶ παχείῃ
 κείμενον ἐν πεδίῳ μέλανα τρηχὺν τε μέγαν τε,
 τὸν ῥ' ἄνδρες πρότεροι θέσαν ἔμμεναι οὖρον ἀρούρης·
 τῷ βάλε θοῦρον Ἄρηα κατ' ἀχένα, λῦσε δὲ γυῖα.

ἐπτά δ' ἐπέσχε πέλεθρα πεσών, ἐκόνισε δὲ χαίτας,
τεύχεά τ' ἀμφοράβησε.

“But Athena, having fallen back took up in her hand a massive stone which, black, jagged, and huge, laid in the field, and which men of old had put there to be the boundary of the field. With this stone she struck furious Ares upon his neck, and she loosed his limbs. And having fallen he covered seven measures of land, and he dirtied his hair, and his armor rattled.”

Perhaps some transparent significance can be garnered from Athena’s defeat of Ares, as the latter represents the Trojans and Athena supports the Achaeans; it is a rather straightforward symbolism of which side shall win the war. However, what lends much more pathetic significance to this passage is the fact that this rock used by Athena to down Ares is a boundary-stone for plough-land. Agriculture, as has been seen on the Shield, is quite absolutely associated with peace. Now it is perverted for the purpose of war. The use of this peacetime-object for a violent, war-oriented purpose, especially by a goddess who is the essence of war against a similarly identified god, exemplifies the “chaotic reversal of the order and sense of life in peace.”³⁶ In this scene the primeval power of war encapsulated in these divinities manipulates the ordinary, distorts what was once peaceful, and warps the world.

The Present

Finding peace in the *Iliad*'s present is an obviously tricky and somewhat counterintuitive task. The present of the *Iliad* is war. What place can peace have in war? It seems that within the confines of Troy’s famous walls that a peace living parallel to the war can be found, and this is defined in the weaving of Andromache.

As Hektor makes his rounds of the city in Book 6, conversing in turn with his mother

³⁶ Griffin 1980, 24.

Hekuba, Paris, and Helen, he seeks out his wife Andromache at his home, expecting her to be there (6.369-71). Upon interrogating a handmaiden he finds that she has gone with their child to the wall of Troy and the great bastion thereon to observe the battle at hand (6.386-9). This is where the other women of Troy, such as Hekuba and Helen, tend to be during the war; however, Hektor does not advocate this for his wife, and instead of being preoccupied with war he insists that Andromache focus on an activity of peacetime (6.490-3):

ἀλλ' εἰς οἶκον ἰοῦσα τὰ σ' αὐτῆς ἔργα κόμιζε
 ἰστόν τ' ἠλακάτην τε, καὶ ἀμφιπόλοισι κέλευε
 ἔργον ἐποίχεσθαι: πόλεμος δ' ἄνδρεςσι μελήσει
 πᾶσι, μάλιστα δ' ἐμοί, τοῖ Ἰλίῳ ἐγγεγάασιν.

"But going to our house tend to your own work, the loom and the distaff, and command your maid-servants to go about their work: but let war remain a care for all men, who have been born in Ilion, but especially for me."

With the City at War on the Shield and the corresponding examples in mind, this is a "proper" place for women in a city to be during times of war. However, Hektor bids her to go back home, unlike the other women (Hekuba, Helen), and he instructs her and her attendants to weave and thus conduct normal, domestic duties, the duties of a woman during times of peace. In a way Hektor "restores" her to her peacetime and feminine place, while he goes off to his masculine sphere to fight in the war.

In addition, Homer once again juxtaposes a peacetime activity of women with the war that is occurring, the violent action of men. Women in war are often associated with a select few roles, one of which is not managing their own household. Other than watching from the walls and praying (18.514, 6.379-80), they are (potential) slaves to be won through victory and given as prizes to those who capture them;³⁷ the case of Brieseis illustrates this perfectly. Perhaps they will go on to manage the household of another, but it is in a way warped by war; it is not their house,

³⁷ Gaca 2008, 146.

and they are a slave.

Nevertheless, even as the city is besieged and surrounded by war, Adromache continues her work that is a hallmark of peacetime. Hektor's reasoning is that it is the work of men to fight, and that the women should be away from it, so although Helen and Hekuba are found on the walls watching the combat in parallel to the Shield, Andromache tends to remain at her loom, living in a parallel, if not artificial, world of peace. This parallel world of peace is shattered in Book 22 when, at her loom, she is informed of Hektor's death. However, for the bulk of the *Iliad* she is away from the war, literally and figuratively, a last living remnant of peacetime amidst the war.

Future

The future is a bleak affair for so many of the characters of the *Iliad*. Many do not realize it as their fate is carried out in later installments of the epic corpus (even that of Achilles), but for the Trojans as well as Achilles in particular, their imminent and doomed fates loom all too near and are often tragically discussed both in terms of the bleak reality as well as optimistic potentialities. Conversations about any potential future peace for the Trojans tend to concern Hektor, whether they be about him or spoken by him. While there is certainly a tragic poignancy in looking back at past peace and in the shattering of Andromache's faux peacetime of wifely duties, nothing is more tragically evocative than the post-war future for the Trojans. The Achaeans, other than Achilles, don't often look at what a future peace may hold; they tend to be more occupied with the war in the now and achieving victory; peace in the future seems to be taken for granted as the natural companion of victory. However, for the Trojans who know that any future "peace" is inseparable from their destruction, reflections on potential futures are made to be so much more pathetic than anything else.

Book 6 is variously teeming with pitiful, mournfully realistic, and hopelessly optimistic extrapolations by those on the Trojan side about what the future will hold for them, especially within the dialogue of Hektor and his wife Andromache. There are two particular passages from their conversation that I would like to examine, 6.440-65 and 6.476-81. From 6.406-439, Andromache, holding their small child Astyanax in her arms, fervently begs Hektor to stay within the city, “on the rampart (6.431),” and to not go out and die at the hand of Achilles. Although she acknowledges Achilles’ humanity when it comes to his treatment of his slain, an ironic sentiment considering his eventual less than compassionate treatment of Hektor’s body, she knows firsthand of Achilles’ killing capacity, as she lost her brothers and father to Achilles’ blade. However, Hektor responds first as an epic hero ought to respond (6.440-6), saying that he would be ashamed not to fight, lest he be called a coward, and since it is his duty to defend the city and win glory for himself and for his father. He then speaks of the future “peace” after the end of the war (6.447-65):

εὖ γὰρ ἐγὼ τόδε οἶδα κατὰ φρένα καὶ κατὰ θυμόν:
 ἔσσεται ἡμᾶρ ὄτ’ ἂν ποτ’ ὀλώλη Ἴλιος ἱρὴ
 καὶ Πρίαμος καὶ λαὸς ἐυμμελίῳ Πριάμοιο.
 ἀλλ’ οὐ μοι Τρώων τόσσον μέλει ἄλγος ὀπίσσω,
 οὔτ’ αὐτῆς Ἐκάβης οὔτε Πριάμοιο ἄνακτος
 οὔτε κασιγνήτων, οἳ κεν πολέες τε καὶ ἐσθλοὶ
 ἐν κονίησι πέσοιεν ὑπ’ ἀνδράσι δυσμενέεσσιν,
 ὅσσον σεῦ, ὅτε κέν τις Ἀχαιῶν χαλκοχιτώνων
 δακρύνεσσαν ἄγηται ἐλεύθερον ἡμᾶρ ἀπούρας:
 καὶ κεν ἐν Ἄργει ἐοῦσα πρὸς ἄλλης ἰστὸν ὑφαίνοις,
 καὶ κεν ὕδωρ φορέοις Μεσσηϊδος ἢ Ὑπερείης
 πόλλ’ ἀεκαζομένη, κρατερὴ δ’ ἐπικείσεται ἀνάγκη:
 καὶ ποτέ τις εἴπησιν ἰδὼν κατὰ δάκρυ χέουσαν:
 Ἴκτορος ἦδε γυνὴ ὅς ἀριστεύεσκε μάχεσθαι
 Τρώων ἵπποδάμων ὅτε Ἴλιον ἀμφεμάχοντο.
 ὥς ποτέ τις ἐρέει: σοὶ δ’ αἶψά νεόν ἔσσεται ἄλγος
 χήτει τοιοῦδ’ ἀνδρὸς ἀμύνειν δούλιον ἡμᾶρ.
 ἀλλὰ με τεθνηῶτα χυτὴ κατὰ γαῖα καλύπτοι
 πρὶν γέ τι σῆς τε βοῆς σοῦ θ’ ἐλκηθμοῖο πυθέσθαι.

“For this I know well in my mind and in my heart: there will be a day when holy Ilion will be destroyed, as well as Priam and the people of Priam armed with the good ashen spear. But it is

not so much the pain of the Trojans hereafter that weighs on me, nor that of Hekuba herself nor of Priam the king nor of my brothers, who being many and noble will fall in the dust by the hands of men hostile to them, but rather more your pain, when one of the bronze-clad Achaeans would carry you, tearful, away, having taken away your day of freedom; and you will constantly have to carry water from Messeis or Hypereia, very unwilling, but strong necessity will be laid upon you; and one day someone looking upon you shedding tears shall say: ‘This was the wife of Hektor who was the best of the horse-taming Trojans at fighting when they fought around Ilion.’ So one day someone will speak; and yet again there will be fresh pain for you having no-such man to ward off that servile day. But having died, may the earth poured over me cover me before I learn anything about you crying and being carried off.”

After this moving scene Hektor then goes to hold his son, but the child screams in fear at the sight of the son of Priam’s helm, not recognizing his own father, and an amused Hektor takes it off to quell his child’s terror (6.466-74). This passage marks a contradiction between Hektor’s “heroic values and familial loyalties”³⁸ Just as Achilles’ armor and the armor of any hero, Hektor’s armor is intended to strike fear into his enemies. This scene is a cross-section of spheres though, as the armor performs its war-like purpose on his baby boy. Holding his child, Hektor then optimistically and contrastingly says the following (6.476-81):

Ζεῦ ἄλλοι τε θεοὶ δότε δὴ καὶ τόνδε γενέσθαι
 παῖδ’ ἐμὸν ὡς καὶ ἐγὼ περ ἀριπρεπέα Τρώεσσι,
 ὧδε βίην τ’ ἀγαθὸν, καὶ Ἰλίου ἱφὶ ἀνάσσειν:
 καὶ ποτέ τις εἴποι πατρός γ’ ὄδε πολλὸν ἀμείνων
 ἐκ πολέμου ἀνιόντα: φέροι δ’ ἕναρα βροτόεντα
 κτείνας δῆϊον ἄνδρα, χαρεῖη δὲ φρένα μήτηρ.

“Zeus and the other gods, indeed grant even that this my child may be even as I am, very distinguished among the Trojans, so good in strength, and that he may rule strongly over Ilion:

³⁸ Schein 1984, 175; Schein also makes the point about the cross-section of spheres with Hektor’s helm frightening Astyanax.

and someday I pray that someone says that this man is better by much than his father, as he comes in from war: and I pray that he bring forth bloody spoils having killed his enemy, and that his mother be glad in her heart.”

There is something so profoundly human about this “final” exchange between Hektor and Andromache. The scene as a whole represents the doomed soldier leaving his wife for the last time, a motif alluded elsewhere in the *Iliad* such as at 15.495.³⁹ On the one hand Hektor acknowledges the fate that will realistically occur, his death and the fall of the city, and he tries to prepare Andromache for this reality. Although he can tell her little more than that she will likely end up the slave of another after his fall and that of Troy (in the future “peace”), his comfort for her, and his reasoning for fighting, is that the glory he shall obtain through battle will reflect upon her forever. This future is certainly one that is doomed.

On the other hand, he also reflects upon a future where their son, Astyanax, will grow up to be even greater than his father, even though he knows that if the city falls, which he just talked about, that his son will die. This is blatantly contradicting, to the point of nonsense. However, that is what makes this scene so realistic. Is this not a usual way in which human beings deal with grief and tragedy? We try to cope with the reality, but that is oftentimes too difficult to accept, so we might tend toward optimism, especially if we are trying to console a loved one. Thus Hektor divulges to Andromache this doomed sentiment, an alternative, optimistic future, which he and the readers of the *Iliad* know will never be. Hektor has just stated his fate plainly at 6.448 that he will die (although he doesn’t understand the imminence of his fate so well as Achilles), and at other places in the epic such as the dying words of Patroklos (16.852-4) his fate is also openly explained. While this epic tends to be preoccupied with divine wrath, godlike heroes, the will of gods, and powers beyond the realm of men, this reflection upon a potential yet doomed future is

³⁹ Griffin 1980, 122.

certainly one of the most innately human events in the entire *Iliad*.

Considering his interactions with Andromache and also Helen and Hecuba in Book 6, I must take a moment to explore Hektor and his fate. Unlike Achilles, who is prophesied to die at Troy and gain everlasting glory for himself, Hektor is not so aware of his fate. Certainly, in the excerpts of Book 6 about which I have just written, he speaks of his fate being bound up with the destruction of Troy and the imminent likelihood that he and the city will not survive. However, this is more an acknowledgement of Hektor's status as the greatest hero in Troy, without whom the city cannot survive. This sentiment is echoed by essentially every other Trojan and even some Greeks, but especially in Books 22 and 24 after Hektor's death is the parallel nature of his fate with that of Troy expressed.

After Hektor's body is returned to Troy by Priam in Book 24, Andromache is the first to rush to the body of her husband (24.723), and she laments as she holds her husband's head that she has been left a widow and that her son, along with the city of Troy, is doomed (24.727-30):

...οὐδέ μιν οἴω
ἦβην ἴξεσθαι: πρὶν γὰρ πόλις ἦδε κατ' ἄκρης
πέρσεται: ἦ γὰρ ὄλωλας ἐπίσκοπος, ὅς τέ μιν αὐτήν
ρύσκει, ἔχει δ' ἀλόχους κεδνάς καὶ νήπια τέκνα...

“I do not think that he will come into his youthful prime: for before then this city will be sacked down from the top: for truly you, the city's guardian, have perished, who protected it, and you guarded its diligent wives and its infant children....”

The most clear connection between their fates is expressed earlier in Book 22.410-11, right after the death of Hektor and the whole-hearted and wide-spread lamentation that followed:

τῷ δὲ μάλιστ' ἄρ' ἔην ἐναλίγκιον ὡς εἰ ἅπασα
Ἴλιος ὀφρυόεσσα πυρὶ σμύχοιτο κατ' ἄκρης.

“And it was most like unto this, as if all of majestic Troy was burning with fire from top to bottom.”

These passages being placed after the death of Hektor most encapsulate how the doom of Troy is inherently linked with Hektor’s mortal evanescence. His death is promulgated in symbolism, similarly to how the death of Patroklos draws on and represents the death of Achilles in language and structure; in Hektor’s case, it is not the death of a man that he represents, but the death of the city which does not occur within the *Iliad*.⁴⁰ The passage from 22.410-11 is certainly the most evocative of this intrinsic link, and the culmination of all such parallels of the interwoven fates of Hektor and Troy.

Hektor views the future both optimistically and realistically, understanding that the fate of the city is inextricably bound to his own but not comprehending its imminence. Although Achilles is in many ways the consummate epic hero and his heroic future is clear from Book 1, in Book 9 he is so disenchanted with the war and the heroic ethos that he is willing to cast his fate and way of life aside. He makes his disenchantment with the war and the heroic ethos quite clear when he is approached by the delegation of Odysseus, Ajax, and Phoinix in Book 9. I will deal with his disenchantment in the next section in greater detail, but toward the end of his speech Achilles contemplates the future in terms of the importance of his life and whether staying at Troy is worth the cost of his life (9.401-20):

⁴⁰ Schein 1984, 9, 26, 168-9: Hektor’s death is clearly associated with Troy’s destruction considering the excerpts I have provided as well as 6.403, where he is referred to as Troy’s “sole defender.” This is highlighted especially because the destruction of the city is not included in the *Iliad*. For the purposes of this comparison I say that Hektor is not related to the death of a man but to that of a city. However, it is important to note that parallelism which Schein describes on page 27, that while Patroklos’ death is described in the same manner as that of Achilles, Hektor has a very close parallel with Memnon in the *Aithiopsis*, where also the death of Achilles is described. Schein suggests that Patroklos and Hektor were fleshed out for the purposes of the *Iliad* with a less significant tradition in the epic compendium before Homer’s work was written. Because the *Iliad* does not and cannot include the death of Achilles, and Memnon is not in it, Homer elaborated these other characters to symbolize the later and important end of the war, especially the fate of Achilles which is ever-present throughout the *Iliad* yet never realized.

οὐ γὰρ ἐμοὶ ψυχῆς ἀντάξιον οὐδ' ὅσα φασὶν
 Ἴλιον ἐκτῆσθαι εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον
 τὸ πρὶν ἐπ' εἰρήνης, πρὶν ἐλθεῖν υἴας Ἀχαιῶν,
 οὐδ' ὅσα λάϊνος οὐδὸς ἀφήτορος ἐντὸς ἔεργει
 Φοῖβου Ἀπόλλωνος Πυθοῖ ἐνὶ πετρηέσση.
 ληῖστοὶ μὲν γὰρ τε βόες καὶ ἴφια μῆλα,
 κτητοὶ δὲ τρίποδές τε καὶ ἵππων ξανθὰ κάρηνα,
 ἀνδρὸς δὲ ψυχὴ πάλιν ἐλθεῖν οὔτε λείσστη
 οὔθ' ἐλετή, ἐπεὶ ἄρ κεν ἀμείψεται ἔρκος ὀδόντων.
 μήτηρ γὰρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα
 διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλος δέ.
 εἰ μὲν κ' αὖθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,
 ὄλετο μὲν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται:
 εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ' ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
 ὄλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰὼν
 ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ' ὄκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη.
 καὶ δ' ἂν τοῖς ἄλλοισιν ἐγὼ παραμυθησαίμην
 οἴκαδ' ἀποπλείειν, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι δῆετ' ἐτέκμων
 Ἴλιου αἰπεινῆς: μάλα γὰρ ἔθεν εὐρύσπα Ζεὺς
 χεῖρα ἐὴν ὑπερέσχε, τεθαρσῆκασι δὲ λαοί.

“For not worth as much as my soul are as many things as they say were acquired at Ilion, in that well-situated citadel, in the time before during the peace, before the sons of the Achaeans came, nor as many things as the stone threshold of the archer encloses, of Phoebus Apollo in rocky Pytho. For oxen and fat sheep can be won by force, and tripods and the tawny heads of horses may be acquired, but the life of a man cannot come back again, nor be won by force nor caught, when it has crossed the enclosure of the teeth. For my mother, the silver-footed goddess Thetis said to me that I carry a two-fold fate to the end of my life. If remaining here I fight around the city of the Trojans, then my return home will be lost, but my glory will be everlasting; but if I return home to the beloved land of my father, my noble glory will be lost, but my life will last for a long time, and the end of my life will not come swiftly. And I also encourage these others to sail back home, since no longer will you reach your goal of lofty Ilion; for far-seeing Zeus has held his hand over it exceedingly, and its people are encouraged.”

Although it is inevitable that Achilles will return to the fighting as Diomedes expresses at 9.702, as it is his undeniable fate, it is striking that Achilles could long for such a future. He is the

epitome of the epic hero model. It is in his fate to die young as a warrior, which should be the ideal fulfillment of an epic hero's life. Yet now he is willing to disregard honor and glory for the sake of life. Achilles is beyond human and at the same time all-too human,⁴¹ and it is in Book 9 where his humanity has fully bared itself. Upon weighing the value of all the lovely material prizes which he could win in war against that of his life, he finds the former wanting. Thus he advocates for himself and the other warriors that all embrace this new future and go home. Even though this diatribe on the epic hero way of life comes out of personal insult and self-pity thereof, it brings up the important theme of conflict between human nature and the heroic code along with this pertinent question: is life better than death, no matter the circumstances of that death?

In a way, the *Odyssey* is the future manifestation of the post-Trojan War peace. The story is very different from the *Iliad* in its perspective as it centers on Odysseus' journey back to Ithaca and the struggles of Penelope and Telemachus, but through these lenses are seen some of the characters of *Iliad* who survived and their perception of the war through the retrospective lens of victorious peace. A first example is found at Book 3, when Telemachus comes to Pylos of Nestor in search of his father Odysseus. In response to his query, and before he states that he does not know the whereabouts of his father, the elderly hero of good counsel says to him in lines 102-130 that the best of the Achaeans, such as Ajax, Achilles, and Patroklos were slain in the war, and that it would take several years in order to recount all of the woes that the Achaians suffered at Troy. He speaks of these heroic dead not in terms of their glory and honor, but in lamentation of their deaths.

Another of the *Iliad's* great heroes, Menelaos, echoes this mourning in *Odyssey* 4.95-9, after Telemachus and Pisistratus, son of Nestor, have come to Sparta and praised the great wealth

⁴¹ Schein 1984, 23.

of Menelaos, that which he brought home from the Trojan War.⁴² Menelaos then proceeds to reply in the aforementioned lines that he wishes that he could part with a third of this wealth in order that he could still be in the company of those men who were killed in the war. This future manifestation of the peace that follows the *Iliad* is not filled the joy of victory, but of lamentation and sorrow.

Moreover, when Odysseus ventures into the Underworld in Book 11 (*Od.*) seeking out Teiresias to show him the way home, he encounters the ghosts of several heroes now dead, including Achilles with whom Odysseus converses through the course of lines 465-540. Achilles questions why Odysseus would descend to Hades, and after Odysseus explains his purpose, he praises Achilles as a lord among the dead and urges him not to grieve. However, Achilles tragically responds (*Od.* 11.487-91):

ὧς ἐφάμην, ὁ δέ μ' αὐτίκ' ἀμειβόμενος προσέειπε:
 'μὴ δὴ μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.
 βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητευέμεν ἄλλω,
 ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίοςτος πολὺς εἶη,
 ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν.

“So I spoke, and he at once answering me said: ‘Indeed, do not speak lightly of death to me, radiant Odysseus. I would wish, just to be on the earth, to be a serf for someone, alongside a man who has no lot of land, for whom sustenance would not be much, rather than rule over all of the dead who have wasted away.’”

After inquiring about his son and pondering the state of his father and whether he is being dishonored on account of his old age, he then laments (*Od.* 11.501-503):

εἰ τοιόσδ' ἔλθοιμι μίνυθ' ἀπὸ πατέρος δῶ:
 τῷ κέ τε στυγέω μόνος καὶ χεῖρας ἀάπτους,
 οἳ κείνον βιόωνται ἐέργουσιν τ' ἀπὸ τιμῆς.

⁴² Griffin 1980, 67.

“If only I could come such as I was even for a short time to the house of my father, I would make hateful my strength and invincible hands against any one of those who overpower that man and keep him away from his honor.”

How little honor avails the greatest of heroes beyond the grave! He embraced the fate of an early death for the sake of immortal glory, yet being dead he would rather have the meanest existence imaginable if only he were still alive. As in Book 9 of the *Iliad*, the most celebrated man, the most pure epic hero, is in distress on account of the life he has led, saying that he would prefer long life to death. However, unlike in Book 9 where Achilles was faced with the choice of which destiny to follow, it is too late now, he no longer is indulging in petty self-pity for some offense but lamenting the realities of life and death. Despite immaterial and ethereal glory, death holds little fulfillment for the dead.

Even the journey of Odysseus can be seen in the light of the future “peace” that he is living in. His adventure home takes place within such a context, and yet he has a very tragic journey home in spite of the Achaean victory. His goal is to get home to Ithaca, an obvious goal after 10 years at war. However, I believe that there is poignancy to the fact that even though he has lost all of the wealth that he gained in the war Odysseus is not predominated by lamentation for the loss of his material honor and glory. Fundamentally, he desires home, normalcy, and peace. He literally puts the war behind him, even the material manifestations of his glory, and he places the value on home. The overall sense taken from these great Trojan War heroes is one of lamentation for the war and wishing that it had not happened for all of the sorrow that it brought about.

Reflections on War

Especially in light of the lamentation of Achilles and the *Iliad*'s manifest future in those who survived the Trojan War in the *Odyssey*, it would seem that Homer brings into question the heroic ethos and set of morals. I do not believe that his message was to absolutely shatter the epic hero as a character, nor was he trying to wholly devalue κλέος, τιμή, and military ἀρετή, but rather he aimed to display how this lifestyle is at absolute odds with human nature and the struggles and sacrifices of heroes, even unto death, they make in order to live up to this ethos. Considering these examples I believe that he succeeds in doing so. The *Odyssey* was an easier place in which to do this on account of the retrospect of the heroes who survived as well as those whose spirits Odysseus meets in the underworld. However, Homer does extract this feeling in the *Iliad* from characters on all sides and social strata.

The speech of the great Lykian hero and Trojan ally Sarpedon to Glaukos made at 12.310-28, being one of the most famous in the *Iliad*, outlines the morality of the hero, as Adam Parry puts it,⁴³ or, in the words of Johnston, the “warrior’s fighting creed.”⁴⁴

Γλαῦκε τί ἦ δὴ νῶϊ τετιμήμεσθα μάλιστα
 ἔδρη τε κρέασίν τε ἰδὲ πλείοις δεπάεσσιν
 ἐν Λυκίῃ, πάντες δὲ θεοὺς ὧς εἰσορόωσι,
 καὶ τέμενος νεμόμεσθα μέγα Ξάνθοιο παρ’ ὄχθας
 καλὸν φυταλιῆς καὶ ἀρούρης πυροφόροιο;
 τῷ νῦν χρῆ Λυκίοισι μέτα πρώτοισιν ἐόντας
 ἐστάμεν ἠδὲ μάχης καυστείρης ἀντιβολῆσαι,
 ὄφρα τις ᾗδ’ εἴπη Λυκίων πύκα θωρηκτάων:
 οὐ μὰν ἀκλεέες Λυκίην κάτα κοιρανέουσιν
 ἡμέτεροι βασιλῆες, ἔδουσί τε πίονα μῆλα
 οἶνόν τ’ ἔξαιτον μελιιδέα: ἀλλ’ ἄρα καὶ ἴς
 ἐσθλή, ἐπεὶ Λυκίοισι μέτα πρώτοισιν μάχονται.
 ᾧ πέπον εἰ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμον περὶ τόνδε φυγόντε
 αἰεὶ δὴ μέλλοιμεν ἀγήρω τ’ ἀθανάτω τε
 ἔσσεσθ’, οὔτε κεν αὐτὸς ἐνὶ πρώτοισιν μαχοίμην
 οὔτε κε σὲ στέλλοιμι μάχην ἐς κυδιάνειραν:

⁴³ Parry 1956, 3.

⁴⁴ Johnston 1988, 57.

νῦν δ' ἔμπης γὰρ κῆρες ἐφeskτᾶσιν θανάτοιο
 μυρίαί, ἅς οὐκ ἔστι φυγεῖν βροτῶν οὐδ' ὑπαλύξαι,
 ἴομεν ἢ ἐ τῷ εὖχος ὀρέξομεν ἢ ἐ τις ἡμῖν.

“Glaukos, truly, why indeed are we so especially honored with a seat of privilege, choice meats, and full wine-goblets in Lykia, and all men see us as gods, and we are bestowed a great portion of land by the banks of the river Xanthos with good vineyards and wheat-bearing plough land? Therefore now it is necessary that we be among the foremost Lykian ranks to make our stand and to partake of the raging battle, in order that someone of the thickly armored Lykians may thus say: 'Truly, inglorious men do not rule over Lykia, our kings, who consume the fat sheep and the choice honey-sweet wine; but actually their strength is noble, since they fight among the foremost Lykian ranks. My friend, for if, escaping this war, indeed we should be destined to be ever ageless and immortal, I myself would neither fight in the foremost ranks, nor would I dispatch you into battle which brings men glory. But now as the innumerable spirits of death stand about us, whom it is not possible for mortal man to escape or flee from, let us go forth and therefore either obtain this desired glory by means of another, or let someone else obtain it by means of us.'"

The first half of his speech is very important for understanding the social aspect of the hero, for it shows that individual prowess is directly correlative to tangible honors, such as choice meat, wine, good land, etc.⁴⁵ To maintain their status they must fight at the forefront, thus showing to those who bestow them their honors that they are deserving of them. Sarpedon then interjects in the middle of outlining his heroic code at 322, and in so doing he makes clear that engaging in these things is not his own desire, but a necessity. This is the grim fate of the hero, to deny his human nature and desires for life and embrace self-annihilation. As Johnston states, “even the best-known evocation of the warrior’s fighting creed...makes the point that the glories of the

⁴⁵ Parry 1956, 3.

warrior life would not be worth it, if human beings had a better alternative.”⁴⁶ Clearly, Sarpedon somehow feels trapped by the social morality of the hero, taking it as an inevitable necessity of life. However, the issue of death is also what drives this self-destructive moral code, for there are greater things at hand than simply material honors. He states that if they could but be immortal, then even with whatever “pride there is in the warrior life”⁴⁷ he would not take it or encourage others to do so. Yet man cannot be immortal, so the hero’s only recourse is to strive for the immortality of glory and reputation. The hero’s awareness of the imminence of death leads him to scorn death in action.⁴⁸ Thus Sarpedon resolves his speech asserting that if death is the imminent result of life, and that they are trapped in this code of conduct, then until they can die gloriously and be the object of another’s glory, then they might as well gain as much as they can for themselves.

Sarpedon’s message overall is not a radical one, for he does outline the motives of a hero as well as the impulses of human nature that heroes must stave off for the sake of glory, concluding that they must all live up to the heroic code. However, he does show that the doubt is there, and that heroes fight because that is the system of morality they are entrenched in, not because they enjoy it. Episodes from Book 2 and the Achaean army further make clear that it is not the pleasure in fighting that keeps the soldiers at Troy.⁴⁹

In the opening lines of Book 2, Agamemnon is inspired by a divine dream to rouse the Achaeans into battle, as Zeus deceives him into thinking that if the Achaeans attack at this time that they will defeat the Trojans and take Ilium. However, he decides to test the resolve of his army by telling the Achaeans to flee to their ships in hopes that they will protest for the sake of the war, thus inspiring their spirit for battle even more greatly than if he had just ordered them to

⁴⁶ Johnston 1988, 57.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*

⁴⁸ Parry 1956, 3.

⁴⁹ Johnston 1988, 57.

fight. In this way Agamemnon endeavors to inspire the Achaeans to take up arms (2.110-41). The Achaean response to Agamemnon's rouse is indeed quite visceral, yet in the exact opposite way than Agamemnon expected, for in haste they rush to their ships, eager to put the war behind them and return to their families and peace. If not for Odysseus, inspired by Hera through Athena, the speech of Agamemnon would have been fulfilled, not in its intent but in its words. While Agamemnon does nothing to stop the tumult, Odysseus marshals the troops once again, bringing the army to order and illuminating the true purpose of Agamemnon's words to the Achaeans.

This episode is indicative of the predisposition of men to crave peace over war. The reaction of the Achaeans when presented with the prospect of home is not to spurn it with preference to battle and death, but to embrace it in excitement. It is quite clear that the heroic code is difficult to live up to,⁵⁰ especially for those who do not already enjoy the high status of the Achaean lords. Once again, Homer succeeds in depicting realism; for most men, peace trumps war, and the tangible home, hearth, and kin are much preferred to intangible "everlasting" glory. Even for those heroes who have the benefit of status these are preferable, as Sarpedon and those in the *Odyssey* explain. Unlike Sarpedon and other *bona fide* epic heroes, who truly feel that they have something to gain from war, be it civic status or glorious death, the mass of lesser warriors have little to gain from war other than the glory that comes with death; human nature holds more sway for them than the heroic code.

There are other instances, notably at 9.17-18 and 14.65-81, in which Agamemnon despairs about the success of the Trojans and expresses the desire that the army go home, yet the army does not react in the same way (although fear that it will do so is expressed in 14), and he is met with rebuke and disobedience from his fellow heroes. In these cases, another hero, Diomedes in Book 9 and Odysseus in Book 14, immediately speaks out against the counsel of Agamemnon. The example from Book 14 occurs just among the heroes who have withdrawn from the fray,

⁵⁰ Johnston 1988, 63.

wounded, yet Odysseus, as he is berating Agamemnon for this vain and foolish counsel, fears that the other Achaeans will hear him saying such things, mirror his despair, and flee, presumably acting under the auspices of a desire to escape the war in favor of the peace of home.

In the different scenario of Book 9, Agamemnon calls an assembly to make this proclamation, and in the context of the assembly Diomedes invokes his right to speak and offers his counsel in opposition to that of Agamemnon, that the commander-in-chief may go home if he chooses, but that Diomedes and the other Argives will remain at Troy (9.32-49). Diomedes' words are met with approval by the assembled army, which to me is more an indication of his talent for words in the assembly and how important a strong civic-assembly presence is, rather than something that contradicts the basic human desire of peace over war in Book 2. In Books 2 and 9 it takes the action of another hero to oppose Agamemnon and convince the army that it would be better to stay and fight at Troy; in Book 2 it is not until after Agamemnon's orders are being fulfilled that Odysseus is able to assert his authority and make clear to the army that they are not going home, while in Book 9 Diomedes immediately takes his stand, with both heroes succeeding in their counsel to stay and fight. In addition, an army fooled once into thinking they were going home only to be told they were staying at Troy would be less likely to jump to action at the same orders from the same man. In both cases the hero lauded for his good counsel in the assembly, and not Agamemnon, prevails; I will elaborate upon this civic-side of the hero and its importance in the next section, but it is necessary to make this distinction between the two episodes here, that Book 2 exemplifies the contradiction between human nature and that of the epic hero while Book 9 is indicative of the importance of the civic aspect of the hero.

This position is upheld and expanded in the rant of Thersites directly subsequent to the re-marshaling of the army by Odysseus. Thersites is considered the ugliest and lowest of the Achaeans, a correlation that I consider obliquely significant in that the best heroes of the Achaeans and Trojans in status and prowess tend to be described as handsome or comely (See

*Il.*18.24, *Od.*11.465-71). This hated man's speech is especially important on account of his point of view as the only file-and-rank soldier to speak in the entire epic, a commoner speaking against his aristocratic fellow-heroes. In his speech (2.225-42) he calls into question the basic assumptions of the group heroic morality and "warrior code" in an almost rational, humanistic, and democratic objection:⁵¹

Ἄτρεΐδη τέο δ' αὐτ' ἐπιμέμφει ἠδὲ χατίζεις;
 πλεῖαί τοι χαλκοῦ κλισίαι, πολλαὶ δὲ γυναῖκες
 εἰσὶν ἐνὶ κλισίῃς ἐξαίρετοι, ἅς τοι Ἀχαιοὶ
 πρωτίστῳ δίδομεν εὐτ' ἂν πτολίεθρον ἔλωμεν.
 ἢ ἔτι καὶ χρυσοῦ ἐπιδεύεαι, ὃν κέ τις οἴσει
 Τρώων ἵπποδάμων ἐξ Ἰλίου υἱὸς ἄποινα,
 ὃν κεν ἐγὼ δῆσας ἀγάγω ἢ ἄλλος Ἀχαιῶν,
 ἢ ἔτι γυναῖκα νέην, ἵνα μίσγεται ἐν φιλότῃτι,
 ἢν τ' αὐτὸς ἀπονόσφι κατίσχει; οὐ μὲν ἔοικεν
 ἄρχον ἐόντα κακῶν ἐπιβασκόμεν υἱᾶς Ἀχαιῶν.
 ὃ πέπονες κάκ' ἐλέγχε' Ἀχαιΐδες οὐκέτ' Ἀχαιοὶ
 οἴκαδέ περ σὺν νηυσὶ νεώμεθα, τόνδε δ' ἐῶμεν
 αὐτοῦ ἐνὶ Τροίῃ γέρα πεσσέμεν, ὄφρα ἴδηται
 ἢ ῥά τί οἱ χῆμεῖς προσαμόνομεν ἢ καὶ οὐκί:
 ὅς καὶ νῦν Ἀχιλῆα ἔο μέγ' ἀμείνονα φῶτα
 ἠτίμησεν: ἔλων γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας.
 ἀλλὰ μάλ' οὐκ Ἀχιλῆϊ χόλος φρεσίν, ἀλλὰ μεθῆμων:
 ἢ γὰρ ἂν Ἄτρεΐδη νῦν ὕστατα λωβήσαιο:

"Son of Atreus, what are you further complaining about and what do you crave? Your tents are full of bronze, and there are many women picked out for you in your tents, whom we the Achaeans give to you first of all when we capture a citadel. And truly, will you still be wanting for gold, which some son of the horse-taming Trojans will carry out of Ilion as a ransom, whom I or another of the Achaeans captured and led forth, or for a young woman in order that you may lie with her in love, whom you keep for yourself far apart from the others? It is not right that you, being our leader, lead the sons of the Achaeans in sorrow. Oh weaklings, base, wicked, women, not men, of Achaea, let us go home with our ships and let this man enjoy his prizes just here in

⁵¹ On "the warrior code," its "limited and fragile communal ethic," and the point of view of the common soldier, see Johnston (1988), 73-4.

Troy, so that he may see whether at all or not we come to his aid. And now he has dishonored Achilles, a much better man than he; for having seized and taken away his prize he himself holds her. But Achilles has no excessive rage in his heart, but he is remiss. For truly now, son of Atreus, you would have committed your last outrage.”

While he is beaten down by Odysseus and then laughed at and mocked by “the Achaeans,” which shows that “the code holds in adherence to a limited and fragile communal ethic,” he does speak for the masses as the only one of the everyday soldiers to speak. He embodies the ultimate opposition of epic heroism with pure human nature and the difficulty for those without the status to live up to the heroic ethos. From the point of view of the common soldier, the heroic code is unfair, for those who aren’t leaders and heroes exist within this system for the purpose of the epic heroes, to win them prizes or to die for them at their hand or for their sake. Thus from an entirely opposite social perspective the heroic way of life is brought into question, and an argument is made for peace instead of war.

The Iliadic heroes in the *Odyssey* as well as Achilles in Book 9 further elucidate the fact that dissatisfaction with war and the heroic ethos is not only for the common man, but can be found among some of the most renowned heroes. In the *Odyssey* both Menelaos and Nestor (*Od.* 103-130) lament the war for the loss and waste of life. Menelaos states that he would gladly give up two-thirds of his wealth if only those who had died were back among the living (*Od.* 4.95-9), and throughout the *Odyssey* the loss of possessions means little to Odysseus in light of returning home. The hallmarks of heroism, the material honors that symbolize the immaterial τιμή and κλέος, are found to be worth less than life. This goes utterly against the heroic morality which they are supposed to be upholding. If they were actually true to this set of ideals, would they not be rejoicing in the glory that these heroes have earned in their deaths, and perhaps even mournful themselves that they did not get to fulfill the epitome of epic heroism? This is certainly a case in which human nature prevails over the code of heroism, a reminder of how difficult it is to want to

and actually live up to the moral implications of epic heroism. These heroes prefer peace to war, and wish that the Trojan War had never occurred.

The heroic ideal of the *Iliad*, however, is revisited not only by the heroes of the *Odyssey* but also from a central voice within the *Iliad* itself, Achilles. As I have discussed, Achilles' disillusionment is reactionary, emerging out of the insult which Agamemnon has inflicted upon him. Yet it is still remarkable that the epic hero most true to the model is stating his intentions to leave the war, choosing long life over honor and glory, both material and immaterial. At this point in the epic, he has come to the anti-heroic conclusions that the possessions that could be won in war are not worth the value of his life, and that while possessions can be won, a life cannot. He is content with all that he has already won, and knows that he has many riches back in Phthia. Why risk it all, his life, for the sake of honors, especially those which are intangible when he has so many tangible things now? He knows that ruling at Phthia cannot give him the same level of glory that he will gain upon his death, however, he knows that he can at least maintain the honor that he already has in that civic position. Despite all of this, Achilles eventually is compelled to rejoin the fight on account of the divinely-wrought death of Patroklos, and he ultimately accepts his short-lived yet immortal and glorious fate. Yet when Odysseus meets him in the Underworld in the *Odyssey*, Achilles regrets his decision, wishing that he could have lived a long-life, for glory holds no fulfillment for the dead. Even the great Achilles, in the absolute end, would have preferred peace to the war that took his life and the lives of so many others long before it was their time.

One very human aspect of the tragedy of the *Iliad* is that so many characters die according to this self-destructive heroic ethos, that so many characters understand its implications and are in tune with the desires of their human nature, and that so many characters disregard their desires, feel trapped by or obligated to their heroic morality, and die young for the sake of honor. One way or another, the heroes who died did so for the sake of their status as an epic hero and for

the sake of the heroic morality. The glory of death brings these warriors to the same level as epic heroes in some capacity. Of course, those with greater battle prowess tend to kill more men and acquire for themselves more glory in life. However, death is both the ultimate maker of remembrance as well as the ultimate finality. Within war, these characters fulfill each other in their quest for glory and honor, whether they kill or are killed. Is the epic hero's existence so limited? I believe that the spectrum of a hero's honor is greater than his feats in battle, for all men are equal in death. In light of the pervasive theme of peace, I believe that there is something to be said for the civic place of epic heroes and how they perpetuate and increase their honor and glory in peacetime. Thus I pose the questions: how is the epic hero supposed to function when he is not engaged in battle, and how is he able to maintain and enhance his status outside of war?

Chapter 3

Epic Heroes and Civic Αρετή

The last two chapters have been preoccupied with establishing the wide-ranging capacity of the theme of peace in the *Iliad*. In so doing I have endeavored to establish counter to the war-ravaged world of the *Iliad* what this world is to be in peacetime. The peaceful world that the various similes and shield elucidate creates an image of the world over which the epic hero would preside outside of war. In conjunction with the established theme of peace, I believe that some modicum of information can be garnered as to how the epic hero functions outside of war. Now, since the *Iliad* is a war epic, there are no actual examples of action taking place in peacetime nor are epic heroes ever seen out of the over-arching context of the war. However, true peacetime is not necessary to see the function of a hero during it; the *Iliad* houses several scenes which mirror civic context, such as assemblies and games, and it is in these places that the epic hero's peacetime function can be seen. Especially in light of Achilles' conflict with Agamemnon and the partial resolution of Achilles' inhumanity at the funeral games of Patroklos, as well as prototypes that are depicted on the Shield and in certain similes, I believe that a sort of civic excellence proves to be crucial to the overall status of an epic hero.

Images of the Epic Hero in Peacetime

In order to establish the social position of the epic hero during peace time, I return to the speech of Sarpedon at 12.310-28. It would seem that his speech holds importance not only for establishing the heroic code, but also for outlining the expectations of a hero during peacetime. He begins the speech by asking Glaukos why they are honored "with a seat of privilege, choice

meats, and full wine-goblets in Lykia, and all men see us as gods, and we are bestowed a great portion of land by the banks of the river Xanthos with good vineyards and wheat-bearing plough land?" In answer to the question, he then explains that because of these honors they must fight at the forefront of the battle so that they may not be deemed ignoble but worthy of their honors. The manner in which Sarpedon describes the duties of the hero indicates that in order to justify their palpable forms of honor and social position, they must display valor in battle⁵² and win for themselves the intangible honors of κλέος and ἀρετή. Certainly, the hero's battle prowess is the primary source of that honor and also a means of maintaining his peacetime treatment. In addition to that aspect, it would seem that the speech of Sarpedon links the civic standing of heroes with their hero-status. Outside of war, the hero receives these tangible honors, but also stands at the forefront of society as a civic leader. Johnston⁵³ asserts that the warrior must honor this code not on account of any civic position but because there is no other choice in a world of constant warfare. I disagree with the idea of "constant" warfare, because if it truly was constant, what would there be to fight for? This seems to oversimplify the issue to one of life and death alone, in that life without honor is worse than death with honor, even though death is finality. Nonetheless, the context of Sarpedon's speech is precisely about the place of the hero outside of war, in the civic sector and/or peacetime. The deeds in war justify the honors of peacetime, a peacetime which is not hypothetical but is referred to in the past throughout the *Iliad*, and one in which the hero must have a place. This would be this position of civic leadership, and it seems to me that in this position there is much that the hero can do to withhold and enhance his status.

The treatment that Sarpedon speaks of stems mostly from the hero's military ἀρετή and κλέος, and the τιμαί (honors/prizes) that the hero has won are manifest in the good treatment Sarpedon describes: choice meat, full wine cups, etc. However, as much as Sarpedon does outline

⁵² Parry 1956, 3.

⁵³ Johnston 1988, 58.

the basic parameters of a hero's treatment in peacetime, there is more to the epic hero's place outside of war which the speech of Sarpedon does not illuminate. I believe that what allows these honors to exist and persist in peacetime is an unspoken sense of civic ἀρετή. I define this type of excellence as the ability to speak well in the assembly, administer justice, and act with a group-mentality as opposed to acting purely on the desires of the self. By harnessing civic ἀρετή, the hero completes himself as a character, enabling the maintenance and growth of status outside of feats of battle, and uplifting his overall reputation.

This purely non-military aspect of the Iliadic epic hero is given form on the Shield of Achilles at 18.497-508 in the City at Peace. In this excerpt, there has been a murder in the city and arbitration is sought over the blood-price; honor and a prize go to the judge who can proffer the most just decision, by judgment of the assembly and council of elders:

λαοὶ δ' εἰν ἀγορῇ ἔσαν ἀθρόοι: ἔνθα δὲ νεῖκος
 ὠρώρει, δύο δ' ἄνδρες ἐνεΐκεον εἵνεκα ποινῆς
 ἀνδρὸς ἀποφθιμένου: ὃ μὲν εὐχέτο πάντ' ἀποδοῦναι
 δήμῳ πιφάσκων, ὃ δ' ἀναινετο μηδὲν ἐλέσθαι:
 ἄμφω δ' ἰέσθην ἐπὶ ἴστορι πεῖραρ ἐλέσθαι.
 λαοὶ δ' ἀμφοτέροισιν ἐπήπυον ἀμφὶς ἀρωγοί:
 κήρυκες δ' ἄρα λαὸν ἐρήτυον: οἳ δὲ γέροντες
 εἶατ' ἐπὶ ξεστοῖσι λίθοις ἱερῶ ἐνὶ κύκλῳ,
 σκῆπτρα δὲ κηρύκων ἐν χέρσ' ἔχον ἠεροφώνων:
 τοῖσιν ἔπειτ' ἦϊσσον, ἀμοιβηδὶς δὲ δικάζον.
 κείτο δ' ἄρ' ἐν μέσσοισι δύο χρυσοῖο τάλαντα,
 τῶ δόμεν ὃς μετὰ τοῖσι δίκην ἰθύντατα εἴποι.

“But the people were crowded together in the marketplace; and in this place a quarrel had arisen, and two men were arguing on account of the blood-money of a man who was killed. The one man vowed that he would make atonement for it in every way, saying this in public, while the other refused to accept anything. Then the two men sent for an arbitrator to choose an end to the case. And the people were shouting on either side, aiding both men. And heralds restrained the people, and the elders were sitting upon polished stones in a sacred circle, and they held the staves of the loud-voiced heralds in their hands. Then the two moved quickly before them, and they gave their

judgments in succession. And in the middle two talents of gold were laid to give to the one who would speak the straightest judgment among them.”

This passage puts forth a model for other cases of civic engagement in the *Iliad*. As the civic assembly prototype taking place in the City at Peace, by extension it makes other cases of assembly among the Achaeans parallel to peacetime and a civic setting in which heroes act. A first point of note is the assembly of people who have gathered for this arbitration. It is much akin to those assemblies which have met throughout the first 18 books of the *Iliad* and those after it. This is a simple detail, but one that establishes a like context. The next factor is that the judges and elders are holding the “staves of the loud-voiced heralds.” This firmly establishes the staff as an object of civic power, not a military accouterment. The staff has already been established as an object of import in the Achaean assembly, one of power and one which is associated with speaking with authority in the assembly. The scepter is described in detail in Book 1 as an instrument of divine justice (1.238-9) by Achilles, and upon it he swears the oath that he will no longer fight before he dashes it to the ground (1.245). The scepter is thus made out to be an object of power, and certainly of civic justice, which is concordant with the Shield. Agamemnon’s scepter’s origins and importance are further explained in Book 2.100-9, namely its making by Hephaistos for Zeus, who then bestowed it to the line of Pelops in which it eventually descended to Agamemnon. This empowers the scepter even more as a tool of the assembly, as Agamemnon leans on it, acting in a position of authority, to make his deceptive proclamation to the army of their return home. Furthermore, when the army descends into chaos in their efforts to carry out Agamemnon’s rouse, Odysseus takes hold of the scepter to bring the army back to order, not military order, the arraying of battle formation, but civic order in assembly. The scepter symbolizes his authority to command men.

Yet further is the staff established as an item of civic order by a passage in Book 8, lines 490-6, when the Trojans are in the midst of routing the Achaeans. At this point Hektor holds an

assembly of the Trojan army, but instead of leaning on a staff to speak to the Trojans, he leans upon his spear, “eleven cubits long” (8.494). Line 496 of book 8, describing this act, and 2.109 are nearly identical:

τῷ ὃ γ' ἐρεισάμενος ἔπεα Τρώεσσι μετηύδα: (8.496)

“Having leaned upon this (spear) he addressed these words to the Trojans.”

τῷ ὃ γ' ἐρεισάμενος ἔπε' Ἀργείοισι μετηύδα: (2.109)

“Having leaned upon this (scepter) he addressed these words to the Argives.”

The similarity at face-value of these two lines belies the inherent difference between the two contexts, a fact which actually firmly engrains the staff into civic context. The speech of Hektor, which he makes while leaning on his spear to the “assembly” of the Trojans, actually consists of military orders and is in a clearly military setting; thus it is appropriate that he would use an object of “valour” and military might instead of the scepter of civic order in this military context.⁵⁴

Further, the speech of Hektor suggests that there is a difference between military and civic assemblies. Although everything in the *Iliad* takes place in the context of the Trojan War, because Hektor’s military assembly uses a spear as the symbol of authority and not the staff, it can be said in confidence that the assemblies of the Achaeans in Book 1 and even Book 2 are of the civic sort, mirroring the Shield and working to establish the place of the epic hero outside of war. If the assemblies of the Achaeans were meant to be purely military, it is possible to say that they would use the spear as their symbol of authority. However, it is the staff that they use, not the spear, a reflection of the civic sector and of the Shield.

⁵⁴ Griffin 1980, 13.

Another example from the Shield of Achilles of the staff being used in a civic context, and by extension of the epic hero presiding over peacetime, is the king and the vineyard at 18.550-560:

ἐν δ' ἐτίθει τέμενος βασιλήϊον: ἔνθα δ' ἔριθοι
 ἦμων ὀξείας δρεπάνας ἐν χερσὶν ἔχοντες.
 δράγματα δ' ἄλλα μετ' ὄγμον ἐπήτριμα πῖπτον ἔραζε,
 ἄλλα δ' ἀμαλλοδετῆρες ἐν ἔλλεδανοῖσι δέοντο.
 τρεῖς δ' ἄρ' ἀμαλλοδετῆρες ἐφέστασαν: αὐτὰρ ὀπισθε
 παῖδες δραγμαέοντες ἐν ἀγκαλίδεσσι φέροντες
 ἀσπερχές παρέχον: βασιλεὺς δ' ἐν τοῖσι σιωπῇ
 σκῆπτρον ἔχων ἐστήκει ἐπ' ὄγμου γηθόσυνος κῆρ.
 κήρυκες δ' ἀπάνευθεν ὑπὸ δρυὶ δαῖτα πένοντο,
 βοῦν δ' ἱερεύσαντες μέγαν ἄμφεπον: αἱ δὲ γυναῖκες
 δεῖπνον ἐρίθοισιν λεύκ' ἄλφιτα πολλὰ πάλυνον.

“And on it he put the precinct of a king, and in this place the day-laborers were reaping, holding sharp reaping-hooks in their hands. And some sheaves fell to the ground one upon another into the middle of the furrow, while the sheaf-binders bound up the others in bands. And three sheaf-binders stood at hand, but behind them children collected the sheaves, carried them in their bent arms, and ceaselessly handed them over. And the king stood among them in silence, holding his staff, near the furrow, joyful in his heart. And heralds prepared a feast afar off under a tree, and having sacrificed a great ox they were busying themselves with it. And the women scattered much white barley as a meal for the day-laborers.”

This passage once again shows a distinguished figure in a civic, peacetime setting holding the staff as a symbol of his power and authority. The agricultural plenty depicted serves a dual purpose of emphasizing the peacetime and also of linking this scene to the agricultural similes scattered through the *Iliad*. As a representation of the Iliadic epic heroes (who are called kings) during peacetime, it is possible to conjecture that this king is also a warrior taking his place in the civic context and wielding civic power. Although this manifestation of the epic hero in peacetime is never seen in the midst of this war epic, it retains significance on account of the use of the staff

as the symbol of authority, and it hearkens back to images of these heroes before the war in their homelands. It is yet another facet and expression of the epic hero outside of war.

The Civic Hero

The importance of civic ἀρετή as a part of the epic hero's reputation and prestige is exhibited nowhere better than in the character of Achilles. In terms of his military prowess and his fate to certainly die in battle for the sake of his everlasting glory, Achilles is the epitome of the epic hero model. I am of the belief that his ability to act as the ideal civic leader as well as the quintessential warrior helps to place Achilles so far above all other epic heroes in prestige. Furthermore, it is the absence of this quality in other heroes that precludes them from eclipsing Achilles in preeminence.

One of the aspects of Achilles' character that lends credence to his civic and whole heroic preeminence is his status in relation to the assembly. Although he is removed from the assembly from Book 1 until well after the death of Patroklos, it is he who summons the first assembly (1.54) of the *Iliad* in which his feud with Agamemnon begins. I find it telling of his civic status that he has the power to summon the assembly, even though Agamemnon is the leader of the host. His place as the greatest Greek warrior certainly plays into his status, but this assembly is mirroring the civic world, and thus there is clearly some civic clout mixed into his heroic status. While Odysseus and Nestor may be those heroes who are best known for the gift of speech and counsel, this too is an intrinsic part of Achilles' person. In Book 9 after Achilles has rejected Agamemnon's offer in his lengthy oration, the aged horseman Phoinix, who helped to raise Achilles and who is now supplicating him to return to battle, speaks to Achilles of his training, saying (9.442-3):

τοὔνεκά με προέηκε διδασκέμεναι τάδε πάντα,
 μύθων τε ῥητῆρ' ἔμεναι πρηκτῆρά τε ἔργων.

“Therefore he sent me forth to teach you all of these things, to be a speaker of words and a doer of deeds.”⁵⁵

This statement makes evident that the ability to speak, presumably in the assembly, is very important along with the ability to be prolific in action, that is to say in battle. Even more striking is that the words (μύθων) come before the deeds (ἔργων), perhaps a subtle gesture to show that although great deeds in battle may predominate the focus of the hero, the only way to be an absolutely complete hero, as well as a great hero who is respected to the utmost by his peers, is to be able to master both abilities. Phoenix thus acknowledges the civic aspect of the hero in his description of Achilles' training.

Nestor is a perfect example for the importance of a strong civic aspect in an epic hero. A large portion of Nestor's prestige certainly rests on the great deeds that he accomplished on the field of battle, which were indeed long ago considering he had outlived two generations of mortal men. Thus at the time of the *Iliad* he is quite old and is no longer able to fight much or at all. However, he is still among the lords of the Achaeans at Troy, and this is because of his gift for speech and counsel. He speaks of the men and heroes of ages past at 1.260-1, saying that these

⁵⁵ Parry (1956, 4-6) viewed these lines, Achilles preceding speech, and the entire *Iliad* through an entirely different lens. He believed that the poetic language did not only limit Homer in writing, but that these lines of Phoenix internally meant that there was a certain way for heroes to speak and act in accordance with the poetic tradition (externally) and their way of life within the poem. Thus when Achilles makes his rant about trying to live outside of the framework that is established in absolute terms, his disillusionment leads to a confusion and misuse of the language that he is supposed to be using and that he only can use. He is limited by the world and system he lives in, the poetic world, and thus he cannot actually express himself. Unfortunately, Parry gives no examples in this analysis, drawing the ire of M.D. Reeve (1973, 193-5) in an article with the same title. Reeve exposed this flaw in Parry's until-that-time accepted suppositions. I am much more in accord with Reeve (195), in that I think Achilles does express himself very well and anything that could have been considered misuse of language is more along the lines of “blatant logical absurdity” and childishness, who is just looking for reasons to reject the offer, even though it should have been enough to repay the slight. Nevertheless, Achilles is adamant, knowing his fate, and questioning the way of life he has always known. To me, it is actually an incredibly powerful passage because Achilles, the most epic of epic heroes, is the one who is disillusioned by this self-destructive system.

were much better men than Achilles and Agamemnon, and yet even they gave heed to Nestor when he spoke. It is this civic aspect that he bids them respect as he tries to arbitrate their struggle, his ability to give counsel that is just and good. That is what makes Nestor of high status among the Achaeans at this time, not his prowess in battle for his strength has withered with age, but his wisdom, counsel, and speech. Nestor is the living proof that there is much to be gained by speech, namely status, and, as I have dubbed it, civic ἀρετή.

A powerful counter and complement to Nestor in terms of the importance of speech and counsel is Thoas. A relatively unheralded character in comparison to Nestor and the other preeminent Iliadic heroes, Thoas' finest moment, at least in a quasi-civic sense, comes in Book 15 as the Trojans draw dangerously close to Achaean ships. It is he, not one of the great heroes, who proposes that the best of the Achaeans hold the point against the oncoming tide of Trojans and allow the rest of the army to retreat and regroup (15.286-99). I draw attention to him on account of his extended epithet at 15.283-4:

.....ἀγορῇ δέ εἰ παῦροι Ἀχαιῶν
 νίκων, ὅπποτε κοῦροι ἐρίσσειαν περὶ μύθων:

“And in the assembly few of the Achaeans prevailed over him, whenever they contended in debate.”

Here is another character who is adept in the assembly and of good counsel. Thoas has been of little consequence up to this point in the narrative and has done nothing so explicitly consequential in the past as to give him a high place in the heroic hierarchy, in contrast to the past glorious deeds of Nestor which have given him honorable standing among the Achaean lords. Indeed, he is named the best of the Aitolians, skilled in the spear-throw and brave in close combat (15.282-3), yet he is never named as having any notable accomplishments. Nevertheless, the Achaeans and their greatest heroes follow his counsel. It is his words, not his deeds that give him

the clout to be obeyed. This aspect of civic prowess, the power of speech and good counsel, is able to transcend the assembly onto the field of battle. That the great heroes take heed to the advice of Thoas, a hero of relatively minor status, clearly shows that being distinguished in speech is a very important aspect of the hero's skill set.

Continuing in Book 1, the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon opens up a conflict of spheres, civic and military. Agamemnon is indeed the undisputed leader of the army, as he organized the expedition on behalf of his brother and he rules over and commands the most men and ships out of any of the Achaean lords. However, this is indicative of his source of status: power over men and divine appointment.⁵⁶ He leads the most men in war, but that proves to have little bearing on his civic power and status as a civic leader, as it is quickly made clear that he is a poor civic presence in the assembly. His main tools of power are fear, intimidation, military strength, and bullying⁵⁷ as is seen clearly in the cases of Calchas the prophet and Chryse the priest of Apollo, both lesser men in terms of strength and heroism than he. However, he cannot threaten Achilles by flexing his military muscles, knowing that Achilles is the greater warrior. He thus invokes his status as giving him the right to take anything from any of the other heroes, and considering Achilles was the one to convince him to give up the daughter of Chryse, Agamemnon decides to take Briseis from him.

In my eyes it is a confusion of spheres, civic and military, that perpetuates this conflict. Agamemnon wrongly and selfishly impugns the honor of Achilles, his military τιμή, the woman he has won through his deeds in battle. Beyond the belittling of Achilles' military ὑπερή through this slight, Agamemnon also acts out of turn in the assembly, not acting in the interest of the group, which would be to be just to Achilles, the greatest among them, but he invokes military hierarchy in order to fulfill his own desires. This is in opposition to the scene of the City at Peace

⁵⁶ Johnston 1988, 61.

⁵⁷ Hammer 1997, 5.

on the Shield, in which the arbitrator dispenses justice as judged so by the assembly. Agamemnon is unjust in his judgment of this situation, despite the presence of the staff bestowed to his family and him in order to dispense the divine justice of Zeus. This highlights the aspects of civic ἀρετή and especially τιμή. As is seen on the Shield, there is a prize of gold for the arbiter with the best judgment, literal, physical τιμή in the civic sector. The gold in the scene of the just arbitrator on the Shield is a symbol of the wealth of honor that one may receive from being just, an honor that transcends physical τιμή of women or riches and that adds to a hero's status outside of battle. Conversely, Agamemnon acts in the mentality of an epic hero, one purely preoccupied with the spoils of war and the glory and honor they impart upon him, in the midst of a civic type of disagreement. In Iliadic war and military matters a warrior fights first for his honor and glory, and then the cause. In the Trojan War, the oath related to the abduction of Helen is the reason the Achaeans sailed to Troy and battle, but what keeps the heroes there is the heroic code, the prospect of glory and honor in battle. See Achilles, who leaves battle when his honor is infringed upon; he is not there for the "noble," greater cause of Helen. He is there for his glory and the fulfillment of his fate as an epic hero. By his military mindset Agamemnon violates his civic aspect which yields ramifications even beyond inciting the wrath of Achilles. He weakens his own reputation as a civic leader and lessens himself as a hero in terms of prestige and respect.

The ramifications of Agamemnon's blunder, or perhaps just his general civic weakness, are seen as soon as Book 2. After the army descends into frenetic disorder in response to Agamemnon's false pronouncement of their return home, Agamemnon does nothing to return order to the assembly. He stands by, stricken and silent, and it is up to Odysseus to take up the divine staff and marshal the army again. Agamemnon's weak leadership is quite evident in this instance. However, his status as a leader in this quasi-civic context soon descends from being ineffective to being disrespected outright.

The episode of Thersites is very significant in regard to the civic status of Agamemnon,

as well as the effect that his dishonoring of Achilles has had on his reputation which I believe is made clear by lines 2.220-1. These lines explain that Thersites is normally a thorn in the side of Achilles and Odysseus, yet now, in light of Agamemnon's rouse and now his shaming of Achilles, he shifts his focus. The object of his rant is Agamemnon, first of all because the army has just discovered that Agamemnon's orders to get in the ships and sail home were but a fraud to test the army and that they actually were staying at Troy. This is yet another in a series of leadership-blunders committed by Agamemnon; that a common soldier is speaking out against him shows a lack of respect toward one whose actions and place of honor should have garnered it. Thersites criticizes the military aspect of Agamemnon's leadership and the epic hero morality, as it is the common soldiers like himself who must deliver material prizes (bronze, gold, women) to their lords, and that while their tents are full of riches, the soldiers get little, neither the material goods which he states, nor do they receive the immaterial honor and glory with the accompanying status that the heroes hold (2.226-8). He then criticizes the dishonoring of Achilles, and although the topic of the dishonor was a military prize, due to the assembly-context of the dishonor, a parallel with civic assembly and a peacetime context, it seems to be the case that Thersites is also lambasting Agamemnon's civic leadership and status. Agamemnon's military leadership has certainly suffered, for the way that he shamed Achilles put him in the wrong in their quarrel,⁵⁸ but the context of that action made his wrong two-fold, not only as a military matter but also a civic one. Thersites illuminates this in his rant.

Agamemnon's significant warrior-prowess furthers my belief that civic ἀρετή is a significant aspect of the epic hero's character. For all of Achilles' insults in Book 1 (see 1.163-8, 225-32) concerning Agamemnon's absence from battle and the similar disparagement of Thersites (see 2.226-34), Agamemnon proves his formidable military might during his ἀριστεία in Book 11, in which he kills a multitude of Trojans and seemingly single-handedly routs their

⁵⁸ Johnston 1988, 65.

host. There is no doubt that Agamemnon is a powerful warrior; he did not acquire his power over multitudes through inaction. It is precisely his ability to be a “doer of deeds” as Phoinix talks about that has gotten him the honor, glory, and status as commander-in-chief that he possesses. Although he is certainly full of words, Agamemnon evidently does not have the mastery of the civic assembly and rule that Nestor and Odysseus are famous for, and that Achilles also possesses. Agamemnon’s failures in Books 1 and 2, and then his despairing that Zeus is against the Achaeans and that they ought to just go home in Books 9, all occur in assembly-like settings and thus exemplify his weak leadership qualities and his civic frailty. His authority seems to suffer through these events, for in Book 1 it seems surprising that any hero, even the great Achilles, would speak against him, yet at 9.33, when Diomedes claims his right to speak in the assembly, he also asserts his right to speak against Agamemnon. His counsel is then approved over that of Agamemnon. Now, these events all occurred before the ἀπιστεία of Agamemnon. However, the manifestation of his military might seems to do nothing to change his civic standing.

Even after his incredible feats of military prowess in Book 11, Agamemnon still suffers from a lack of authority and respect. In Book 14, as Agamemnon once again advocates for the Achaean host to flee, Odysseus rebukes him very harshly and expresses his fear that if the Achaeans were to hear Agamemnon now they would certainly give up on the battle and flee for ships and home (14.83-102). Odysseus goes so far as to say he wishes that another man led the Argives (14.84-5) and that he despises Agamemnon for saying such things (14.95). Any respect for Agamemnon’s counsel and even Agamemnon himself is lost in this episode. Odysseus, who defended Agamemnon against the insults of Thersites, is now rebuking the greatest of the Achaean lords openly. In both Books 9 and 14, the hero acclaimed for counsel is portrayed as having more clout than Agamemnon, the leader of their host, for the very reason of their good counsel. This civic attribute shows itself to override the status of one whose position derives from

their battlefield prowess.

It is significant that both Diomedes and Odysseus in their respective criticisms and rebuttals of Agamemnon mention his scepter (9.38, 14.93), this object of civic import. The staff is bestowed by Zeus, giving Agamemnon divine right to rule and be the preeminently honored leader of the Achaean host. It solidifies his position as commander-in-chief, yet without regard for whether Agamemnon can wield it with proper authority. By these two examples, it is clear that Agamemnon does not live up to his staff. As the Shield illustrates and as I have explained, the staff is a symbol of just counsel and civic presence. However, despite his possession of such a staff, Agamemnon in both of these cases is shown to have the lesser of two counsels. He may lead the most men and be the “greatest of the Achaeans,” a force to be reckoned with on the battlefield, but he does not exhibit the civic skill of these other heroes, Diomedes, Odysseus, Nestor, and, as I shall explain, Achilles. He is always found to be woefully wanting with respect to just and wise counsel, judgment, and words.

In Achilles in Book 23, the antithesis of Agamemnon is seen. From Book 19 through 22 the ἀριστεία of Achilles and his absolutely unstoppable military prowess are on full display. Through the entire epic— until Book 19, that is— Achilles has been removed from the battle, yet there are constant reminders of his superior fighting ability as characters reflect on his past victories such as Andromache in Book 6 and Aeneas in Book 20. After the death of Patroklos, Achilles rejoins the war in a purely animalistic blood-lust fomented on anguish and vendetta. However, Book 23 brings Achilles back to humanity for a time on account of his visit from the ghost of Patroklos, who tells Achilles that he must bury his body. In returning to himself and in overseeing the funeral games of Patroklos, the true and completely heroic nature of Achilles is revealed. Funeral games (and games in general) are very important to the civic community as an “outstanding, ritualized, non-military expression of a value system in which honor was the

highest virtue.”⁵⁹ Indeed, games themselves are an excellent example of how a hero may perpetuate his honor and glory during peacetime, for they reflect the contests of war, physical tests of speed, strength, and fighting ability. This is directly correlative to the hero’s military ἀρετή, yet it is the role that Achilles plays in these games that interests me most, for within the context of the funeral games of Patroklos Achilles shows the proper civic place and function of the epic hero as it would be during peacetime. It is in Book 23 that the just arbiter from the Shield of Achilles is animated in the person of Achilles.

A series of conflicts arises throughout the funeral games of Patroklos between the various contestants, all of which Achilles arbitrates with justice and to the benefit and liking of all involved. The first occurs during the chariot race between Idomeneus the Kretan and Ajax son of Oileus. Idomeneus calls out that he sees the race unfolding from afar at 23.457, but after he outlines some of the details of the race and claims that it is Diomedes who leads the charioteers, the lesser Ajax rebukes him for spewing falsehood and “speaking rashly.” (23.478) Idomeneus responds with insults and a wager, and just as Ajax is about to respond again, Achilles intervenes (23.492-498):

μηκέτι νῦν χαλεποῖσιν ἀμείβεσθον ἐπέεσσιν
 Αἴαν Ἰδομενεῦ τε κακοῖς, ἐπεὶ οὐδὲ ἔοικε.
 καὶ δ’ ἄλλω νεμεσᾶτον ὅτις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι.
 ἀλλ’ ὑμεῖς ἐν ἀγῶνι καθήμενοι εἰσοράσθε
 ἵππους· οἳ δὲ τάχ’ αὐτοὶ ἐπειγόμενοι περὶ νίκης
 ἐνθάδ’ ἐλεύσονται· τότε δὲ γνώσεσθε ἕκαστος
 ἵππους Ἀργείων, οἳ δεύτεροι οἳ τε πάροιθεν.

“No longer now, Ajax and Idomeneos, exchange these harsh and evil words, since it is not seemly. You two would be wroth with another who did these sorts of things. But you two, having sat yourselves down in the assembly, watch for the horses: they themselves in eager haste for victory will come here swiftly, and then each one of you will see for himself the horses of the

⁵⁹ Hammer 1997, 14.

Argives, the ones in front and the second ones.”

In this way Achilles arbitrates the first conflict of Book 23. It is relatively minor, yet he is the one to do it, acting as is fit for the just arbiter and civic leader.

The conclusion of the chariot race finds Diomedes (as Idomeneus saw) victorious by a wide margin, and thus he takes the first prize. Next, Antilochos, with Menelaos right behind him, crosses the finish-line, and far off after these two comes Meriones, the slowest of them all. In last place straggled in Eumelos son of Admetos, who had passed Diomedes after Apollo struck the whip from his hand (23.384-6), and if not for divine intervention would have retained that position, but Eumelos’ chariot was smashed by Athena (23.391-6). On account of these events, Achilles felt pity for the poor fate that was allotted to Eumelos and made a proposal met by approval by the Achaeans (23.536-8):

‘λοῖσθος ἀνὴρ ὄριστος ἐλαύνει μώνυχας ἵππους;
ἀλλ’ ἄγε δὴ οἱ δῶμεν ἀέθλιον ὡς ἐπεικὲς
δεύτερ’ : ἀτὰρ τὰ πρῶτα φερέσθω Τυδέος υἱός.

"As the last of all, the best man drives in his uncloven-hoofed horses. But come then, let us give to him a prize as befits him, the second-place one. But let the son of Tydeus be presented the first-place prizes.”

However, Antilochos took offense to this, and in his rebuttal the original conflict between Agamemnon and Achilles is mirrored and revisited. It is especially fitting that Achilles gets the opportunity to solve a conflict of the same nature as his own. Achilles takes the place of Agamemnon, and although he does not plan to take the prize of Antilochos for himself, he desires to give it to Eumelos because he deems the latter the “ἀνὴρ ὄριστος,” the best man. That was the rationale that Agamemnon used for himself to justify why he should be allowed to take Achilles’ prize as is seen at 1.186. In his speech at 23.543-54, Antilochos deems this extraordinarily unfair, that he should give up a prize that he has rightfully won just because another man is considered to

be “better” than him. He is in the same situation as Achilles was in Book 1, threatened with the loss of his prize and the honor that goes along with it for the sake of another. Like Achilles with Agamemnon, he cites the many goods that already lie in the tent of the one making this judgment, and the fact that some other prize could be given to Eumelos as opposed to his. Obviously in Book 1 Achilles is indeed stripped of his prize. However, Achilles does not make himself into a second Agamemnon in his judgment, and with justice and the community in his heart he decides to allow Antilochos to retain his prize, and instead he finds another prize suitable for Eumelos, the corselet of Asteropaios (23.560), which the son of Admetos gratefully accepted (23.565). Unlike the rift in the Achaean host created by Agamemnon in his Book 1 judgment, in which he aimed to appease his own desires to the detriment of the community, Achilles in Book 23 displays his civic prowess that Agamemnon lacks, and he appeases all of the parties involved, he who was great and deserving of honor in general, he who deserved and earned the honor at hand, and the entire assembly. Thus Achilles responded to and solved another conflict.

The next judgment that Achilles makes is not regarding a conflict of words, but the outcome of a game itself, as he looks out for the well-being of the competing heroes. After each hero has taken a fall in the brutish wrestling match between Odysseus and Telemonian Ajax, Achilles ends the bout, saying (23.735-7):

μηκέτ' ἐρείδεσθον, μὴ δὲ τρίβεσθε κακοῖσι:
 νίκη δ' ἀμφοτέροισιν: ἀέθλια δ' ἴσ' ἀνελόντες
 ἔρχεσθ', ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλοι ἀεθλεύωσιν Ἀχαιοί.

“Wrestle no more, do not wear yourselves out with bad injuries: the victory is for the both of you: and after taking up the prizes equally, depart, in order that that other Achaeans may also compete.”

The next event is the footrace between Antilochos, Odysseus, and Oilean Ajax (23.740-97). Odysseus ends up winning the race, but a similar situation arises to that of the chariot races

as Ajax slips and falls on cow dung. However, the good judgment of Achilles seems to already be affecting the Achaean army for the better, for Antilochos not unhappily accepts the third-place prize of a half-talent of gold for the sake of the unfortunate Ajax. In return for his just admission of Ajax's superiority in age, status, and speed over him (not to mention a little bit of flattery toward the son of Peleus), Antilochos receives from Achilles another half-talent of gold. Clearly there is merit in the good civic judgment. Returning to the prize for best judgment on the Shield, I stated before that it was a symbol for civic honor, but it would seem that this sort of honor can also take the form of material prize, as Antilochos is rewarded for his good judgment.

Achilles continues to arbitrate and judge the various contests through the rest of Book 23, and his word is met with obedience and acceptance, considering there is no mention of argument or dissatisfaction. He functions as the ideal leader in this civic context, as he commands the respect of the Achaean host even in a context other than battle. Unlike the age and past achievements of Nestor, Achilles' judgments and authority do not explicitly derive from his actions in battle and glorious deeds, but from his position in this civic setting as the arbitrator; it is his actions in this social and civic position that prove his civic excellence.⁶⁰

Throughout the funeral games, Achilles acknowledges and confers honors upon those who deserve it on account of their actions and he justly arbitrates disputes. Achilles also shows his respect for the heroic hierarchy during the funeral games of Patroklos. As he is distributing the prizes to the participants of the chariot race, including the substitute prize for Eumelos in acknowledgment of him as the "best man" in the races, Achilles finds himself with the fifth prize left over. He decides to give it to Nestor who can no longer compete in the games yet certainly deserves honors due to his place in the hierarchy, good counsel, past accomplishments in games (which Nestor himself lists at 23.634-42), and age (23.617-23). Nestor invokes the gods to honor Achilles for this gesture, for Achilles remembers to honor those who deserve it though cannot

⁶⁰ Hammer 1997, 20.

complete (23.648-50), remembering the hierarchy and his elders.

Achilles further acknowledges and honors the hierarchy in the closing lines of Book 23 through a gesture of reconciliation toward Agamemnon. As Agamemnon and Meriones rise up for the spear-throwing contest (23.887-8), Achilles stops them from competing, acknowledges that Agamemnon “surpasses all others” by much, and says that he ought to take the greater portion of the prize due to his greatness, but that the lesser portion (a spear) go to Meriones; Agamemnon does not dispute this judgment, and thus the funeral games of Patroklos come to an end (23.890-5). He does not allow his past conflict with Agamemnon concerning honor and prizes to color his judgment at this time. Instead, he gives honor where honor is due in terms of the hierarchy, ruling justly within the social order and displaying his civic ἀρετή.

Achilles proves himself to be the antithesis of Agamemnon in that he arbitrates conflicts by thinking beyond himself and rather for the welfare of the community at large. The warrior’s focus is on himself and his own personal glory. He operates according to the accepted concepts of glory, honor, and excellence, but these concepts do not extend beyond the individual. As much as this epic hero system is self-destructive it is also oriented about the self. On the other hand, the civic figure, a warrior in a civic situation, the whole epic hero, must think outside of his own status and do what resonates positively in the community at large. Achilles removal from the situation is denoted at 23.274-75 and 279, where he says that if these games were for some other hero he would take part in them, and that he would win (the chariot race), but then he asserts his abstinence from them. Indeed, he elaborates in line 23.280 that he does so for the sake of his companion whom he has lost. Nevertheless, this removes Achilles from the quest for personal glory, and by his separation— a separation from the group that is obverse to his self-imposed and perpetuated social exclusion which until the death of Patroklos is physical removal but changes as he casts aside his humanity in his bloodlust— he reintegrates himself into the social group, taking the place that is proper for the epic hero in a civic context as an arbitrator and just judge. By

acting according to the principles of community-welfare and justice, he engages overarching concepts of honor and excellence, but of the civic sort.

This aspect of the hero is even more intangible than his warrior side, but is very important toward the overall image of the hero. Achilles, the greatest warrior at Troy, engages and garners for himself civic ἀρετή as the just arbiter of disputes, the distributor of prizes, and the mediator.⁶¹ Indeed, it is an ironic turning of the tables since Book 1. At the beginning of the epic, Agamemnon the blustering bully forces Achilles to give up his prize of honor, shaming him in the army and in the assembly; he goes so far as to claim that no one will obey Achilles like they do him, and that Achilles is the lesser of the two. By Book 23 an entirely different social order emerges. Agamemnon places himself under the command of Achilles, and the son of Peleus through the funeral games of Patroklos proves himself to be the consummate hero via his civic presence, presiding over the entire Achaean community with his mediation, arbitration, and justice.⁶² Thus Achilles solidifies his place as the whole epic hero, one who has and will gain glory on the field of battle, but also as one who is held in a place of honor in the civic sector.

This is not to say that Achilles is necessarily the best of the Achaeans in his civic skills: Achilles admits this himself at 18.106 after asserting his preeminence on the field of battle. Nestor certainly would be one who is better in counsel on account of his age and experience. His good counsel is why he is among this Achaean host. Odysseus is another who could be argued to be better than Achilles in counsel. There is also Diomedes whose wisdom is heralded especially due to his youth. I still maintain that there is no character more worthy of being called the most complete epic hero than Achilles. No one can boast a more tragic and heroic fate, no one can surpass him on the battlefield; his feats during Books 18-22 are absolutely unmatched by any other hero. So closely juxtaposed to this is his civic prowess in Book 23, and in his display of

⁶¹ Hammer 1997, 17.

⁶² *Ibid*, 22.

justice in the civic assembly, his action for the sake of the community, and his conflict resolution, he displays a marquee civic presence and place among the Achaeans in the assembly which is alluded to in Book 1 before his dishonoring by Agamemnon. He is the best warrior, but unlike Agamemnon he proves to be able to put his pride and warrior-ethos aside for the sake of his civic position in society, and thus his image as a complete epic hero. In the *Iliad*, no hero displays such prowess in both spheres of the hero's life. Many are skilled warriors, many are skilled in counsel, few possess both abilities. Achilles surpasses them all with the *Iliad*'s context. Although he regresses to his somewhat inhumane state of vendetta at the beginning of Book 24, continuing to drag Hektor's body with his chariot, when Priam comes to his tent and supplicates him for the body of Hektor, he taps into his civic nature of resolving crises in a just manner.⁶³ He lays aside his vendetta, his pride, his lust for revenge, and his inhumanity, and he fulfills his nature as the just hero. This is the intermingling of the spheres: in a matter relating directly to war, the ransoming of a body, Achilles acts in a just manner which stems from his civic prowess. With the Shield of Achilles in mind, as well as these civic examples put forth, the poor actions of Agamemnon, the honor accorded to the aged Nestor, and especially the preeminent paradigm of Achilles, I believe that the stage is set for the place and function of the epic hero during peacetime.

⁶³ Hammer 1997, 21.

Conclusion: Epic Hero in Peacetime

To end where I began, the *Iliad* is a poem of war. Every single event in the *Iliad* takes place in the context of the Trojan War. In war the epic hero thrives. He kills or is killed, gaining for himself everlasting glory and honor. But for all of the war that there is, peace is never far away. The readers of the *Iliad* are constantly reminded of the peaceful world that once was, that will be, and that should be. In the midst of the most horrific, gory, bloody scenes of battle they are whisked away to a poplar on a river bank, the threshing floor of the farmer, or some other tranquil venue by the similes. Characters such as Hektor, in scenes of pure love and human emotion pray for a peaceful future that is doomed, while others in despair lament the past peace that they will never see again. Then the Shield of Achilles takes the world and puts it into a realistic perspective. Peace pre-dominates the world in the Shield. It is a microcosm depicting life and the world in as realistic of terms as it can muster. War is but a small part of the artistry on this weapon of war, yet it is the part that can destroy every good thing the Shield has to offer. It shatters peace, and for the characters of the *Iliad* war has consumed their reality. With the Shield of Achilles at its nucleus, all of this beautifully crafted peaceful imagery creates what the Iliadic world outside of the Trojan War ought to be, a world of peace and plenty, of herding and harvesting, of drinking and dancing. Although he would seem to require war to exist, I believe that the epic hero has a place in this world.

Certainly, war is an integral component of the epic hero's character. As a warrior, the hero strives to gain everlasting glory for himself, to be sung of in the songs of poets and rhapsodes. The most sure way to do this is to die, but until death takes them their slaying of other heroes and the prizes that they win therefrom grant them honor and glory, the heroic κλέος and

τιμή. It is not a life that many would choose to lead if they had a choice, as is expressed by Sarpedon and even Achilles, but it is the life that heroes feel bound to, a life wherein death is ever imminent. It is a self-destructive existence, but it is their existence.

If anything is to be appreciated from the Shield and similes, if the reflections on past peace by characters are to be taken seriously, and if the *Odyssey* is to exist at all, war is not the only aspect of their life. Peace is something that is desired, missed, and that is a part of the hero's reality. Thus I come to my central questions: how does this epic hero, a character predicated upon war, exist outside of the very institution to which he is bound and dependent on, and how is he able to perpetuate and augment his honor, glory, and excellence outside of war? In response, I would say that within the world of peace outlined as it is in the *Iliad* the civic place of the hero as described in the previous chapter along with specific scenes from the Shield of Achilles work in tandem to give the answer.

The Shield of Achilles, especially through the scene of the just arbitration in the City of Peace and others, depicts prototypical images of civic context. From this is seen the civic side of the hero as I have described, and how a hero's civic prowess affects his overall reputation and character. It is this sort of civic ἀρετή such as that which Achilles exhibits in Book 23 that creates the complete epic hero, as he is. Thus in order to see how the epic hero functions during peacetime, one must look no further than the examples of civic activity put forth and back to the City of Peace. As much as this activity represents the civic aspect of the hero's life, it also shows how the hero functions during peacetime. As opposed to this civic role being in the context of war though, it is in the context of peace. These ideas of glory and honor need not be thrown out of the window, but pursued in a different way, namely in the civic sector. Certainly, games such as those at the funeral of Patroklos allow heroes to exercise their military muscle in a civic, community manner, and thus they can acquire τιμή and κλέος and display their ἀρετή.

However, what is important to take from the funeral games is Achilles' position as the

arbitrator and overseer. This is the role that embodies the epic hero outside of war as a just ruler. This is the just arbiter of the City of Peace in the flesh. This is how the hero functions and can maintain and increase his status in peacetime. On one hand there is Agamemnon who fumbles in his counsel and running of the assembly. Despite his prowess in war and command over men, he does not exhibit the qualities of a good leader in a civic context or indeed peacetime. On the other, there is Achilles, who embodies everything that the epic hero ought to be: a warrior of preeminent prowess as well as a just ruler. A speaker of words and a doer of deeds, Achilles proves himself the best of the epic heroes because he is able to harness both aspects of his heroic nature. He gains honor and respect from both spheres, and although he is and ought to be remembered as an unstoppable warrior, it is undeniable that he was also a good and just leader of men outside of war. It adds to his tragedy that he was fated to die and was unable to be a ruler of men in peacetime, yet that is what makes him truly the ultimate epic hero. A speaker of words, he embraced his fate; a doer of deeds, he embraced death. He gained glory in war and peace, or at least civic contexts, in life, and made his glory everlasting by his death. Based on his own Shield and coupled with the images of honor described by Sarpedon, it is through Achilles in the civic contexts of the assembly and the funeral games that an image emerges of what the epic hero should be and what the epic hero is during peace.

It has not been my intention to in any way belittle or take away from the epic hero's warrior aspect, but to elucidate how he can exist during peacetime and thus bring into the light the aspect of the hero that is left in the dark, showing that the complete epic hero is indeed, simply put by Phoenix, not only a doer of deeds, but a speaker of words. By understanding the hero's role in peacetime along with his place in war, the scope of the *Iliad* is magnified. Instead of an existence embroiled in battle, we see an entire Iliadic world where war is present but so too are farming, herding, drinking, and dancing. Instead of only single-minded warriors who cannot see beyond their own desires, we see leaders of men whose glory comes not only from battle and the

sacrifice of death but from ruling with justice. Death is not alone; there is also life. War exists, but so too does peace.

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Appendix

Greek Words

Throughout this paper I interchangeably use Greek terms and what they mean in English when describing certain concepts and events. Outside of the passages which I translate, there are five pertinent terms that must be understood which I use often in Greek, but also in their English translation: κλέος, τιμή, ἀρετή, δίκη, and ἀριστεία.

Κλέος simply put is glory. It is an intangible concept, but related to the immortal remembrance of the deeds and honor of the hero.

Τιμή (plural τιμαί) means “honor” in a literal sense, but it can also be the word used for the physical manifestations of that honor, the prizes (γέρα-the word for the prizes of honor) and possessions of the hero, or more specifically the honor which the possessions bestow.

ἀρετή is a difficult word to put into one definition, yet normally is translated into English as “excellence.” Another popular translation is “virtue,” but this word is often colored by modern conceptions of morality and doesn’t seem to always fit characters. It is the overall excellent quality of a person, and for epic heroes this normally means excellence in battle, yet I ascribe the hero a civic ἀρετή which describes their excellence in the civic sector, in which they act as just arbitrators and make group-decisions in a just manner. To have civic ἀρετή, one must adhere to δίκη, or justice.

Finally, an ἀριστεία is a display of excellence on the battlefield. When a character has an ἀριστεία (see Achilles, Agamemnon), they seem to become unstoppable military forces and vanquish many foes. They are the mark of a hero’s military might. The term can also be used as a general descriptor of prowess; it isn’t always a single event.

ACADEMIC VITA

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Education

Pennsylvania State University **Expected May 2014**
Schreyer Honors College, Paterno Fellows Program

Bachelor of Arts in History
Bachelor of Arts in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies
Emphasis in Ancient Languages
Minors: Greek
Latin
International Studies

Languages

Ancient Greek

Iliad: Book 1
Lysias: *Against Eratosthenes*
Heraclitus
Herodotus: *History* I.28-34
Thucydides: *The Peloponnesian War* 2.34-46
Gorgias: *Encomium of Helen*
Herodorus: Fragments 1, 13, 14, 17, 22a/b, and 30
"Hippocrates": *On Ancient Medicine* 20.1-6
Plato: *Clitophon*
Aristophanes: *Eccleziastuzae*
Xenophon: *Symposium* I, III
Isocrates: *Against the Sophists* 1-22

Latin

Catullus: *The Poems* 1-9, 11-16, 21-22, 24-29, 31-34, 36-37,
41-59, 62-63, 67, 69-116
Livy: *History of Rome* Books 21-22
Tacitus *Annals*: Book I. 1-10, 24, 69, Book III. 29, 35, 72,
Book IV. 1-4, 7-12, 17-20, 32-33, Book V

Conversational Modern Greek

Research Experience

Peace and the Epic Hero in the *Iliad*

Advisor: Zoe Stamatopoulou
Summary: In my thesis, I explore the underlying theme of
peace in the *Iliad* and its relationship with the epic hero.
I focus on allusions to peace in the past, present, and future
in its various potentialities, the problems of peace in the context

2013-2014

of heroic epic, and how the epic hero can function in a peaceful society and achieve civic glory and excellence.

Architectural Development of Nubian Churches

Advisor: Paul Dilley (now at University of Iowa)
Research assistant studying the churches of Nubia in Late Antiquity with a focus on their archaeological timeline and architectural style. 2011

Honors and Awards

O. Richard Bundy Jr. Scholarship 2014
Evan Pugh Senior Award 2014
Evan Pugh Junior Award 2013
Phi Kappa Phi Honors Society 2013
Butner Scholarship 2013
Class of 1922 Scholarship 2012
Reverend Thomas J. Birmingham Scholarship in the Classics 2012-2013
Eugene N. Borza Award in Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies 2012
President's Freshman Award 2011

International Experience

Athens, Greece (Spring Semester)
Courses in Greek Archaeology, Byzantine History, Crete, Troy and Greek (both ancient and modern) at the Athens Centre. 2013
Rome, Italy (2.5 weeks in Summer)
Study tour of Roman archaeological sites and analysis. 2012
Cairo, Egypt (1.5 weeks; end of Fall semester)
Study tour of Egyptian archaeological sites of Ancient Egyptian, Judaic, Christian, and Islamic natures. 2010
Rosarito, Mexico (1 week in Summer) 2008
Participated in Project Mexico (affiliated with the Orthodox Church in America) in which our group built a house for a homeless family.

Miscellanea

Leadership

CAMS (Classics and Ancient Mediterranean Studies) Club Officer Treasurer: Planning meetings, lectures, social events, professional opportunities, etc. in conjunction with the officer board and department faculty advisors.	Presently
Pennsylvania State Marching Blue Band Leadership <u>Guide</u> : Leading the trombone section, teaching marching fundamentals coordinate section rehearsals, lead and teach at music rehearsals, dispense necessary information from staff to the section.	Presently
<u>Squad Leader</u> : Learning drill outside of band, attend meetings pertaining to the drill, teach marching maneuvers and drill to a four-man unit of marchers, coordinate squad with the rest of the band on the field.	Presently
<u>Assistant Squad Leader</u> : Assisted the squad leader in dispensing information about the drill and coordinating the squad on the field.	2011-2012
Volunteer Youth Counselor; Orthodox Christian Youth Rally (NH) Supervised children ages 10-17 as a cabin counselor as well as an activities coordinator for a week.	2012-2013
OCF (Orthodox Christian Fellowship) Club Officer Served as President and Vice-President: Planned meetings, discussions, presentations, and social events.	2011-2013

Work Experience

Choir Director at Holy Trinity Orthodox Church, State College, PA Directing the choir at services, hold rehearsals 3-4 times a month, teach music fundamentals and technique.	Presently
CNB Bank, Loan Processing Assistant Processed loan documents, filed taxes, organized online records and input codes.	2013