

2017-3

# Archilochus's Effect on the Homeric Hero: Tracking the Development of the Greek Warrior

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## Recommended Citation

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**Archilochus's Effect on the Homeric Hero:**  
**Tracking the Development of the Greek Warrior**

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HAB Thesis

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“This thing about being a hero, about the main thing to it is to know when to die.”

-Will Rodgers

Heroes are common to all cultures. Their stories are an intriguing part of human society that often reveal the qualities that a society values through their heroic deeds. Conversely, the tragedy and death of heroes are also used as a way of warning people about dangerous qualities of which individuals should be wary. Heroes have been so ingrained in our societies that from the beginning of literature and writing, they have had their own genre. The epic of Gilgamesh is considered the first great work of literature that has survived and dates back to ca. 3000 B.C.E.<sup>1</sup> These epics follow the exploits of heroes and defined a genre that thrived for thousands of years and appeared in many different cultures. While the epic of Gilgamesh is perhaps the oldest example of epic poetry, the *Iliad* is perhaps the most famous and well-studied epic discussing heroes and warfare. The *Iliad* presents soldiers in a manner that exemplifies certain qualities and conceptions about warfare and promotes certain choices made within war, thereby defining the Greek hero for the first time. Furthermore, the *Iliad* was so influential on Greek literature that it was transcribed and survived in some form throughout the entirety of Greek history despite being one of the oldest works of Greek literature. Because of its renown, it might be expected that the poem would dominate all Greek conceptions of how soldiers ought to act. However, Homer’s conception of heroism and the proper qualities of a soldier were challenged within a century after its formation by a warrior-poet named Archilochus of Paros.<sup>2</sup>

Archilochus is less renowned in modern times than Homer, but for the ancients his poetry pervaded their culture and was referenced by a wealth of ancient sources. For a thousand years,

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<sup>1</sup> Sadigh 2010: 76.

<sup>2</sup> Although most scholars assume that the *Iliad* was composed in the late eighth century B.C.E., West puts the date as early as 688 or 878 B.C.E. The two most accepted dates for the height of Archilochus’ fame are 664/3 and 652 B.C.E. Lavelle 2002. West 1995.

from Heraclitus in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. to the church fathers in the 6<sup>th</sup> century C.E., critics and admirers alike referred to Archilochus, often with comparison both to Homer and to Hesiod.<sup>3</sup>

Archilochus' renown comes from both a stark contrast in values with Homer as well as his synchronism with the Poet. Because both authors were contemporaries to some degree, Archilochus' contrast with Homer more likely a direct response to the other authors writing close to his own time. In many cases Archilochus' fragments even mimic Homeric vocabulary and plot in an attempt to highlight specific criticisms of Homer's *Iliad*. From a superficial prospective, it seems that Archilochus' origins are a probable explanation to his attack on the Homeric hero.

According to the tradition, Archilochus was the son of Telesicles, a nobleman who founded the colony on Paros, and Enipo, his slave.<sup>4</sup> Due to the illegitimacy of his birth, Archilochus was never destined to be a nobleman like his father. He was portrayed by Critias as ἀπορία and by Pindar as ἀμηχανία, both terms for lacking or being in need.<sup>5</sup> This gives more weight to the ancient tradition that Archilochus was a mercenary at some point in his life. Although tradition on Paros states that Archilochus was sent to the Parian colony on Thasos by the Muses, it seems much more fitting based on these accusations and the *ethos* that he portrays for himself that he was more likely a mercenary trying to ward off poverty.<sup>6</sup> In any case, Archilochus' experience of warfare seems to be much different than the idealistic, glory-seeking experiences of the Homeric heroes because he uses war as a means of employment and survival rather than a means of honor and glory.

While Homer concerns himself with heroes and demigods, Archilochus portrays the ordinary Greek soldier in a blunt and somewhat transparent way. He does not concern himself

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<sup>3</sup> Rankin 1977: 2. Longinus refers to Archilochus as one of the 'most Homeric' poets in 13.3 of his *On the Sublime*.

<sup>4</sup> Rankin 1977 10.

<sup>5</sup> Aelian tells us that Critias referred to Archilochus as ἀπορία in the *Vita Historia*.10.13 and Pindar refers to Archilochus as ἀμηχανία *Pyth.*2.53-58. Rankin 1977: 13.

<sup>6</sup> Rankin 1977:16.

with the unrealistic, divine men of the *Iliad*, and in one poem he even admits to despising people who resemble them, preferring men who are seeking survival rather than glory (Fr. 60).<sup>7</sup> As a mercenary and not a demigod, Archilochus portrays a simpler way of living. For him, war is a way to make money and is not worth dying for. As previous scholars have pointed out, for Homer glory is a significant motivation to go to war. In fact, Achilles and the rest of the heroes often times put themselves in mortal danger citing glory as the reason for risking their lives. Archilochus opposed this notion whole-heartedly. He famously reported throwing down his shield and running from battle when his life was threatened, and his poetry was banned from Sparta as a result of this shameful stance.<sup>8</sup> It is also worth noting that Archilochus' fame in the ancient world is much different from his fame in the modern world. Although in modern times, Archilochus' works are less renown and more fragmented, it is clear that his fame in the ancient world along with his opposition to Homer affected the Greek conception of the hero and heroic values for centuries. This opposition is clearly demonstrated in the works of the tragedians and certain philosophers following Archilochus.

This paper aims to show Archilochus' effect on the conception of the Greek hero by identifying various Greek authors' assessments of heroic qualities and comparing them with those of both Homer and Archilochus. The first chapter will define the Homeric values of the hero as presented in the *Iliad* and then identify Archilochus' specific opposition to these values. In this context, Homer is considered the chief architect of the Greek hero, and the authors

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<sup>7</sup> οὐ φιλέω μέγαν στρατηγὸν οὐδὲ διαπεπλιγμένον/ οὐδὲ βοστρύχοισι γαῦρον οὐδ' ὑπεξυρημένον./ ἀλλά μοι μικρός τις εἶη καὶ περὶ κνήμας ἰδεῖν/ ροικός, ἀσφαλῆ εὖς βεβηκῶς ποσσι, καρδίας πλέως. "I despise to see a tall, swaggering general with a beard of curls. Give me an officer who's short and bow legged, with his feet planted well apart."

<sup>8</sup> Archilochus advises shield-throwing in Fragment 6, and we learn that the Spartans banned his poetry as a result in *Memorable Deeds and Sayings: Lacedaemonii libros Archilochi e civitate sua exportare iusserunt, quod eorum parum verecundam ac pudicam lectionem arbitrabantur; noluerunt enim ea liberorum suorum animos imbui, ne plus moribus noceret quam ingeniis prodesset.* (Val.Max.6.3.Ext.1). "The Spartans ordered that the books of Archilochus should be removed from their state because they considered them indecent, and would not have their children indoctrinated with writings which might do more harm to their morals than good to their minds." Translation by Frank Redmond, Redmond 2016:18.

following Homer are remodeling and altering his original design rather than redesigning the hero altogether. The method used for identifying the Homeric values is a combination of literary analysis as well as attention to specific word choice used to describe heroes and their goals. After identifying these values, I cross-examine these values with Archilochus' own poetry to show a very distinct split in their conceptions of the Greek warrior. The second chapter examines the next significant literary genre after Homer and Archilochus: Greek tragedy. The chapter focuses on the works of Aeschylus *Achilleis* trilogy and Sophocles' *Ajax*, identifying specific Archilochean and Homeric values that have carried over to the tragedians and the significance behind their influence. Finally, the third chapter is concerned with the philosophers' treatment of Homeric and Archilochean values. This final chapter will focus on Plato's conception of the ideal warrior, whom he refers to as the guardians in the *Republic*.

## Chapter 1: Archilochus' Opposition to the Original Greek Hero

Homer and Archilochus were two of the oldest, surviving Greek authors to concern themselves primarily with poetry and warfare. It is curious, however, that they give two profoundly different accounts of the ancient Greek soldier. Both authors give us extensive and graphic accounts of military life, but those accounts differ in a variety of ways from their method of presentation to the content presented. It is evident from Archilochus' surviving works that he was aware of Homer and alluded to his works and his conception of warfare on multiple occasions. In fact, his allusions seem to be a response to the emphasis of heroic values within Homer.<sup>9</sup> On the surface it seems that Archilochus is against the Homeric values portrayed in the *Iliad*. However, the issue is more complicated than that. Archilochus is not exactly "anti-heroic," but rather that he favors survival over glory. The need for glory, or κλέος as the Greeks knew it, consumes the hero in the *Iliad*. However there seems to be a shift within Homer as the hero of the *Odyssey* desires a νόστος, a return from battle to live out the rest of his life peacefully at home. Therefore, Archilochus takes a stance against Homer's portrayal of the greatest good as an undying legacy made immortal through great feats on the battlefield as portrayed in the *Iliad*. In place of this, Archilochus stresses the importance of survival and living by simple means that is reflective of his own reality. It seems then that Archilochus believes that life, even one without κλέος, is more important than any glory that results in a hero's death. This seems to portray a more realistic attitude for the common soldier than the attitude of the mythical, semi-divine heroes that the *Iliad* portrays.

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<sup>9</sup> For an example, see Swift's article concerning Archilochus' Telephus epode and its use of Homeric language. Swift discusses the fragment centered around Telephus and his retreat from the Greeks before their arrival at Troy (P.OXY LXIX 4708). It seems to heavily mirror Homeric style while portraying themes contrary to Homer's own conception of the Iliadic hero. Swift 2012: 139.

There seem to be two obvious methods for evaluating the virtues in a warrior that Homer praises the most. The first method places an emphasis on who is the “best” hero within the *Iliad* and analyzes the actions of that hero, as Gregory Nagy pioneered.<sup>10</sup> The second method analyzes the speeches and concessions made by warriors within the *Iliad* in more conventional fashion. In the *Iliad*, many amazing warriors are showcased throughout the epic, but only a handful of these warriors receive the epithet “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν,” the best of the Achaeans. This subset of warriors consists of crucial characters who are prominently featured heroes in the epic: Agamemnon, Ajax, Diomedes, Patroklos, and finally Achilles. Agamemnon earns the epithet only once during his own *aristeiā* (*Il.*11.228), Ajax only once during his fight with Hector (*Il.*7.289), Diomedes twice during his *aristeiā* (*Il.*5.103; *Il.*5.414), and Patroclus post mortem (*Il.*17.687-690).<sup>11</sup>

Other than these few instances, where some other hero receives the epithet, Achilles retains the epithet exclusively. Thus, from an analysis of this epithet, it seems that the poet intends for Achilles to best represent the idealized hero of the *Iliad*. It follows that as the ideal Homeric hero, Achilles represents the qualities that should be praised in a warrior. It is important to note that this praise of Achilles is limited to the *Iliad*, as Achilles’ role seems to be limited to those deeds he completes in wartime only. Although Achilles is by far the “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν,” this epithet is relinquished to other heroes when Achilles is away from the battlefield as demonstrated when Agamemnon, Ajax, Diomedes and Patroklos assume this epithet. Therefore by examining Achilles’ deeds on the battlefield and as a commander of troops, we are able to

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<sup>10</sup> Nagy 1999. Nagy gives a detailed account of Homeric values and the heroes who embody them, but for the most part his greatest contributions for the purpose of this paper come in his second chapter which concerns the epithet, who receives it, and what the epithet signifies in the overall structure of Homer’s works.

<sup>11</sup> Nagy 1999: 30-35. Although Agamemnon is called “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” in other sections of the *Iliad*, in every instance besides the one in book XI Agamemnon gives himself that title. The examples above cite either the poet himself or another hero giving the epithet to the aforementioned heroes. Moreover, Odysseus gets the title “best” with regards to the other Greek leaders right before the embassy arrives to Achilles’ hut. It should also be noted that Ajax is never actually called “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν”, but is called “Ἀχαιῶν φέρτατος.”

examine what exactly it means to be “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” and how that relates to Homer’s concept of the hero.

Because he is “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν,” Achilles represents heroism at its pinnacle. He is the ideal hero, who earns κλέος on the battlefield with mythical feats of power and destruction. However, before Achilles rejoins the battle he is not this ideal hero. As a result, other heroes are able to vie for the title “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” because he refuses his heroic character by abstaining from the battlefield. In fact, Achilles is temporarily willing to abandon all attempts to gain more κλέος in the war by going back to his home in Thessaly in order to spite Agamemnon.<sup>12</sup> Achilles is aware of his fate, and more importantly he is aware of the choice that lies before him: νόστος or κλέος. After threatening to leave the beaches and not just the battlefield, he reflects upon the two paths that lie before him at this crucial crossroads:

μήτηρ γάρ τέ μέ φησι θεὰ Θέτις ἀργυρόπεζα  
διχθαδίας κῆρας φερέμεν θανάτοιο τέλος δέ.  
εἰ μὲν κ’ αὔθι μένων Τρώων πόλιν ἀμφιμάχωμαι,  
ᾧλετο μὲν μοι νόστος, ἀτὰρ κλέος ἄφθιτον ἔσται:  
εἰ δέ κεν οἴκαδ’ ἵκωμι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,  
ᾧλετό μοι κλέος ἐσθλόν, ἐπὶ δηρὸν δέ μοι αἰῶν  
ἔσσεται, οὐδέ κέ μ’ ᾧκα τέλος θανάτοιο κιχείη (*Il.*9.410-416)

“My mother, silver-footed Thetis the goddess, tells me  
that two contrary spirits go with me until the end that’s death.  
If I stay here, and fight around the Trojan’s city  
I’ll lose my homecoming, but gain imperishable renown.  
On the other hand, if I return to my own dear country  
my fine renown will have perished, but my life will long endure,  
and the end of death will not find me any time soon.”<sup>13</sup>

These lines confirm that Achilles not only knows what fate awaits him if he stays and returns to battle, but that he has the chance to change it. This is not necessarily the fate of all

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<sup>12</sup> This occurs in his response to Odysseus during the embassy scene of book 9, (*Il.*9.328-416). Especially notable are lines 356-361, which Green’s translation gives as “But now since I have no wish to fight against noble Hector, tomorrow I’ll offer sacrifice to Zeus and all other gods, then haul my ships down to the sea and load them up, and you’ll see-if you want to, if it concerns you at all- at first light, sailing over the teeming Hellespont, my flotilla, its rowers all eagerly plying their oars;” Green 2015:172-173.

<sup>13</sup> Green 2015: 174.

heroes, but for Achilles, the decision of κλέος or νόστος is forced upon him. Homer is emphasizing the importance of κλέος to the warrior by pairing it with an unavoidable death. Because Achilles has chosen to go to war and accept death for κλέος, it becomes the most important thing to him. This is why Agamemnon's insult to his κλέος is so inflammatory to Achilles.

He states that he knows that he is destined to die at Troy. However, at that time he had initially accepted that fate and wished for the κλέος promised to balance this short fate:

μη̄τερ ἐπεὶ μ' ἔτεκές γε μινυνθάδιόν περ ἐόντα,  
τιμήν περ μοι ὄφελλεν Ὀλύμπιος ἐγγυαλίξαι  
Ζεὺς ὑψιβρεμέτης· νῦν δ' οὐδέ με τυτθὸν ἔτισεν·  
ἦ γάρ μ' Ἀτρεΐδης εὐρὺ κρείων Ἀγαμέμνων  
ἠτίμησεν· ἐλὼν γὰρ ἔχει γέρας αὐτὸς ἀπούρας. (*Il.* 1.352-356)

“Mother, since you bore me, though for a short life only, some honor, for sure, the Olympian should have guaranteed me- Zeus, who thunders on high; but now not the slightest regard he has shown me- and Atreus' son, wide-ruling Agamemnon, has done me dishonor, himself took my prize and keeps it.”<sup>14</sup>

Thus the issue of his death suddenly having intimidated him into leaving is not convincing. He has known from the beginning that he was destined to die, but the guarantee of κλέος from Zeus seemed to make up for the fact that he would die a fatefully early death. However, when he becomes dishonored he immediately withdraws himself from battle as a result of the loss of κλέος. Agamemnon has insulted him and dishonored him by taking away Briseis and drastically weakened his κλέος without a new promise of even more κλέος or amending that previous weakening of κλέος. This is evident in the first book when Achilles and Agamemnon are just beginning their feud.

Achilles states that he came here only for glory, not to fight the Trojans, οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ Τρώων ἔνεκ' ἦλυθον αἰχμητῶν /δεῦρο μαχησόμενος, ἐπεὶ οὐ τί μοι αἰτιοί εἰσιν: (*Il.* 1.152-153).

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<sup>14</sup> Green 2015: 34.

“I did not come here on account of Troy’s spearmen: why/ should I fight them? In no way have they wronged me.”<sup>15</sup> Paired with Achilles’ statement that Agamemnon always takes the greatest prizes from the Achaeans without ever doing anything to earn them, Achilles’ anger is directly influenced by the distribution and redistribution of κλέος among the army:

οὐ μὲν σοὶ ποτε ἴσον ἔχω γέρας ὀππότε Ἀχαιοὶ  
Τρώων ἐκπέρσωσ’ εὖ ναιόμενον πτολίεθρον:  
ἀλλὰ τὸ μὲν πλεῖον πολυάϊκος πολέμοιο  
χεῖρες ἐμαὶ διέπουσ’: ἀτὰρ ἦν ποτε δασμὸς ἴκηται,  
σοὶ τὸ γέρας πολὺ μεῖζον, ἐγὼ δ’ ὀλίγον τε φίλον τε  
ἔρχομ’ ἔχων ἐπὶ νῆας, ἐπεὶ κε κάμω πολεμίζων. (*Il.* 1.163-168)

“Never do I rate a prize to match yours when the Achaians lay waste some populous citadel of the Trojans, though mine are the hands that bear the brunt of furious battle; and when the time comes for sharing, then your prize is by far the greater, while I, with some smaller thing for my share, trudge back to the ships, still combat-weary.”<sup>16</sup>

As a result of Agamemnon’s insult to his κλέος, Achilles no longer has a reason to risk his life.

The promise of κλέος and undying glory has been taken from him. As Nagy describes the tradeoff, “For Achilles, the κλέος of the *Iliad* tradition should be an eternal consolation for losing a safe return home, a νόστος.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore, his deciding from the beginning to come and stay at Troy for the promise of κλέος and “τιμή,” knowing all the while that they come at the sacrifice of a journey home, a νόστος, shows what the “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” truly values.<sup>18</sup> It demonstrates the priority of values for the Homeric hero in the *Iliad*, mandating a κλέος above a νόστος.

Furthermore, this prioritization is not limited to the first half of the epic.

After Patroclus dies, many readers make the mistake of assuming that Achilles goes back

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<sup>15</sup> Green 2015: 29.

<sup>16</sup> Green 2015: 29-30.

<sup>17</sup> Nagy 1999: 29.

<sup>18</sup> Τιμή here means the physical manifestation of honor. It is the armor, the slaves, and the material goods that a warrior earns through battle. As the Liddell and Scott’s Greek-English Lexicon puts it, “the price, cost, *worth* of a thing.” Liddell 2007:705.

to the battlefield solely because of revenge. Some assume that the death of his friend is enough for Achilles to forgive Agamemnon's hubris and the dishonor that he experienced and go to back into battle. While vengeance is surely a part of Achilles' return to the battlefield, it is not the sole component. The need for κλέος once again plays an important part in motivating the "ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν" to fight once more. After all, Achilles presumably could have left Troy before the end of the war after killing Hector and honoring Patroklos through his funeral games. What else besides κλέος would have held him in Troy after these events? Achilles once again cites κλέος as the reason rushes back to battle and forsakes his quarrel with Agamemnon and his νόστος, as he explains to his mother:

ὥς καὶ ἐγὼν, εἰ δὴ μοι ὁμοίη μοῖρα τέτυκται,  
κείσομ' ἐπεὶ κε θάνω: νῦν δὲ κλέος ἐσθλὸν ἀροίμην,  
καὶ τινα Τρωϊάδων καὶ Δαρδανίδων βαθυκόλπων  
ἀμφοτέρησιν χερσὶ παρειάων ἀπαλάων  
δάκρυ' ὁμορξαμένην ἀδινὸν στοναχῆσαι ἐφείην,  
γνοῖεν δ' ὡς δὴ δηρὸν ἐγὼ πολέμοιο πέπαυμαι:  
μηδὲ μ' ἔρυκε μάχης φιλέουσά περ: οὐδέ με πείσεις. (*Il.*18.120-126)

"So I too- if indeed there's a like fate's in wait for me- shall lie when I'm dead. But for now, let me win high renown, causing many a one of all those deep-bosomed women-Trojan, Dardanian- to wipe tears from their tender cheeks with both hands, to keen ceaselessly, to get it into their heads that I'd held off too long from battle! So do not try, though you love me, to stop me fighting: you'll not persuade me."<sup>19</sup>

And so, it becomes increasingly clear that Achilles, "ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν," values κλέος above a νόστος. He values an undying renown, κλέος ἄφθιτον, and honor above a further life in his homeland without honor and renown but a further life none the less.

While he does seek revenge for Patroklos, it is interesting to note how he goes about seeking that vengeance. Through his revenge, he attains glory. The two are almost inseparable for Achilles. In order to honor his dear comrade and avenge his death, he must slaughter the

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<sup>19</sup> Green 2015: 342.

Trojans and Hector, the best of the Trojans, most of all. For Achilles this ultimate κλέος is the only thing that can make up for the death of Patroclus and the other Greeks. This can be seen in the last few lines of book 20, mid-rampage for Achilles, as he slaughters and maims the Trojans for revenge:

ὥς ὑπ' Ἀχιλλῆος μεγαθύμου μώνυχες ἵπποι  
στεῖβον ὁμοῦ νέκυάς τε καὶ ἀσπίδας: αἷματι δ' ἄξων  
νέρθεν ἅπας πεπάλακτο καὶ ἄντυγες αἶ περι δῖφρον,  
ἄς ἄρ' ἄφ' ἰππέων ὀπλέων ῥαθάμιγγες ἔβαλλον  
αἶ τ' ἄπ' ἐπισσώτρων: ὃ δὲ ἴετο κῦδος ἀρέσθαι  
Πηλεΐδης, λύθρω δὲ παλάσσετο χεῖρας ἀάπτους. (Il.20.498ff)

“so, urged by great-hearted Achilles, his whole-hoofed horses galloped over the dead and their shields; with blood all the axle below was splashed, and the rails round his chariot, with the drops flung up by he wheels and the horse’s hooves as Pēleus’s son charged on, his invincible hands bespattered with flying gore, in his pursuit of glory.”<sup>20</sup>

In his first encounter with the Trojans, just after receiving his new, godly armor, Achilles sets himself upon the Trojans for glory. It seems curious at first glance that he is pursuing glory, in this case “κῦδος,” instead of revenge.<sup>21</sup> But upon close examination it seems that winning glory is a way to avenge Patroklos for Achilles. By slaughtering on the battlefield, Achilles is able to win armor and hostages, both of which are material forms of τιμή, and by extension κλέος, for the Greeks. In the opening of book 21, just after those lines above indicating Achilles’ pursuit of glory, Achilles slaughters warriors in the Xanthus and then pauses his killing spree to capture twelve youths. It is significant that in his vengeful rampage, Achilles stops his slaughtering in order to procure physical κλέος. More significant is why, as Achilles captures them, ποινήν Πατρόκλοιο Μενoitιάδαο θανόντος (Il.21.28), “to be blood-price for the death of Menoitios’s

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<sup>20</sup> Green 2015:382.

<sup>21</sup> The Liddell Scott lexicon defines κῦδος as “of a hero, μέγα κῦδος Ἀχαιῶν the great *glory* or *pride* of the Achaeans.” Liddell 2007:397.

son Patroklos.”<sup>22</sup> And as soon as he has procured this material κλέος, which Achilles uses to honor Patroklos later on at his funeral games, Achilles goes back to slaughtering the Trojans. Not soon after, he proclaims that all Trojans will die in blood-debt to Patroklos and the Achaeans that died while he was abstaining from the battlefield.<sup>23</sup> Achilles seeks revenge for Patroklos and the other Achaeans killed, but the way in which he does that is by the method befitting an epic hero, by earning the glory, the κλέος, that he believes that Patroklos deserves. But this isn’t a completely selfless act. For Achilles to restore his own κλέος, he must restore that of Patroclus. Thus he is able to make Patroklos, who just proved his mortality through his death, immortal in the same way that Achilles himself seeks to be immortal, through undying glory.

This notion of revenge by κλέος can be seen further as Achilles chases Hector around the city. As he chases Hector he also motions for his men to stop aiming their spears at him lest one of their spears deny Achilles the glory that he needs in order to atone for Patroklos’ death, λαοῖσιν δ’ ἀνένευε καρῆατι δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς,/ οὐδ’ ἔα ἰέμεναι ἐπὶ Ἴκτορι πικρὰ βέλεμνα,/ μὴ τις κῦδος ἄροίτο βαλῶν, ὃ δὲ δεύτερος ἔλθοι (*Il.22.205-207*). “To his troops too, noble Achilles, with a shake of the head, signaled they shouldn’t let fly their bitter shafts at Hector- a good shot might win the glory, leave himself as an also-ran!”<sup>24</sup> If Achilles just intended to kill Hector, and not gain κλέος for the sake of Patroclus, it does not make sense for him to ward off his own men. If, however, the hero conceives his only way of properly avenging his fallen comrades as winning glory for them, Achilles’ actions become clearer. Through his own logic, Achilles sees himself as the cause of his comrades’ deaths. He protested the battle as a matter of κλέος, as a

<sup>22</sup> Green 2015: 383. The lines concerned with this capture and blood are *Il.21.26-33*.

<sup>23</sup> *Il.21.133-135*. ἀλλὰ καὶ ὅς ὀλέεσθε κακὸν μόνον, εἰς ὃ κε πάντες/ τίσετε Πατρόκλιο φόνον καὶ λοιγὸν Ἀχαιῶν,/ οὗς ἐπὶ νηυσὶ θοῆσιν ἐπέφνετε νόσφιν ἐμεῖο. “you’ll all suffer the same evil fate, till every one of you has paid for Patroklos’s death, and the loss of those Achaians whom you slaughtered by the swift ships while I was absent.” Green 2015: 386.

<sup>24</sup> Green 2015: 405.

result his comrades died and the Trojans won κλέος. Now the only way to avenge his comrades seems to be for him, the self-proclaimed transgressor, to win them the κλέος that the Trojans won as a result of his absence.

We see this revenge by κλέος come to fruition during Patroklos' funeral and the games surrounding the funeral. Here Achilles is seen giving up his κλέος for Patroklos. First he gives up the twelve Trojans he took as hostage and sacrifices them for his pyre; nine horses and two dogs follow. Once the pyre is lit, they start funeral games for which Achilles provides all of the wonderful prizes. All of these materials once again serve to honor and glorify Patroklos. But there is also a personal element to this revenge as well. Achilles was supposed to protect and care for Patroclus. For Achilles to return to Pthia without Patroclus or without winning him the κλέος that he deserved would be the ultimate shame for him. It is another element that reinforces his decision to stay and attain a legendary κλέος rather than get a νόστος. Therefore the ultimate fruit of Achilles' vengeance is κλέος, not only for himself, but also for Patroclus, so that they can both transcend their mortality.

Although Achilles is the paramount hero, he is not the only hero within the epic that portrays a deep desire for κλέος. Indeed, the other heroes of the epic also express this mentality throughout the *Iliad*. Most notably, the speech of Sarpedon to Glaukos in Book 12 stresses the meaning of κλέος for the Iliadic hero. Amid the battle, Sarpedon decides to rush the wall that the Greeks had built around their camp. When he does so, he contemplates why the two of them are so highly valued in Lycia, their homeland, and speaks to Glaukon about this balance between achieving κλέος on the battlefield and a getting a proper νόστος:

Γλαῦκε τί ἢ δὴ νῶϊ τετιμήμεσθα μάλιστα  
ἔδρη τε κρέασίν τε ἰδὲ πλείοις δεπάεσσιν  
ἐν Λυκίῃ, πάντες δὲ θεοῦς ὧς εἰσορώωσι,  
καὶ τέμενος νεμόμεσθα μέγα Ξάνθοιο παρ' ὄχθας

καλὸν φυταλιῆς καὶ ἀρούρης πυροφόροιο;  
τῶ νῦν χρῆ Λυκίοισι μέτα πρώτοισιν ἐόντας  
ἐστάμεν ἠδὲ μάχης καυστείρης ἀντιβολῆσαι,  
ὄφρα τις ᾧδ' εἴπη Λυκίων πύκα θωρηκτάων:  
οὐ μὰν ἀκλεέες Λυκίην κάτα κοιρανέουσιν  
ἡμέτεροι βασιλῆες, ἔδουσί τε πίονα μῆλα  
οἶνόν τ' ἔξαιτον μελιδέα: ἀλλ' ἄρα καὶ ἴς  
ἐσθλή, ἐπεὶ Λυκίοισι μέτα πρώτοισι μάχονται.  
ὦ πέπον εἰ μὲν γὰρ πόλεμον περὶ τόνδε φυγόντε  
αἰεὶ δὴ μέλλοιμεν ἀγήρω τ' ἀθανάτω τε  
ἔσσεσθ', οὔτε κεν αὐτὸς ἐνὶ πρώτοισι μαχοίμην  
οὔτε κε σὲ στέλλοιμι μάχην ἐς κυδιάνειραν:  
νῦν δ' ἔμπης γὰρ κῆρες ἐφεστᾶσιν θανάτοιο  
μυρίαι, ἃς οὐκ ἔστι φυγεῖν βροτὸν οὐδ' ὑπαλύξαι,  
ἴομεν ἠέ τω εὖχος ὀρέξομεν ἠέ τις ἡμῖν. (Il. 12.310-328)

“Glaukos, why is it that we two are honored so highly,  
get the best places at table, choice meat, cups always full,  
back in Lycia? Why do all men there look on us like gods?  
We have that vast estate too, by the banks of the Xanthos—  
Fine acres of orchard and good wheat-bearing plowland.  
That’s why we must take our stand among the front-line Lycians,  
And face up with them to the searing heat of battle,  
So that Lycia’s corseleted soldiers may say this of us:  
‘Not short of renown, then, are Lycia’s overlords,  
these kings of ours: they may banquet on fattened sheep,  
and drink the best honey-sweet wine, but there’s also great  
valor in them—they’re out there with Lycia’s foremost fighters’  
Ah, my friend, if the two of us could escape from this war,  
and be both immortal and ageless for all eternity,  
then neither would I myself be among the foremost fighters  
nor would I send you out into battle that wins men honor;  
but now- since come what may the death-spirits around us  
are myriad, something no mortal can flee or avoid-  
let’s go on, to win ourselves glory, or yield it to others.”

Thus the argument once again comes between achieving κλέος on the battlefield and risking death or guaranteeing a proper νόστος by withdrawing and returning with less κλέος. The reality that these men are destined to die at some point spurs them on to solidify their legacy through glory and honor. This κλέος then gives them an elevated social status within their own kingdoms, which gives another justification as to the motivation of κλέος. Without this honor, the men

would not be valued as such within their society. They would be treated as any other citizen within their kingdoms. This elevated position, then, seems to be a significant part of motivation behind κλέος.

The semi-divine nature of these heroes also seems to play a part in their choice to risk life for glory. Michael Clarke suggests that this is due to the demigod's incomplete nature. He is neither human nor god, so he strives for both an immortal and mortal existence. Although he is still destined for death like every other mortal, he has the chance to become immortal through κλέος on the battlefield.<sup>25</sup> Furthermore, Arvanitakis proposes that death on the battlefield not only reinforces the mortality of the heroes, but also that these deaths are a method of immortal self-realization.<sup>26</sup> So it seems that the hero is driven to amass κλέος and dies a glorious death on the battlefield as a method of preserving himself past his death so that they become immortal in a way like their godly parent. This seems to be the mentality for most, but not all of the heroes in the *Iliad*.

The reversal of values between the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* has caused many scholars to question the authenticity of a singular Homer as the author of both the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*.<sup>27</sup> The hero of the *Odyssey* is very different from that of the *Iliad* in both who is “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” and the virtues of that man. In the *Odyssey*, the man who receives the honored epithet almost exclusively becomes Odysseus. Indeed, even when Odysseus talks to the shade of Achilles, the former “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν,” in Book 11, Achilles' response is completely contrary to the κλέος seeking character portrayed in the *Iliad*:

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<sup>25</sup> Clarke 2004: 78.

<sup>26</sup> Arvanitakis 2015: 93.

<sup>27</sup> The oral foundations of both poems only further complicate the authenticity of Homer as the sole author of both epics before they were solidified into a single works; however, many modern authors assert that the poems were set into their surviving forms by two different sources. Green 2015: 1. West 2011.

ὥς ἐφάμην, ὁ δὲ μ' ἀντίκ' ἀμειβόμενος προσέειπε:  
μὴ δὴ μοι θάνατόν γε παραύδα, φαίδιμ' Ὀδυσσεῦ.  
βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἔων θητευέμεν ἄλλω,  
ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρῳ, ᾧ μὴ βίητος πολὺς εἶη,  
ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν. (*Od.* 11.486-491)

“So I spoke, and he straightway made answer and said: ‘Nay, seek not to speak soothingly to me of death, glorious Odysseus. I should choose, so I might live on earth, to serve as the hireling of another, of some portionless man whose livelihood was but small, rather than to be lord over all the dead that have perished.’”<sup>28</sup>

It seems that the *Odyssey* has a completely different attitude towards what makes the epic hero heroic as Achilles denounces the value of his undying κλέος. This is, perhaps, due to the setting of each play. While the *Odyssey* is after the fact, the *Iliad* presents warriors who are in the middle of a war, one that has been going on for ten years none the less. The *Iliad* emphasizes undying glory through the acquisition of κλέος because it is relevant to the current situation while the *Odyssey* emphasizes a νόστος above everything else when the situation changes. This desire for a proper νόστος, even above the acquisition of κλέος, is echoed by Agamemnon in the same scene of the *Odyssey*.<sup>29</sup> There seems, then, to be a split between two opposing heroic motivations. On the one hand, the hero is called to gain κλέος in order to earn an immortal fame, while on the other hand there the hero is called to achieve a proper νόστος and return home to a long and peaceful retirement. The two qualities, however, are not necessarily competing with each other given the contrasting nature of the two epics and their lack of reference to one another. Neither poem ever directly refers to the other. It seems odd that the two epics never refer to each other given the huge amount of related subject matter and the ongoing narrative of the characters within both works. Nagy suggests that because of these abnormalities this

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<sup>28</sup> Lombardo 2000

<sup>29</sup> Nagy 1999: 34.

avoidance must be intentional.<sup>30</sup> Although the epithet “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” was vied for in the *Iliad*, it is not unreasonable to suppose that Homer meant to praise both qualities, κλέος in conjunction with a νόστος. While the question of which quality is better still arises for the reader, they are still seen as heroic qualities within their own rights. When the two qualities possible for a hero, contrasting Achilles’ forced decision between the two, κλέος in conjunction with a proper νόστος, a different kind of hero arises in the form of Odysseus. It should be noted, however, that his κλέος is not the same as Achilles’. While Homer emphasizes Odysseus as the artist of the Trojan horse and still a threat on the battlefield, he praises Achilles for his κλέος when glory is the defining quality for a hero. Furthermore, Achilles’ κλέος is described as undying, κλέος ἄφθιτον, when Achilles’ fate is discussed within the *Iliad* while Odysseus’ κλέος does not receive such a qualifier.<sup>31</sup>

Although Archilochus more closely aligns with Odysseus, his conception of how a soldier should act is much different from the “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” from both of Homer’s epics. Instead Archilochus conceives of the hero as he knows it in a much more realistic and personal account of what the Greek soldier went through. Archilochus is not a demigod or even a renowned warrior, for that matter. He is said to be the illegitimate son of Telesicles, the founder of the Greek colony on Paros, and Enipo, a slave of Telesicles. Although his father was a wealthy man, as an illegitimate child a career as a nobleman or politician was out of the question for Archilochus. Rankin proposes that his father intended to set him on a path towards a military career that would have been more plausible for Archilochus given the circumstances of his parentage. The etymology of his name points towards this even further.<sup>32</sup> Archilochus, therefore,

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<sup>30</sup> Nagy 1999: 20.

<sup>31</sup> *Il.*9.413. This is another allusion to the prophecy that his mother received and that Achilles has accepted.

<sup>32</sup> Rankin 1977: 15. Archilochus translates to “leader of a company,” which implies that his parents were hopeful towards his progression within the military to some higher position than a common soldier.

is not a soldier seeking glory like the Achaeans of the *Iliad*. For Archilochus, war is a career, an occupation necessary to survive. This sense of war as a job instead of a place to win renown pervades his poetry. His famous shield fragment, which supposedly got him and his poetry banned from Sparta, expresses this sentiment as he throws down his shield and forsakes glory in order to preserve his own life:

ἀσπίδι μὲν Σαίων τις ἀγάλλεται, ἦν παρὰ θάμνω  
ἔντος ἀμώμητον κάλλιπον οὐκ ἐθέλων:  
αὐτὸν δ' ἔκ μ' ἐσάωσα: τί μοι μέλει ἀσπίς ἐκεινη;  
ἔρρέτω: ἐξαὔτις κτήσομαι οὐ κακίω. (Fg 6 D)

The shield I left because I must, poor blameless armament!  
Beside a bush, gives joy now to some Saian, but myself I  
have saved. What care I for that shield? It shall go with a  
curse. I'll get me another e'en as good.<sup>33</sup>

So it seems very clear that Archilochus is opposed to the valuation of the hero proposed within the *Iliad*. He does not elevate κλέος in the same way that Achilles and the rest of the Greek heroes value it. He seems to have no need for κλέος, or at the very least he does not value it enough to risk his life for it. That does not mean that he thinks of himself as base or cowardly, however. Archilochus is taking a stance about what the soldier should prioritize when it comes to war and battle by disavowing the drive for κλέος and the Homeric notion of obtaining κλέος at any cost, including death as demonstrated by Achilles.

This revaluation of priorities is likely a product of his humbler origins. The notion of honoring and praising a demi-god who fought gloriously and died in battle is more understandable than people praising the illegitimate child of a nobleman who died in battle, even if that death was glorious. Instead Archilochus seems to value a life with shame from his culture

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<sup>33</sup> Edmonds 1931: 101.

over any κλέος for which he might have to risk his life on the battlefield.<sup>34</sup> He confirms this prioritization in another fragment, stating that such desire for κλέος is outside of his own hopes:

οὐ μοι τὰ Γύγεω τοῦ πολυχρύσου μέλει,  
οὐδ' εἶλέ πώ με ζῆλος, οὐδ' ἀγαίομαι  
θεῶν ἔργα, μεγάλης δ' οὐκ ἐρέω τυραννίδος:  
ἀπόπροθεν γάρ ἐστιν ὀφθαλμῶν ἐμῶν. (Fg. 74)

“These golden matters of Gyges and his treasures are no concern of mine. Jealousy has no power over me, nor do I envy a god his work, and I don’t burn to rule. Such things have no fascination for my eyes.”<sup>35</sup>

Although spoken through a character whom Aristotle identifies as Charon the carpenter in his *Rhetoric* (Aris.*Rhet.*3.17.), we can assume that Archilochus is asserting his own viewpoints through the lyric ἔγω as Farenga points out.<sup>36</sup> These lines read as if they are a direct response to Homer, about whom Archilochus would have surely known by the time of his own composition.<sup>37</sup> His aims as a soldier and as a Greek in general are not like those of the heroes. As a common soldier, his goal is simply to survive. Archilochus feels no drive to achieve some sort of renown because he puts his own self-worth into a much humbler perspective and recognizes the restraint that mortality and status puts upon him.

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<sup>34</sup> Throwing down one’s shield was seen as the most deplorable thing to do and was most likely the reason that Sparta banned his poems, which Valerius Maximus described in his *Memorable Deeds and Sayings: Lacedaemonii libros Archilochi e civitate sua exportare iusserunt, quod eorum parum verecundam ac pudicam lectionem arbitrabantur; noluerunt enim ea liberorum suorum animos imbui, ne plus moribus noceret quam ingeniis prodesset.* (Val.Max.6.3.Ext.1). “The Spartans ordered that the books of Archilochus should be removed from their state because they considered them indecent, and would not have their children indoctrinated with writings which might do more harm to their morals than good to their minds.” Translation by Frank Redmond, Redmond 2016:18. Davenport 1980:21.

<sup>35</sup> Aris.*Rhet.*3.17. καὶ ὡς Ἀρχίλοχος ψέγει: ποιεῖ γὰρ τὸν πατέρα λέγοντα περὶ τῆς θυγατρὸς ἐν τῷ ἰάμβῳ “χρημάτων δ’ ἄελπτον οὐθέν ἐστιν οὐδ’ ἀπόμοτον,” καὶ τὸν Χάρωνα τὸν τέκτονα ἐν τῷ ἰάμβῳ οὐ ἀρχὴ “οὐ μοι τὰ Γύγεω,” “And Archilochus does this as he censures: for in his iambs he represents a father speaking about his daughter, “There is nothing beyond hope of achieving, not one thing, and nothing can be sworn impossible.” And the carpenter Charon in the iamb which begins “Not for me [are] the matters of Gyges.” This translation is my own work. Aristotle sees Archilochus’ use of Charon as a way of deflecting responsibility for the verses that he writes. In a way he is proactively protecting his poem from the criticisms that he might receive by using another speaker and claiming them to be someone else’s words. Farenga 1981: 1.

<sup>37</sup> Van Sickle points out Archilochus’ use of Homeric vocabulary and composition structure in order to draw a comparison between scenes in one of his erotic fragments to the scene of Hera seducing Zeus in book 14 of the *Iliad*. He points out a conflict between the aristocratic ethos of Homer versus a more realistic or common portrayal of how things normally unfold. Van Sickle 1975: 126-156.

But Archilochus also goes further than just the scope of his own situation. Archilochus also rejects Homeric values in those who might be unrestrained in the way that he is and have the potential to gain κλέος on the battlefield. In one particular fragment, Archilochus rejects the noble looking, tall officer for one who is more suited to help him survive a battle:

οὐ φιλέω μέγαν στρατηγὸν οὐδὲ διαπεπλιγμένον  
οὐδὲ βοστρύχοισι γαῦρον οὐδ' ὑπεξυρημένον,  
ἀλλὰ μοι σμικρὸς τις εἶη καὶ περὶ κνήμας ἰδεῖν  
ροϊκός, ἀσφαλ εὖ βεβηκῶς ποσσι, καρδίας πλέως. (Fg.60)

“I do despise a tall general, one of those swaggerers, a curly-haired, cheek-frilled whisker dandy. For me a proper officer’s short and bow-legged, both feet planted well apart, tough in the guts.”<sup>38</sup>

It seems that Archilochus’ rejection of the pretty soldier is also a rejection of Greek nobility, represented by the type of soldier who might be more inclined to seek κλέος on the battlefield instead of survival. Instead he chooses the general who is of more worth to his survival. At first glance, an association with Homer might not seem obvious, however when other epithets within the *Iliad* are considered, the association becomes more obvious. Epithets like “godlike,” “brilliant,” and “shining” pop up throughout the *Iliad*. When Achilles is not “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν,” he is often δῖος. Much of the time, Achilles is compared to Apollo himself throughout the course of the *Iliad*. In fact, it seems that even in the eyes of the person who has the most right to hate Achilles by the end of the poem, king Priam, Achilles still appears to be like a god:

ὥς Ἀχιλεὺς θάμβησεν ἰδὼν Πρίαμον θεοειδέα:  
θάμβησαν δὲ καὶ ἄλλοι, ἐς ἀλλήλους δὲ ἴδοντο.  
τὸν καὶ λισσόμενος Πρίαμος πρὸς μῦθον ἔειπε:  
‘μῆσαι πατρὸς σοῖο θεοῖς ἐπιείκελ’ Ἀχιλλεῦ, (24.483-486)

“So Achilles was amazed at the sight of godlike Priam, and the rest were likewise amazed, and looked at one another. Then Priam addressed Achilles, entreating him in these words: ‘Remember your own father, godlike Achilles,’”<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> Davenport 1980:75

<sup>39</sup> Green 2015: 452.

It is significant to note that both men, who have been enemies for ten years, see each other as godlike. They share a bond in that they are all godlike and noble, and they both have the means to attain κλέος. When read in light of these epithets, the general who is “tall and swaggering” represents the archetypal soldier of the *Iliad*. Archilochus rejects that soldier who is noble, handsome, and values κλέος enough to risk his life for it. Instead, he proposes that the imitators of those great heroes, those commanders who might lead him to his untimely doom in pursuit of their own κλέος, are a grief for the soldiers that they command, an “Ἀχιλλεύς.”<sup>40</sup>

It seems that Archilochus is fundamentally opposed to the heroes of the *Iliad*. He even goes as far as to rewrite the character of some heroes in order to portray them in a more pragmatic and sensible light. In his Telephus fragment, Archilochus describes a scene just before the events of the *Iliad* when the Greeks are on their way to Troy. The Greeks mistakenly land at Mysia thinking that it is Troy and attack Telephus and his community. During the battle, Achilles wounds Telephus who then withdraws. Later, Telephus is inspired by his father, Heracles, to rout the Greeks who then turn and flee. In the first three lines of the poem, Archilochus describes the qualities that he himself is trying to emphasize:

εἰδὲ[.][.....][.].θεοῦκράτερη[ς ὑπ’ἀνάγκης/ οὐ χρεῖ] ἀν[α]λ[κείη]ν/ και κακότητα λέγει[ν·  
 π]ήμ[α]τ’ εἶ [εἴμ]εθα δ[ῆ]α φυγεῖν· φεύγ[ειν δέ τις ὄρη· (P.OXY LXIX 4708) “If (one retreats) under the powerful compulsion of a god, one should not call it weakness or cowardice; we were right when we hastened to flee our dreadful suffering.”<sup>41</sup> The concept of fleeing, even from a god, seems to be frowned upon by the *Iliad*. Diomedes, when he receives the epithet “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” during his *aristeiā*, assaults not one, but two different gods. While it is true that Nestor

<sup>40</sup> The etymology of Achilles’ name translates as “grief for the people” (ἄχος, “grief”; λαός, “people), an allusion to the fact that the Greek army suffers innumerable losses because of his unwillingness to rejoin the battle after his quarrel with Agamemnon and the Trojan army suffers when he is in battle.

<sup>41</sup> Swift 2012:143

convinces Diomedes to flee in Book 8, it is when Diomedes is the “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν” that he is confronting the gods. Similarly, Apollo chides Achilles for pursuing him at the beginning of Book 22, when Achilles has returned to battle and is once again the “ἄριστος Ἀχαιῶν.” Apollo convinces him to stop after pointing out his immortality, but it seems that Achilles only stops because Apollo has drawn him away from Hector, whom Achilles sees as his greatest source of κλέος (*Il.*22.1-20). Within this context, upon which those who are the best do not retreat from even the gods, it seems that Archilochus’ fragment is a direct challenge of the *Iliad*. Archilochus seems to be calling for a change in how retreat is portrayed rather than praising Telephus for his heroism and his routing of the Greeks. The very Greeks who assault the gods in the *Iliad* are fleeing them in Archilochus’ fragment.

These differences, both in parentage and in ability, between the heroes of the *Iliad* and his contemporary Greek soldier, which Archilochus seems to be stressing, provide a rationale, at least in part, for his conception of what the Greek soldier is actually concerned with. This seems to be evident in how Achilles and Archilochus deal with the stress of war. Jonathon Shay’s *Achilles in Vietnam* provides a potential account of Achilles PTSD symptoms as they relate to Vietnam veterans. It seems that Achilles has the same symptoms of PTSD that Shay observed in Vietnam veterans. Archilochus’ PTSD symptoms are much more nuanced because of the fragmented nature of his works. That being said, it seems clear that Archilochus’ episode for Lycambes is a sign of Archilochus’ PTSD symptoms. In the account, some of which we have the poems for and some of which is filled in by other Greek authors, Archilochus becomes so unnaturally enraged by the retraction of a marriage proposal to Lycambes’ daughter, Neobule, that he drives them to suicide through invective. No physical violence or action on Archilochus’ part is recorded, but Archilochus’ heightened aggression towards non-threatening civilians

reveals signs of PTSD, which Shay describes in regards to Achilles. Shay names such aggression and rage as a berserker state.

Achilles' own berserker state comes in his *aristeiā*, the climax of which is his duel with Hector. After killing Hector, he is no longer physically threatened by the man, however he mistreats his corpse to an almost inhuman level even after Hector asks him not to before his death. He even attempts to justify this mistreatment before he kills Hector:

Ἔκτορ μή μοι ἄλαστε συνημοσύνας ἀγόρευε:  
ὥς οὐκ ἔστι λέουσι καὶ ἀνδράσιν ὄρκια πιστά,  
οὐδὲ λύκοι τε καὶ ἄρνες ὁμόφρονα θυμὸν ἔχουσιν,  
ἀλλὰ κακὰ φρονέουσι διαμπερὲς ἀλλήλοισιν,  
ὥς οὐκ ἔστ' ἐμὲ καὶ σὲ φιλήμεναι, οὐδέ τι νῶϊν  
ὄρκια ἔσσονται, πρὶν γ' ἢ ἕτερόν γε πεσόντα  
αἵματος ἄσαι Ἄρηα ταλαύρινον πολεμιστήν. (*Il.*22.261-267)

“Hektōr, don't, damn you, make me speeches about agreements!  
Between lions and men binding oaths do not exist,  
Nor are wolves and lambs ever like-minded at heart  
But ceaselessly plotting trouble, each against the other.  
So there's no way for us to be friends, we can't exchange  
Sworn oaths: no, before that one or the other must fall,  
And glut Arēs, the oxhide-shield combatant, with his blood.”<sup>42</sup>

Shay ascribes this kind of action and disrespect to the berserker state, in which the soldier often lowers their morals to become beastlike and cruel.<sup>43</sup> Achilles even likens himself to a beast and refuses to follow the moral code of men. Similarly, Archilochus no longer follows a moral code in his attack on Lykambes. He slanders a family that did wrong him by breaking a marriage oath to such a harsh degree that they commit suicide. Although he does no physical action, he still uses the methods at his disposal in order to get revenge. His use of invective instead of

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<sup>42</sup> Translation by Green. Green 2015: 407. Kitts goes on to describe how such a denial of this oath and refusal to obey the laws of war and respect in the ancient world sanctifies Achilles' actions to the corpse after the death of Hector and that the proposal and refusal are very intentionally placed right before the death and defilement. Kitts 2005: 52.

<sup>43</sup> Shay 1994: 82-84.

physical violence aligns with the same reasons that he refrains from glory-seeking activities; he does not have the parentage or ability to get away with a physical manifestation of his violence against another Greek citizen. Achilles, however, does not have anyone who is able to hold him accountable for physical manifestation of his violence. The gods, as the only power that could truly hold Achilles in check, prevent Hector's body from degrading, but they do not stop Achilles from defiling the body. However Archilochus is not able to express his rage in a physical manner in the same way because he does not have the physical prowess for an *aristeiā* or the parentage to get away with violence in the public sphere. As a result, Archilochus' only outlet for his seemingly Achillean rage is his use of invective and poetry.

These fundamental differences between Archilochus and Achilles also seem to align with the socio-political changes occurring before and even during Archilochus' composition. With the invention of the hoplite shield around 800 B.C.E., the rule of the polis and the overall rule within Greek states was starting to shift.<sup>44</sup> By the beginning of the seventh century, the shift away from an aristocratic polis and towards a more democratic polis was more concrete. This is generally attributed to the fact that the hoplite shield completely changed the way that war was waged by the states. Instead of the open warfare that was only available to the rich who could afford the armor and weapons, a large army characterized by men of different classes became the standard. Because the upper class no longer controlled the protection and advancement of the city, they could no longer control the state through an aristocracy. When viewed through this lens, the struggle between Homer and Archilochus seems to be inspired by these dramatic socio-political changes. The generally accepted date for the *Iliad*, in the late eighth century, would put the composition of the *Iliad* before or around the beginning of this socio-political change. Perhaps the *Iliad* was a response to the changing power structure by the aristocrats in order to retain their

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<sup>44</sup> Kagan 2013: 112-113.

power over the polis. In any case, it is no surprise that the *Iliad* praises the aristocratic and honorable nobles in battle because at the time of the composition, the nobles would have been the only ones able to fight in a battle for their state. Archilochus, however, started his composition after the turn of the seventh century. He would have been accustomed to the changing power structure and to farmers and other middle class citizens fighting in the phalanx. It makes sense, then, for his poetry to reflect an opposition to the aristocratic nobles who might have threatened his survival on the battlefield and his social status in the political stage.

In short, it seems that Archilochus and Homer have two very different sets of ideals when it comes to war. Homer describes an idealized set of values in which the hero should strive for κλέος on the battlefield even at the cost of a glorious death on the battlefield. Archilochus, however, denies the romanticized notion of the epic hero and instead writes that soldiers should act according to their realistic abilities. Instead of striving for glory, the soldier should strive for a νόστος. This outlook about military values aligns closely with Archilochus' reality. He would never be able to win the glory that Homer's heroes are able to achieve in the *Iliad* because of his physical and social restrictions. Homer puts forth an undying glory as the greatest good that a soldier can attain in the *Iliad*, while Archilochus ascribes survival as the goal. Archilochus, therefore, seems to align more closely with the emphasis on νόστος that is present in the *Odyssey*. Therefore the distinction between Archilochus and Homer seems to be κλέος versus survival and the ideal versus the realistic.

## Chapter 2: The Homeric and Archilochean Effects on the Tragic Hero

While Homer may have shaped the first image of the Greek hero, Archilochus' attacks on this image permanently altered how the later Greeks felt about the hero. The playwrights were certainly influenced by both authors as their tragedies dealt directly with the same mythical heroes that Homer portrays and Archilochus condemns. Apfel even states that Sophocles is the most important cultivator of the philosophic dilemmas of value conflict and incommensurability that arise in Homer.<sup>45</sup> In fact, Sophocles and Aeschylus address the same issues that Archilochus takes up with Homer. However, these tragedians take on a different argument about Heroic culture and the need for glory that takes a middle ground between Homer and Archilochus. Both authors seem to agree in part with Archilochus' abandonment of glory, but do not completely forsake the notion of heroism. It seems that Sophocles and Aeschylus recognize heroes as important to society, although with their own set of flaws.

In one fragmented trio, designated the *Achilleis* by scholars, Aeschylus rewrites some of the scenes of the *Iliad* in a way that portrays heroes in a then modern light. Specifically, Achilles' attitude towards the Greek army and the death of Patroklos, who is portrayed as Achilles' lover, are the focus of the *Achilleis*.<sup>46</sup> Although the trilogy is fragmented, we can still glean some insight about Aeschylus' take on heroes through ancient commentary on the trilogy and the fragments themselves. In the *Myrmidons*, the first play of the trilogy, the plot revolves around books 9-18 of the *Iliad* and is set in Achilles' hut. The beginning of the play focuses on the embassy scene of the *Iliad* and Phoenix's attempt to persuade Achilles to rejoin the battle. The chorus opens with a lament of Achilles' rage and his refusal to rejoin the battle:

τάδε μὲν λεύσσεις, φαίδιμ' Ἀχιλλεῦ  
,δοριλυμάντους Δαναῶν μόχθους,

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<sup>45</sup> Apfel 2011: 240.

<sup>46</sup> Plato, *Symposium* 180a.

οὐς σὺ προπίνεις <θάσσω> εἴσω  
κλισίας (Aesch.fr 131)

“Do you see this, glorious Achilles—  
the toils of the spear-ravaged Danaans,  
whom you are betraying by sitting idle within  
your hut...?”<sup>47</sup>

The word “betraying” here is a specifically pointed one. In the eyes of the chorus, Achilles actions are a betrayal of the entire Greek army and not just Agamemnon. He is letting the Greeks suffer for his argument with Agamemnon and this is demonstrated further by the chorus:

Φθιῶτ' Ἀχιλλεῦ, τί ἀνδροδάικτον ἀκούων/ ἠὲ κόπον οὐ πελάθεις ἐπ' ἀπωγάν; (Aesch. Fr. 132).

“Phthian Achilles, why, when you hear of the suffering and slaughter of men—/ Iehhh!—do you not advance to their succour?”<sup>48</sup> The men are dying as a direct result of Achilles abstinence from battle just as they were in the *Iliad*, and similarly the plight of the Greeks is emphasized in the death of the Greeks. The difference between Aeschylus’ rendition and Homer’s lies in the reason for Achilles’ grief.

While before we saw that Homer’s Achilles regrets the deaths of Patroklos and the other Greeks for the lack of honor for those men, Aeschylus’ Achilles regrets Patroklos’ death as the loss of a lover.<sup>49</sup> When this Achilles mourns Patroklos, he mourns him with arguments similar to those of Tecmessa and Andromache. He evokes the duty to family and to spouses with a similar argument that “kindness begets kindness.” σέβας δὲ μηπῶν ἀγνὸν οὐ κατηδέσω/ ὦ δυσχάριστε τῶν πυκνῶν φιλημάτων (Aesch. Fr. 135). “And you did not respect the sacred honour of the thigh-bond, ungrateful that you were for those countless kisses!”<sup>50</sup> Just as Andromache and Tecmessa ask their spouses to stay alive for their own sake and the love between them, Achilles

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<sup>47</sup> Sommerstein 2008:136. These are also the opening lines of *Myrmidons*.

<sup>48</sup> Sommerstein 2008: 136.

<sup>49</sup> Pp 5-8. *Il.* 18.120-126; 20.498ff; 21.28; 21.133-135; 22.205-207.

<sup>50</sup> Sommerstein 2008: 145. The thighbond is in reference to the bond created by intercrural sex that was popular among homosexual men at Aeschylus’ time.

bewails the death of Patroklos because of the loss of his love. It is not because of Patroklos' damaged honor this time. Achilles even describes Patroklos as all he has, completely disregarding his honor and pride: Ἀντίλοχ', ἀποίμωξόν με τοῦ τεθνηκότος/ τὸν ζῶντα μᾶλλον. τὰμὰ γὰρ διοίχεται (Aesch. Fr. 138). "Cry for me the living, Antilochus, more than for the dead:/ all I had is gone!" This Achilles has forgotten about his honor after the death of Patroklos. He is only concerned about the loss of his love and avenging that love, but not for the sake of honoring Patroklos or himself. There is a certain sense of irony here in the reversal of hero and supplicant. The hero is using the arguments that the supplicant uses to persuade them to stay out of harm's way. He is thinks and argues in a way that is debatably impossible for the Homeric hero to think.<sup>51</sup>

Although the altered mentality of the hero is most evident in *Myrmidons*, most likely because most fragments of the *Achilleis* are from *Myrmidons*, this mentality is evident in a few other places as well. In the last play of the trilogy, *Phrygians*, the ransom of Hector in Book 24 is reconstructed. While Hermes and Priam try to convince the still wounded Achilles to release Hector's body, we see another unheroic argument almost identical to that of Odysseus' in *Ajax*. Hermes addresses the value of honor and dishonor for the dead and their relationship to justice:

καὶ τοὺς θανόντας εἰ θέλεις εὐεργετεῖν  
 εἴτ' ὄν κακουργεῖν, ἀμφιδεξίως ἔχει.  
 < >  
 καὶ μήτε χαίρειν μήτε λυπεῖσθαι βποτούς.  
 ἡμῶν γε μέντοι νέμεσις ἐσθ' ὑπερτέρα,  
 καὶ τοῦ θανόντος ἡ Δίκη πράσσει κότον (Aesch. Fr. 266)

"And if you want to do good to the dead, or again to do them harm, it makes no difference; for <the lot of> mortals <when they die is to have no sensation> and feel neither pleasure nor pain. *Our* indignation, on the other hand, is more powerful, and Justice exacts the penalty for the

<sup>51</sup> Perry 1989. Perry argues that the hero has no language for issues that go against the heroic code. His language is entirely heroic because he is not meant to think or act unheroically.

wrath of the dead.”<sup>52</sup>

Again, here we have a statement that honor, and dishonor in this case, does not affect the dead. It is eerily similar to Odysseus’ speech in *Ajax* in that it says that Justice is the true driving force for respecting the dead. Honor is removed from the equation almost entirely. Just as it would have been unjust, and therefore against the gods, for Agamemnon to have denied Ajax a burial, it would also have been unjust for Achilles to deny Hector a burial because of his wrath. This is a radically different notion to the heroic method for honoring the dead. Achilles entire effort after the dead of Patroklos is to give him the most lavish and extravagant burial that he can. Recall the Trojan boys captured to heap on his burial mound and the luxurious gifts given at Patroklos’ funeral games. Thus it seems that Aeschylus’ *Achilleis* is different from the *Iliad* in the appraisal of heroic values. It should be noted, however, that Aeschylus does not completely align himself with Archilochus. The laments of the chorus in the beginning of *Myrmidons* demonstrates an anti-Archilochean theme. The chorus laments that Achilles is abstaining from battle, something that Archilochus would have been in favor of considering it is not completely necessary for Achilles to return to battle. He is not in need of payment like Archilochus, Achilles is a prince. Nor does Achilles have any political obligation. Thus it would not have made sense to Archilochus for Achilles to return to battle, and so Aeschylus is somewhere in between Homer and Archilochus. It seems that Aeschylus may have even laid the groundwork for some Archilochean themes that Sophocles later explored in *Ajax*.<sup>53</sup>

Sophocles’ *Ajax* provides an interesting example of Archilochean influence on Homeric concepts very similar to that of Aeschylus’ *Achilleis*. The tragedy deals directly with heroes that

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<sup>52</sup> Sommerstein 2008: 267.

<sup>53</sup> The exact relationship between the two poets isn’t exactly known. While Aeschylus’ opinions on the hero might have helped form Sophocles’ own opinions, Sophocles also influenced Aeschylus’ style heavily. According to Knox, Prometheus bound is an example of this influence and represents a Sophoclean hero within Aeschylus’ work. Knox 1966: 3-8.

Homer first defined and made famous, however it portrays them in a scenario that fall outside of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. This gave Sophocles the chance to give his own unique interpretation on the heroes and heroic culture that Homer defined. As P.E. Easterling puts it, Sophocles “is likely to be transmuting his sources into something new and distinctively his own.”<sup>54</sup> The play seems to offer a commentary on the honor culture of the *Iliad* with the ultimate price of such a culture and the hero’s willingness to live by such a culture as the main tragedy. As one scholar puts it, “The heroes are prepared to sacrifice everything, even life, to their principles, to the maintenance of their standards.”<sup>55</sup> Specifically, Ajax’s commitment to live by the heroic standard set by his father Telamon eventually drives Ajax to commit suicide. His perceived dishonor of not getting the armor of Achilles and the secondary dishonor of slaughtering the Greek’s flocks in frenzy are ultimately the cause of his death since he decides that he must die to amend his dishonor rather than live with dishonor. However the supporting characters within the tragedy also serve as an important reinforcement of the plurality of Ajax’s situation and as a result they contrast with the monistic standard that the Homeric hero faces, in which “claims of honor are paramount and deterministic.”<sup>56</sup> This ultimately serves to show that “tragedy is inherent not only in the human condition and the individual destiny, but in the very standards of heroism.”<sup>57</sup>

Sophocles’ Ajax is not a Homeric hero. He is an exaggerated and distorted version of the Homeric hero who is more “monistic.”<sup>58</sup> Here Apfel uses the term “monism” to encapsulate Ajax’s unbending, stubborn view and pluralism to describe a consideration of multiple

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<sup>54</sup> Easterling 1984: 1.

<sup>55</sup> Winnington-Ingram 1980: 10.

<sup>56</sup> Apfel 2011: 243.

<sup>57</sup> Winnington-Ingram 1980: 311.

<sup>58</sup> Although the Sophoclean hero is different in extent of their adherence to the heroic code, we can be sure that Achilles is in fact the model for the Sophoclean hero. The strict, unbending adherence to their code of conduct is first found in Homer’s Achilles, but all Sophoclean heroes adopt this behavior. Knox says that because the adherence to the heroic code is different between the two versions, Sophocles’ Ajax is not truly a Homeric hero. Knox 1966: 50-52.

perspectives. That is to say, Sophocles' Ajax is monistic because he only ever considers his decisions based upon the heroic code of his society. Whereas Achilles and Hector, both weak pluralists, wavered when confronted with an alternative to honor and self-sacrifice, it is absolutely impossible for Ajax ever to consider an alternative to heroic action.<sup>59</sup> He lives by the same heroic code as the heroes of the *Iliad*, but he is so dogmatic towards that code that other courses of action, ones that do not align with the heroic code, do not even register with Sophocles' Ajax. He only wavers one time, when Tecmessa addresses him with a speech modeled after Andromache's, and even then it is only for the briefest moment. Because of this exaggeration and hyperbole, we can not call this version of Ajax a Homeric hero. However, because of the imitation of the heroic code we can assert that Ajax follows the same heroic ethics of the *Iliad* and, as a result, that he is a Homeric-styled hero with the difference between the two renditions being their degrees of blind adherence to this code.<sup>60</sup>

This difference between Ajax and the Homeric hero becomes apparent in each hero's response to the pleas of his *philoï*. Ajax's situation in the tragedy most closely aligns with Hector's situation in the epic.<sup>61</sup> Both men have a wife and child for whom their death means doom and dishonor and their adherence to the heroic code and pursuit of honor ultimately leads them to their death. However, Hector is different in that he genuinely feels a pull towards sacrificing his honor for the values that Andromache presented to him. "He [Hector] acknowledged their claim on him and, it can be argued, sadness at the prospect of not fulfilling them."<sup>62</sup> After Hecuba (*Il.*6.258ff.), Helen (*Il.*6.359ff.), and finally Andromache (*Il.*6.429ff.) all

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<sup>59</sup> Apfel 2011: 244-247.

<sup>60</sup> Apfel 2011: 244.

<sup>61</sup> Zanker 1994:64-71.

<sup>62</sup> Apfel 2011: 245.

address him, Hector acknowledges some desire to fulfill his familial duty that is ultimately consumed by a need for honor:

τὴν δ' αὖτε προσέειπε μέγας κορυθαίολος Ἕκτωρ:  
ἥ καὶ ἐμοὶ τάδε πάντα μέλει γύναι: ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰνῶς  
αἰδέομαι Τρῶας καὶ Τρωάδας ἐλκεσιπέπλους,  
αἶ κε κακὸς ὧς νόσφιν ἀλυσκάζω πολέμοιο:  
οὐδέ με θυμὸς ἄνωγεν, ἐπεὶ μάθον ἔμμεναι ἐσθλὸς  
αἰεὶ καὶ πρότοισι μετὰ Τρώεσσι μάχεσθαι  
ἄρνύμενος πατρός τε μέγα κλέος ἠδ' ἐμὸν αὐτοῦ. (*Il.* 6.440-446)

“Then great bright-helmeted Hektor answered her: ‘Wife, all this is my concern too, but I’d be deeply ashamed before the Trojan men and deep-robed Trojan women if like a coward I hang back, far from the fighting. No, my spirit won’t let me, I’ve trained myself to excel always, to battle among the foremost Trojans, striving to win great glory both for my father and for myself.’”<sup>63</sup>

But Ajax’s response to Tecmessa, whose speech mimics the arguments of both Andromache and Priam to Hector, is almost completely devoid of similar acknowledgement.<sup>64</sup> The chorus prays that Tecmessa’s speech will touch his heart as it has touched theirs, however Ajax’s immediate response is entirely dismissive of her pleas: καὶ κάρτ’ ἐπαίνου τεύξεται πρὸς γοῦν ἐμοῦ, / ἐὰν μόνον τὸ ταχθὲν εἴ τολμᾷ τελεῖν. (*Soph.* *Aj.* 527-28) “She will have approval as far as I am concerned, if only she takes heart and graciously does my bidding.”<sup>65</sup> He is so engulfed by his devotion to the heroic code that he seems completely unaffected by the appeals to his wife, child and parents even though these appeals were momentarily effective for the heroes of the *Iliad*. This demonstrates the exaggeration of the weak pluralism in the *Iliad* to the complete case of monism in *Ajax*. For the Sophoclean hero, there is only one choice that can even be considered: Ajax must die in order to avoid further shame and preserve what honor he

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<sup>63</sup> Green 2015: 130.

<sup>64</sup> Zanker 1992:22-23

<sup>65</sup> Jebb 2004. It should be noted also that in his second speech, Ajax does make arrangements for Eurysaces and his parents, but this is not indicative of the same type of response that Hector faces in book 6 of the *Iliad*. Rather, he seems to be making arrangements because he has confirmed his decision to die for his honor and must still divert Tecmessa’s appeals somehow. Apfel 2011: 247.

still has.<sup>66</sup> Although Tecmessa's speech addresses Ajax with the same concerns as those presented to Hector, it is different in that it recognizes and appeals to the hero's monism, or weak pluralism in the case of the *Iliad*, for the heroic code.<sup>67</sup>

While the first half of Tecmessa's speech focuses on the *pathos* associated with his family and their consequences if he dies, the second half of her speech uses a more logical appeal that aligns with the heroic, honor-seeking quality of the hero. Instead of trying to convince Ajax by emphasizing her and her child's terrible fate if he kills himself, Tecmessa tries to re-evaluate the heroic honor system so that it is more honorable for Ajax to stay alive than to kill himself. Instead of dying a heroic death for the sake of honor she tries to force Ajax to live for honor:

ἀλλ' ἴσχε κάμοῦ μνήστιν: ἀνδρί τοι χρεῶν  
μνήμην προσεῖναι, τερπνὸν εἴ τί που πάθοι.  
χάρις χάριν γάρ ἐστὶν ἢ τίκτους' ἀεὶ:  
ὄτου δ' ἀπορρεῖ μνήστις εὖ πεπονθότος,  
οὐκ ἂν γένοιτ' ἔθ' οὗτος εὐγενὴς ἀνὴρ. (Soph.Aj.520-524)

“But hold me back within your mind: it is necessary for a man to hold at hand memory, if anywhere it had any pleasure. It is kindness which always gives birth to kindness; But of whoever suffers the memory being good to run-off, this man cannot become a noble man.”<sup>68</sup>

Thus she has redefined his intended course of action as something that will hurt his honor more than the sympathetic course of action that she prefers. She claims the kindness that she and Telamon have shown Ajax as something that he must repay in order to be honorable. She appeals

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<sup>66</sup> While Ajax's later speech from lines 646-92 does seem to be an acknowledgement of Tecmessa's pathetic argument, it is often debated whether this speech is intended to be genuine or deceptive, which is why it is often referred to as the deception speech throughout scholarship. While the result is still the same, Ajax dies to preserve his glory, I agree with Apfel who states that the speech is deceptive. It serves as a source of irony to distinguish and emphasize the monism that the hero faces. This is consistent with Ajax's earlier mentality in the tragedy as well as the portrayals of Ajax by other authors. Apfel 2011: 250-256.

<sup>67</sup> While the appeals to the Sophoclean hero are different in that they acknowledge the hero's unbending nature, they are, non-the-less, rational arguments that are unable to appeal to the stolid emotions of the hero. The heroic resolve is absolute and forbidding and cannot be persuaded by reason. It should be noted that I will be using the term monism to describe this unbending nature for the remainder of the paper. Knox 1966: 11-21.

<sup>68</sup> This translation is my own work.

to Ajax’s monism towards the heroic code by appealing to a sense of familial honor, but this honor is not the same as κλέος. Translated literally, κλέος means “‘glory, fame, that which is heard’; or, ‘the poem or song that conveys glory, fame, that which is heard.’”<sup>69</sup> So the glory that Ajax is concerned with is one that is tied to his public image or his poetic legacy, not the private honor that come from a sense of fulfilling familial duties. Even though Tecmessa’s appeal to honor seems more logical than an appeal to *pathos*, Ajax’s devotion to the heroic code is too powerful for the appeal to persuade him. This serves to further illustrate the dogmatism and monism of Ajax and the Homeric code in general. The only pull that Ajax seems to have is to honor tied with the legacy of a hero, that legacy that serves to immortalize the hero in tradition and helps him to fulfill the drive to become undying in some part like his godly parent.<sup>70</sup>

This unbending devotion to legacy and public opinion at the cost of life and the concern of those who care for the hero seems to be what Sophocles is directly attacking. After Ajax has killed himself the rest of the play seems to evaluate the consequences of his decision, the outcome of his tragedy. The chorus and Tecmessa are the first to discover his body and comment on what his death means to them. Here Sophocles draws the same distinction that Homer did and which Archilochus criticized: Ajax has died for the sake of honor and lost his homecoming. But Ajax has not just sacrificed his own homecoming, he has also sacrificed the homecoming of his friends and family. After Tecmessa’s initial lament, the Chorus immediately draws our attention to their own unhappy situation: ὄμοι ἐμῶν γόστων: / ὄμοι, κατέπεφνες, ἄναξ, / τόνδε συνναύταν, τάλας / ὃ ταλαίφρων γύναι: (Soph.Aj.900-904). “Ah, no! Our homecoming is lost! Ah, my king, you have killed me, the comrade of your voyage! Unhappy man—broken-

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<sup>69</sup> Nagy 2013: 26.

<sup>70</sup> Clarke 2004: 78. Arvanitakis 2015: 93.

hearted woman!”<sup>71</sup> The fears that Tecmessa echoed in her appeal to Ajax are confirmed here.

Ajax has denied his wife, child, and all of his people from a proper *nostos* all for the sake of his glory.

In this way, Sophocles portrays Ajax as more despicable than Achilles in the *Iliad*.

Although Achilles sacrificed his own νόστος for glory, he did actively intend to doom others to that fate. He chose it for himself with what he thought were independent consequences for the people around him who could seemingly defend themselves. But Ajax is different, he has doomed everyone around him that he was supposed to protect and provide for all because he was too committed to the heroic code and driven by a need to make up for his lost glory. The chorus comments upon his blind adherence and labels him stubborn-hearted as a result: ἔμελλες,τάλας, ἔμελλες χρόνω / στερεόφρων ἄρ' ἐξανύσσειν κακὰν / μοῖραν ἀπειρεσίων πόνων (Soph.Aj.928-930). “You were bound, poor man, with that unbending heart you were bound, it seems, to fulfill a harsh destiny of limitless toils.” Thus the tragedy of Ajax seems clear to us here as stated directly by the chorus. The “countless toils” that Ajax has suffered is a direct result of his strict obedience to the heroic code and the need for κλέος. Sophocles is against blind adherence to the heroic code. But the inherent value of honor has not been defined by Sophocles thus far. In contrast to the Homeric hero who assumes its inherent value without question, the supporting characters in Ajax call the value of honor into question.

As news spreads about Ajax’s death, the Atreids are quick to condemn Ajax despite his previous honor on the battlefield. Menelaus is the first to deny Ajax burial for his madness and murder of the flocks; Agamemnon soon follows his brother in condemning Ajax after Teucer refuses to obey. However, Teucer responds with his opinion about the Atreids and the hypocrisy of heroic honor while defending Ajax:

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<sup>71</sup> Jebb 2004. All translations forth are from Jebb 2004 unless otherwise noted.

φεῦ: τοῦ θανόντος ὡς ταχεῖά τις βροτοῖς  
χάρις διαρρεῖ καὶ προδοῦσ' ἀλίσκεται,  
εἰ σοῦ γ' ὄδ' ἀνήρ οὐδ' ἐπὶ σμικρῶν λόγων,  
Αἴας, ἔτ' ἴσχει μνηστίν, οὐδ' σὺ πολλάκις  
τὴν σὴν προτείνων προύκαμες ψυχὴν δόρει.  
ἀλλ' οἴχεται δὴ πάντα ταῦτ' ἐρριμμένα. (Soph. Aj. 1266-1271)

“My, how quickly gratitude to the dead seeps away from men and is found to have turned to betrayal, since this man no longer offers even the slightest praise in remembrance of you, Ajax, even though it was for his sake you toiled so often in battle, offering your own life to the spear! No, your assistance is dead and gone, all flung aside!”

Through Teucer Sophocles directly challenges the notion of κλέος and what it does to aid the hero. Ajax was second only to Achilles, and at one point Ajax even earned the title “Best of the Achaeans.” But as soon as something goes wrong, after just one transgression, Ajax is condemned by the leaders of the Greek army and denied a burial. According to Teucer, the honor which Ajax so desperately craved and which he died for is completely worthless to him now that he is dead. Archilochus relays a certain sentiment in his poetry, which constantly advocates for the survival of the warrior above his κλέος. He most explicitly expresses the idea that glory does nothing for the dead in one poem:

οὐ τις αἰδοῖος μετ' ἀστῶν οὐδὲ περίφημος θανῶν  
γίγνεται: χάριν δὲ μᾶλλον τοῦ ζοοῦ διώκομεν  
ζῶντες ἔτι: κάκιστα δ' αἰεὶ τῶ θανόντι γίγνεται. (CURFRAG.tlg-0232.65)

“No man dead feels his fellow’s praise.  
We strive instead, alive, for the living’s honor,  
And the neglected dead can neither honor  
Nor glory in the praise.”<sup>72</sup>

While Homer thinks that honor is undying for the hero, Archilochus and now Sophocles seem to say the opposite.<sup>73</sup> These authors agree that κλέος will not follow the hero to Hades. The obvious conclusion from this is that honor is not worth dying for in any case because any honor

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<sup>72</sup> Davenport 1964:79.

<sup>73</sup> Recall again *Il.*9.410-416 where Achilles reveals his mother’s prophecy of either a νόστος or κλέος ἄφθιτον.

gained in life or through their death will ultimately be useless to the hero after death. Thus κλέος harms Sophocles' Ajax with no recompense to the hero. Not only does he die, but the glory that he gained in his life does nothing for him or his family after he has been killed. Therefore it seems that κλέος is not useful to the dead like Homer supposes, at least not according to Sophocles. In fact, there is only one person, outside of his *philoï*, who respects Ajax after his death: Odysseus.

Odysseus' intervention in the debate over Ajax's burial rites is curious because he was the most hated by Ajax. The entire plot stems from Odysseus' victory over Ajax for the armor of Achilles and Ajax's subsequent madness over such disrespect. So his respect for Ajax, his disgraced enemy, is more significant than the respect given to him by his *philoï*. He seems to be the most rational and honorable supporting character, and seems to counteract the impression that honor is completely worthless to the dead. Odysseus serves as a reminder that honor is still recognized by other noble people and is not completely abandoned once the hero is dead. However, it is again important to recall the true meaning of the word κλέος. It is not simply honor, but the amount of honor and manner in which people speak about the hero. Although Odysseus stands as one of the few remaining that respects Ajax's honor, he is just one person among his *philoï*. Ajax's honor has guaranteed him a proper burial, but his legacy and immortality is lost. In a way then, it seems to be a compromise between the Homeric notion of immortality through honor and the Archilochean idea that honor does nothing for the dead. This is best demonstrated in Odysseus' reasoning for Agamemnon as to why they should bury Ajax:

ἀλλ' αὐτὸν ἔμπαρς ὄντ' ἐγὼ τοιόνδ' ἐμοὶ  
οὐκ ἀντατιμάσαιμ' ἄν, ὥστε μὴ λέγειν  
ἔν' ἄνδρ' ἰδεῖν ἄριστον Ἀργείων, ὅσοι  
Τροίαν ἀφικόμεσθα, πλὴν Ἀχιλλέως.  
ὥστ' οὐκ ἂν ἐνδίκως γ' ἀτιμάζοιτό σοι:  
οὐ γάρ τι τοῦτον, ἀλλὰ τοὺς θεῶν νόμους

φθείροις ἄν. ἄνδρα δ' οὐ δίκαιον, εἰ θάνοι,  
βλάπτειν τὸν ἐσθλόν, οὐδ' ἐὰν μισῶν κυρῆς. (Soph.Aj.1338-1345)

“Yet for all that he was hostile towards me, I would not dishonor him in return or refuse to admit that in all our Greek force at Troy he was, in my view, the best and bravest, excepting Achilles. It would not be just, then, that he should be dishonored by you. It is not he, but the laws given by the gods that you would damage. When a good man is dead, there is no justice in doing him harm, not even if you hate him.”

Again, Odysseus explains that Ajax’s previous κλέος is enough to earn him a proper burial. However it is important to note that κλέος does not directly earn him this burial. Rather, the respect for the gods and their laws combined with his honor earns Ajax his burial. At first glance the distinction seems minor and irrelevant, but its implications reveal more about the value of κλέος. It seems that the hero’s honor is only truly respected when enforced by law and respect for the gods. This idea aligns itself again with the idea that the Homeric hero feels a pull from both the immortal and mortal halves of his parentage.<sup>74</sup> In this case, however, the relationship seems to be reversed. The gods realize the hero’s κλέος because it is tied to his immortality, the part that they can understand and relate to. On the other hand, most of the mortals do not respect this because they cannot relate to a sense of immortality. It seems then that it is only out of fear for the gods that men respect the κλέος of the hero. The hero is only recompensed for his honor if men respect the gods. Odysseus reminds us of this, but his presence also serves as a source of contrast for Ajax.

In comparison to Ajax and Achilles, Odysseus is a very atypical Homeric hero whose presence only amplifies Ajax’s heroism. In fact, it can be disputed as to whether he is a hero at all. He is not overly concerned with κλέος. He does not have immortal parentage. And he is renowned for his wit and speaking ability, not his prowess on the battlefield. Moreover, he is

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<sup>74</sup> Clarke 2004: 78. Arvanitakis 2015: 93

willing to undergo humiliation that Achilles and Ajax would never consider.<sup>75</sup> In these ways and even more, he is clearly different from the rest of the heroes, which begs the question of whether he is even a hero at all. In terms of monism and devotion to the heroic code, he is clearly not dogmatic and monistic, but pluralist and open to other suggestions. According to Whitman, “[t]he case could be argued that Odysseus has too much flexibility for a real hero...”<sup>76</sup>

Regardless of whether he is a hero or not, it is clear that Odysseus is not the typical hero of the *Iliad* at the very least, and Ajax can be regarded as such an archetypal hero in Homeric terms. Thus Odysseus’ presence at the burial of Ajax draws the audience to the immediate contrast between Odysseus and Ajax. In fact, this contrast is unique in that it shows the benefits of being unheroic in a way that the *Iliad* is not able to do. Instead of taking a side concerning whether it is better to be heroic or unheroic, the merits of both states are presented.<sup>77</sup> Odysseus is safe and will return home, Ajax is dead but he has his honor. Thus Sophocles does not seem to take a side in the end. The heroic man is honored, even if just for fear of the gods, and the less heroic man is safe. Thus in the conclusion of the tragedy, there is not resolution to the fight between Homer and Archilochus. Sophocles does not exactly choose a side, but rather he shows the merits and shortcomings of both positions and allows the audience to decide for themselves. Although it is the tragedy of Ajax, Odysseus does not win in the end and ends up mourning the loss of a heroic soul.

In short, both Aeschylus and Sophocles pursue Archilochean themes in their own tragedies. In the *Achilleis* it comes in the form of how Achilles’ anger is directed and the supporting characters’ reactions to that anger. In Sophocles’ *Ajax* the supporting characters are

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<sup>75</sup> Finkelberg specifically gives the example of hiding underneath the rams in order to escape Polyphemus’ cave. Finkelberg 1995:2-3.

<sup>76</sup> Whitman 1951: 151. Segal also puts Odysseus’ heroism into question when discussing the irony of his honor and its relation to the term κλέος, Segal 1996:220.

<sup>77</sup> Apfel 2011: 265.

almost entirely responsible for Archilochean themes while the title character represents the heroic argument. Together these tragedies show a trend, a sort of redefinition of the Greek hero. A definition that moves away from an unrealistic and impractical concern for glory towards a more practical concern for life and its utility to the hero and his family. Perhaps this more realistic conception comes from both tragedians' military histories. Both authors were accustomed to war and fought to some degree in a military setting, although not to the degree that Archilochus as a mercenary would have fought. Thus their alignment with Archilochus may have to do with a shared connection with real military conflict. In any case, we can be sure that both of these authors were influenced by both Homer and Archilochus in the design of their heroes. Homer represented the classic Greek conception of the hero while Archilochus represented a more realistic, and perhaps more modern, alternative for the 5<sup>th</sup> century tragedians. The tragedians portray their heroes in between these two vanguards, and thus we see the importance of both Homer and Archilochus to the portrayal of the Greek hero.

### Chapter 3: Archilochus' Effect on Greek Philosophy

Thus far we have seen how Homer's conception of and Archilochus' alterations to the hero pervaded Greek tragedy, perhaps the most popular literary genre to the later Greeks. However, the influence of these authors and the battle between their values goes even farther into Greek literature. For philosophers, Homer and Archilochus were a major topic of discussion and criticism. They influenced the masses in a way, for better or for worse, which forced the philosophers to acknowledge their persuasion and highlight their perceived short-comings.<sup>78</sup> For Plato, both authors were great and deplorable. Often he commended their ability to persuade the masses and even commented on their poetic style, but he also often criticized the message presented in the poetry as harshly as Socrates refuted characters in his dialogues. Plato had clearly read both Homer and Archilochus, and makes multiple references to them throughout his dialogues. Given that he was well read in both authors and that he cites both authors in Book 2 of the *Republic*, these poets certainly had some influence on Plato and his conception of heroism. This influence is best demonstrated in his discussion of the guardians of the city in the *Republic*.

These guardians are the warrior class that is designated to protect and police the city. As a result, they are analogous to the hero at war that our previous authors represented. We can be sure that Plato has both Archilochus and Homer in mind during this discussion since he cites Homer very frequently throughout the discussion of the warriors and he cites Archilochus in the argument that gives rise to the discussion of the city and the guardians responsible for protecting the city. As with the case of Aeschylus and Sophocles, Plato also seems to fall in between both Homer and Archilochus in his conception of the guardians. In fact, Plato's guardians are

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<sup>78</sup> It was Heraclitus who, according to Diogenes, claimed that both Homer and Archilochus should be driven off from the poetry contests and beaten (Diog.*Laert.*9.1).

designed to be Homeric and in their bravery and devotion to the city (piety) in the face of death, but they are also Archilochean and anti-Homeric in their sense of moderation.

The discussion of the city as a representation of the soul in *The Republic* starts after Adeimantus requests Plato to prove that justice is truly better than injustice. He asks why it is better to be just rather than to seem just, “Then since it is ‘the seeming,’ as the wise men show me that ‘masters the reality’ and is lord of happiness, to this I must devote myself without reserve. For a front and a show I must draw about myself a shadow-outline of virtue, but trail behind me the fox of the most sage Archilochus, shifty and bent on gain.”<sup>79</sup> From our first reference to Archilochus, we see that he is associated with the crafty, but apparently unjust fox. More importantly, however, is the fact that he is specifically referred to as an example of someone who has no honor, who thinks mainly of themselves and without regard to justice or the community. After this question is posed, Plato goes on to say that he will attempt to demonstrate the effect of justice in the city since it should be similar to the effect in a single man.<sup>80</sup> After reasoning that the purpose of the city is the collection of goods for the common good of each citizen (369b), the men gradually expand the city as the need for a new good or service arises in their discussion. Eventually the men come to the conclusion that the farmers will need to procure more land and that the city will need a class of guardians in order to procure more land and defend the existing land from other communities, “then we shall have to cut out a cantele of our neighbor’s land if we are to have enough for pasturing and ploughing, and they in turn of ours if they too abandon themselves to the unlimited acquisition of wealth, disregarding the limit set by

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<sup>79</sup> Shorey 1946: 137. A translation of Plato 365. I will hold back the original Greek text for the next few primary citations because they are not central to my argument and are used mainly as a means of context for the support.

<sup>80</sup> Plato.*Rep.*368e.

our necessary wants.”<sup>81</sup> After our characters recognize the need for an army, Plato goes on to convince Glaucon and Adeimantus that the guardians, as Plato has now labeled them, are the most important professionals in the city and therefore require the most care and skill (374e). Finally Plato begins the discussion of what kind of nature is suitable for the guardians to have.

The first characteristics for the guardians are the physical ones. Plato compares the guardians to watchdogs and says that they must be “keen of perception, quick in pursuit of what it has apprehended, and strong too.” But the brevity with which the physical aspects are addressed is revealing of their insignificance to Plato. Plato moves on from here into a much more lengthy discussion of what makes up the guardians’ characters. The first two virtues that Plato lists are bravery and high-spiritedness: καὶ μὴν ἀνδρείον γε, εἴπερ εὖ μαχεῖται. πῶς δ’ οὐ; ἀνδρείος δὲ εἶναι ἄρα ἐθελήσει ὁ μὴ θυμοειδῆς εἶτε ἵππος εἶτε κύων ἢ ἄλλο ὅτιοῦν ζῷον;

(Plato.*Rep.*375a). ““And it must, further, be brave if it is to fight well.’ ‘Of course.’ ‘And will a creature be ready to be brave that is not high-spirited, whether horse or dog or anything else?’”<sup>82</sup>

We thus see in the first distinction themes that are Homeric and not Archilochean. As demonstrated in Chapter 1, Archilochus has no shame in throwing down his shield, and even redefines a heroic figure to condone fleeing in his fragment on Telephus. By contrast, more than one Homeric figure chases and fights a god in the *Iliad*. Furthermore, Archilochus is certainly not high-spirited in the sense that Plato is referring to.<sup>83</sup> He defines himself as the child of a slave

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<sup>81</sup> Shorey 1946: 163. Plato.*Rep.*373d. Although the conclusion that they need to procure more land comes in 373d, the need for luxury and expansion beyond necessity comes earlier in 372e. Plato also asserts that this need for luxury and comfortable means is the origin of war. In terms of material goods, the link between the luxuries that Plato claims must be procured by war almost immediately draws our focus back to the material goods in Homer, the hero’s τίμη. It should also be noted that the translation of θυμοειδῆς as high-spirited is misleading. It simply means passionate or hot-tempered and I will use these words interchangeably.

<sup>82</sup> Shorey 1946: 169.

<sup>83</sup> Liddell and Scott define θυμοειδῆς as “I. high-spirited, courageous, Lat. *animosus*. II. Hot-tempered, passionate.” For these purposes, however, the word seems to me to translate best as our modern understanding of pride. Liddell 2007: 323.

and constantly deprecates himself against the standards of Greek culture.<sup>84</sup> By contrast, the Homeric characters are undoubtedly high-spirited. It is Achilles' passion and temper that are at the focus of the *Iliad*. Without that passion, the conflict between Achilles and Agamemnon boils down to the material worth of his τιμή instead of the damage to his pride. And so it seems at first glance, from his connection of Archilochus with the deceptive fox and from his desire for a brave and high-spirited guardian class, that Plato wants his guardians to be anti-Archilochean. Furthermore, it seems Plato is partial towards the Homeric heroes. However, Plato soon discovers a serious issue with his guardians being both brave and passionate.

Plato recognizes that without wisdom, bravery and high-spiritedness are two very volatile virtues. The guardians run a serious risk of damaging each other and the citizens if left unchecked. They will be driven by their passion and spiritedness, and also unhindered by fear. This conflict, of one fearless warrior's quarrel against another and fueled by passion, is once again that of Achilles. The first seven lines of the *Iliad* tell of Achilles' destructive rage, an emotion invoked by passion:

μῆνιν ἄειδε θεὰ Πηληϊάδεω Ἀχιλῆος  
 οὐλομένην, ἣ μυρὶ Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκε,  
 πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν  
 ἡρώων, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τεῦχε κύνεσσιν  
 Σοῖωνοῖσιν τε πᾶσι, Διὸς δ' ἐτελείετο βουλή,  
 ἐξ οὗ δὴ τὰ πρῶτα διαστήτην ἐρίσαντε  
 Ἀτρεΐδης τε ἄναξ ἀνδρῶν καὶ δῖος Ἀχιλλεύς. (Hom.II.1.1-7)

“Wrath, goddess, sing of Achilles Peleus's son's  
 calamitous wrath, which hit the Achaians with countless ills—  
 many the valiant souls it saw off down to Hades,  
 souls of heroes, their selves left as carrion for dogs  
 and all birds of prey, and the plan of Zeus was fulfilled—  
 from the first moment those two men parted in fury,  
 Atreus's son, king of men, and godlike Achilles.”<sup>85</sup>

<sup>84</sup> We know this without a doubt from Critias' criticism of Archilochus. Aelian gives us a second-hand version of Critias' account in the *Varia Historia* (Aelian.VH.10.13).

<sup>85</sup> Green 2015: 25.

From the very start, the poet attributes most of the pain that the Achaeans faced to Achilles' passionate rage. Plato directly addresses that issue and strikes it from his guardians before they ever have the chance to be destructive. But he does not get rid of passion or bravery from the guardians as quickly as Archilochus abandons glory. Instead, Plato seeks to reign in the passion and pride of his warriors somewhere between the two authors. He still wants his guardians to fight passionately and gloriously, but not to cause fights and risk damage to one's self or one's comrades for the sake of passion and glory. He asserts wisdom as the guiding force to balance the guardians between the two extremes, and he attributes this wisdom to the same thing that allows a guard dog to distinguish between those towards whom it must show affection and those towards whom it must be hostile (376b).

Plato moves on to discuss the best way to make their guardians wise. Plato states that they will educate the guardians with regard to their souls first and thus they must first learn of poetry and the stories therein. However, Plato is very precise about the poetry that these guardians will be given and makes it clear that the poetry around today must be censored of qualities that Plato deems improper and unbecoming to his guardians. Here Plato outright names Homer as a poet who must be banned from the guardians: οὐς Ἡσίοδος τε, εἶπον, καὶ Ὅμηρος ἡμῖν ἐλεγέτην καὶ οἱ ἄλλοι ποιηταί. οὗτοι γὰρ πού μύθους τοῖς ἀνθρώποις ψευδεῖς συντιθέντες ἔλεγόν τε καὶ λέγουσι. (Plato.*Rep.*377d). “‘Those,’ I said, ‘that Hesiod and Homer and the other poets related to us. These, methinks, composed false stories which they told and still tell to mankind.’”<sup>86</sup> Thus from here on out, Plato has set himself to show what sort of things are done well within Homer and what sort of things must not ever be shown to the guardians.

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<sup>86</sup> Shorey 1946: 179.

After labeling Homer as a poet who portrays warriors of improper behavior, Plato returns to this notion of heroes quarreling with one another. Again he condemns the notion of two of the guardians fighting with each other and becoming controlled by their passions: ...πολλοῦ δεῖ γιγαντομαχίας τε μυθολογητέον αὐτοῖς καὶ ποικιλτέον, καὶ ἄλλας ἔχθρας πολλὰς καὶ παντοδαπὰς θεῶν τε καὶ ἡρώων πρὸς συγγενεῖς τε καὶ οἰκείους αὐτῶν (Plato.*Rep.*378c). "...still less must we make battles of gods and giants the subject for them of stories and embroideries, and other enmities many and manifold of god and heroes towards their kith and kin."<sup>87</sup> While he doesn't name Achilles and Agamemnon directly, we can be sure that Plato has this quarrel in mind because he cites another passage from the *Iliad*, the abuse of Hephaestus by Hera, directly after. And so it seems that Plato's main concern with Homer and the guardians who might read his poetry stems from the quarrel between two warriors who are supposed to be allies. Their passions get the best of them since the fight between them is started by pride, since Agamemnon's pride will not let him be without a γέρας, and sustained by Achilles' pride. But this pride, which stems from a sense of passion and duty to the war, is not to be completely expunged. As stated before in 375a, a person must be high-spirited and passionate in order to be brave.

Although the guardian becomes reckless and dangerous to his comrades if he is too spirited, if he is not spirited enough he becomes susceptible to cowardice. Because there is a chance that these guardians might be gripped by fear, Plato begins the second part of his censorship by expunging the passages in Homer that reflect the afterlife negatively. He first starts with the first νεκρία of the *Odyssey* wherein Achilles' ghost proclaims: βουλοίμην κ' ἐπάρουρος ἐὼν θητευέμεν ἄλλω /ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀκλήρω, ᾧ μὴ βίωτος πολλὸς εἶη /ἢ πᾶσιν νεκύεσσι καταφθιμένοισιν ἀνάσσειν (Plato.*Rep.*386c; Hom.*Od.*489-491). "Would that I was in the fields

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<sup>87</sup> Shorey 1946: 181.

up above to be serf another/ Tiller of some poor plot which yields him a scanty substience,/ Than to be ruler and king over all the dead who have perished.”<sup>88</sup> This thought is not one from the *Iliad*. It is a statement in the *Odyssey* where the νόστος of the hero is praised instead of his κλέος. This sort of thinking that Plato wants to expunge prefers a νόστος to the wellbeing and promotion of the city. As we have seen in chapter 1, this sort of thinking is entirely Archilochean. Archilochus readily admits his fear of death without any shame. He views it as rational to fear death, and his shield-throwing fragment is evidence of this mentality. And so we again find ourselves caught between Homer and Archilochus. While Homer’s heroes are too spirited and are prone to expressing their passions for honor and glory above the success of the army, Archilochus promotes a cowardice that is also entirely unbecoming of the guardians. Instead it seems that the guardians must be concerned with the city above their own passions and they must not fear death. They must be un-Homeric in their restraint and also Homeric in their bravery. Thus the passages that might make a future guardian fear death are entirely unsuitable to a hero who is destined to: δουλείαν θανάτου μᾶλλον πεφοβημένους (Plato.*Rep.*387b), “be free and be more afraid of slavery than of death.”

Plato’s guardians are not just brave in the face of their own deaths, but also in the face of their comrades’ deaths. The guardians must not be prone to lamentations and dirges or concerned with the wellbeing of their friends over the protection of the city. Once again, Achilles becomes Homer’s example par excellence of what the guardian should not do. His lamentations over the body of Patroklos are quoted for the first two examples by Homer.<sup>89</sup> Plato’s issue with the guardian lamenting the deaths of their friends boils down to the same common theme that we have seen thus far: it presents a situation where passions have overcome reasoning. This is

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<sup>88</sup> Shorey 1946: 203.

<sup>89</sup> Homer cites *Il.*23.10-12 specifically as improper behavior for the guardians. Plato.*Rep.*388a.

confirmed by the next topic of censorship, laughter. Laughter is also associated with the passions, and when the hero is prone to laughter, he is prone to putting that laughter above his own reasoning: ἀλλὰ μὴν οὐδὲ φιλογέλωτάς γε δεῖ εἶναι. σχεδὸν γὰρ ὅταν τις ἐφιῆ ἰσχυρῶ γέλωτι, ἰσχυρὰν καὶ μεταβολὴν ζητεῖ τὸ τοιοῦτον (Plato.*Rep.*388e). “For ordinarily when one abandons himself to violent laughter his condition provokes a violent reaction.”<sup>90</sup>

Indeed Plato continues by saying that the guardians will also need the virtue of self-control. Without this virtue, the passions are easily in charge of reason. From a physical standpoint, this self-control extends to the physical needs and overindulgence: τί δέ; σωφροσύνης ἄρα οὐ δεήσει ἡμῖν τοῖς νεανίαις; πῶς δ’ οὐ; σωφροσύνης δὲ ὡς πλήθει οὐ τὰ τοιάδε μέγιστα, ἀρχόντων μὲν ὑπηκόους εἶναι, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἄρχοντας τῶν περὶ πότους καὶ ἀφροδίσια καὶ περὶ ἐδωδὰς ἡδονῶν; (Plato.*Rep.*389d). “‘Again will our lads not need the virtue of self-control?’ ‘Of course.’ ‘And for the multitude, are not the main points of self-control these—to be obedient to their rulers and themselves to be rulers over the bodily appetites and pleasures of food, drink, and the rest?’”<sup>91</sup> Thus the guardian has no room for an abundance of passion. He must be passionate about the protection and safety of the city, but nothing else.

This notion goes completely against both Homer’ and Archilochus’ conceptions of the Greek hero. Archilochus has no passion. He is only concerned with his own well-being. This is most evident in the aforementioned shield throwing epode as well as his position as a mercenary and not a soldier for the state. He has no concern for anything but himself and is seen as a coward as a result. On the other end of the spectrum are Homer’s heroes. The Greek army in the *Iliad* does fight as a unit. The various kings as well as their subjects fight for the honor of their own fatherlands. However, this goal of honor is too passionate. As seen in the case of Achilles, it

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<sup>90</sup> Shorey 1946: 213.

<sup>91</sup> Shorey 1946: 215.

is able to completely consume reason and put the individual and the entire army in danger. Plato also recognizes this second, spiritual form of passion and makes specific reference to it as well.

Achilles becomes the focus of the discussion of emotional and spiritual passions overcoming reason. His devotion to honor, both κλέος and τίμη, is subject to scrutiny as they both undermine the purpose of the Greek army as a whole:

οὐδὲ τὸν τοῦ Ἀχιλλέως παιδαγωγὸν Φοῖνικα ἐπαινετέον ὡς  
μετρίως ἔλεγε συμβουλευὼν αὐτῷ δῶρα μὲν λαβόντι ἐπαμύνειν  
τοῖς Ἀχαιοῖς, ἄνευ δὲ δῶρων μὴ ἀπαλλάττεσθαι τῆς μήνιος. οὐδ'  
αὐτὸν τὸν Ἀχιλλέα ἀξιῶσομεν οὐδ' ὁμολογήσομεν οὕτω  
φιλοχρήματον εἶναι, ὥστε παρὰ τοῦ Ἀγαμέμνονος δῶρα λαβεῖν,  
καὶ τιμὴν αὖ λαβόντα νεκροῦ ἀπολύειν, ἄλλως δὲ μὴ θέλειν.  
(Plato.*Rep.*390e).

“Nor should we approve Achilles’ attendant Phoenix as speaking fairly when he counselled him if he received gifts for it to defend the Achaeans, but without gifts not to lay aside his wrath; nor shall we think it proper nor admit that Achilles himself was so greedy as to accept gifts from Agamemnon and again to give up a dead body after receiving payment but otherwise to refuse.”<sup>92</sup>

And so it seems as if Achilles quest for glory, and those of all heroes, is completely unacceptable for Plato’s guardians. They must think of the state instead, and be ruled by reason and not their various passions. They must still have passion for the state, in order to be brave and not fear death, but when this spiritedness overcomes the ultimate goal of the guardians, the protection of the city, the guardians have then become too spirited. And so in terms of κλέος, fame and reputation, and τίμη, physical honor which gives rise to fame and reputation, Achilles’ character is corrupt. The hero should not be focused on these things individually, but the wellbeing of the state, in this case Phthia or the Greek army, as a whole. That is not to say that the warrior should not be concerned with glory or material goods at all; we must remember that the theoretical state is a luxurious one as mentioned earlier. The hero should then be concerned for the procurement

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<sup>92</sup> Shorey 1946: 219. b

of collective goods and honor rather than individual goods and glory. If this were the case, then presumably Achilles would not have ever quarreled with Agamemnon, Patroclus might still be alive along with countless other Greeks, and Achilles would not have done harm to the Greek army as a whole. Thus concludes Plato's discussion of the education of his guardian class within the city of the soul.

In short, Plato's description of the guardians within his description of his theoretical city seems to describe a class of warriors that fall somewhere between the Homeric heroes and Archilochean warriors. The characters must be brave and spirited according to Plato, but they must not be so spirited that they risk harming the army or themselves as Achilles did. Furthermore, they must be brave enough not to fear death. To fear death would put the individual guardian's wellbeing above that of the state. Thus, Plato's guardians are very much anti-Archilochean, since Archilochus readily admits that he fears death and will throw down his shield to preserve his own life. Ultimately Plato's guardians are different from both Archilochus and Homer in this regard, they put the state above their own interests and they do not let their passions, for honor and life respectively, rule over their reasoning. However, the guardians seem to fall in between both authors in their conduct.

### Conclusion: Archilochus and Homer in Modern Times

We see then just how Homer and Archilochus have affected the conception of the hero at war throughout the majority of Greek history. Homer's idealized, honor-loving heroes may have set the standard for the Greek hero, but Archilochus' own personal philosophy as a warrior certainly altered that standard for the rest of Greek history. Ultimately we see a battle between the idealized warrior, represented in Homer as demigods and men of incredible power and nobility, and the realistic warrior, represented by Archilochus, our honest and self-effacing mercenary poet. This battle, set up between the early, contemporary authors raged on throughout generations of Greek authors. Indeed, as we have seen with both Aeschylus and Sophocles, both of whom had military experience of their own, the tragic hero is not cast in the same light as the Homeric hero. By dramatization of the single-mindedness of Homeric heroes, Sophocles was able to demonstrate the merits of both the Homeric and Archilochean type warriors. Sophocles' Ajax died, but in the end he retained his glory even at the risk to his friends and family. On the other hand, Odysseus demonstrates a type of hero who is not stuck in a Homeric code of honor. For him, honor is not the reward for the Trojan War; instead, he receives a proper νόστος and his friends and family are protected. We see further the conflict of a personal need for honor in Aeschylus as well, as the chorus berates Achilles for refusing to fight until Patroklos has died in the *Myrmidons*. This split between Homer and Archilochus continues into the time of the philosophers as Plato conceives a different motivation for the warrior in the discussion of the guardians in books 2 and 3 of the *Republic*. The guardians are different in that they are brave, unlike Archilochus, but also they have tempered spirits, unlike Homer. Furthermore, these guardians do not fight for their own gain, neither monetary nor for the sake of glory, but rather they are devoted to the wellbeing of their own state instead. They fall both in between Homer

and Archilochus in their temperaments, but also outside of both authors in the motivation and ultimate goal of the warrior. Plato has exchanged the desire for κλέος for that of the common good. Thus we see the effect of both Homer and Archilochus on the Greek hero. The balance is split between the ideal and the realistic, the epic and half-divine heroes and the emotional and human Greek soldiers. Although this battle seems to have started, or at the very least come to light, with Homer and Archilochus, it is not confined to the Greeks. Rather, it seems to be a fundamental distinction in human societies at war.

The tradition of war poets is a long and tumultuous one, as demonstrated by Archilochus who wrote in the 7<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. But in more modern times, the tradition has come back into popularity. In World War I, many poets flourished and became very popular within their societies even when they spoke out against popular opinion. The two authors that most readily come to mind are Siegfried Sassoon and Wilfred Owen. These two authors were both warriors during a war in which the technological advances of weaponry had come to a major advancement. Machine guns, gas warfare, and airplanes were all new terrors to the soldiers on both sides of the trenches. The gruesome deaths of comrades and the haunting memories of mass casualties plagued soldiers and are readily visible in the poetry of both of these war poets. Take for example, Sassoon's poem *The Death Bed*:

He drowsed and was aware of silence heaped  
Round him, unshaken as the steadfast walls;  
Aqueous like floating rays of amber light,  
Soaring and quivering in the wings of sleep.  
Silence and safety; and his mortal shore  
Lipped by the inward, moonless waves of death.

Someone was holding water to his mouth.  
He swallowed, unresisting; moaned and dropped  
Through crimson gloom to darkness; and forgot  
The opiate throb and ache that was his wound.  
Water—calm, sliding green above the weir;

Water—a sky-lit alley for his boat,  
Bird-voiced, and bordered with reflected flowers  
And shaken hues of summer: drifting down,  
He dipped contented oars, and sighed, and slept.

Night, with a gust of wind, was in the ward,  
Blowing the curtain to a gummuring curve.  
Night. He was blind; he could not see the stars  
Glinting among the wraiths of wandering cloud;  
Queer blots of colour, purple, scarlet, green,  
Flickered and faded in his drowning eyes.

Rain—he could hear it rustling through the dark;  
Fragrance and passionless music woven as one;  
Warm rain on drooping roses; pattering showers  
That soak the woods; not the harsh rain that sweeps  
Behind the thunder, but a trickling peace,  
Gently and slowly washing life away.

He stirred, shifting his body; then the pain  
Leaped like a prowling beast, and gripped and tore  
His groping dreams with grinding claws and fangs.  
But someone was beside him; soon he lay  
Shuddering because that evil thing had passed.  
And death, who'd stepped toward him, paused and stared.

Light many lamps and gather round his bed.  
Lend him your eyes, warm blood, and will to live.  
Speak to him; rouse him; you may save him yet.  
He's young; he hated war; how should he die  
When cruel old campaigners win safe through?

But death replied: "I choose him." So he went,  
And there was silence in the summer night;  
Silence and safety; and the veils of sleep.  
Then, far away, the thudding of the guns.

While Britain portrayed the war as an honorable war and downplayed the horrors of mustard gas throughout their propaganda, Sassoon portrayed the reality of the war through vivid imagery that make the horrors come to life. He went against the ideal representation of war by his society and those leading his country and portrayed what war was to the individual soldier: death, pain and despair within the muddy, wet trenches. Sassoon was very much against the older

generation who organized a war, a generation that had not seen a war of its own and based its perception of what war should be from the stories of the generation before them. This can be seen as analogous to Homer who composed his *Iliad* almost 500 years after the battle of Troy. He was a poet, rumored to be blind, who most likely never fought in battle, and did not portray realistic battle if he did indeed fight at some point. This feud between the generations can be seen further in Sassoon's poem *To the Warmongers*:

"I'm back again from hell  
With loathsome thought to sell;  
Secrets of death to tell;  
And horrors from the abyss

Young faces bleared with blood,  
Sucked down into the mud,  
You shall hear things like this,  
Till the tormented slain

Crawl round and once again  
With limbs that twist awry  
Moan out their brutish pain,  
As the fighters pass them by.

For you our battles shine  
With triumph half-divine;  
And the glory of the dead  
Kindles in each proud eye.

But a curse is on my head,  
That shall not be unsaid,  
And the wounds in my heart are red,  
For I have watched them die."

In this particular poem, Sassoon is directly addressing the older generation who is carrying on the war. Particularly Sassoon addresses those of the generation who see the war as glorious and triumphant rather than a war where young men are suffering terrible and painful deaths. In this way, Sassoon is not just realistic, but Archilochean. He values the life of his comrades in arms over the glory and power that is won in the war. That is not to say that Sassoon is a pacifist or

against war at all. Just like Archilochus, war served a purpose for Sassoon when it was being fought in a way that still valued the soldiers fighting in it. In his declaration condemning the war, for which he was sent to a psychiatric hospital for “shell-shock,” Sassoon says that he no longer supports the war effort because of the change of motives that has occurred, “I believe that the war upon which I entered as a war of defence and liberation has now become a war of aggression and conquest.” Just as Archilochus is willing to fight for something he values, money, Sassoon also was willing to fight for something that he valued, the defense and liberty of his country. He will not, however, fight for aggression and honor as his older generation wants him to. This mentality is further continued in Wilfred Owen who died in battle. Although he also did not support the war effort, he was sent back to the front lines after being released from the same psychiatric hospital as Sassoon. Like Archilochus, his poetry also reveals the mentality of the individual soldier and their fight against the glorification of war.

The study of war poets is therefore valuable to us because it reveals a part of human existence that we still deal with today. If we can learn about the shared experiences of soldiers, and their own experiences in light of our society, then we can improve the experience of those soldiers in a way that might mean the difference between a soldier experiencing PTSD for a year and a lifetime. It takes a combination of both Homer and Archilochus to understand the mentality of the hero. While Homer is unrealistic, he does convey some part of the soldier’s mentality and the mentality of a soldier’s society. Similarly, while Archilochus portrays a very harrowing and realistic part of the soldier’s experience, it is not the complete story. In conclusion I will leave you with Owen’s most famous poem. It describes powerfully the distinction between ideal war and realistic war and the experience of some of our soldiers at war:

BENT double, like old beggars under sacks,  
Knock-kneed, coughing like hags, we cursed through sludge,  
Till on the haunting flares we turned our backs  
And towards our distant rest began to trudge.  
Men marched asleep. Many had lost their boots  
But limped on, blood-shod. All went lame; all blind;  
Drunk with fatigue; deaf even to the hoots  
Of gas-shells dropping softly behind.

Gas! GAS! Quick, boys!—An ecstasy of fumbling  
Fitting the clumsy helmets just in time,  
But someone still was yelling out and stumbling  
And flound'ring like a man in fire or lime.—  
Dim, through the misty panes and thick green light,  
As under a green sea, I saw him drowning.

In all my dreams before my helpless sight  
He plunges at me, guttering, choking, drowning.

If in some smothering dreams you too could pace  
Behind the wagon that we flung him in,  
And watch the white eyes writhing in his face,  
His hanging face, like a devil's sick of sin,  
If you could hear, at every jolt, the blood  
Come gargling from the froth-corrupted lungs,  
Bitter as the cud  
Of vile, incurable sores on innocent tongues,—  
My friend, you would not tell with such high zest  
To children ardent for some desperate glory,  
The old Lie: *Dulce et decorum est*  
*Pro patria mori.*

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